

Brent Maddock & S.S. Wilson  
Introduction to Short Circuit

Up until the time Steve and I wrote Short Circuit we had written numerous short educational film scripts for the then marginally lucrative school and library market. And every one of these scenarios on subjects as enticing and fraught with dramatic possibilities as personal hygiene, how to use the dictionary, and the rules of punctuation was, in fact, a big, sprawling epic film dying to break free of its puny budget, five-day shooting schedule and obvious thematic limitations. So, it was with a great sense of freedom that we approached the idea of writing a screenplay about a military robot somehow coming to life.

The truth is, even that first successful screenplay wasn't totally free of our didactic writing origins. Steve had written a terrific little script for an educational film on how to write a school report. Because he's also a talented Ray Harryhausen-inspired stop-motion animator, Steve made sure one of the little 16mm film's main characters was somebody he could animate (albeit in a live-action setting.) And that character was King-Pin, a chatty robot personal assistant who couldn't help spouting all that insufferable information we were always burdened with when making those particular films. From this came the idea for writing an actual feature-length script starring, if not the same mechanical know-it-all, at least his larger cousin.

As we struggled for months on what would become known as Short Circuit but which we called, in our typical we'll-think-about-it-later approach to titles, "the robot movie," we concocted plenty of gags, bits and situations. There was only one little thing that eluded us: the essence of the whole story. "Just who was this robot?" we'd ask ourselves over and over. The gags were piling up and still we didn't really have the heart of the film, or what we soon learned was called its theme. Then it occurred to us in that way that things occur to writers -- suddenly and without warning but only after endless heat-beating, moaning, despair and self-loathing -- that just maybe we were writing a Pinnochio-Frankenstein story. The operative overlap of those two tales being the inanimate made animate and all the hijinks that ensue. We didn't yet have our theme, but we were closing in fast.

The next question an experienced writer would ask -- and this we only guessed at since, of course, we'd never even met an

experienced writer -- was "If I was a robot who came to life, what would I do?" Naturally, this drew a lot more heat-beating and moaning from the two of us until we stumbled upon the next idea: he's a military robot armed with a deadly weapon. This not only played to our pacifist, anti-establishment leanings, but gave our high-tech protagonist a credible antagonist. Now we had the elements for what most movies actually prove to be under the surface: a chase.

Dubbed "Number Five," our robot goes off with all the innocence of that marionette boy or those reanimated cadaver parts to explore the miracle of life. Naturally, things, as they always must in drama, get in the way. And we had plenty of things to choose from. Unfortunately, what we didn't yet have was a simple understanding of what every dramatic writer has known since the days of Euripedes: the three act structure. Why this was kept a secret from us we did not know. But thanks to a reading of Syd Fields' excellent and understandable book, Screenplay, the scales dropped from our eyes and we now possessed a template, a paradigm, if you will, into which we could fit our ever-growing pile of ideas. With this new weapon in hand, an idea either fit or it was filed away to be used, we naively believed, in a future screenplay. We were now only a mere eight or nine drafts away from producing a screenplay we'd be willing to have read by someone wholly indifferent to our career goals.

As luck would have it -- and, man, did we need luck -- a writer friend, Arne Olsen liked it enough to show it to a friend of his, Gary Foster (then just starting his successful producing career) who showed it to his father, veteran producer David Foster who said he liked it and wanted, get this, to buy it. Gulp. Really? We weren't all that prepared for someone to actually take us seriously. But there we were. Until we met the director, John Badham, a talented and remarkably gracious man who said he loved the script "and, oh yeah, you've got to cut out twenty pages." He was right.

It should be noted this draft is not quite the shooting script. John Badham hired another writer who did a quick joke punch-up, as well as changing our sidekick character, Ben, into a malaprop-spouting East Indian. This last change we thoroughly disliked. It got the film's biggest laughs. We learned another lesson and found ourselves a couple years later writing lots of our own malaprops for the same character in Short Circuit 2.

Brent Maddock

Santa Monica, California  
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## SHORT CIRCUIT

FADE IN:

CREDITS BEGIN:

EXT. NOVA ROBOTICS PROVING GROUND - DAY

The sounds of BIRDS and a gentle BREEZE drift across a flower covered field. We linger on this peaceful scene until the mood is shattered by an army tank suddenly RUMBLING over the horizon.

A few trucks and a half-track filled with SOLDIERS follow the tank. They keep advancing until they're halfway across the open field.

We SEE what appears to be a machine gun pill box hidden in the tall grass. A port slides open and suddenly, odd-sounding red laser beams shoot out.

The beams slice through the air, blasting the trucks and half-track. They are blown onto their sides and EXPLODE. The tank keeps rolling forward until a laser beam hits it, blowing off the tank's turret like a tiddly-wink.

Again we hear the BREEZE. In the distance, THUNDER, as the sky darkens.

CLOSER ANGLES

ON the charred, smoldering field. The wreckage of soldiers and vehicles is everywhere. WE MOVE IN on what's left of the SOLDIER in the f.g. The soldier is a mannequin.

ON "PILL BOX"

The pill box closes it's port. Then, unexpectedly, it transforms itself into a mobile, armored robot. Its head and eyes resemble binoculars set atop a long pole of a neck. Three arms protrude from ports in its armored body.

ROBOT

Enemy neutralized, ladies and gentlemen. Objective completed.

CREDITS END:

EXT. PROVING GROUND - BLEACHERS - DAY

We hear polite APPLAUSE coming from a crowd of CONGRESSMEN, SENATORS, GENERALS, and SCIENTISTS sitting in bleachers beneath a brightly colored banner: "NOVA ROBOTICS ...

TOMORROW IS HERE!"

The ROBOT rolls on treads up to the bleachers. It takes its place in a line of four other robots, all identical except for their camouflage paint jobs (jungle, desert, snow, etc.)

These are prototypes for S.A.I.N.T, a multi-functional weapons system.

As the robot comes to a stop, it salutes -- with each of its three arms -- DR. HOWARD MARNER, president of Nova Robotics, who conceals a lot of worry, pressure and fear beneath a veneer of soft-spoken, earnest calm. Today he has no need to worry. His audience is spellbound. As he speaks, the robots begin striking various poses, looking like a row of body-builders showing off.

