



## **UTATANE**

WRITTEN BY MARCO HOLDEN JEFFERY

I declare that in submitting all work for this assessment I have read, understood and agree to the content and expectations of the assessment declaration.

***Utatane***  
**Marco Holden Jeffery**  
**Synopsis**

In the not-so-distant future, the Musk Corporation, a successor to today's Tesla and SpaceX, has successfully created a supposedly self-sustaining off-world colony of almost 3,000 people. Its inhabitants, rather than being the mega-rich who want a new start or the poor and displaced who perhaps need a new start, are somewhere in the middle: the advertising executives, the teachers, the journalists, the public servants. Within a year they have formed a compact society of young couples and aspiring families in a well-resourced and highly-functional community, a bastion of mankind's achievements.

But what happens to a society of creatives, knowledge hoarders and bureaucrats without its janitors, plumbers and sanitation workers? What happens when a well-meaning community of middle-class people are supplanted somewhere without the support of the working class?

*Utatane* opens on George Albee, an advertising executive, and his wife Martha Taylor, an unemployed academic, two members of the colony who live in a state of perpetual squalor and boredom. Much like the rest of the colony, without the complexities and support of Earth's class-based economy George and Martha find themselves with little to do, little to drive them and a slowly deteriorating apartment and world around them. Their marriage is combative, but mainly because there's nothing driving it or either of them individually.

One lazy night spent bickering and forcing down a microwave meal, an unexpected visitor arrives at the couple's apartment. Jack is an all-purpose android sent to every household in the colony by the Musk Corporation to repair and maintain their deteriorating living spaces. To appear friendly and non-intrusive and connect with the colony's Australian residents, Jack has been programmed with a working-class Australian "ocker" personality.

Jack quickly disturbs George and Martha's stagnant lives with his vigorous housework, repairs and unrelentingly positive attitude, but the pair aren't driven enough to send him away. Martha becomes increasingly suspicious and uncomfortable with Jack's work ethic, physical strength and wide range of abilities, while George is simultaneously confused by his lack of desire to do anything but work. One night, the pair creep from their bedroom to find Jack mechanically watching "Russell Coight's All Aussie Adventures" (a feature of his programming designed to make him more relatable and human) and begin to genuinely fear his presence and ability.

After a phone call to his busy, Earth-stuck brother fails to convince him otherwise and an attempt to reach the Musk Corporation's colonial office in relation to Jack falls on deaf ears, George becomes convinced Jack means them ill, and the pair begin quietly resisting his efforts at maintaining them and their home; confused, this just makes Jack more determined. The couple, meeting in the privacy of their bedroom, make a plan of action to combat Jack when he, in their eyes, inevitably shows his true intentions. One night, a refusal of dinner climaxes into a confrontation, and the couple mercilessly kill/destroy a pleading Jack, who refuses to resist. The couple, having destroyed their physically superior subordinate, are drawn together in the knowledge that they've protected themselves from a perceived threat; in reality, George and Martha have unnecessarily destroyed a harmless android out of fear and paranoia of his abilities.

1 INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

A slick, modern kitchen of curved edges and pure white detailing has been neglected for several months, or at least its upkeep has been lazy and sporadic. A thin layer of dust collects in a corner beneath a cabinet. A slice of wall is dully stained. Plates, teacups and cutlery are stacked high in the sink, but a dishwasher remains untouched. A pipe running beneath the ceiling is damp and cracked. An unfinished meal sits on the kitchen bench, next to a stack of books, papers and knickknacks. A digital radio drones in the background, its source unseen.

MARTHA, late 20s, wearing a loose pastel sweater, sits slouched at the kitchen table, one hand holding a book open, the other holding a teacup inches from her face. The table itself is stacked with plates and a variety of papers. MARTHA's eyes, half-closed and disengaged, pass over the same sentence over and over again, her teacup eternally moments from her lips.

A door opens and closes. MARTHA glances sideways momentarily, before returning to her book. GEORGE, early 30s, wearing a beige sweater over a white shirt, enters the kitchen sluggishly, a leather briefcase dangling from one hand. He stops a foot away from the kitchen table and drops the suitcase. MARTHA doesn't react.

GEORGE  
(expressionless)  
We pitched to the local Panasonic  
executives today.

MARTHA does not look up from her book, finally taking a sip of tea.

GEORGE  
(cont'd)  
Blew them out of the water. They said it  
was the best creative they'd seen. (beat)  
Off world, of course.

