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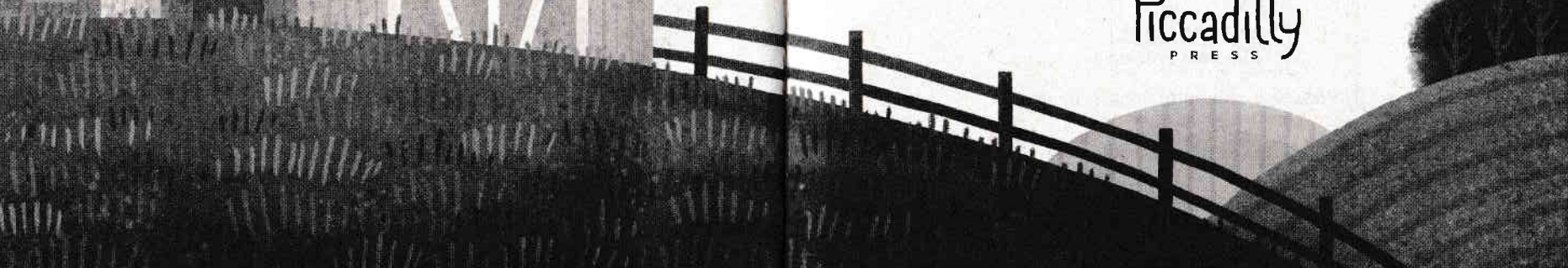
We know
books



THE WILD ROBOT ESCAPES

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Piccadilly
PRESS



CHAPTER I

THE CITY

Our story begins in a city, with buildings and streets and bridges and parks. Humans were strolling, automobiles were driving, airships were flying, robots were hard at work.

Weaving through the city streets was a delivery truck. The truck knew where to go, and how to get there, all by itself. It pulled up to a construction site and automatically unloaded some crates. A few more turns and it unloaded more crates down at the docks. The truck

zigged

and

zagged

across the city, delivering crates as it went, and then it merged onto a highway.

LRDIS

We know

Cars and buses and trucks were cruising along the highway together. But as the delivery truck continued, the traffic became lighter, the buildings became smaller, and the landscape became greener.

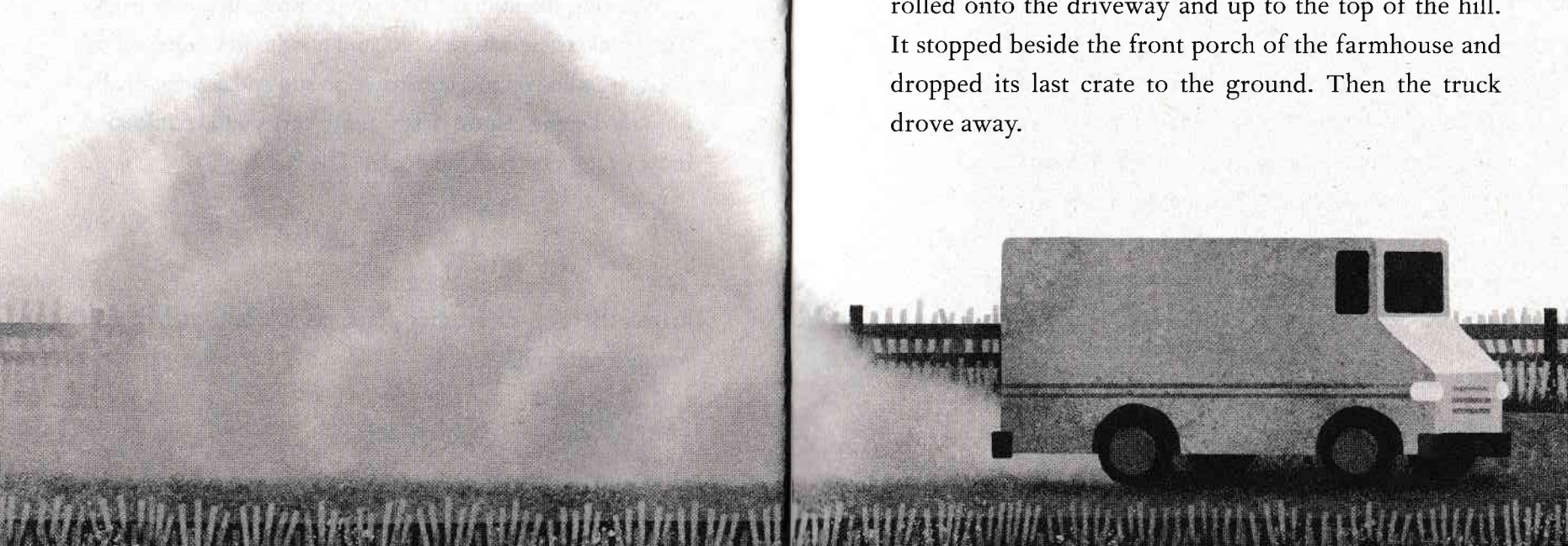
With nothing but open road ahead, the truck accelerated to its top speed. The landscape outside was now just a green blur, occasionally broken by a flicker of gray as a town flew past. On and on the delivery truck went, racing over long bridges, shooting through mountain tunnels, gliding down straight stretches of highway, until it started to slow. It drifted from the fast lane to the

