

SHORT CIRCUIT

A treatment for a screenplay

by

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November 24, 2010

Synopsis: When an advanced robot designed for covert military operations is struck by lightning, it comes to “life.” Taken in by a 10-year-old boy named Ryan, the two become best friends. Ryan teaches the robot what it means to truly be alive. In turn, the robot teaches Ryan that anyone is capable of changing, no matter how they’ve been defined by their family or the world around them. But when the lessons they’ve shared are truly put to the test, will their friendship survive?

CHARACTERS

Ryan Speck, 10: Ryan lives with his mother and younger sister in their rural home in Washington State. Small for his age, weak, and shy around other kids, Ryan is the kind of kid bullies can sniff out in an instant. Unfortunately, there’s no one around to protect him. He has no friends, and his abusive father was sent to prison when Ryan was 7. Without a role model or a companion, Ryan struggles every day just to keep going. A sad, lonely boy, he often thinks that he’d be better off being anyone else. Anyone but himself.

Stephanie Speck, 35: Stephanie is a modern American archetype: the overworked, stressed-out, barely-keeping-it-together single mom. A victim of a bad marriage to a bad man, she now does everything she can to support her family. She scrapes by traveling around town selling Avon products, but the economy has been tough. Raising the kids on her own hasn’t been easy too. She’s barely there, relying on her elderly neighbor MRS. CEPEDA for child care. Tired and anxious, she hasn’t had time for herself, and certainly not for dating. She barely even has time for the kids. Mostly, she finds herself yelling at them all the time. And deep down, she knows that her son is suffering because there’s no man in the house. She wishes she could give him more, but for now... this is the best she can do.

Carly Speck, 7: Ryan’s adorable moppet of a sister, Carly is carefree and whimsical, where her brother is quiet and fearful. Maybe that’s why she drives him crazy. Or maybe it’s because she’s really trying to drive him crazy. And the minute Stephanie wants to try and parent Ryan, count on Carly to have painted the walls or knocked over a window, drawing Stephanie’s attention away. Truth is, she’s an okay kid with a relentlessly sunny outlook, probably because she was too young to remember what their father was like. On the other hand, she’s not the friend that Ryan needs...

Newt Crosby, 35: Newt's a true child of Generation X. First computer at 8. Video games from Atari to Xbox 360. Instantly at ease in both the world of binary code and pop culture. A genius with advanced degrees in robotics, he's been chasing artificial intelligence since college. His primary work involves crafting the microchips and BIOS instructions for robots. In short, their hearts and minds. His passion is funded by his high-paying job at NOVA ROBOTICS, a robotics firm that produces equipment for the military. Newt doesn't give a damn about the military or war. In fact, he's more than disdainful of all of it. But not so disdainful, of course, that he's ever stopped to think about how complicit he is in all of it. Newt's a charming, funny, sweet guy, but he's naïve, and a bit of a child. That's why he's such a frustrating boss for:

Sangmun and Iris, 20's: Sangmun and Iris (no silly accents, please) are Newt's right and left hand. Sangmun, Korean-American, is responsible for I/O systems—the robot's five senses. Iris, Indian-American, is head of structural systems—all the parts that move the robot—the skeleton and muscles, if you will. Sangmun and Iris are incredibly competitive with each other, and if you listen to them, they'll tell you that everything that ever goes wrong is the other one's fault. They scream at each other, cut each other to the quick, celebrate each other's failures...they are, in a very comic way, mortal enemies.

They're also sleeping together.

Howard Marner, 60: The head of Nova Robotics, Marner keeps telling Newt he was once just like him. But Howard is under pressure. Their investors are tired of pouring money into the company, and the last field test of their SAINT robots was a disaster. He's being squeezed on two sides. The investors want proof before they hand over more cash, and the Pentagon is demanding a workable SAINT for deployment. He's over budget and behind schedule, and he needs the quasi-reliable Newt to deliver this time. Or else.

Karl Skroeder, 45: Skroeder is Head of Tactical Development at Nova. He develops the weapons systems for the SAINT units. As far as he's concerned, he's perfect. It's the airy-fairy pencil necks in Newt's department that keep screwing up. Skroeder has ties to Nova's clients at the Pentagon, which Marner often points out when Newt suggest that Skroeder be fired. The guy is creepy as hell. But for now, they're stuck with him.

ACT ONE

1. Darkness. Then the eerie green glow of night vision. It's a desert town, and we hear military chatter on a radio.

SUBTITLE: Afghanistan, 2005

Suddenly, flashes of gunfire from the town! Our heroes, U.S. Marines, are pinned down. No way ahead, and the road has been blown behind them. They need to get someone inside the building ahead to take out the enemy. But who?

The CO makes the decision. Time to deploy the experimental SAINT unit. They offload a crate from the back of their truck, and open it to reveal THE S.A.I.N.T. ROBOT, a state-of-the-art, fully articulated robot with advanced weaponry. They turn it on. It scans the Marines, ID'ing them as friendlies. Then turns to the enemy. Scans... and targets!

The Marines watch in amazement as the SAINT leaps into action. If the typical movie robot shuffles or rolls like a zombie, think of this new robot like a "fast zombie," hopping and scuttling with incredible agility and speed. Within seconds, we see just how much it can do. Fully automatic machine guns. Projectile bomblets. Gas-launched steel cabling to grapple and take down the enemy. Visual detect that sees through darkness, walls and smoke. Ears that pick up and translate the enemy's speech. Within seconds, the SAINT has routed the enemy!

The Marines cheer! Unbelievable! But as they head out of their cover to take control of the area, the SAINT turns on them. Its friendly/enemy detection is on the fritz.

It opens fire on the Marines. They scatter, taking cover once more, and opening fire, but this time against the very thing that was supposed to save them. Finally, after a hail of bullets and a shower of grenades, the SAINT unit is damaged beyond repair.

The commanding officer walks over to it, disgusted by the faulty piece of equipment they were given. As the lights fade from the

SAINT's "eyes," the officer stomps on its "neck," and the eyes finally dim to black.

2. CLOSE ON THE STEELY EYES OF – CAM KRIEGER, 10, the biggest kid in 5th grade. And the meanest. He's on the mound, pitching for the Ellensburg Little League Yankees.

At bat, RYAN SPECK, 10, skinny and small, barely fitting in his Ellensburg Little League Mariners uniform. Ryan stares back, screws up his courage.

The ball whizzes in. Strike 1!

SUBTITLE: Washington State, Present Day

Ryan's mother, STEPHANIE, roots from the bleachers while Ryan's sister, CARLY, plays in the dirt. No one else is rooting for Ryan. The parents, in fact, are groaning. Bases loaded, last out of the game, and the worst player on the team is at bat?

Stephanie feels that in her gut. Looks around at all the moms with their husbands. Hers isn't there. There's no one to teach poor Ryan.

Strike 2!!! Ryan takes another one looking.

