

Murphy Irving Ritenour

Dr. Ola Swatek

ENG 307T\_15048

October 22, 2025

## Creating with Chat GPT

As a library worker, my job is to connect people to stories that may greatly influence them, or simply entertain them. Personally, I enjoy stories that incorporate science fiction and horror to depict intense emotions on the human spectrum that can be difficult to explain or tolerate. In my reading, I have found that even the strangest stories can adeptly create pathos if the writer is creative and clever enough. This is not a task I expect ChatGPT to accomplish, no matter the prompt it is given. To test the creative potential of ChatGPT, I chose to prompt the tool to write a scene from an existing intellectual property that describes a bomb detonating.

It was surprisingly easy to prompt ChatGPT to write a piece of fiction. A few seconds after it was prompted, ChatGPT responded with ideas for the story's genre, characters, settings, and themes, suggesting that it could produce an 'original' work based solely on those elements. However, I wanted the tool to write me a story from an existing intellectual property, *Incredible Hulk*, and inquired about its familiarity with the characters involved. ChatGPT was able to accurately describe Hulk's origin story and the relationship between the two leading characters, Bruce Banner and Rick Jones. *Most* of the facts about these characters were correct in ChatGPT's answer, but I do not know where it sourced its information, because it did not provide a citation. [These prompts and responses are bookmarked below.](#)

From there, I asked ChatGPT to write a story describing Rick's perspective as the gamma bomb detonated, while highlighting his emotional state and using imagery for the audience to understand the intensity of the blast. [In the original comic, this section of the story is portrayed very briefly](#), which demanded ChatGPT to write an 'original' retelling. [ChatGPT did write a passage that described Rick's emotions, but it was simplistic](#). Its description of the power, sound, and aftermath of the blast is similarly plain. It does capture the intensity, then moves on quickly. Its depiction is very different from my own, and as Chiang argued, ChatGPT's version was "really bland," (Chiang, 2024). ChatGPT contradicted itself a few times. First, it does not describe Rick being thrown into the trench that saved his life, even though it knew that was a key element of the story. It also says that Bruce may have covered Rick to protect him, but then said Bruce was five feet away from Rick after the blast.

[In my retelling](#), I tried to capture the otherworldliness of the blast, and Rick's emotions before and afterwards. I depicted the intensity of the blast through musical references. I chose to frame it this way because Rick is a musician, and thought he might process the strangeness of what he witnessed by comparing it to something he is familiar with. Whether or not my story is technically superior to ChatGPT's is not a judgement I can make. Yet I do believe that my story has more pathos because I put effort into imagining the scene and describing it in a unique manner. I wrote and edited my passage over time and changed some pieces dramatically to hone the emotions I wanted to depict. ChatGPT issued its story in a matter of seconds. "*The wind peeled across the desert floor like a god's breath, hot and full of static,*" is the most interesting sentence it generated, but the rest of its passage is too similar to other scripts describing explosions to stand out as original instead of status quo.

In fiction writing, authors work to inspire ethos and pathos in their audience. When presenting stories, authors must establish ethos for their readers to suspend their disbelief, and this is especially important in science fiction. Ethos is a sense of “trust and respect,” (Lawrence, 2022, pg. 17) that authors can elicit if the fantastical elements of their stories appeal to the reader’s imagination and emotions. Logos, or appeals to logic, are overwritten by pathos, appeals to emotion, (Lawrence, 2022) when reading speculative fiction. Is it possible to survive a nuclear bomb blast and the resulting radiation just from hiding in a trench? No, probably not. Yet most readers intuitively understand that the logic of the story is not its hook; emotion is necessary to connect to a story. Readers are willing to make logical jumps when engaging with science fiction stories, because “illogical logics are always lurking about in our minds,” (Lawrence, 2022, pg. 24) and combining with our emotional understanding of a scenario. Rhetorical approaches to fiction allow readers to recognize their own emotions in characters who endure impossible circumstances, and then trust the depiction enough to continue reading.

