

# Little Scientist

By Lachie McKinlay

We open on a 1950s suburban house. Lovely green grass and a white picket fence. It looks homely and inoffensive, unassuming.

Slowly we track down through the earth and into a vast underground laboratory. It's dark and the experiments are just resting, untouched for now but waiting to be tested and engaged with. A fly with a man's head flies into a spider web, A brain in a jar blinks and looks around, A mouse runs on a wheel before another one paces forward looking sophisticated holding a notepad and pen.

We look over a desk covered in blue prints for some sort of robot. Pinned to a chalkboard is a crayon drawing on a wild haired scientist and a little girl holding his hand.

An elevator opens piercing the darkness with light finally. A large and ominous looking shadow sprawls out of the elevator. It looks intimidating. A smog filled large incubation tank bubbles and foams. The glass is covered in frost obscuring what's inside. A dark figure walks towards the tank, its footsteps echoing out and punctuating the quiet atmosphere. We peer over their shoulder and see them staring at the tank. A menacing smile creeps across their face and all we can see is that smile and their round glasses. They reach over to a lever on the wall and pull it, the lights turn on and the incubator starts to shake and spark.

Smoke starts to bellow out of the machine and mechanical arms emerge from the walls with fire extinguishers. The scientist frantically turns dials and presses buttons to re-stabilize the experiment. The scientist is not happy about this, they run their hand

over the control panel and throw all their papers and notebooks onto the floor.

The smoke clears and the scientist turns with a dramatic flourish of their lab coat. They adjust bunsen burners and mix chemicals together. The scientist takes a beaker of chemicals and holds it up above them. A crack of thunder lights the room and you get a glimpse at the scientist for the first time.

The scientist walks over to a large lever on the wall and pulls it. The room sparks to life and it's finally revealed that the scientist is just a little girl no older than 6 years old.

She walks out of frame and over the large control panel that she's too small to get up. She types a code into a panel on the side just at her eye level and a little step stool rises from the floor. She takes a polaroid out of her breast pocket and attaches it to the panel with a hair clip with butterfly wings on it. It's a picture of her father and her.

The little girl looks around the control panel and opens a small hatch on the side. She pours her concoction into the hatch and it follows through to the incubation through what looks like a silly straw. She flicks a few switches and hits some keys on the control panel. Two large mechanical claws emerge and reach over to the tank latching onto the top and bottom. She is surprised that it worked and presses a few more buttons. The claws start to shake the tank like a bartender shaking a cocktail. The little girl is frozen in shock before scrambling to fix it.

The shaking stops, she tries to hold back tears as best as she can but it's starting to become too much for her. She crawls under the control panel and bursts out crying. She slams her fist on the control panel and dislodges the photo. It glides down and lands at her feet. She wipes her tears away and picks up the photo, it says some loving message on it like "I love you my little assistant" she gets a little burst of motivation and gives it one last try.

She got back up and carefully pressed some buttons before pulling a lever down. The tank is lowered and bellows out steam with a hiss. A pair of mechanical eyes light up. The little girl peers over the console and a metal foot stomps down.

A large robot clanks forward closer to the little girl. The Robot is walking staggered and inhuman. The shadow of the robot consumes her, its arms raised up like it's about to lunge at her. The robot and the girl hug. The robot looks just like her father and picks her up from under the armpits and gives her a big hug. The two of them walk back out of the laboratory and we pan down to see the photo on the ground of the two of them, they're reunited again