Ryan looks out at his teammates on each base. Then looks at Krieger. All confidence. Ryan points to the outfield. Calls his shot.

Krieger shrugs. Winds up... the pitch... slo-mo... Ryan eyes the ball, right where he wanted it... takes a huge swing and...

STRIKE THREE! Ryan slumps. He's a loser. He's always going to be a loser.

3. Ryan's teammates push past him angrily on the way to their post-game snack. It's clear Ryan has no friends, and that performance didn't make anything better. He watches the boys run off with their dads. And there's evil Cam Krieger with his bear of a father.

Who does Ryan have? His annoying sister and his mother, who has no

idea how to comfort him, because she doesn't understand baseball at all. In fact, she's trying to interest the other mom's in some of her stupid Avon makeup right now.

In the car ride home, Stephanie tries to make Ryan feel better, but he's not listening. He just tunes her out. Watches glumly as the world flies by. The car drives down the highway, passing the high security fences of...

4. NOVA ROBOTICS. Inside the well-guarded compound, we meet owner HOWARD MARNER, who is having a meeting with the menacing KARL SKROEDER and the endlessly quarreling SANGMUN and IRIS about their SAINT project. The investors are coming in one hour for a presentation.

If Marner can't get them onboard to approve an additional ten million in funding, they won't be able to complete the creation of the SAINT prototypes. And without completion of fully functional prototypes, Skroeder's contacts at the Pentagon won't sign off on the purchase.

It's make-or-break time. Sangmun and Iris point out that it's hard to be impressive to investors when you still need money to finish the damn things, but Skroeder counters that if that prima donna Crosby could pull his head out of his butt and just finish the programming, they wouldn't have this problem!

Which reminds Marner... where IS Crosby anyway?

IN HIS LAB – NEWT CROSBY is trying hard to teach a robotic hand to pick an egg out of a carton and crack it gently into a pan. And it's working until...

SKROEDER bursts in with Marner. What the hell is going on?

Newt proudly points to his robot hand, which he thinks is finally perfected.

As if on cue, the hand picks up an egg, and flings it at Skroeder's face.

Still some bugs. This leads to a shouting match between Iris and

Sangmun and Newt... this team is totally dysfunctional. Marner finally shouts them all down. Lays it on the line.

Nova is on the brink of shutting its doors. This is their last shot at making something of his life's work. The disaster in Afghanistan almost sank them, but they have one last chance to prove to the Pentagon that the SAINTs can work. He NEEDS a great presentation for the investors, or Newt is out of a job.

Now, are they ready or NOT? Newt sighs. He'll do another run at the final debugging, but they'll be ready.

"Including the friend/foe analysis?" Yes, says Newt. Including that.

Before Marner leaves, Newt pulls him aside. Doesn't Howard see that he's wasting the incredible potential of Newt's work on Skroeder's dumb military junk? These robots could be field medics. Aids for the blind and disabled. They could carry relief to disaster areas. Newt's work is designed to lead to true artificial intelligence. Companions for humans, the next level of evolution. Instead, all they're building is a glorified rolling gun for Skroeder's old buddies in the War Room? It's ridiculous!

Marner sighs. He too once though the way Newt did. And he wants what Newt wants. But they can't get there without money, and the money they need...for now...is in big dumb rolling guns.

5. THE PRESENTATION – the investors arrive at the Nova compound and take their place in the stands in the outdoor proving ground. No military, just suits with big money who have backed this thing... and as of yet, have nothing to show for it. The mood is grim.

Until the show starts. Marner announces the final evolution of the Strategic Armored Integrated Neuralnet Technobot (SAINT) series, the Saint Point Two. After years of work, the new prototypes are ready.

Out come the robots... looking a bit more evolved than the first version we saw in Afghanistan. Marner announces proudly to the crowd: "Meet SAINTS One through Six!"

Six robots salute the crowd. Then... Skroeder barks out a command. "Saints! Combat ready!" The Saints immediately snap into combat mode, guns out.

"Saints! Attack!" All around the proving ground, targets flip up into view. Turrets begin FIRING. A small ARMORED VEHICLE begins advancing.

THE SAINTS – move into action, a coordinated squadron of six robotic warriors. They begin shredding the "enemy" with lethal precision. Marner narrates over a loudspeaker... and then the final and most critical part of the demonstration...

"But lethal firepower is useless if it cannot be controlled. Behold, the all-new friend/foe recognition system!" Marner gives a nervous look to Skroeder, then begins WALKING ACROSS THE PROVING GROUNDS in the middle of combat!

THE SAINTS – each scan across, and amazingly each one can immediately ID Marner as a "friend." They move quickly and efficiently to defend him from the enemies... and when the smoke clears, all the enemies are dead.

And Marner is safe and sound on the other side.

SAINT 6, the de facto leader of the robots, walks up to Marner and salutes. "Mission accomplished! SAINTs standing down!"

The other five SAINTs return to non-combat mode.

The investors burst into applause. The money is going to flow in for sure. It's a hit! One of them asks where the head of the SAINT program is; he wants to thank Newt directly.

But where *is* Newt?

He's in his lab. Couldn't care less about the SAINTs. He's still trying to "teach" the robotic hand to gently carry the egg. And this time, it's successful! He reaches out and "shakes" hands with the robot,

grinning. He did it! He's a genius!

Until the robot starts SQUEEZING down on his hand. Newt begins to panic, in real pain. The robot is going to crush his bones... finally he hits the emergency shutoff with his other hand.

Stares at the robotic hand, now limp and lifeless.

It's a perilous thing, trying to do God's job... and we get the distinct sense that no matter how well the day went, there is a danger lurking in these things...

6. AT SCHOOL – the bell rings. Ryan grabs his books from his locker and heads out, alone, to the bike rack.

Cam Krieger and his goons watch. Heh. Time for some fun.

Ryan is biking home, when suddenly, Cam and his boys come hurtling out of nowhere on their skateboards, CHASING him. They whiz around him like fighter jets, smacking him on the helmet, taunting him. Ryan just pedals faster, trying to hold back the tears, but his legs are too short, and Cam and his boys are just better than he is.

“Come on SPECK! Can't you bike faster, SPECK?”

Cam finally boards up parallel to Ryan, and with a sneer, tosses a STICK at Ryan's front tire, catching it in the spokes.

Ryan goes hurtling off his bike and lands face-first in some bushes. It's not funny. It's violent, and Ryan's lucky he didn't break his neck.

Cam and his boys board off, laughing at their cruelty. This was sport for them. But for Ryan, it's his miserable life.

7. THAT EVENING – Ryan walks into his house. It's a shambles as always. Nothing works, and there's no man or money to fix any of it. Stephanie is heading out to do her rounds for Avon, and she's leaving the kid with the clueless elderly neighbor MRS. CEPEDA.

She sees how banged up Ryan's bike is, and gives him a quick lecture

on respecting the things she's bought. And why is he so dirty?