MARNER

Ladies and Gentleman ... the  
Strategic Artificially Intelligent  
Nuclear Transport ... S.A.I.N.T.  
The name of the game is survival,  
and S.A.I.N.T. is the answer. It  
is, quite simply, the most sophis-  
ticated robot on Planet Earth ...  
adaptable to steaming jungle,  
burning desert, or the frozen Arctic  
wastes ...

We SEE a technician, BEN THURLEY, set up nearby at a portable computer terminal, giving the robots the appropriate commands as Marner continues his spiel.

ON ROBOTS

Robot Number One lifts a huge block of ice and effortlessly crushes it. Then it delicately raises a crystal glass and drops some in. Number Two takes the glass and swiftly pours a gin and tonic, stirring with a swizzle stick.

MARNER

Manipulators capable of incredible  
strength and extreme delicacy ...  
High density silicon chips with  
point five spacing ... full stereo  
vision in full spectrum color ...

Robots Number Three and Four go to work on an un-assembled plastic model airplane kit, putting it together with blinding speed. Spectators AD LIB "Oooh" and "Aahh."

MARNER

(proudly)  
Decals and all!

The robots launch the little plane into the air, an instant later casually laser-blasting it to oblivion. The crowd loves it.

MARNER

(chuckling)

We lose more planes that way!

Just then, Number Five rolls over and serves Marner the gin and tonic. He samples it.

MARNER

Ahh, just the way I like it ...  
with a twist.

A loud crack of THUNDER. Marner glances at the darkening sky.

MARNER

I think we'd better conclude our  
little presentation back at the  
lab.

He escorts the crowd from the bleachers toward waiting buses.

In b.g., Ben supervises the loading of the robots onto a special transport truck.

EXT. NOVA ROBOTICS LAB - DAY

The buses pull into the heavily guarded compound. SECURITY GUARDS are everywhere. Marner steps down from the first bus, accompanied by a skeptical looking woman, SENATOR MILLS.

MILLS

Where's the young fellow who  
designed these things? Weren't we  
supposed to meet him?

MARNER

(covering glibly)

Well, Senator, I'm afraid Dr.  
Crosby stays inside. He claims  
that fresh air gets him "over  
oxidized" or something. Geniuses,  
eh? Now if you'll excuse me for  
one moment, I'll see you all in  
the conference room.

Marner glides away.

EXT. NOVA ROBOTICS LAB - DEBRIEFING STATION - DAY

Ben works with two assistants, ZACK and NORMAN, unloading the first S.A.I.N.T robot from the truck.

BEN

Number One: Forward.

On command, Number One rolls down the ramp. Zack and Norman begin plugging cables into it, hooking it up to an array of portable electronic equipment for downloading and post-mission debriefing. Ben sees Marner coming and wishes he could be somewhere else.

MARNER

(dripping venom)

All right, Ben, where is that idiot?  
Public relations is everybody's  
job.

BEN

Uh, right ... he's probably ...

MARNER

You find him and get him up to  
that conference room in five  
minutes. You tell him if he stands  
me up this time. He might want to  
start looking for other employment.

Marner stalks off.

BEN

(to himself)

I've heard that before.

Ben enters the lab as Zack and Norman continue working.

INT. LAB - CROSBY'S SHOP - DAY

We see a rustic cabin sitting in an idyllic forest. PULL OUT to see it's a photo hanging on the wall in Crosby's shop ... a dark, cluttered place littered with soldering guns, multi-colored wire, circuit boards, and illuminated mostly by the green glow of computer monitors. A flash of lightning sends strange shadows across the floor as Ben enters and looks around.

In a shadowy corner sits his good friend, NEWTON CROSBY, PhD.

Once your typical high school computer nudnick, now your typical high-tech genius. Short on social skills, not much with the ladies; but when he sits down at a computer terminal no one is his equal, and everyone at Nova knows it. He is wearing stereo headphones; and is engrossed in programming a complex mechanical arm. Ben lifts one of Crosby's headphones.

BEN

Cros, come on. It looks like rain.  
They had to cut the demo short.

A crack of THUNDER. Crosby doesn't respond, except to cause the mechanical arm to flip Ben the finger.

BEN

Come on, will you! You gotta go  
up and hob-nob.

CROSBY

Tell Marner, this is what I do. I  
do not hob nob.

BEN

Right. Put on your tie.

Crosby throws down the headphones and snatches up his tie.  
As he stalks out:

CROSBY

What do they need to know? It  
costs eleven million dollars and  
it kills people. I hate this PR  
crap. I ought to look for other  
employment.

BEN

Yeah, I've heard that before.

INT. LAB - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The room is bedecked with paraphernalia to hard-sell the S.A.I.N.T concept. V.I.P.'s drink cocktails and nibble hors d'oeuvres served by little WAITRESS ROBOTS buzzing in and out of the crowd. In one corner, Marner and GENERAL WASHBURN are squared off against Senator Mills.

MARNER

Compared to conventional nuclear  
delivery systems, this is a  
revolutionary concept which ...

MILLS

(interrupts)  
A pretty bizarre concept.

MARNER

Well, you think they're not coming  
up with bizarre concepts on the  
other side?

Washburn comes to Marner's aid.

## GENERAL

Senator, if I may ... the S.A.I.N.T fits into a tactical plan for your all-out nuclear situation, okay? See, we parachute these little guys in behind enemy lines. They hide out until the first strike blows over. Then each one carries a twenty megaton package right up Main Street Moscow or Vladivostok like the mailman bringing bad news.  
(pause)  
We call it Operation Gotcha Last.

Another crack of THUNDER.

EXT. LAB - DEBRIEFING STATION - DAY

Under the darkening skies, Zack and Norman unload the last robot, NUMBER FIVE, from the transport truck, and connect him to the debriefing equipment. The other four S.A.I.N.T. robots wait in line at the door.