MARTHA  
(by reflex)  
That's great, honey.

GEORGE observes MARTHA, her eyes never leaving the page. He moves towards the kitchen bench.

GEORGE  
What's for dinner?

MARTHA  
There's some chicken in the fridge.

GEORGE opens the fridge, and removes a plastic tub. On the lid is printed "Pan-roasted chicken with sweet potatoes and sauteed leek". He grimaces, and places the tub in the microwave, which

lights up and whirs to life. A tiny glimmer of interest and excitement comes across GEORGE's face as he turns to the seated MARTHA.

GEORGE

Basically it's this family, mum, dad, son, daughter, and they're in this beautiful old-fashioned kitchen, with a lovely wooden counter-top. They're all helping cook a meal, the dad chopping wild mushrooms, the mum stirring a pot, the kids making a salad. All smiling, working together.

MARTHA

(takes a long sip of tea)

Mm-hm.

GEORGE

And the narrator is talking about the importance of family, spending quality time with the people you love, how blessed we all are to have this opportunity, all that stuff, as the family put together this fantastic meal.

GEORGE strolls away from the microwave, and pauses before the overflowing sink.

GEORGE

Finally, the mum places a little dish in a Panasonic, and closes the door. We cut to the family sitting at the table, the mum serving everyone their meals. And then the line: "Panasonic: let your family flourish." And it reminds everyone that the reason we're up here is because of all these things, the microwave, telecommunications, solar energy. Without these things, would we be living these idyllic lives?

The microwave dings, and GEORGE's head darts up. He walks slowly to the microwave, the glimmer of excitement gone, and removes a steaming plate of chicken, sweet potato and leek, lavishly plated and garnished. He takes a fork from the sink and rinses it briefly, dries it on a towel and begins eating his dinner leaning on the bench.

MARTHA puts her book down momentarily.

MARTHA

So what's the point of the Panasonic?

GEORGE

(mouthful of food)

Excuse me?

GEORGE moves from the bench and sits adjacent to MARTHA, sideways in his chair.

MARTHA

If they're cooking this "beautiful",  
"rustic" meal, what's the point of a  
microwave? What authentic wild mushroom  
dish uses a microwave?

GEORGE

Well, uh, she could be melting some uh,  
(aggressively) What would you know  
anyway? All we do is eat this fucking  
packaged swill. And-and-and what's it  
you! The executives loved it, what have  
you been doing all day, Martha?

MARTHA

(sipping her tea)  
I've been reading.

GEORGE

For what?!

MARTHA

I don't know George, why does anyone  
read? To learn? What else am I supposed  
to be doing?

GEORGE

Y'know you could get a job right?

MARTHA

Oh sure, I can teach the three  
university-aged kids up here linguistics?  
What's the point, George? Just ...  
enough.

A digital pulse rings throughout the house, and the couple briefly look up. GEORGE walks toward the door, his dinner in one hand, and MARTHA returns to her book.

2 INT. HALLWAY - EVENING

The door opens. JACK stands in the doorway, grinning broadly, adjusting the top button of his faded blue flannel shirt with one hand and grasping a blue toolbox with the other.

GEORGE

(beat)  
Can I help you?

JACK

(enthusiastically)  
G'day Mr. Albee! My name's Jack, I'm a  
Class A-780 Maintenance Android, at your  
service, mate.

GEORGE

E-excuse me what? What are you doing here?

JACK

The Musk Corporation's assigned one of us fellas to help out every unit in the colony. Just keep everything shipshape, do the cleaning, make sure your plumbing and electronics are working.

The two stand in the doorway in silence for a moment, GEORGE confused and suspicious, JACK enduringly enthusiastic.

JACK

Can I come in, Mr. Albee?

GEORGE

Uh, yes yes, come in.

JACK strides purposefully past GEORGE who holds the door open. He stops momentarily to lock eyes with GEORGE, grinning.

JACK

Cheers, mate.

3 INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

JACK walks in, examining the apartment with apparent wonderment. MARTHA looks up from her book, and slowly lowers it in confusion.

JACK

(examining the pipes)

Lovely place you've got here, mate. Needs a bit of work, but -

JACK turns to the perplexed MARTHA.

JACK

Oh g'day, you must be Mrs. Albee. My name's Jack, I'm a Class A-780 Maintenance Android, at your service, ma'am.

JACK extends his hand toward MARTHA, grinning. MARTHA slowly puts down her tea cup and limply shakes his hand.

MARTHA

It's uh, it's Ms. Taylor actually.