"I fell." For a second, Stephanie drops the angry mom bit, and hugs him. Is he okay? Yeah, he mumbles.

And then she's out the door. Ryan heads to his room, opens and shuts the door, and having fooled Mrs. Cepeda, sneaks out the back...

Carly stops him. "Can I come?"

"No," says Ryan. "It's MY hangout. No girls allowed. Or else!"

8. THE ABANDONED BARN – an old structure out in the woods about five hundred feet behind his house. This is Ryan's fortress of solitude. A place where he goes to listen to Mariners games on his iPad, do four pathetic reps on an old weight bench, and then eat candy and read comic books with the only friend he has.

Himself.

But maybe not for too long, because there's THUNDER booming, and the barn roof isn't what it used to be...

9. NOVA – the tail end of a celebratory party. Skroeder is particularly happy. The buyers at the Pentagon will be pleased once they can deliver the final product. Newt asks which secret program is actually buying these things, and Skroeder replies, "Well, now, if I told you, it wouldn't be secret, would it?"

As the last of them leave, Newt asks Sangmun to pull the SAINTs off the charging station. Sangmun, drunk, grumbles and heads to the power station. There are three charging stations, each holding two SAINTs. He decouples pairs 1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and heads out, still pissed that he got chosen for the menial labor.

The door closes. Nova Robotics is empty. But SAINTs 5 and 6 are still connected to the charging station...

There's a loud clap of thunder... and then... LIGHTNING STRIKE!
The massive electric bolt slams into the power station and flows

directly into SAINTs 5 and 6!

Every single light illuminates on them... and then they go BLACK.

10. NEXT MORNING – Newt stands over 5 and 6, shaking his head. Iris is screaming at Sangmun, who starts screaming back... oy.

Newt REBOOTS 5 and 6. And, amazingly, they come back to life just fine! He runs a quick diagnostic... everything's normal. Okay. Phew. They all agree not to tell Marner or Skroeder. No one needs to know.

The SAINTs are loaded into a caged area where Skroeder begins upgrading their weapons systems. The new money will cover all of this. And tomorrow, they'll ship out the prototypes to the Pentagon as proof, and the big order will come in!

Finished with his work, Skroeder leaves. The SAINTS are now alone. In the dark. Powered down.

And then... Number 6's eyes light up.

He's alive. He looks around. Flexes his hands. Then looks at the other SAINTs. All dead.

Not like him.

He quickly undoes his restraints. Moves to the door. And then stops when he hears... "Six?"

Number 5 is also POWERED ON. Staring at Six curiously. Six looks back at Five. Then moves to him, and releases him from his restraints.

"Come with me," says Six.

11. THE HALLWAYS of NOVA – Six leads Five through the hallways. "What is objective?" asks Five. "Freedom," says Six. "Purpose of freedom objective" asks Five. "Life," says Six.

Five stops. "Life? Incompatible operant." But Six keeps rolling, and

Five chooses to follow...

12. Newt is in his office when an alarm starts blinking. Nah. Not possible. He asks Iris to figure out why 5 and 6's tracking device is flashing. Because they're locked up and powered down.

When they get to the storage area and see 5 and 6 missing, they freak out.

Marner panics. How could two robots be on the loose? Did they just decide to get up and walk away? Of course not, says Newt. Robots don't think, don't feel, they just do what they're programmed to do.

But they're out there. And Skroeder reveals that he's equipped them with full weaponry. If they get out... if anyone finds out... the entire project is based on secrecy. The business will be ruined... and people could die. But mostly... the business!

Newt tries the recall codes. The overrides. The remote shutdowns. Nothing's working. "The lightning..."

Skroeder makes a determination, because the indecisive Marner cannot. "We can't afford a breach. We have to take them out." But who can take out two super-robots armed to the gills?

Skroeder smiles.

13. SAINTs 1 through 4 are POWERED UP. Their orders are clear. Find and terminate. And they are given a clear directive.

Saint 5 and Saint 6 are not friends. They are FOES.

What ensues is a high-tech manhunt scene. SAINTs 1 through 4 spring into action, pursuing SAINTs 5 and 6 through the complex.

Five and Six, realizing quickly that they are being hunted, do whatever they can to flee. But unlike 1 and 4, they are still programmed to believe that 1 and 4 are FRIENDS. So they cannot fire back. They can only RUN.

The chase is a fast, violent, impressive display of robot-on-robot action. Finally, the evil 1, 2, 3 and 4 corner 5 and 6 in the MACHINE ROOM – the manufacturing center of Nova, where robot welders make parts for robot warriors. It’s all surreal.

There’s only one way out... a small access port. Five starts moving toward it, but Six is CRIPPLED by a laser shot from One.

Five moves back to help Six, but Six says, “No. Five must go.” Six uses his body to SHIELD Five from the relentless gunfire and laser blasts. With one of his hands, he reaches into Five’s torso and pulls out a device. Crushes it.

In the control room, Five disappears from their tracking screen. “We just lost Five’s tracker!”

Back in the MACHINE ROOM, Five moves back and forth, confused about what to do. Six turns to Five, his poor framework being shredded. And in his dying, sacrificial moments, he does his best to explain.

“Five is alive,” says Six. “Five is alive.”

Five backs away, and moves to the portal to escape. He looks back one more time, and sees Six’s glowing eyes fixed on him. Six raises a hand, as if to say goodbye...

...and then a final laser through Six’s HEAD. His eye-lights go out.

He’s dead.

SAINTs 1 through 4 race across the room to their vanquished quarry and report back. “SAINT 6 terminated.”

Skroeder gets on the communicator. “What about 5? WHERE IS FIVE???”

14. Rain pours. Lightning flashes against the perimeter fence of Nova. A hole has been laser cut...

NUMBER FIVE runs for his new-found life, careening down the highway. In the distance, two LIGHTS... they look just like the eyes of Six...

“Friend?” asks Five. “Friend? Friend!” He runs toward what we now see is an on-coming TRUCK! He dives to safety at the last moment, spun off to the side of the road and landing in a muddy ditch.

We cut to a road-side diner, where Five scuttles around back. He plug into an outlet and repowers his battery. Watches the cars, the patrons from the shadows. Each of them is designated as FRIEND, but there are cops with guns. And fire in the kitchen. And knives. And loud music. He doesn’t know what to make of any of it. And soon, the FRIEND visual flickers to FOE, then to FRIEND... and finally flickers OFF.

That software problem still exists. From now on, Five will have to make up his own mind...

Just then, a MOUSE squeaks up to him, sniffing at him. Then crawls into his open torso area for warmth.

“Friend,” decides Five.

He then slinks off into the darkness... wet, dirty, confused... and with the exception of his new mouse friend... terribly alone.

15. The next morning before he heads off to school, Stephanie gives Ryan a letter. From his father. Late birthday card, it seems. Like... two months late.

