Physics 101
by Larry Strattner

"So what are you up to?" I asked him. His hair was sticking up every which-way. He looked as if he had taken a nap in a Cuisinart.

"I'm doing a lab experiment for my physics class." Smoke floated around; little cumulus clouds of burnt solder. The cellar smelled like an aroused muskrat.

"Physics? What's a geezer like you going to do with physics, unless maybe you haven't taken a crap in a week?"

"Not that physic you idiot. The kind moving molecules, atoms and text messages around. The kind making you irrelevant as games and apps alter the social fabric and render you unable to communicate." As he soldered a green wire the muskrat smell morphed into a slightly-squashed skunk odor. The iron made a zzzzt sound.

"I don't text or tweet or any of that bullshit," I said, smug in my moral superiority.

"I don't either, which you know full well," he replied, not lifting his eyes from the work. "That stuff is sophomoric, narcissistic, time wasting drivel. Who really cares on what side you part your pubic hair? More importantly, who has to know the answer right now?"

"My sentiments exactly. So why fuck with physics?"

"For the same reasons I find its current applications so abhorrent. The people utilizing the science don't have a clue. Physics is currently fueling a vast social change for the worse and the people applying its principles all have their head up their collective asses."

"Maybe. But why you? Most days you can't even remember the

reason you went from one room into another. Why should you give two shits about an iPhone app or the World of Warcraft?"

"Somebody with their feet on the ground better start paying attention or the whole place is going to turn into a drone warfare rock concert with a corn dog diet. I can only speak for me, so I'm trying to figure out physics. Maybe I can make a contribution to salvation."

"So you figure it out. Big deal. Then what? What contribution?"

"Simple. I use my physics and my three credit programming course to turn the drones on the game developers, smart phone people and software ying- yangs. Force people to start talking again. Maybe even pay attention to one another once in a while; watch the fucking road and not run their Escalades over Presbyterians."

"You mean pedestrians."

"Whatever."

"That's actually some pretty weird thinking."

"Yeah, well, it's a weird world."

"You are seriously unbalanced."

"Right. Have you played Thrixxx Kinect yet?"

"What?"

"I rest my case."

"You are the case," I said. "A certified head case."

"No I'm not," he said. "I'm just a physicist in training."