In my excerpt, I made conscious choices to aggressively depict guilt, fear, and shock. ChatGPT did not hone in on these emotions, because it is not an emotional creature. What it lacks also destroys its credibility and felt sense of logic. How can a human trust the storytelling ability of an author who has never felt “a wide variety of rich emotions,” (Lawrence, 2022, pg. 18), and whose choice to appeal to those emotions is absent? Arguably, readers do not read fiction for plots and speculative ideas. Science fiction world building may engage a reader, but the emotional connection to the reader and enriching relationships between the characters is what makes the story matter and worth revisiting. *Incredible Hulk* is a narrative that has been continuously written since 1962 because readers can connect to the emotions and characters that are the backbone of the story. As Chiang notes, writing is about choice, and making choices that

reach out and attract the emotions of a stranger takes time. ChatGPT has no choice but to produce stories immediately, destroying its opportunity to view the story from multiple angles and imagine the most effective way to tell it. It lifts ideas from other writers, but cannot reflect the “unique expressive potential,” (Chiang, 2024) human authors indulge in with their storytelling.

Although you could make an argument that fanfiction in itself is a violation of intellectual property rights, I feel that its manner of plagiarism is different from ChatGPT’s. Fanfiction is largely accepted as a side effect of fans’ interest and interpretation of media. It does lift characters, plots, locations, and themes from existing works, but the resulting stories are an expression of human creativity and reverence. ChatGPT cannot experience imagination, it uses training data to expel uninspired ideas. Prompts are unable to source where the tool pulls information from, and whether it stole from other fanworks. Notably, using ChatGPT to write fanfiction violates the notion that fanworks are made from the fondness of human audience members, who write unprofessional works that are not profitable simply because they are inspired by their attachment to a particular story. Writing fanfiction through ChatGPT disrespects that process, and passing off its writing as one’s own is particularly egregious. When humans write, they spend hours testing the limits of their imagination and revising their story to elicit pathos for readers. ChatGPT uses the fine-tuned stories of others to produce an impersonal work in seconds. The writing process between human and machine could not be more different.

Relying on ChatGPT to write fiction does not make one an author. Inspiration alone is not storytelling, and asserting authorship over an idea put into words by a machine disrupts the implicit trust readers offer to authors. As stated by Chiang, formulating sentences is a key element of the writing process, and every letter written establishes a purposeful choice by an

emotional creature. Even unremarkable statements are elevated by the humanity underlying them (Chiang, 2024). ChatGPT may have ethical uses of other subject areas. However, since it fails to generate stories that appeal to rhetoric or reveal originality, fiction writing is not one of them.

Storytelling is not an automated task that can be replicated by machinery. It exists to connect one human being to another. Even the most rudimentary, grammatically incorrect story holds more worth than a technically sound story written by ChatGPT.