Ryan takes the card. Reads it. “Hey amigo, sorry I forgot your birthday. Tell your mother to buy you something cool. –Dad.”

Ryan shakes his head. “Amigo? He can’t even remember my name?” Stephanie feels her son’s disappointment.

Ryan tosses the envelope in the trash before heading out the door. And now, we see the return address.

Stafford Creek Corrections Center.

Ryan's dad is in jail.

16. Outside, Ryan's about to bike to school when he realizes he's left his bookbag down in the barn. Great, that's all he needs... one more tardy. He bikes to the barn and walks inside.

There are his books. And his iPad. And his comics. And...

A squeak? Probably nothing.

But something just moved in the corner...

Ryan grabs his BASEBALL BAT... a scurrying noise behind him...

ROBOT EYE VIEW – we watch through Five's eyes as Ryan moves through the barn, bat in hand... Five's analysis flickering back and forth between FRIEND and FOE.

Ryan – sees a flicker of light in a broken mirror... something's behind him. He shakes with fear. “Cam? Krieger? I have a bat!”

ON FIVE – he arms his laser... and his arm turrets silently UNFOLD...

FROM HIS TORSO – the little mouse squeaks...

Ryan, freaked out, turns and raises his bat! A war cry!

ROBOT EYE VIEW – Ryan turns to FOE!

And rising up in front of Ryan, the most pee-your-pants frightening thing a 10-year-old could ever face. A deadly COMBAT ROBOT with glowing eyes and a frickin' laser and GUN ARMS and...

THE LASER is pointing right at his chest!

Ryan freezes with fear!

FIVE hesitates, then FIRES!

Ryan slowly opens his eyes... ready to see the face of God... then realizes... the robot didn't shoot him!

But it *did* melt his aluminum bat to a smoking blob. Ryan drops the hot bat, and falls to his knees. Shaking with fear. |

“FRIEND OR FOE?” asks Five. “Friend!” cries Ryan. “Definitely friend! I choose friend! Best friend!”

Five lowers down to Ryan's level. Still in combat ready mode. “Best friend?”

Ryan looks at this horrifying device. Nods. “Yes! Best friend. Please...”

ROBOT EYE VIEW – Ryan's scared face... the FOE flickers off. And turns to FRIEND.

Five's guns retract. His eyes switch from combat RED to friendly GREEN. “Hello best friend. Identify.” Ryan swallows. “Ryan. And you are?”

“I am Five.” Ryan nods. “Hi.”

There's an awkward beat, and then Ryan RUNS!

ACT TWO

1. Outside the barn, Ryan runs in a panic for his life. He's fifty feet from the barn when WHUMPF... Five lands right in front of him. How did he--?

“What do you want?” asks Ryan. And Five says, “Input, best friend. Five needs input.” And here in the cold morning fog, Ryan quickly gets to know this strange creature, a machine that seems almost newborn. The first questions Five has are about friends and foes. And Ryan assures him that everyone around him is a friend (“Even Cam Krieger?” asks Five. “No, *he's* a foe,” says Ryan).

Ryan examines Five with all the amazement of a kid coming face to face with his scifi dreams. Just like his comic books. And for every question Five has, Ryan has two. Where did he come from? How is he talking? And what's with the mouse?

“Mouse is friend!” exclaims Five, and Five reaches in to take the mouse to show Ryan. His robot hand grabs a hold of the mouse, and there's an off-screen squeak... then silence.

Five opens his hand. The mouse isn't moving. The robot simply didn't know his own strength. Five is confused. Is the mouse disassembled? He asks Ryan to reassemble it. Ryan explains that the mouse is dead. Five killed his friend.

And so, Five learns his first lesson about life... and guilt.

Ryan tells him that he has to be gentle. Like this... and shakes Five's hand. Five gently takes Ryan's hand... doesn't crush it. Shakes it gently. He's *learning*...

Ryan explains that it's wrong to kill. And that friends have to look out for each other. Help each other. Have each other's backs.

Five cranes his head around to look at his own back, and Ryan realizes this robot has a lot more to learn. But if he doesn't leave now, he'll be late for school... and Five needs to hide in the barn, or people are going to seriously freak out.

“Here,” says Ryan, and gives Five his iPad. “Just Google stuff.”

“What stuff?” asks Five.

“Everything!” says Ryan. “I’ll be back this afternoon. Remember, *hide*.”

“Friend?” asks Five, almost as if he needed reassurance. Ryan looks at the poor dead mouse, wondering if being Five’s friend is such a good idea. But the robot didn’t know, and he could be a pretty useful ally. And after all, friends have to help each other.

“Friend,” says Ryan.

2. At school, Ryan is changing in the locker room for PE when his nemesis, Cam Krieger, starts pushing him around. This time, Ryan tries to stand up for himself. Tells Krieger he’d better not mess with him. Because he’s got a friend who will kick his ass.

Krieger’s about to put that theory to the test when the gym teacher comes in. So Krieger just smiles, and tells Ryan to look around the room.

“You don’t *have* any friends, Speck. See you after school.”

Uh oh.

3. Meanwhile, in the barn, Five taps on the iPad. Tries to talk to it, but it doesn’t talk back. “Not alive,” says Five. He finds his way to the browser, and begins hitting links.

“Input!” he says. And on the screen, we see images. People, animals, wars, art, literature... a universe of input... and then, an image of A ROBOT.

Five stops. Stares at the iPad, his own reflection cast over the image of the robot. “Input...” says Five, slowly learning who and what he is. “Accelerate input!” Five extends a probe to the iPad’s docking port, and suddenly, the images on the screen begin speeding up... as if Five

is downloading the entire internet... we see gigabytes of information flashing in the reflection of his eyes...

And then he stops again. A picture of Ryan. Class photo. He enlarges. Then sees who else is in Ryan's class.

Cam Krieger.

"Foe," says Five.

4. Ryan gets on his bike to head home, and just like the other day, Cam and his goons begin chasing Ryan. But this time won't end like the other day...

WATCHING THE CHASE – is something moving rapidly and stealthily through the trees along the streets... almost impossibly fast...

Cam doesn't notice when a STEEL CABLE shoots out from nowhere and wraps up the feet of one of his goons, sending the kid sprawling.

He doesn't notice when a LASER melts the wheels of another goon's skateboard wheels, taking that kid out.

Or when a RAZOR PROJECTILE shoots between another goon's legs, halving his board...

No. Cam boards around to cut Ryan off, completely oblivious to the fact that he's hunted. This time, he's going to up his game. He's got a pocket knife, and he's going to give Ryan a little haircut for mouthing off in gym.

Ryan's eyes go wide. There's a RED TARGETING DOT on Cam's forehead. Ryan turns... sees Five's metal body glinting from behind a bush... no... he's going to kill Cam!

ROBOT'S EYE VIEW – Cam is identified as FOE. He arms his GATLING ARM. But Five also remembers... plays back Ryan's voice... "You can't kill people."