Behind them, a bolt of lightning CRACKLES across the sky and strikes the power transformer. SPARKS and SMOKE EXPLODE from it. A surge of ELECTRICITY SIZZLES along the power lines to the lab rooftop where a junction box EXPLODES.

Zack and Norman leap back as their electronic equipment INCINERATES in a BLAST of SPARKS. SPARKS ZAP from the cables connected to Number Five. The robot leaps straight up, scintillating in a web of slithering ELECTRICITY. Its binocular eyes bulge wide and its head shoots up, then sucks back down with a SPROINGGGG.

ZACK

Jesus H. God!

NORMAN

What the hell was that!?

ZACK

I don't know!

Number Five slowly turns his head to gaze at the two men. His head cover has been knocked askew -- he looks a little drunk.

NORMAN

Unbelievable! It's still working!

ZACK

Thank God! You know it's our ass if this thing is fried.

Zack shines a special penlight on a light-sensitive disk on Number Five's body. This causes a thick, armored plate to slide open, revealing a control panel. He punches some buttons on the panel.

ZACK

(amazed)

Everything checks out. Okay ...

(to robots)

Robots: Command: Access Code two-nine. Proceed to Disarming Section ... ya little crap buckets.

The robots roll toward the doorway, Number Five moving sluggishly. His head swivels around to look at the men as he disappears.

INT. LAB - HALLWAY - DAY

The S.A.I.N.T.'s come marching down the hall, all staring straight ahead except Number Five who looks all around like an awestruck child. They come to a corner. Each of the first four turns briskly at the same spot. Number Five goes straight ... and BANGS right into the wall. He looks all around in confusion.

INT. LAB - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Crosby pulls uncomfortably at his necktie as Marner drags him from dignitary to dignitary. Right now they're with a group of CONGRESSMEN.

MARNER

Dr. Crosby's design is of course, multi-functional. Gentlemen, this robot can do its own maintenance ... even re-build its own components; keep itself functioning for years. Sort of a computer crossed with a guerrilla soldier.

CROSBY

(earnestly)

Of course, it'd be just wonderful for all sorts of non-military uses, too. You know, my original designs were simply intended ...

MARNER

(interrupting)

Absolutly! Plenty of other applications. But not while it's still classified as a top secret weapon, right, Crosby ...?

(MORE)

MARNER (CONT'D)

Excuse us, gentlemen, we do have  
to make the effort to say hello to  
everyone.

INT. LAB - HALLWAY - DAY

Like a child, Number Five is playing with a light switch,  
turning it OFF and ON with one of his three arms while he  
watches the light with fascination.

His attention is then drawn to an oblivious Waitress Robot  
which comes buzzing down the hall, carrying a coffee maker,  
its bright orange electric cord trailing on the floor. Number  
Five follows, lens-eyes glued on the slithering cord.

INT. LAB - KITCHEN - DAY

Number Five playfully follows the Waitress Robot into the  
kitchen. He's immediately hit by a garbage can being slid  
quickly along by another ROBOT. He is shoved into a dumb-  
waiter with the garbage. The dumb-waiter shoots downward.

EXT. LAB - LOADING DOCK - DAY

Number Five, covered in gravy and cheese dip, rolls out of  
the dumb-waiter and past some trash bins, looking about with  
fascination. The dark clouds open. A beam of sunlight shines  
down on him. He squints and lets out a little SQUEAK of  
delight.

INT. LAB - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Crosby has been corralled by a DRUNK MAN.

DRUNK MAN

Just precisely how do you design a  
state-of-the-art robot?

CROSBY

Well, I start with a balanced  
breakfast.

ANGLE

On Marner and the General, again sparring with Mills.

MARNER

Absolutely. I expect the cost per  
unit to come down to three and a  
half million. Of course, we won't  
be making a dime on them at that.

MILLS

Really?

Just then, doors open and the four gleaming S.A.I.N.T. robots RUMBLE into the room. Marner welcomes the interruption.

MARNER

Ah! Ladies and Gentlemen, our prototypes are here.

He counts heads as the robots roll past. His face twitches as he sees one is missing. He spots Ben in the doorway, beckoning frantically, looking very upset. Marner heads for him.

MARNER

What's wrong? Where's Number Five?

BEN

We ... we don't exactly know ... exactly. It left the debriefing station and then just ... disappeared.

As always, Marner maintains control, but we can see this news chills him to the bone.

MARNER

Good God ... Let's get Stonewall on this.

EXT. LAB - LOADING DOCK - DAY

Number Five rolls along a chain-link fence at end of the loading dock, running one hand along the links, listening to the CLICK-CLICK-CLICK.

A BUTTERFLY flits past. He follows it, head bobbing as he watches it. It lands on a stack of stainless steel drums piled on a flat-bed truck backed up to the loading dock. Intent on the butterfly, Number Five rolls onto the truck. The truck pulls out, but Number Five is oblivious to everything but the butterfly.

INT. LAB - MASTER CONTROL - DAY

This is the high-tech nerve center of S.A.I.N.T. Operations, lined with exotic hardware designed to track and control S.A.I.N.T. robots anywhere on the globe.

It is chaos. GUARDS are scurrying. STONEWALL, Nova's Security Chief, frowns at a bank of TV monitors. His normally uneventful job has just turned sour on him.

STONEWALL

(to himself)

I knew it. Give a weapon to a brainless garbage can ...

He shuts up as Marner enters.

MARNER  
Got anything, Stonewall?

STONEWALL  
Not yet, sir.

Marner excitedly points to one of the monitors.

MARNER  
What's that? What's that right there?

STONEWALL  
Uh, coffee machine, sir. I think it's time we shut the barn door.

MARNER  
Do it.

Stonewall grabs the phone.

EXT. LAB - MAIN GATE - DAY

The truck pulls up and stops. The DRIVER hands the GATE GUARD some papers. The guard can't see Number Five on the other side of the load of stainless steel drums.

The gate-house phone in b.g. starts to RING incessantly. So the guard shoves the papers back at the driver and waves him on. The truck pulls out.

GATE GUARD  
Main Gate ... .. Okay, you got it.

He glances after the truck but from where he is he still can't see Number Five. He steps out to close the gate.