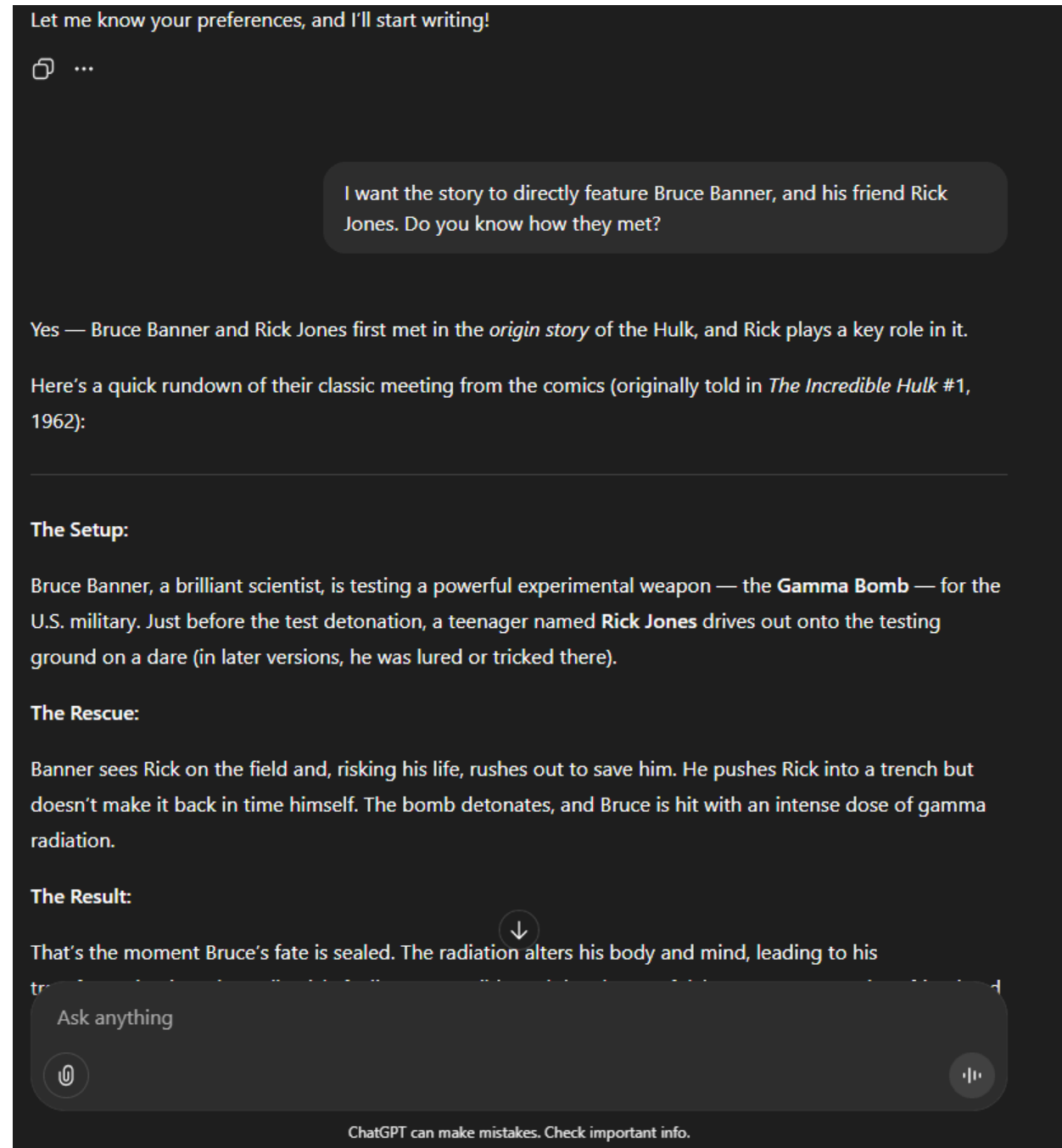
A human story roams outside space and time, uniting the author and reader with shared imagination and emotion across nations and generations. Without human rhetoric, a fictional work is unable to establish such a link between human beings. Machine-made stories therefore are an aberration with no value in the human world.

The original scene of the bomb blast from *Incredible Hulk* #1 by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby.





ChatGPT's existing knowledge of the *Incredible Hulk* characters.



Let me know your preferences, and I'll start writing!

📄 ...

I want the story to directly feature Bruce Banner, and his friend Rick Jones. Do you know how they met?

Yes — Bruce Banner and Rick Jones first met in the *origin story* of the Hulk, and Rick plays a key role in it.

Here's a quick rundown of their classic meeting from the comics (originally told in *The Incredible Hulk #1*, 1962):

---

**The Setup:**

Bruce Banner, a brilliant scientist, is testing a powerful experimental weapon — the **Gamma Bomb** — for the U.S. military. Just before the test detonation, a teenager named **Rick Jones** drives out onto the testing ground on a dare (in later versions, he was lured or tricked there).

**The Rescue:**

Banner sees Rick on the field and, risking his life, rushes out to save him. He pushes Rick into a trench but doesn't make it back in time himself. The bomb detonates, and Bruce is hit with an intense dose of gamma radiation.

**The Result:**

That's the moment Bruce's fate is sealed. The radiation alters his body and mind, leading to his transformation into the Hulk.

Ask anything

📄 🔊

ChatGPT can make mistakes. Check important info.

**The Setup:**

Bruce Banner, a brilliant scientist, is testing a powerful experimental weapon — the **Gamma Bomb** — for the U.S. military. Just before the test detonation, a teenager named **Rick Jones** drives out onto the testing ground on a dare (in later versions, he was lured or tricked there).

**The Rescue:**

Banner sees Rick on the field and, risking his life, rushes out to save him. He pushes Rick into a trench but doesn't make it back in time himself. The bomb detonates, and Bruce is hit with an intense dose of gamma radiation.