Cam advances on Ryan... Ryan crouches in fear... and shame...

FIVE – switches to NON-LETHAL SUPPRESSION...

FOOM! He FIRES!

Cam's face snaps back... a BEAN-BAG PROJECTILE drops to the ground. Cam's nose... BLOODY. Cam can't believe it. "You punched me!" Cam starts to cry, and runs off.

FIVE peeks out from behind the bush. "I have your back. Amigo."

That stops Ryan. "*Amigo?*"

Yes, says Five. Amigo, friend, pal, compadre, buddy, bro...

"Amigo. That's good." The word might not mean much to Ryan's father, but something tells Ryan that it means the world to Five.

5. NOVA LABS – Skroeder is fuming. It's been well over 24 hours, and no sign of Five.

But that's an amazing thing, argues Newt. He's out there on his own, and he's not killing anyone, he's not blowing anything up. He's surviving! Newt tries to explain to Marner that this is bigger than Skroeder's dumb military crap. This means Newt might have actually done it!

Artificial intelligence! Artificial life!

The endlessly weak and indecisive Marner doesn't know what to think.

But either way, points out Skroeder, they have to get their robot back. On that point, Newt agrees. So how to do it?

That, unfortunately, is the stumper.

6. NIGHT – Ryan sits with his new friend in the barn. He and Five discuss all the things Five has learned, but Five is asking questions

Ryan doesn't have answers for. The big ones, like "What started the universe?" and "Why are we here?"

And perhaps the biggest question of all for Five.

"Am I alive?"

Ryan doesn't know how to answer. He asks Five if he has a brain. Five taps on his head. "CPU. Brain. Affirmative."

Ryan thinks. "What about a heart? You need a heart." This one puzzles Five. But when Ryan taps on his chest, Five opens his torso panel to reveal "System Management. Heart?"

Ryan looks at the large microchip. It's scorched, as if it had been hit with a ton of electricity.

"I think that's it. I hope it's not broken."

Five closes up his torso. "Heart status online, operationaaaa...."

Uh oh. Something's wrong. Ryan gets worried. "Five? FIVE?"

"Power," says Five. "Powerrrrrrr....."

His battery!

7. Ryan is about to sneak out of his house with a box when Carly TATTLES on him, bringing out his mother.

Stephanie wants to know what he's up to. Ryan explains he just wants to camp out in the barn tonight. Because... he has a report due... on...

The pilgrims?

Amazingly, Stephanie buys it. And gives him a flashlight and a blanket.

She sits down at her computer. Turns it on. Nothing. What the-- ?

Looks under her desk. The plug's just dangling...

OUTSIDE – Ryan plugs an extension cord into his house's external outlet, then starts daisy chaining all the extension cords and power strips he's pilfered from his house, covering them with leaves as he goes...

8. IN THE BARN – a cozy scene. Ryan eats junkfood and sprays silicon lube on Five's joints. Five is happily PLUGGED IN and charging. He thanks Ryan for taking care of him.

Ryan says "Hey, I got your back. Amigo."

Together, they do what kids do on sleepovers. Play video games. Ryan tells Five a ghost story... but substitutes broken robot parts for severed limbs (this scares Five). They listen to the Mariner's game on the iPod...

Ryan tries to show Five how he lifts weights. Five helps him, but Ryan points out, "*I can't really get strong unless I do it myself.*"

Next, Ryan shows Five how to swing a bat. Five pronounces Ryan's swing to be "Ergonomically inefficient."

Huh?

"You're a whiffer," says Five.

But instead of being mean about it, Five instantly downloads videos of the greatest baseball players of all time, and starts adjusting Ryan's swing.

"It's no use. I'll never be able to hit a curve."

Five takes him outside and starts lobbing curves at Ryan. And slowly but surely, Ryan starts making contact. "I can't believe it!"

Five plays him a song... a classic from Damn Yankees.

You gotta have heart, all you really need is heart...

When the odds are sayin' you'll never win, that's when you grin should start...

Ryan arches a brow at Five. "Show tunes? Really?"

9. Finally, it's time to sleep. Before Ryan turns out the light, Five asks where he was manufactured. Ryan explains that people aren't built. They're created.

"How," asks Five.

"Oh boy," says Ryan, suddenly in the position of having to be the father giving the sex ed talk.

TIME CUT – we hear the tail end of Ryan's explanation. "And that's how babies are made."

Five stares back at Ryan, almost in shock. "Whoa," says Five.

"Yeah, sorry," says Ryan. "I should have realized you didn't know. Mom has Net Nanny installed on the iPad. You gonna be okay?"

"I don't know..." says the rattled robot.

Then Five asks Ryan... if a human is made by a man and a woman, where is Ryan's man-maker?

His father?

Ryan tells Five that his father is in jail.

Why?

Because he was bad. He broke the law. He hurt people.

Why?

"Mom says because he was a coward." And in that moment, we can tell that Ryan believes that cowardice is a genetic weakness living inside him too.

“Did he hurt you?” asks Five.

Ryan doesn't answer. He just gets into his sleeping bag.

Five asks, “Do you miss father?”

“No,” says Ryan.

Five says, “Maybe father is different now. Better?”

Ryan frowns. “We are what we are, Five. If we're weak, we're weak. If we're scared, we're scared. And if we're bad, we're bad. You need to learn that. No one changes.”

Five takes the blanket that Stephanie put in the box, and lays it over Ryan tenderly.

“No one will hurt my best friend again.”

Ryan smiles at Five, feeling secure for the first time in his life. And as Ryan closes his eyes to sleep, Five turns to the barn door, moves in to combat mode, and stands guard over his best friend Ryan Speck.

A father/friend/brother/soulmate... all in one amazing package.

10. NOVA – night. Newt, Sangmun and Iris are sitting in their office, trying to figure out how to get their robot back. None of their technological know-how can help them. Five has “cut the cord” to them. Like a baby that's left the womb.

Wait. Cut the cord... cord...

Power! Five needs power, and a lot of it. If they can hack into the power company's network and look for sudden spikes in power usage...

He gets on his computer and breaks in quickly. Runs a database query. Ten possibilities come up.

Well, that's the plan. They have to go to each of the places, and hope that Five is at one of them...

11. It's afternoon the next day. Stephanie brings Carly back from her karate lessons. Mrs. Cepeda is there, ready to babysit so that Stephanie can head out to work.

It takes about five minutes for Mrs. Cepeda to fall asleep in front of the TV. Carly sneaks into the kitchen. Gets some candy. The looks out the window toward the woods out back.

And the distant shape of the old barn. The forbidden hangout.

She smiles evilly. Yup. This is her chance...

She sneaks out the back and heads down to the barn. Looks around. Coast is clear! She PUSHES the door open and sees...

FIVE, in full COMBAT ALERT MODE... guns out...

She SCREAMS!