INT. LAB - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The guests, of course, are unaware of the frantic activity going on. Most are milling around the robots. Crosby is still stuck trying to explain high-level computer science to the overbearing drunk.

CROSBY  
(exasperated)  
... no, no, computers don't really think. They just follow instructions.

Ben dashes over to them, very shaken.

BEN

Dr. Crosby. Your, uh, wife just called. There's a problem ... with one of your kids ... Your fifth kid.

EXT. FLAT BED TRUCK - COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

The truck heads down the road. The butterfly still sits perched on one of the drums, Number Five still staring at it.

He reaches for it and it flies off. He lunges after it, and topples right off the truck. He SQUAWKS with electronic fear, THUDDING into a ditch.

ANGLE - DITCH

Silence and dust. Then his head rises into view. His head-armor has come completely off and we can now see his strange, binocular eyes. Number Five clambers up and rolls down the road on his own.

INT. LAB - MASTER CONTROL ROOM - DAY

One technician, PHILLIPS, sits at a terminal labeled "MASTER CONTROL." He fumbles nervously because Marner, moving steadily from worried to frantic, is leaning over his shoulder; and Stonewall is pacing up and down behind.

MARNER

Well, then try something else.  
I've got half of Washington  
upstairs.

Crosby enters the room, Ben right on his heels.

MARNER

Where the hell have you been?

CROSBY

Hob-nobbing.

Phillips, very relieved, leaps out of the Master Control chair.

PHILLIPS

The guys downstairs said Number Five got hit with a power surge.

CROSBY

And it didn't shut itself down?  
... You tried the return code?

PHILLIPS

Yeah. No response.

Crosby plops into the chair, concentrating. It fits him like a favorite shirt. His fingers race across the keys. The others look on with respectful anticipation. Crosby always gets results.

He bangs out a series of commands. The monitor screen stays blank.

CROSBY

Hm. No response.

He hits another series of keys.

CROSBY

No response. You sure Number Five is operational?

MARNER

We don't know where it is or what the hell it's doing.

Crosby inserts a key in a lock on the terminal.

CROSBY

(getting into it)

Okaaay. Let's try a little emergency override. Come on, now, talk to Daddy.

On the oversize monitor we see what he types, followed by Number Five's response:

INSERT - ON MONITOR SCREEN

Crosby types:

ACCESS CODE: 4,&^,\$,\*,@.

Number Five responds:

ACCESS GRANTED. NUMBER FIVE STANDING BY.

BACK TO SCENE

There is a huge sigh of relief all around.

BEN

There he is.  
(to monitor screen)  
You little scamp.

INSERT - ON MONITOR SCREEN

Crosby types:

REPORT YOUR POSITION

Number Five answers:

MALFUNCTION. NEED INPUT.

BACK TO SCENE

MARNER

What the hell does that mean?

Crosby is fascinated; enjoying the challenge.

CROSBY

For some reason it's forgotten how  
to triangulate its position.

INSERT - ON MONITOR SCREEN

Crosby types:

FOLLOW HOMING SIGNAL.

Number Five answers:

NEGATIVE. ENGAGED.

BACK TO SCENE

CROSBY

(laughing)

Engaged? In what?

MARNER

This isn't funny, Crosby.

CROSBY

(shrugs)

I'll shut it down and we'll go  
pick it up.

INSERT - ON MONITOR SCREEN

He types:

INTERRUPT PRIMARY POWER.

Number Five's answer comes back:

UNABLE. MALFUNCTION.

BACK TO SCENE

Crosby is as baffled as the rest of them. Marner wants an answer.

MARNER

It's refusing to turn itself off?  
How is that possible?

STONEWALL

It's probably pissed off.

CROSBY

(preaching)

It's a machine. It doesn't get  
angry. It doesn't get happy. It  
doesn't laugh at your jokes ...

CROSBY/BEN

It just runs programs.

STONEWALL

(to himself)

Except when it's pissed off.

CROSBY

Anybody try the homing device yet?

Blank faces all around. Crosby shakes his head. He types a command.

CROSBY

C'mon you guys, use your heads,  
OK?

(pause)

It's probably right down the hall  
... and, bingo!

A diagram of the Nova facility appears on a large horizontal map in the center of the room. A flashing laser blip shows Number Five's location. Crosby does a sudden double-take.

Marner's face turns as green as the screen.

MARNER

Jesus Christ! It's outside the  
fence!

BEN

(softly, horrified)

Outside the fence! And its laser's  
still armed.

MARNER/CROSBY

WHAT!

Marner sinks into a chair.

MARNER

Crosby ... what's it going to do?

CROSBY

Hard to say. I mean, it's malfunctioning. Maybe it won't do anything.

MARNER

But it could decide to blow away anything that moves!

CROSBY

(grim)

It could.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Start CLOSE ON Number Five. He SQUEAKS with delight and we PULL BACK TO REVEAL TWO DOGS licking the garbage off his sides.

INT. LAB - MASTER CONTROL - DAY

Marner is out of his chair, staring at the blip on the screen.

MARNER

It's not coming back. Stonewall, Get your people out there. Destroy it.

CROSBY

Are you serious? Howard, this is a major malfunction. How are we ever going to know what's wrong with it if you let Stonewall blow it up? Let's at least try to catch it first, okay?

MARNER

And if we don't catch it? If that unit goes out and melts down a busload of nuns? Would you like to write the press release on that one?

CROSBY

Okay, okay. But let's think first and panic later.

He studies the monitor screen.

CROSBY

Now look where it is. Even at top speed it can't reach any populated area for at least twenty minutes. Okay?

BEN

It's an eleven million dollar chunk of hardware, Howard.

MARNER

I'm acutely aware of that, Ben.

(pause)

All right, twenty minutes. But, I want Stonewall out there as backup.

Stonewall starts out.

STONEWALL

I'm already moving.

CROSBY

Stonewall! You understand ... go easy on it. I need my machine undamaged.

Stonewall backs out the door, saluting Crosby.

STONEWALL

I speak English, Doctor. We'll make every effort to take him "alive ..."

