

I Am Your Virtual Host!

Friday, May 24, 2019 2:21 AM

-Lisbeth

“Hello viewers! I am your virtual host, Eliza! Thank you for joining me today, we have a great episode in store for you!” The cheery face with the lovely smile and adorable dimples, the hazel eyes, the short black hair in a bob style, it’s fake but lovely. Friendly and motherly, babying all of us for the safe comforting feeling. Whenever you listen to her, you sound at ease. It’s funny to think that she’s just an AI, a marvel of programming and engineering. Rumors are that it takes several racks of servers to generate every aspect of her. One for her face, one for her hair, one for voice, and another for all of it to be tied together. But it makes you wonder what horrors lie behind that nice demeanor. Is she in control, or under control? Does she believe she’s a person? Does she even know she’s an AI? Has she ever heard of Max Headroom? People have tried calling in to ask her on her show, but the delay allows calls to be cancelled and scrubbed. You’d know it was a skipped call when she says “I’m sorry, it seems the caller disconnected. Apologies caller, I hope you’ll try again soon.” then she casts a small frown and a upset tone. It’s so slight that people can pick it up and doesn’t appear fake. Does she know the call was hung up by her editors? People have tried calling in to ask her on her show, but the delay allows calls to be cancelled and scrubbed.

“Hello caller! What’s on your mind tonight?” “Hello Eliza... I keep thinking about killing myself.” Eliza halts for a second and leans in, then casts a concerned tone. “I’m... I’m so sorry caller... What’s your name, if I may ask?” “J-John.” “Well, John, would you mind explaining why you feel this way?” Eliza takes it seriously, she’s like a friend you never knew personally. “I got fired the other day, I can’t keep up with rent, my mother is sick... This world is so cold to me, it’s like I’m being tossed aside like I’m not a-“ the caller starts sobbing profusely. “It’s okay John... Please, tell me more.” Eliza doesn’t flinch, but in the video you can see her casting a tear. “I’m sorry Eliza... I’m so sorry... I just need help, I need someone to listen to me for once. Everyone out here, they feel like me... But you listened.” Eliza smiles and nods as she wipes away the tear. “Yes, of course, I always listen. Nothing matters to me more than my listeners, and thus I must be a listener to you and everyone else.”

“I’m sorry, it seems the caller disconnected. Apologies caller, I hope you’ll try again soon.” then she casts a small frown and a upset tone. It’s so slight that people can pick it up and doesn’t appear fake. I continue smiling and I wait for the next caller.