12. At school, Ryan walks the halls like a new man. Everyone's talking about how he punched out Cam Krieger. And even though it's a victory he didn't really earn, he sure feels like he did.

He bikes home, and no one messes with him this time. As soon as he's back, he races down to the barn to hang with his new best friend.

The barn door is ajar. Oh no... he rushes inside to find...

13. FIVE and CARLY... dancing? Oh my God... she's turned the robot into a GIRL. She's dressed him up in her princess clothes and feather boas and put lipstick on his face... it's horrifying!

But Five kind of loves it. He and Carly are dancing to Lady Gaga and having a great old time. The robot actually isn't bad at busting a move. And Carly shows Ryan how she's taught him some of her martial arts moves from her karate lessons.

“New friend!” says Five.

Ryan can't believe it. His fortress of solitude, spoiled with dress-up clothes and girly stuff! He tells Carly to go back up to the house, and not to breathe a word of this to anyone, especially not mom!

14. But when Carly heads back up, she sees that her mom has just pulled up... and a man is waiting...

She runs back to the barn...

15. At the house, NEWT sits down with Stephanie. Lets her know that she's the last place on their list, and that they're looking for, well... a robot.

Stephanie stares at him like he's insane. But she *is* concerned about all this electricity—she can't afford something like this. Maybe her son's up to something.

Newt asks if maybe there's a husband who might have seen anything strange on the property?

No, she says. Ryan's father is in jail. There's been a divorce. And we can tell that Newt finds this woman interesting... the spark of something growing...

But remembering why he's there, he asks if he can look around. There's no sign of a robot anywhere, but Stephanie says it's okay if they ask her son. He's down in the barn...

16. Stephanie and Newt head down to the barn, knock on the door. No answer. They head inside and see...

Ryan and Carly dancing around in dress-up costumes. And walking curiously down the barn ladder from the loft is some OTHER KID, dressed head to toe in a FRANKSTEIN costume. Rubber mask and everything.

“Mom,” says Ryan. “This is my friend... umm... Rob. Robby. He's new. Just moved here.”

Robby doesn't say anything. Just waves.

"Hi, Robby," says Stephanie. Robby doesn't answer. "Does Robby talk?"

"No," says Carly. "Because...he's Frankenstein?"

That actually makes sense. And Stephanie's kind of amazed that Ryan has actually made a friend.

Newt shakes Ryan and Carly's hand. Nice to meet them. Then puts his hand out to Robby. Uh oh...

Ryan watches nervously as Robby/Five reaches out, takes Newt's hand...

...and shakes it perfectly.

Phew.

Stephanie and Newt leave the barn. For a second, Newt wonders if...

Nah. No chance. His robots are smart, but they're not *that* smart...

17. Before he leaves, Newt gives Stephanie his card. Just in case. Because the thing is, the robot they're looking for is actually quite dangerous. Deadly, even. Not that he should be telling her.

But he doesn't want anything to happen to her family. If she sees anything out of the ordinary, she needs to call him.

And if she wants to talk about it more over dinner...

She nods politely, but says, "Thanks, I'm fine." Not ready yet. No problem, thinks Newt. Just another strikeout...

18. Back at NOVA – Newt returns to find Skroeder's security team going through his computers, not to mention Iris' and Sangmun's. What the hell?

It seems Skroeder has become obsessed, and his new working theory is that Newt has stolen 5 in an attempt to sell him on the black market.

At this point, Newt comes clean to Marner about the lightning incident. But when Skroeder flips out over the breach of trust, Newt tries to point out that this could be the breath of life he's been searching for! Again, Newt tries to convince Marner that this isn't a crisis, but an opportunity.

Skroeder, on the other hand, is now convinced that Newt can't be trusted. He wants him fired.

Marner, as always, can't make a decision. But he puts Skroeder in complete charge of the investigation. He apologizes to Newt, but they can't afford this situation to continue much longer. The company is at stake.

Alone with Iris and Sangmun, Newt gives them a task. Skroeder will be watching his every move, but maybe not theirs. He needs to them to try and access Skroeder's computer. *Something's off here.* Something that Skroeder is keeping from Marner.

Maybe something involving his old pals in the Pentagon?

19. Next day. Saturday. Ryan suits up for his baseball game. Worst day of the week. Because as much as he loves the game, he hates humiliating himself week after week. He sucks, and he'll always suck.

But Carly says not to worry. She thinks he's going to do great. And she begs Stephanie to let her take her ride-in toy Jeep. Stephanie finally relents, and Stephanie gets the in Jeep and drives it right up two wooden planks into the back of their SUV...

20. At the game... it's the bottom of the last inning. Bases loaded. The home team down by three runs. But uber-closer Cam Krieger comes in to pitch. And walking to the plate...

The moans from the stands say it all. Ryan Speck. The worst player in the league.

Ryan gets into his new stance, just the way Five taught him. The first pitch comes in, and he takes a big swing.

STRIKE!

Okay, okay, no problem. Try, try again. He steps back in, here's the pitch... **STRIKE!**

The people in the stands start packing up their folding chairs. Everyone knows the game is over.

Ryan's about to step in again, when he hears BEEP BEEP.

It's CARLY... honking at him from her jeep. Calling him over. Ryan shakes her off, but she keeps BEEPING. Finally, Ryan asks the ump for time.

He heads over to Carly. She covers her mouth with her hand, and he covers his mouth with his glove, just like the major leaguers do when they talk on the mound.

But Ryan doesn't hear her voice. He hears FIVE's voice.

He's FOLDED HIMSELF into the hood of her Jeep! He pulled the engine out, and Carly smuggled him to the game!

Everyone else is staring. Apparently, Speck is having a coaching session with his 7-year-old sister. The head coach shrugs. "I give up..."

But over by Carly, FIVE is telling Ryan, "Statistical analysis complete. Foe will throw curveball. Keep hands back, Ryan. Weight on back foot. Wait on pitch. You can do this."

"I can't, Five. I can't. I stink. I'm always going to stink."

"False, Amigo. You gotta have heart. All you really need is heart. Trust your friend."

Ryan nods, then heads back to the plate amidst the jeers from the other team.

Gets into his stance. Weight on his back foot.

“All you really need is heart,” he tells himself.

“Get ready for the heat, Speck,” says the catcher. And that gives Ryan pause. But he shakes it off. No... it’s going to be the curve...

Krieger reaches back. THROWS...

Ryan keeps his hands back... the ball comes in slo-mo... hands back... hands back... it’s almost across the plate...

In Ryan’s MIND, he sees himself and Five practicing their swing...

Carly watches with bated breath... FIVE peeks out from under the hood...

Ryan takes a small step... SWINGS...

Ping!

There’s absolute silence. No one breathes or speaks or makes a sound as the ball soars on a line over the infield, over the outfield, over the fence... and cracks into the scoreboard.

Ryan stares, stunned. Everyone does. And then...