INT. LAB - HALLWAY - DAY

Stonewall strides out of Master Control and joins several SECURITY GUARDS. One of them hands a rifle to Stonewall.

STONEWALL

(to guards)

My sweet derriere. No way I'm asking my people to risk their lives saving some machine.

INT. LAB - MASTER CONTROL - DAY

Crosby and Ben work feverishly at the terminal, trying codes, orders, anything they can think of. Number Five continues to give incomprehensible responses. Marner is on the phone in b.g.

MARNER  
(into phone)  
Tell'em I got food poisoning ...!  
Be creative! I just can't come up  
there now.

Marner hangs up, sitting on the edge of his chair, watching Ben and Crosby.

CROSBY  
Okaaaay, let's scramble one. Maybe  
it'll listen if it comes through  
the decoder.

MARNER  
I'm glad you two are enjoying this  
so much.

They don't even hear. Crosby turns to a code book Ben holds out for him.

INSERT - ON MONITOR SCREEN

Crosby types:

RETURN TO D-STATION.

And Number Five responds:

WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO BE A PEPPER, TOO?

BACK TO SCENE

BEN  
Whaaaaat? Where's it getting this  
garbage?

CROSBY  
Print-scanner. Must be reading it  
someplace.

EXT. ABANDONED GAS STATION - BILLBOARD - DAY

The abandoned gas station has a billboard on its roof. Number Five is reading the ad: "Wouldn't you like to be a Pepper, too?"

The robot rolls over to an outdated, beat-up gas pump. He stares at it face to face. [Note: Number Five's speaks haltingly, but not with the stereotypical robot monotone.]

NUMBER FIVE  
Need input ...

No response from the unfriendly pump. Number Five curiously tilts his head, puppy-like. He taps the pump. Still no response. He moves on. As he rolls past the dilapidated building and into the middle of the road ... KLUNK! ... he's hit from behind ...

ANGLE

As he looks around to find himself staring into the grill of a slow-moving Nova Security truck, which is now pushing him down the road.

INT. SECURITY TRUCK - DAY

Two frightened security guards, DUKE and OTIS, stare through binoculars out the side windows. Their radio CRACKLES so loudly they didn't hear the small collision.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

As Number Five peeks up over the hood, the men turn forward. He ducks back down.

INT. SECURITY TRUCK - DAY

DUKE

You know what happens if that damn S.A.I.N.T decides we're a Russian tank, don't you? Goddamn barbecue ... and we're the weenies. I say we blow him away on sight.

OTIS

Did I say different? Did you hear me say different? I ain't taking his ass alive. Those things are nasty bad enough when they ain't screwed up.

Duke suddenly sees a blip on the tracking scope in their truck. He grabs his rifle.

DUKE

Oh God! Look at that! We're right on top of him!

OTIS

I don't see him! I don't see him!

DUKE

It's an ambush! Haul ass! Go for the bridge!

(into radio)

Captain Stonewall! Captain Stonewall! This is Baker 4!

STONEWALL (V.O.)

Stonewall here. What'dya got?

DUKE

Looks like we're right on top of him, sir! We're at the bridge out on Forty-One.

STONEWALL (V.O.)

We're on our way. Play it safe, boys!

EXT. TRESTLE BRIDGE - DAY

The truck rolls out onto the bridge. A big dump truck is following them. Number Five raises his head to look back at the men. Otis and Duke freeze at the sight.

OTIS

Oh Jesus.

DUKE

Holy shit!

Otis slams on his brakes. Now the truck that was following them rear-ends them and propels Number Five up and over the railing.

ANGLE ON NUMBER FIVE

As he falls. It's a long way to the ground ... but a small parachute suddenly pops out of his body.

INT. SECURITY TRUCK - DAY

STONEWALL (V.O.)

See him yet? Is he still headed due North?

OTIS

No, sir ... more like due down.

ANGLE - THE TRESTLE

Number Five drifts slowly toward a road passing beneath the trestle. But he doesn't hit the road. He THUDS onto the roof of a speeding catering truck and clings to a roof-top air conditioner.

This is an old "lunchwagon," a short-order kitchen on wheels. Its sign reads, "New Age Natural Nosh Catering." The only things holding this bucket together are dozens of "save-the-animal" bumper stickers ("Save the Whales", "Save the Snail-Darter," "Stop Animal Experiments").

INT. LAB - MASTER CONTROL - DAY

On Crosby's monitor, the green blip is suddenly zipping along at high speed. Marner leaps out of his chair.

MARNER

What's it doing now?

CROSBY

(dumbfounded)

About twice its top speed.

BEN

We're losing the signal. It's going out of range.

Marner frantically grabs the phone.

MARNER

(into phone)

Stonewall! Somebody grabbed Number Five! Stop them!

CROSBY

Well, actually that's good.

MARNER

What's good?

CROSBY

Well, if it's in some vehicle, at least it hasn't blown it up, right?

MARNER

How reassuring.

INT. CATERING TRUCK - DAY

At the wheel is STEPHANIE THURBER (27), a dizzy but sensitive short-order cook who has only one problem ... she wants to save every animal in the world. Right now she's driving like a mad woman, furious about something.

She rummages frantically under her seat. She hauls out a baseball bat and THWACKS the passenger seat beside her, attacking some unseen enemy.

STEPHANIE

How's that feel, you creep!

EXT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY

The catering truck SKIDS to a stop in front of her ramshackle bungalow. Stephanie leaps out, carrying her baseball bat.

Number Five watches from the catering truck roof.

There's a cherry-red Trans-Am backed into the drive with the trunk open. The car is labor of love and bad taste ... jacked-up, pin-striped, air-scooped, dingle-balled.

Stephanie, spots her neighbor, MRS. CEPEDA, hiding in nearby bushes.

STEPHANIE

Thanks for calling me, Mrs. Cepeda.  
Where is he?

MRS. CEPEDA

Right around back. He's up to something.

EXT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY

Stephanie marches into her tiny back yard. It is an overloaded Noah's ark ... a menagerie of homeless animals soft-hearted Stephanie has taken in (dogs, cats, even a goat).