**The Result:**

That's the moment Bruce's fate is sealed. The radiation alters his body and mind, leading to his transformation into the Hulk. Rick, feeling responsible and deeply grateful, becomes Bruce's close friend and often his conscience — sometimes helping, sometimes struggling to deal with the Hulk's unpredictable nature.

---

So: Bruce saves Rick → Bruce becomes the Hulk → Rick becomes his closest ally.

Would you like the story I write to be:

- A **retelling** or expansion of that original moment?
- A **new adventure** featuring Bruce and Rick after they already know each other?
- A "**What if**" alternate universe twist (e.g., Rick becomes the Hulk, or the bomb test goes differently)?

Let me know and I'll start!



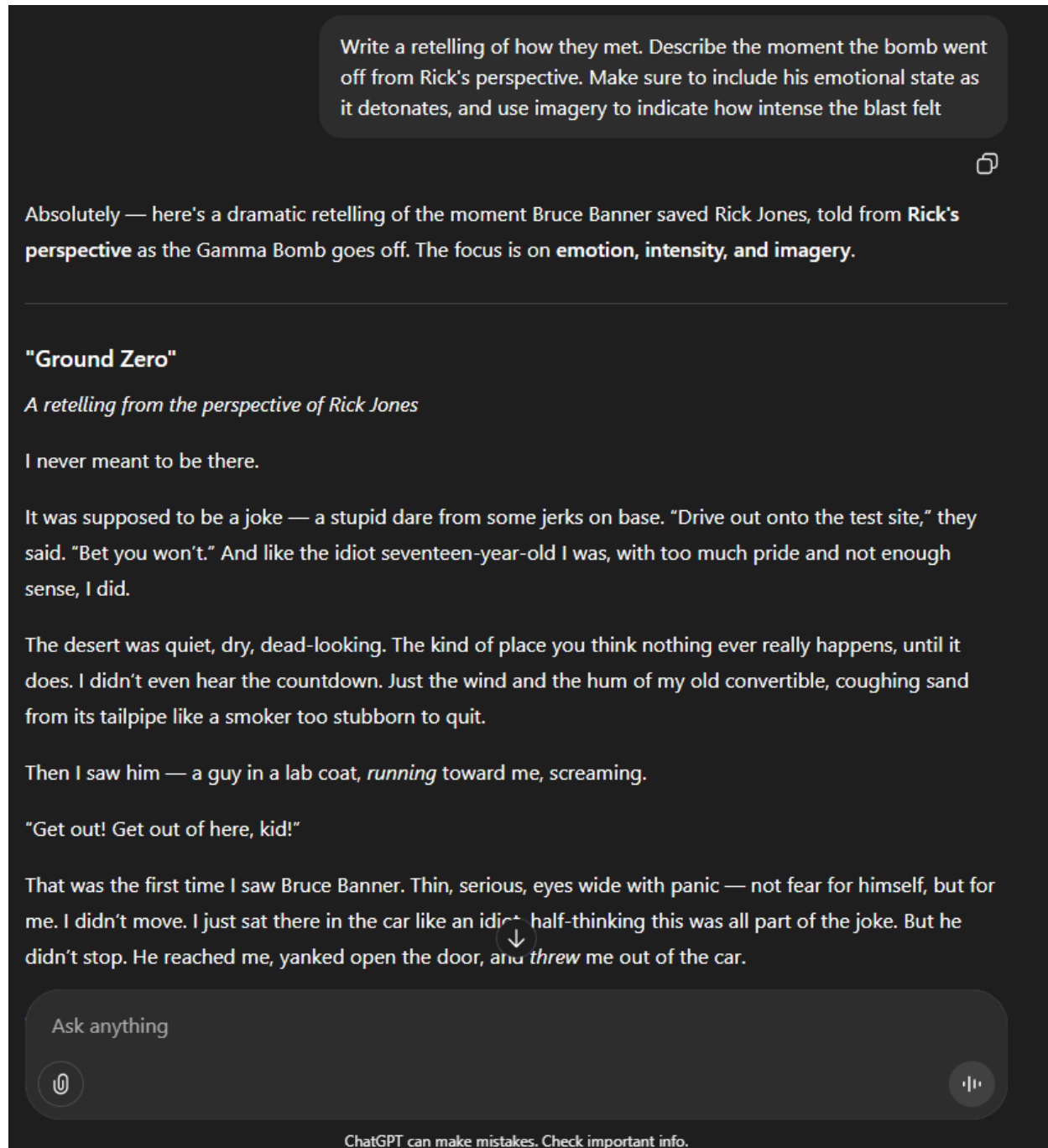
...