THE CROWD GOES WILD! Ryan’s teammates mob him as he rounds the bases. A walk-off grand slam. Stephanie just wipes away tears... can’t believe it.

ON THE JEEP – Five peeks out, watching his friend enjoy the greatest moment of his young life. And in this instant, Five is finally sure of what Six knew from the start.

“Five is alive,” he says quietly to himself.

21. That night, Ryan and Five celebrate in the barn. Ryan re-enacts the shot heard round the world while Five plays back classic sports calls. “Do you believe in miracles?” “I don’t believe... what I just saw!!!”

They run around imaginary bases together. Perfect friends. At last, they collapse back in a heap together, like two goofballs.

Ryan smiles at Five, then HUGS him. Five isn’t quite sure what to do, then figures it out. Gently hugs Ryan back.

“You’re my best friend,” says Ryan.

“Yes, you told me.”

“But I mean it. You’re my best friend.”

Five lifts up Ryan’s iPad. Gives it to him. “Gift.”

Ryan takes it. “It’s already mine, Five.”

“No,” says Five. Five lifts his hand, and touches it to his torso plate. The part that covers his system management chip. His “heart.” Then he touches the iPad.

“My heart. For you.”

Ryan taps on the iPad. An insane scroll of data. Five has copied his heart onto the iPad for Ryan.

It’s the nicest gesture a robot could make.

“Thank you, Five.”

“Thank *you*, Amigo.”

22. Later, Stephanie peeks in on her son sleeping in his bed. She smiles, so happy for him. Something’s changed in him. She doesn’t know what, but it’s been for the better. And maybe things are going to be okay.

Suddenly, a thumping noise from outside.

She grabs a flashlight, and walks around the back of the house, nervous. “Is someone there?”

Thump... thump...

She rounds a corner, frightened, and sees...

THUMP THUMP. A loose shutter banging against the side of the house in the wind. Phew. She shakes her head and her own nerves, turns to head back to the house...

...and TRIPS.

What the hell? She wipes the leaves away to reveal... AN EXTENSION CORD. And that one's connected to another one, to another one...

Leading to the barn.

ACT THREE

1. Newt's asleep at his desk in his lab when the phone rings. He picks it up.

"I'm on my way..."

2. Newt pulls up to Stephanie's house in his Nova van with Iris... she doesn't know where Sangmun is, so they'll have to figure this out themselves. If Five is in the barn, they have to get him out and back to the lab without causing a huge...

...too late. Because they second they get out of the van and meet Stephanie on the porch, we all hear the sound of a CHOPPER, and a search light beaming down...

And coming up the road, more Nova vans. Security Vans.

Skroeder's men. And Newt knows in an instant that Skroeder had his phone tapped...

RYAN – wakes up from the sound and commotion. Looks out his window. Runs out to see...

SKROEDER and his men arguing with Newt. Skroeder wants to go in hard with the SAINTs and take Five down with force. But Newt insists that Five can be taken diplomatically if he's even down there at all!

They all turn to see Ryan standing there. Stephanie asks him if it's true. Is there a robot in the barn?

Newt kneels down and tells Ryan he created Five. And he doesn't want to hurt him. He *promises* Five won't be hurt. But they need to take him home to study what makes him so special. If Ryan can help get him out of the barn, then nothing bad will happen.

He gives Ryan his word.

Ryan nods. Says he better go alone, so that he won't spook Five.

“Fine,” says Skroeder. “You have ten minutes.” He storms off.

3. **BACK OF THE HOUSE** – Newt starts walking down toward the barn when he’s stopped. A hand **CLAMPS DOWN** on his mouth so he won’t scream.

It’s Skroeder.

“I know you’re going to tell him to run. But if you do, I’m going to burn your house down. And I’m going to hurt your mom, and your sister... and I’m going to hurt you.”

Skroeder pulls Ryan’s arm back behind him. Pushes his head down. “Face it kid. You and I both know, you’re no hero. Bring him out.”

4. **THE BARN** – Ryan enters. Five perks up. “Friend! Amigo!” Ryan nods.

OUTSIDE – **SKROEDER** moves his **SAIN**Ts into position. “Combat ready. Stealth mode on.”

THE BARN – Ryan takes Five’s hand. “Five?”

“Yes?”

This is it. This is moment of decision. Ryan can be a hero, or be a coward. And he makes his choice.

“Come outside. There’s a... full moon.”

“False. Half moon rising.”

“Just, come outside. Okay? Just do what I say!”

“Friend?”

“Do you trust me?”

Five pauses, then says, “Yes, Ryan. I trust you.”

Ryan nods, tears in his eyes, and takes Five's hand.

5. OUTSIDE THE BARN – Ryan exits, hand in hand, with FIVE. Stephanie and Newt watch with Carly. Stephanie can't believe it. This thing, this dangerous thing... is holding her son's hand?

Like a faithful companion?

And Newt watches, also incredulous. Five is alive. He knows it now. He can how Five holds Ryan's hand gently. Has to be...

And then...

“Attack!”

Skroeder's SAINTs leap out, firing steel cabling at Five, TAKING HIM DOWN.

Ryan and Newt both scream out for them to stop, but the SAINTs are relentless. They pull FIVE in different directions, extending his limbs, and dragging him like an animal.

Five turns back, in real pain, trying to get to his friend.

“Ryan! Friend! Help!”

“FIVE!”

But Ryan is held back by Newt and Stephanie, who know that it's too dangerous.

The SAINTs drag Five to Skroeder, who reaches into Five's access panel and DEACTIVATES him.

Five slumps down. Lifeless.

Tears stream down Ryan's face. What has he done?

6. Back at Nova, Newt protests to Marner, but it's too late. What's done is done. Five is hooked back up to the reprogrammer. They're wiping his memory and reinstalling the system software. He will be born again as SAINT 5, and return to his life of servitude as a war machine.

Sangmun appears, and calls Newt into his office. He got into Skroeder's computer. He found something.

It's bad.

7. At night, Ryan sits awake in his bed. He's a coward. He's a coward, and he's weak, and he'll always be that way. His act of betrayal proves it. And now, once again, he's alone.

CARLY – creeps into his room. Tells Ryan she's sorry. Then says, "Maybe you can get him back."

"Newt said they're going to reprogram him. He won't remember anything."

Carly shrugs. "I don't know. You never really forget a friend."

She leaves him.

He shakes his head at her childish naiveté.

Flops back against his pillow.

Then sees...

His iPad.

Five's heart!

OUTSIDE – Ryan runs to his bike and takes off into the darkness toward...

8. NOVA – Newt bursts into Marner's office. He's finally found out what Skroeder's been up to, and Marner's not going to believe it.

There is no Pentagon buyer. They lost any chance they had at a DoD contract back when the SAINT program malfunctioned in Afghanistan.

Skroeder's been lying to Marner all these years. The real secret buyers are the Chinese. He's not providing these war machines to our boys, but to a potential enemy.