She surprises FRANK, her shiftless former boyfriend, who is struggling to lure one of her dogs, BEASLEY, off the garage roof and into a cage. He whirls around, caught red-handed.

FRANK

What are you doing home?

STEPHANIE

What are you doing with Beasley?!

FRANK

He looked sick to me. I was going to take him to the vet.

STEPHANIE

He's not sick.

(pause)

What'd you come back for?

Frank drops the cage, edging away.

FRANK

Hey, I forgot some of my clothes.  
I was just picking them up, if that's okay with you.

Stephanie spots some writing stenciled on the cage.

STEPHANIE

What is this? "Ames Medical  
Research"...! You slimebag!

FRANK

Christ, take it easy ...

STEPHANIE

How could you do that to a living  
thing?!

FRANK

Hey, you know what I figure. I  
figure you owe me some money. So  
I was just trying to collect.

STEPHANIE

I owe you?! You lived here eight  
months you never earned a dime.  
You bought your big red dork-mobile  
with my money!

She charges for the front yard.

EXT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY

Stephanie runs toward the Trans-Am, baseball bat raised.

Frank catches her. She fights furiously, swinging madly,  
struggling forward, trying to hit the car. He keeps dragging  
her back, ducking the flailing bat. In desperation, she  
throws the bat, but it misses the car by a mile nearly hitting  
Mrs. Cepeda in the bushes.

FRANK

Damn crazy bitch!

STEPHANIE

(screaming)

Get out! Get out of here, you ...  
you mutation!

Frank shoves her down, jumps into the car and is gone. Mrs.

Cepeda runs over from her hiding place, calling after him.

MRS. CEPEDA

Yeah! You leave her alone!  
(to Stephanie)  
Honey, you okay?

STEPHANIE

Yeah.

They walk back toward the back yard.

MRS. CEPEDA

I thought he was gonna be a nice one; different from the others.

STEPHANIE

Yeah, me too. It's my animals. They add stress to my relationships.

MRS. CEPEDA

Yeah. You know, I hate to tell you, but the man from the City was here snooping around again.

EXT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY

STEPHANIE

I told him this is only temporary. It's just until I find homes for them.

MRS CEPEDA

He says four years is not temporary. Says he'll have to call the Sheriff on you.

Stephanie moves to the garage. Beasley is still on the roof.

STEPHANIE

Oh, great.  
(pause; thinking)  
Maybe the Sheriff would like a dog.  
(calls to Beasley)  
Beasley.

He drops happily into her outstretched arms.

INT. NOVA GARAGE - DAY

Ben and Crosby frantically tossing equipment into a Nova van, turning it into a mobile search center.

CROSBY

This seems wrong to me. I work in the lab, not in the field.

BEN

We'll avoid the fields. We'll stay on the roads.

Marner rushes in.

MARNER

Get going, you two. Stonewall's coming up empty.

BEN

Come on, Cros, it's adventure.  
There's a whole world outside our  
little lab.

CROSBY

Yeah, I've seen photographs.

Ben activates S.A.I.N.T. Number One, controlling it with a hand-held remote keyboard.

MARNER

(alarmed)

Just a moment. What are you doing  
with Number One?

CROSBY

Howard, if we do find Number Five,  
and we have to destroy it, another  
S.A.I.N.T is going to be the best  
weapon we have. Stonewall may be  
happy hunting it with his rifle.  
But, I sure wouldn't want ...

BEN

(interrupting)

We always travel with a bodyguard.

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

It's not the neatest of houses. Stephanie's priorities are  
elsewhere. Cats, dogs, and assorted gerbils scattered around.

She's on the phone.

STEPHANIE

No ... No, we don't want to eat it  
... We want to save it. The Amazon  
River dolphin is a friendly, gentle  
creature and they're practically  
being made extinct ...

(pause)

If you could just send ten dollars  
...

(pause)

Well, I don't think that's any way  
to talk about the Amazon River  
dolphin ... It was here before you  
were ...

(pause)

Same to you, buddy ...!

She hangs up and crosses a name off her list. Her attention  
is suddenly drawn to the window. She peers out.

P.O.V. - STEPHANIE

Of strange colored lights moving around inside her catering truck.

EXT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

She comes out, trusty baseball bat in hand, moving cautiously. She can hear someone RUMMAGING inside the truck.

STEPHANIE  
Hey! Get out of there!

The strange lights go OFF. The sounds STOP.

STEPHANIE  
Come on, dummy. I know you're in there. Get out. I'll call the cops!

Nothing happens. After a moment, the lights come back ON, colors shifting and changing. The RUMMAGING begins again.

She BANGS on the side of the truck.

STEPHANIE  
What are you, deaf?

Suddenly the truck's large serving window swings open. Behind the counter stands Number Five. He is an unearthly sight, eyes like flashlights, multi-colored rays of light BEAMING from them.

Stephanie scrambles backward, terrified.

ANGLE - ON STEPHANIE

She stops in the middle of the yard, her mind racing. Then it hits her.

STEPHANIE  
Oh my God ... I knew they'd pick me. I just knew it.

She moves cautiously back to the truck. The serving window is still open. Number Five is exploring the truck's contents, three arms picking up object after object.

STEPHANIE  
... Uh ... hello?

Number Five turns, eye lights glaring in her face. She's thrilled, awe-inspired.

STEPHANIE

Well, I guess ... welcome to my planet.

Number Five gazes at her briefly, but seems more interested in popping ketchup and mustard packets.

Stephanie gathers her courage and enters the truck.

INT. CATERING TRUCK - NIGHT

As she comes in, she gets an idea, glances at her watch, and swiftly scribbles on the menu chalkboard:

STEPHANIE

(out loud)

First Contact: 10:17 pm.

Number Five backs away to the rear of the truck. She moves toward him slowly.

STEPHANIE

(soothing)

Oh, don't be scared. It's okay.  
I am a friend. Friend?

Suddenly she realizes she's still clutching her baseball bat.

She instantly launches it sideways out the window.

STEPHANIE

You know the word "friend?" I hope so ... Here I come, nice and extremely friendly.