exit lane, and then it rolled down a ramp and into farm country.

Clouds of dust billowed up behind the truck as it drove past fields and fences. In the hazy distance, enormous barns loomed above the plains. The air was thick with the smells of soil and livestock. Robot crews methodically worked the crops and fed the animals and operated the massive farm machines.

A hill gradually climbed into view. The hill was crowned with trees and white buildings. Another farm. But this one was smaller and shabbier than the rest. Out front was a crooked sign that read *Hilltop Farm*.

Wheels crunched on gravel as the delivery truck rolled onto the driveway and up to the top of the hill. It stopped beside the front porch of the farmhouse and dropped its last crate to the ground. Then the truck drove away.



Reader, can you guess what was tightly packed inside that crate? If you guessed a robot, you're correct. But this was no ordinary robot. It was ROZZUM unit 7134. You might remember her old life on a remote, wild island. Well, Roz's new life was just about to begin.

CHAPTER 2

THE CRATE

Woof! Woof! Woof!

Inside the farmhouse, a dog was barking and scraping at the front door. When the door finally opened, the dog scurried out and bounced down the porch steps. And then a man appeared.

The man walked with a limp, and slowly made his way down to the crate, where his dog was sniffing around. He unlatched the top of the crate and it swung open on its hinges. Packing foam was tossed aside, restraining cords were unfastened, and there was ROZZUM unit 7134. Her lifeless body sparkled in the late-day sun.

The man reached down and pressed an important little button on the back of the robot's head.

Click.

CHAPTER 3

THE ROBOT

The robot's computer brain booted up and her programs began coming online. Then she automatically stood, stepped out of her crate, and started to speak.

“Hello, I am ROZZUM unit 7134, but you may call me Roz. While my robotic systems are activating, I will tell you about myself.

“Once fully activated, I will be able to move and communicate and learn. Simply give me a task and I will complete it. Over time, I will find better ways of completing my tasks. I will become a better robot. When I am not needed, I will stay out of the way and keep myself in good working order.

“Thank you for your time.

“I am now fully activated.”



CHAPTER 4

THE FAMILY

“Welcome to Hilltop Farm, Roz. My name is Mr. Shareef. You belong to me now.”

Roz studied the man with her softly glowing eyes and in a robotic voice she said, “Hello, Mr. Shareef.”

“This old fella here is Oscar.” Mr. Shareef scratched his dog’s head. “You won’t see much of him. Oscar spends most of his time sleeping in the house.”

“Hello, Oscar,” said the robot.

A goofy grin stretched across the dog’s face and he let out a happy yelp.

Mr. Shareef pulled a small computer from his pocket. He tapped the screen and brought up a map of Hilltop Farm. “There you are, Roz,” he said as the robot’s electronic signal appeared on the map. “You’ll be working all

over this farm. And now that you’re in the system I can always see right where you are.”

“What would you like me to do?” said Roz.

“You can start by putting your crate in the garage over there. I’ll hold on to it, in case I ever have to send you back to the factory.”

Clearly, Roz was designed to take orders, because her body automatically did as it was told. She stuffed the packing materials into her crate and carried it into the garage.

When Roz returned, Mr. Shareef was watching a school bus winding along the country road. Oscar barked and dashed off as the bus came to a stop at the bottom of the driveway. A girl and a boy jumped out, and the bus drove on. In their matching school uniforms, the children looked almost identical. But the boy was a little taller, and the girl’s hair was a little longer. They meandered up the driveway and romped around with their dog until they noticed Roz.

“A robot!” said the girl, running up.

“It’s about time we got one,” said the boy.

“She’s refurbished,” said the man. “She’s the cheapest one I could find, but she’ll make a decent farmer.”