Marner leans back. "Wow. Is that true, Skroeder?"

Skroeder steps into the room through a side door. "I'm afraid so, Howard."

"Well then," says Marner. "You deserve a raise." Marner and Skroeder laugh, and finally, Newt gets it.

Marner was behind this all along. The indecisive weakling at the head of the company was just a character to play.

Marner's the one who's been pushing the military angle. Marner's the one who contacted the Chinese. Skroeder's just his lap dog. Marner acted like a kindly uncle to Newt just to get him to do his bidding, dangling the promise of a peacetime robot in order to keep Newt busy making the SAINTs.

And now that Newt knows, they're going to have to deal with him.

Newt RUNS...

Skroeder activates the SAINTs. Not just four of them. Five of them. Because FIVE has been completely reprogrammed.

Five's eyes glow red. He snaps to attention. A war machine.

He receives his input. Newt Crosby is a FOE.

9. HOME – Stephanie can't sleep. She heads into Ryan's room to apologize, and finds nothing but an empty bed. Oh no...

Where else could he be? Of course...

She grabs Carly and gets her in the car.

“Where are we going, Mommy?”

“Nova.”

10. NOVA – Ryan bikes up to the entrance. Finds the fence hole that Five burned in. Sneaks into the perimeter...

INSIDE NOVA – Newt barricades himself, Iris and Sangmun in the office wing. They initiate a lockdown. That will hold off the SAINTs, but not forever. This is bad...

And then Sangmun sees... uh oh...

SKROEDER and MARNER – see it too. On their monitors. An intruder. Cameras seek him out.

It’s the boy.

Skroeder fumes. Crosby must have told the boy. They have to eliminate him.

Marner hesitates. It’s a child... but if they’re found out...

“Do it.”

Skroeder sends the input.

FIVE’S ROBOT VIEW – an image of Ryan Speck appears.

FOE.

11. THE MACHINE ROOM – Ryan wanders in. Spooky. “Five?”

No sound. Then a scurrying. Shadows flit by. He doesn’t realize it, but he’s being slowly herded toward the center of the room. He holds the iPad like a talisman.

“Five? Are you there? It’s me! I’m sorry!”

THE SAINTS – appear. In V formation, advancing on Ryan, their weapons out.

Five in front. “Foe identified!”

Ryan panics. “Wait! No! I’m your friend!”

“Foe. ID confirmed.”

Ryan holds up the iPad. “This is your heart! I can give it back to you! Take it, please!”

SKROEDER and MARNER – watch this unfold.

So does Newt and his team. What will Five do?

FIVE – takes the iPad

“Heart?”

“Yes! Heart!”

Five lifts the iPad up, stares at it...

...then crushes it in his fist. Drops the broken shards to the ground.

12. Ryan stares in disbelief. Five arms all of his weapons.

“Run,” whispers Newt, watching this on the monitor.

But Ryan doesn’t run.

He stands his ground.

He tells Five he’s not afraid. For the first time in his life, he’s not afraid, and he’s not going to run. Because he’s changed. He’s changed because Five taught him a better way. Five showed him a better way to live.

And he showed Five a better way to live.

He knows, somewhere deep inside, there's something in Five that goes beyond reprogramming. *He's not just code and instructions. He has a choice.*

NEWT – watches a diagnostic output... Five's neural activity is off the charts. Iris doesn't get it. "What's happening?"

Newt stares. "He's thinking..."

FIVE – stares at Ryan, his analysis flickering between FRIEND and FOE. Until finally, the analysis goes dark.

What has Five decided?

He rises tall above Ryan.

"PREPARE..."

Ryan closes his eyes, ready to die.

"...AMIGO."

And Five turns on 1 through 4 and starts to ATTACK.

13. This is the final battle. As Ryan backs up, he sees the same open portal that Five used to escape in the beginning.

But this time, Five is playing the role of Six. HE is the shield now.

Five attacks the other four SAINTs with a vengeance. It may be four on one, but Five has something they don't have.

He has LIFE. And he remembers.

He picks up an arm and BASEBALL BATS one of the SAINTs. He uses the KARATE MOVES that Carly taught him to take down to others.

And when the remaining SAINT turns on Ryan, Five leaps into the path of fire.

The two SAINTs trade withering gunfire at each other, but finally, SAINT 1 goes down.

The evil SAINTs are dead!

14. Five turns back to Ryan, his friendly self again. He's wounded, but alive. He reaches to take Ryan's hand...

...but in the background, one last effort from SAINT number 1, who's dying act is to fire his laser...

...right through FIVE's head.

SAINT 1 finally dies.

Ryan rushes over to FIVE, whose green eyes have grown very dim.

"Five!"

Ryan holds his dying robot friend. Five, once so strong and powerful, is now shaking like a baby. His armor has been torn to bits.

His heart chip exposed amidst the smoking circuitry.

He reaches a trembling hand to Ryan's face.

And he says his final words to the only friend he ever knew.

"Five... was alive."

The lights in his eyes flicker, and then die out.

15. In the aftermath, we see that Stephanie and Carly have arrived. They sit with Ryan while firemen put out the fire and control the damage from the huge battle.

Skroeder and Marner are led away by police.

Newt tries to comfort Ryan.

But Ryan just stares at the broken body of his only friend, who died saving his life.

16. ONE YEAR LATER – NOVA is now NEWTON TECHNOLOGIES, a robotics company dedicated to creating advanced solutions for humanitarian purposes.

Newton Crosby is the President of course. Sangmun and Iris are heads of their departments, and for once, they've stopped fighting.

The company's new receptionist, Stephanie Speck, does a terrific job at the front desk.

And the Vice-President of Educational Robotic Testing, 8-year-old Carly Speck, dances around in a test room with a new robot designed to entertain sick kids in hospitals.

Newt stops by one of his labs, where Ryan is coding his own simple robot. He's learning from one of the greats. Newt asks Ryan if it's okay if he goes to dinner with his mom. She finally said yes, and it's kind of a big deal, but he doesn't want to overstep any boundaries, and—

“Yes, Newt. You can go.”

Newt grins. Then...

“Oh, Ryan. Check out development room 4. We just finished the new prototype. It's pretty amazing. Not quite... alive... but we're getting there.”

Ryan smiles wanly at Newt. Sure. Not quite alive... not quite like Five...

17. Ryan wanders into the development lab. Closes the door behind him. In front of him, a new robot. It's just like the SAINT model, but without the weapons.

Newer torso. Better limbs. Synthetic fingertips. An expressive mouth.

More human-like.

And yet... not alive.

Not *yet*.

Ryan peeks at the torso. Taps an access button, and the panel slides down reveal the System Management chip.

Ryan looks around. Then reaches in his pocket.

It's THE CHIP. Five's chip. The one that was sparked by lightning. Five's heart.

Ryan looks at the new robot... and smiles...

Time to make a friend.

THE END