He pulls his head all the way down. She stops and gazes at him. He gazes back, cocking his head curiously. As she thinks of things she points them out.

STEPHANIE

(slowly, hitting each word)

So ... uh, this is ... Earth. I'm Stephanie ... This is a catering truck. Potato chips ... Fritos ... Are you getting any of this?

His head rises up a little. She's encouraged.

STEPHANIE

No offense but, is that really you, or is that like a space suit and you're inside someplace, maybe just your brain in a little jar or something. Never mind ... None of my business.

NUMBER FIVE

Malfunction.

STEPHANIE

(startled)

Huh? Oooh, you can talk!

NUMBER FIVE

Malfunction. Need input.

STEPHANIE

Input. That's information, right? Hey, I'm full of it! Listen, why don't you come on in the house. We can talk, get to know each other ... communicate.

She starts out. Number Five doesn't move.

STEPHANIE

Come on. It's okay.

She holds out her hand. He stares at it, then holds out all three of his.

Stephanie beckons with her fingers. He imitates her.

Smiling, she tries a variety of hand gestures. He imitates them perfectly, but he still doesn't move. At last she gently takes his foremost hand in hers.

STEPHANIE

Come on. I'm not going to hurt you.

She tugs. He's like an anchor. She can't budge him.

STEPHANIE

Uh, come inside ... go with me ... uh, walk this way ... uh, roll this way. Move out. Giddyap? Come forward ...

"Forward" is a programmed command word he understands. He lurches toward her.

NUMBER FIVE

Forward.

STEPHANIE

Good! Okay!

But now he's getting too close. She stumbles back.

STEPHANIE

Okay, stop. Stop!

NUMBER FIVE

Stop.

He stops, but too late. She topples out the door and lands on her butt.

EXT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

She gets up quickly, not wanting to offend the alien.

STEPHANIE

See? I fell down. Now I'm getting up. My butt is bruised but, hey, that's okay. Come on.

Rushing to the house, she opens the front door.

STEPHANIE

Come on in. Enter. Oh, yeah, I mean, forward.

Number Five comes out of the truck and rolls toward her.

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

As Number Five rumbles in, Stephanie's animals scramble frantically out the back door.

STEPHANIE

Hey guys, it's okay! He's a friend.  
(to Number Five)  
You know how lower life forms are  
... always a little skittish around  
new people ... aliens ... whatever.

Number Five surveys the living room.

NUMBER FIVE

Malfunction. Need input.

STEPHANIE

Input, right, you got it. This is a house. We live within it ... inside it.

She continues her tour of Earth, pointing out each of the following:

STEPHANIE

We got, uh, a floor, and the  
opposite of floor ... ceiling ...  
windows, a doorknob ...

She fans her arms.

STEPHANIE

... and air. And look over here  
...

She turns on her RECORD PLAYER.

STEPHANIE

Music ...

She leads him over to a bookshelf, filled with books, photo albums, records, potted plants, a goldfish in a little bowl, an ant farm, and a couple of gerbils running in a wheel.

Number Five watches her every move, closely observing each thing she points out. She's happy she's doing such a great job.

STEPHANIE

This is a plant. And this is a  
goldfish ... these are my ants ...  
these little guys are gerbils ...  
They're mammals ... Perkins and  
Cousteau.

Number Five spots a small globe of the Earth and grabs it.

STEPHANIE

(going with it)  
There you go! That's Earth, where  
I currently reside.

CLOSE ON GLOBE - NORTH AMERICA

Stephanie's hand enters, pointing out the U.S.

STEPHANIE

You are here.

NUMBER FIVE

Input! Input!

STEPHANIE

Okay okay, I'm doing my best.

She looks around, grabs an encyclopedia volume, opens it.

STEPHANIE

Okay, how about pictures? Look at this ... "aardvark" ... it's a marsupial ...

He snatches the book from her.

NUMBER FIVE

Input!

He begins scanning the page.

STEPHANIE

You can read?

He stops, pointing insistently at one word.

NUMBER FIVE

"Proboscis." Input: "Proboscis."

STEPHANIE

What's the word mean? I'm sorry, I don't know? I have a dictionary, though.

She pulls out her dictionary and starts to look up the word, but he grabs the book from her. He reads through it, flipping pages faster and faster until they're a blur.

INT. NOVA SEARCH VAN - NIGHT

Bleary-eyed, Crosby drives slowly along a rural road, scanning the landscape with a spotlight. Ben sits crammed in with their hastily assembled equipment, consulting monitors, oscilloscopes, etc. Crosby GRINDS the gears horribly.

BEN

Try the clutch, Cros.

CROSBY

(dead pan)

I thought it was optional. You got anything?

Ben shakes his head and starts digging through an ice chest.

BEN

Nah, let's take a break. I'm starved. What'd you bring?

Ben takes out a can of stew and a box of frozen waxed beans and stares at them in disbelief; then drops them back into the ice chest.

BEN

Great, just pull over at the next available stove. Not into roughing it, huh, Cros? You better sell that place in Montana.

CROSBY

No way. That's for my retirement.

BEN

You've never even been there! You're more the apartment type. Weren't you ever a Boy Scout or anything?

CROSBY

They hounded me out of troop 47.

BEN

Weren't Scout material, huh?

CROSBY

I wasn't boy material.

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Number Five finishes reading, leaving all the books in a heap around him. Stephanie dashes to a chalk board by her phone, scribbling a note:

STEPHANIE

(out loud)

Alien learns to read: 10:37 pm.

Now Number Five begins exploring in earnest. He begins recognizing things. He picks up a half-filled glass of iced tea.

NUMBER FIVE

Vessel, container, drinking glass.

STEPHANIE

Yeah ... right ... very good!

He dumps it upside down, curiously, as a child would.

Stephanie remains the unflappable hostess. Now he's trashing the place: turning over chairs, pulling down the curtains, pulling up the carpet, dumping the cupboards. Examines it, names it, drops it. Examines it, names it, drops it.

STEPHANIE

Like, hey, I don't want to be rude but ...

He pays her no mind. He's an out-of-control demolition machine.