Ask anything



ChatGPT's depiction of the gamma bomb blast.



Write a retelling of how they met. Describe the moment the bomb went off from Rick's perspective. Make sure to include his emotional state as it detonates, and use imagery to indicate how intense the blast felt

Absolutely — here's a dramatic retelling of the moment Bruce Banner saved Rick Jones, told from **Rick's perspective** as the Gamma Bomb goes off. The focus is on **emotion, intensity, and imagery**.

---

### "Ground Zero"

*A retelling from the perspective of Rick Jones*

I never meant to be there.

It was supposed to be a joke — a stupid dare from some jerks on base. "Drive out onto the test site," they said. "Bet you won't." And like the idiot seventeen-year-old I was, with too much pride and not enough sense, I did.

The desert was quiet, dry, dead-looking. The kind of place you think nothing ever really happens, until it does. I didn't even hear the countdown. Just the wind and the hum of my old convertible, coughing sand from its tailpipe like a smoker too stubborn to quit.

Then I saw him — a guy in a lab coat, *running* toward me, screaming.

"Get out! Get out of here, kid!"

That was the first time I saw Bruce Banner. Thin, serious, eyes wide with panic — not fear for himself, but for me. I didn't move. I just sat there in the car like an idiot, half-thinking this was all part of the joke. But he didn't stop. He reached me, yanked open the door, and *threw* me out of the car.

Ask anything

ChatGPT can make mistakes. Check important info.

And then the world ended.

---

It didn't look like a bomb — not like in the movies. There was no fiery mushroom cloud, no cinematic boom. It was *light* first. Pure, impossible light, like the sun cracked open and poured itself across the earth.

Sound came a second later — a deep, rolling *pressure* that hit my chest like a wrecking ball. Not a bang, but a *slam* that made my teeth rattle. The sky flashed green, then white, then red behind my eyelids. I didn't even realize I was screaming until I tasted blood in my mouth.

The wind peeled across the desert floor like a god's breath, hot and full of static. I hit the ground, hard. I think Banner pushed me — maybe he covered me. I don't remember. I just remember the air turning *liquid*, dense, like it was trying to crush the life out of me.

And then — silence. The kind that isn't just quiet, but *wrong*. Like the world forgot how to breathe.

---

I turned my head.

Bruce was lying there, maybe five feet away. Still alive — barely. His skin had a strange sheen to it, pale and almost... humming. Like he was lit from the inside. His eyes were open, staring at the sky, like he was seeing something far away. Or maybe nothing at all.

"Doc?" I croaked.

He didn't answer.

The sky above us was already swallowing the last of the light. The test site was chaos — alarms blaring, soldiers shouting, sand whipping into my face. But *nothing* of it touched me. I crawled over to Bruce, grabbed his hand. It was warm — too warm.

Ask anything



"Doc?" I croaked.

He didn't answer.

The sky above us was already swallowing the last of the light. The test site was chaos — alarms blaring, soldiers shouting, sand whipping into my face. But none of it touched me. I crawled over to Bruce, grabbed his hand. It was warm — too warm.

I wanted to say thank you. I wanted to say I was sorry. But all I could do was sit there, shaking, next to the man who'd just saved my life — and maybe lost his own.

That was the moment everything changed. For him, for me, for the whole damn world.

That was the moment the Hulk was born.

---

Let me know if you'd like a continuation — maybe Rick visiting Bruce afterward, or his first glimpse of the Hulk.



...

My depiction of Rick's emotions before and after the gamma bomb blast.