JACK

Oh, pardon me Ms. Taylor! It's lovely to meet you, ma'am!

JACK turns back to examining the pipe, the mess of the kitchen, the sea of papers. He ducks his head down to get a closer look at the underside of the pipe.

JACK

Yep, definitely got some work to do here.  
Looks like the pressure's a bit loose on  
this tap here.

MARTHA

What are you... what are you doing in our  
kitchen?

GEORGE enters, his hands in his pockets.

GEORGE

He's from the Corporation, some android  
they sent to-

JACK

(interrupting)

Help you fellas on the colony out. Keep  
everything shipshape, do the cleaning,  
make sure your plumbing and electronics  
are working. Anything I can help with,  
mate!

GEORGE, the shock of JACK's arrival now passed, walks toward JACK  
and MARTHA purposefully, his hands still in his pockets.

GEORGE

Yes, but why? We didn't request anything  
from the Corporation.

JACK places his toolbox on the counter and opens it; from a  
selection of vaguely futuristic-looking tools, he removes a  
spanner and turns to GEORGE.

JACK

(sincerely)

It's just a sign of good faith from the  
top dogs. When they sent you fellas up  
here, it looks like there were a few jobs  
none of ya were trained to do. I'm happy  
to leave whenever you like, Mr. Albee,  
but...

JACK examines the mess, then laughs almost mechanically.

JACK

...it looks like you could use some help!

GEORGE eyes JACK suspiciously, then throws his hands up.

GEORGE

Alright, welcome. Where are y-

MARTHA

(interrupting)

George! We can't just-

GEORGE

(over the top of MARTHA)  
Martha, calm down. We'll just see how he goes. (turning to JACK) Where are you... where are you going to sleep? I mean, there's not much extra space in this place.

JACK  
(grinning)  
No worries, mate, I can just power down on the couch or in the corner when I'm done for the day.

The three all fall silence, MARTHA and GEORGE indignant but resigned, JACK still gleefully grasping the wrench.

GEORGE  
Alright, just uh, do whatever you have to do.

JACK nods and mock-salutes with his wrench.

JACK  
No worries, Mr. Albee, right away!

JACK turns his attention to the pipe. MARTHA eyes JACK for a few seconds before returning to her book, and GEORGE picks up his microwave dinner and continues eating it standing up. The previous relative silence, apart from the radio's dull drone, returns, punctuated intermittently by the clunks and strikes of JACK working on the piping.

4 INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

MARTHA emerges at the threshold of the kitchen, dressed in a pastel pink silk robe. In one hand she holds a thick, well-worn volume. She rubs the sleep from her eyes, yawning slightly, before pausing, as if interrupted. She lowers her hands from her eyes to see JACK, whistling "Eagle Rock", arms deep in the kitchen sink. The kitchen is spotless.

JACK turns to MARTHA, a neat apron over his scruffy flannel shirt. He pulls his hands from the scalding hot water, shaking them dry, grinning.

JACK  
Good morning ma'am! Can I whip ya up something for brekky? Eggs, toast, pancakes? Porridge?

MARTHA  
(half-asleep)  
Uhhhh, no thank you, I'm fine.

JACK  
(insistent)  
Really Martha, it's my function, no trouble.



MARTHA

No no, it's fine, I'm not that hungry.

JACK

No worries, Martha! I'll just finish up in here then.

JACK returns to his dishes. MARTHA slowly stalks over to the fridge, one eye on JACK. She removes a yogurt bar from the freezer and slowly begins unwrapping it, never taking her suspicious gaze off JACK.

She takes a bite of the soft bar. JACK looks up and catches her gaze. He grins and returns to work.

MARTHA lowers herself into her seat at the kitchen table, eyes still on JACK, still slowly eating the yogurt bar. JACK resumes whistling "Eagle Rock". Begrudgingly, MARTHA turns to her book.

5 INT. KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

MARTHA is reading a book with her headphones in, her head bobbing along slowly to the music. She looks up for a moment in response to some movement across the room; it is JACK, seemingly struggling with a wardrobe.

Curious, MARTHA puts down her book for a second. JACK seems to be straining, struggling with the object, fighting it until in one moment he lifts it above his head with one hand. Whistling, he walks it to the other side of the room. MARTHA recoils slightly at this sight of obscene strength, then hastily returns to her book.

