x=x+1
A simple statement- one that breaks the fundamental laws of mathematics. On its own, this expression destroys all that we’ve known. Multiplication, division, hypergeometric distributions all collapse at its presence.
0=1
No Euler, Ramanujan, or even Riemann can stand to look at such an equation, questioning the audacity of any individual who presents this axiom to them.
I sat on the office chair, spinning around, contemplating its meaning, only to later learn that it is an essential component of a ‘for loop’ which lets a compiler iterate through a list.
A once dumbstruck individual, I found that it *all* started to make sense to me. The confusion was replaced by a long sigh of relief. It was never wrong.
The idea that I can seemingly *break* the rules with code and can communicate thoughts, feelings, and emotion that know no bounds instilled a god-like impression in me.
For the years to come, the tingling sensation in my fingertips never ceased until I started typing away.

Honestly, I’ve always been a geeky science elitist, planning ahead and dumbing down everything to a mere ‘yes’ or a ‘no’.
I was introduced to computers at an early age. My visits to Mr. Bhushanji’s house usually resulted in scanning his computer for viruses and installing games for his grandchildren. I set up Skype accounts for my Mom, inserted my own *Nvidia GTX* graphics card into the GPU slot, and always had a shot at fixing the printer before Dad called *HP* tech support.
I introduced ‘Control + Z’ to a sad little boy who thought he “deleted” his PowerPoint presentation (I laughed a little).
I felt like a king.
But a time came when I was far from counting the number of entries in an *Excel* column or forming nested IF statements for an ICT assignment.
During summers, my web history was filled with Coursera, CodeCademy, and edX pages.
I learnt how to code, also spending twenty days at a SEAS summer course at the University of Pennsylvania to learn Python. I wrote in detail about Dijkstra’s iterative algorithm and adjacency matrices in my IB Mathematical Exploration on shortest paths in Graph Theory.
My journey had just begun.

Further research catalyzed my interest for algorithms in automation, and I found myself reading about the Autonomous Mobile Robots (CS 3758) course, one Sunday afternoon. A Google search took me to a video of a robotics research project, Baxter, in which I witnessed the capability of the artificial intelligence system Professor Ashutosh Saxena and his team created. Baxter responded to external stimuli in a way that no other robot had. Whether it is the pride of seeing Professor Saxena’s team working on Artifical Intelligence projects that I’ve only heard of in science fiction or the envy of not being able to be in its position, watching that one video taught me why I love doing what I want to do.

To me, the fact that the CS curriculum highly complements research in the Creative Machines lab is one reason why I want Cornell’s engineering department alone. The Robot Learning (CS 4758) course teaches robotic sense perception, and the fact that it is crosslisted with other departments in engineering will enable me to share technical expertise on autonomous projects in a team of MAE and ECE undergraduates. I personally know someone who has undertaken such a project. Specifically, Cornell’s curriculum also supports my aspirations to pursue a minor in Engineering Management (a course rarely offered at the undergraduate level), shouldering my technical plans with an expertise for necessary operations management and financial analyses.

On spending the next few years in the comfort of Cornell’s Ithaca campus, I will be ready to face challenges unique to those of today.
I will be reminded how x can *actually* be equal to x+1- how I can break the rules that govern today’s little world.