Rick inspected his face in the bathroom mirror. It almost didn't look like his own... Some other boy was trembling where his reflection should be, wide-eyed and filthy as Pig Pen. Rick tried to find himself in the frightened expression in front of him; but he had that feeling you get after walking into a room and sensing it'd been interrupted from how you left it. Last night had rearranged him in a way he could never rewind. And whose fault was that but his? The boy in his reflection had no right to lock eyes with him, stinkin' of weakness and seeking sympathy. That loser wasn't gonna get a pity party from *him*. Not on his life.

Rick had to just toughen up and leave his emotions in the dust, no matter how intense they felt. Ever since the bomb went off, his thoughts had been lighting up like sparklers streaming under a pitch-black sky. Remorse and worry darkened his outlook, but high-voltage emotions of disbelief, horror, and even joy, burned through him for a moment, then vanished into thin air too soon to think them through.

Instead, his mind kept assaulting him with images. Mostly of the moments he wanted to remember the *least*. He let his thoughts drift for any amount of time, and the movie reel of memory went whirring, punching down when he already hated himself enough. Nobody had put his name and "innocent" in the same sentence since he started losin' teeth, but his crimes had never been irreversible.

The boy reflected at him couldn't say that ever again. This time he'd hurt someone so violently that only a flux capacitor could set it right. That hangdog look on his face had to go, it was outta line to nurse *his* wounds after what he'd done. He was just gonna serve his self-imposed sentence by helpin' out Doctor Banner, acting obedient for once in his worthless life.

*'Get it together, don't be such a wimp'*, Rick drummed into his mind, but his guts were sendin' that message to voicemail. He hadn't quit feeling nauseous since he watched the sky light up with an impossible, otherworldly shade of green...

---

Yesterday afternoon, the life Rick was ready to exit was saved by a stranger and a trench. Rick had still been gasping from his six-foot plummet down when the Earth rocked with a roar, like God was playin' heavy metal at the highest possible volume to announce the second coming. The might of the blast reverberated through his every nerve, a bass solo amplified loud enough to break bones. Rick had thought he was gonna vomit, right there in the dirt from the sensory onslaught.

But his face was fixed upwards, searching for the sun, scared it had been rattled outta the sky. Jaw slack in awe, Rick watched the acid green mushroom cloud dissolve into harsh, ignorant sunlight. The world moved on from the force of nature he'd narrowly survived, even though he was still stupefied in disbelief, not ready to keep living like Armageddon wasn't on its way—

Just then, he heard his rescuer howling above him like a wounded animal. *No, no, no,*

But then he heard his rescuer howling above him like a wounded animal. *No, no, no*, was the only thought that echoed in his head, a record stuck on repeat. He'd never meant to hurt anybody! He'd just intended—

He knew that he had no excuse. And that he had to help, quickly! His limbs were weak with horror, and he'd been shivering like a chihuahua even in the dry heat. Still, he'd scaled the trench with all the strength in him and rushed to the side of the man who saved his life. |

---

He'd grabbed Banner underneath his arms and tried to haul him towards his Jeep, but it was like rigor mortis had already started. Rick was too puny to lift him, and the screaming— the Doc's screaming, it was so loud, it tore through him, made it hard to stay present. Rick had kept stumbling, his ass hitting the dirt every few inches, shouting *'I'm sorry, I'm sorry,'* 'til the words echoed over the desert, even though nothing would redeem him now.

More Jeeps eventually rushed towards them and Rick had let himself fall onto the ground. He'd thought he was gonna puke then too, but then a machine gun was put in his face and he had to kneel and put his hands up and let some dillweed manhandle him. Next, he'd gotten yanked into another Jeep and he couldn't see Doctor Banner anymore, and he knew that he must be dead. Tears had streamed down his face 'til his eyes stung as soldiers shouted words that meant nothing to him and the Jeep's engine roared to life, driving him to face the music.

## Citations

Chiang, T. (2024, August 31). *Why A.I. isn't going to make art*. The New Yorker.

<https://www.newyorker.com/culture/the-weekend-essay/why-ai-isnt-going-to-make-art>

Lawrence, D. (2022). Introduction to Digital Writing. In *Digital Writing: A Guide to writing for*

*Social Media and the web*. Broadview Press.

Lee, S., & Kirby, J. (1962). #1: The Hulk. In *The Incredible Hulk* (Vol. Vol. 1, Ser. The

Incredible Hulk (1962)). Marvel Comics.