6 INT. KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM - EVENING

MARTHA has moved to the couch to watch TV, behind which JACK remains in the kitchen, examining the dishwasher with his toolkit on the kitchen bench above. The door opens, and GEORGE enters, swinging his leather briefcase back and forth lazily, before dropping it on the floor.

JACK looks up, and removes himself from the dishwasher.

JACK

(excitedly)

Evening mate! How was your day?

GEORGE

It was, uh...

JACK stands up and grins at GEORGE.

JACK

Here, let me get that for you.

He retrieves GEORGE's briefcase from the floor and hangs it on the wall. He turns back to GEORGE, contemplating him for a moment, before mechanically clasping his hands together with a loud clap.

JACK

Now! Would you folks like something to eat?

MARTHA

(eyes remaining on TV)  
I told you Jack, I'm fine.

JACK

C'mon Martha, surely you could eat something?

GEORGE

Uh, that's alright, Jack, there's plenty in the fridge, we can make do.

JACK grins and nods, returning to the dishwasher, humming to himself. GEORGE makes his way towards the fridge, removing once again a plastic tub of "Pan-roasted chicken with sweet potatoes and sauteed leek". He places it once again in the microwave and rests himself on the kitchen bench, regarding JACK.

MARTHA

(loud whisper)  
George!

GEORGE looks up, and briefly makes eye contact with his wife, who has turned to face him. She hastily motions for him to come over. GEORGE looks at JACK, who is still arms deep in the dishwasher, then moves towards the couch.

GEORGE

(quietly)  
What is it?

MARTHA

(same loud whisper)  
All day he's been at it, cleaning, repairing shit, asking if I'm hungry. He hasn't taken a break once.

GEORGE

What, so what? I've been at work all day, I, I've been working all day.

MARTHA

Don't give me that bullshit George, I know you sit at your desk fucking around half the day. He hasn't stopped, and he hasn't stopped fucking whistling to himself either.

GEORGE

I mean, what do you expect? He's an android.

MARTHA

It's unsettling! He's always there,

"making himself busy".

GEORGE sighs, and looks back at JACK, still steadily working away. He slowly walks towards him, hands in his pockets.

GEORGE

Uh, Jack, you can uh, you can take a break or, or power off or whatever now.

JACK looks up, eternally beaming.

JACK

That's alright mate, I'm still working on this one here. Almost got her working again.

GEORGE

No seriously, take a break, I mean... what do you do when you're not working?

JACK

I mean, I'm never not working George! It's what I love to do, I'm a hard working bloke.

GEORGE

(insistent)

Seriously, do you take a break? Do you do anything in your spare time?

JACK's grin softens into a smile, and he laughs, almost nervously.

JACK

(quietly)

I'm an android Mr. Albee, if there's work to be done I'll be doing it. But I'm more than happy to... take some time off every now and then if you like.

GEORGE looks confused, but almost at himself for asking such questions to an android.

GEORGE

Uh, yeah, sure, whatever.

GEORGE rubs his forehead and walks back towards MARTHA, who gives him a "what the fuck?" look.

7 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

GEORGE lies beneath white bedsheets, asleep, breathing heavily. A crack of light shines through the door, illuminating the bedroom slightly; it brings with it a very, very soft sound of TV chatter.

MARTHA

(softly hissing)

George!

GEORGE wakes suddenly, and peeks up from the bedcovers. MARTHA stands in the doorway, frantically motioning for him to come with one hand, her other hand on her lips in a signal to be quiet. GEORGE sighs and rubs the sleep from his eyes, before quietly stalking from bed. MARTHA again motions for him to be quiet, and slowly leads him out of the bedroom and into the living room.

8 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

GEORGE and MARTHA slowly creep into the living room, hiding behind a wall at its entrance. MARTHA stops GEORGE from proceeding any further, and peeks her head around the corner. She comes back, motioning for him to follow suite.

In the living room, JACK sits motionless on the couch, his back to the couple. On the TV, an old episode of "Russell Coight's All Aussie Adventures". About every five seconds, as if by command, JACK lets out a loud, mechanical laugh. GEORGE and MARTHA stand at the room's threshold, just their heads peaking around the corner, frozen with shock and confusion.

Unbeknownst to them, JACK looks out of the corner of his eye, as if aware of their presence. He holds his gaze for a few seconds, laughing mechanically as the time dictates. Eventually, his gaze falls back on the TV.

GEORGE and MARTHA decide they've had enough. They both slowly back up into the bedroom.

9 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

The two crawl into bed, their eyes wide open, speechless. MARTHA puts her hand above the covers; GEORGE grasps it.