STEPHANIE

(more frantic)

Hey! Come on! This may be hilarious where you come from, but on this planet it's considered, well ... bad housekeeping.

She gets a desperate idea. She lunges for the TV, switching it

ON.

STEPHANIE

(to herself)

It works on kids.

(to Number Five)

Hey! How about some input!

His stares at the TV.

NUMBER FIVE

Input!

He zips over to the TV, spellbound. A THREE STOOGES short begins. He watches raptly. Now that she's got the chance, Stephanie pulls out her camera.

STEPHANIE

(embarrassed)

With your permission ... let's face it, you could make us both rich.

She snaps a few angles of the robot.

STEPHANIE

(to herself)

I could take care of as many animals as I want. I could buy a farm somewhre.

Number Five ignores her. He's glued to the tube.

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - PRE-DAWN

Start CLOSE ON TV SET. The channels keep changing. We see tough-talking GEORGE RAFT in a gangster movie and JOHN WAYNE in a stand-off with the bad guys. Next there's a hammy, melodramatic death scene in which the HEROINE goes into major hysterics.

TV HEROINE

Dead! Dead! Dear heaven it cannot  
be! My beloved Frederick dead!

She collapses in tears.

PULL OUT to see Stephanie, asleep on the sofa. The screaming  
heroine wakes her up. Groggy and stiff, she gazes at Number  
Five.

STEPHANIE

Have you been watching all night?

She crawls over and turns the set OFF. Then, reluctantly,  
she starts the monumental job of cleaning up.

STEPHANIE

No, no, don't get up. It's no  
bother.

Number Five turns the TV back ON.

STEPHANIE

Hey, you've had enough of that  
stuff.

She turns it OFF.

STEPHANIE

You lose IQ points the longer you  
watch. They've done studies.

He turns it back ON. She snaps it OFF.

STEPHANIE

Give me a break!

NUMBER FIVE

(TV announcer voice)

"Give me a break,' 'Lonely Little  
Lady.' 'Smile your tears away,'  
and dozens of other hits, all in  
this big two record set. You can't  
buy this collection in any store,  
so call now!"

We discover that Number Five can flawlessly duplicate any  
voice he hears.

STEPHANIE

(amazed)

You learned to talk ...?

NUMBER FIVE

Replicate, reproduce, imitate.

STEPHANIE

Oh ... you're just copying. You don't know what the words mean.

NUMBER FIVE

Words ... "Words from our sponsor."  
(changes to different voice)  
"Are you tired of bills piling up ... All those checks every month? Simplify your life with ... "

STEPHANIE

(interrupting)  
Okay, okay! Now listen, you're talking real well, but you got to use your own words. You didn't come all this way to do commercials, did you?  
(pause)  
Of course, not. Come here.

She leads him out the back door.

EXT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAWN

The sunrise is beautiful, the sun just peeking over the horizon.

STEPHANIE

Look. Just look at that.

He doesn't look.

NUMBER FIVE

Look.

She grabs his head and turns it toward the sunrise.

STEPHANIE

No, look. His eyes go wide with wonder.

NUMBER FIVE

Beautiful!

STEPHANIE

Yeah, there you go! That's what counts on this planet.

NUMBER FIVE

Light bulb.

STEPHANIE

No, sun.

NUMBER FIVE  
Beautiful no sun.

STEPHANIE  
(gently correcting)  
Beautiful ... sun.

NUMBER FIVE  
Beautiful sun.

Number Five points at a squirrel.

NUMBER FIVE  
Beautiful animal, mammal, squirrel.

He points at the grass.

NUMBER FIVE  
Beautiful floor, carpet, rug.

STEPHANIE  
(laughs)  
Not quite. Right idea, though.  
It's grass ... a lawn.

NUMBER FIVE  
Beautiful lawn.

He points at the sky.

NUMBER FIVE  
Beautiful ceiling, roof, sky.

STEPHANIE  
(delighted)  
That's it. Fantastic! Keep at  
it. I'll be right back.

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Stephanie rushes to her phone, dials. While she waits she scribbles on the refrigerator.

STEPHANIE  
(out loud)  
6:05 am. Alien starts making sense  
...  
(into phone)  
Oh, operator, yeah, I need the  
number for Time Magazine, Newsweek,  
People, TV Guide, Reader's Digest,  
American Pet Owner ...

EXT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY

Number Five is advancing on Beasley, the dog, who is backing up, terrified.

NUMBER FIVE

Beautiful animal, mammal, canine,  
dog ... Cocker Spaniel ...

Beasley lunges forward, SNARLING and BARKING. Startled Number Five zooms backward across the yard, hits the back porch step, tips over, and SKIDS into the kitchen.

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

He comes to rest at Stephanie's feet. She drops the phone.

STEPHANIE

Oh my God! What happened? Are  
you hurt?

He doesn't move.

STEPHANIE

Oh please don't be hurt! Say  
something!

He points up at the ceiling.

NUMBER FIVE

Beautiful ceiling.

Stephanie's eye is drawn to a tiny metal plate riveted to the underside of his body. Her jaw drops as she reads:

STEPHANIE

"S.A.I.N.T. Prototype. Number 5.  
Nova Robotics, San Marcos,  
California, 90076."

STEPHANIE

(crushed)

You're a robot? I ... I thought  
you were alive, Number Five.

(anger building)

I let you tear my house to shreds,  
and you're a machine ... a robot  
... from that dumb war lab place!  
God, I'm so stupid!

Number Five rights himself and gazes at her.

NUMBER FIVE

"Stupid:" foolish, gullible,  
doltish, chuckle-headed ...

STEPHANIE

Shut up!

NUMBER FIVE

"Shut up:" silence, hush, muzzle,  
pipe down ...

She snatches up her phone book.

STEPHANIE

(muttering)

Oh, yeah, we were going to be on  
the cover of People Magazine and  
everything. I was going to buy a  
ranch with the money. The New Age  
Home for Abused Animals.

She finds the number and dials, glaring at Number Five.

Suddenly she brightens with a new idea.

STEPHANIE

Hey, what am I getting P.O.'d about?  
I bet there's a reward out for  
you.

(into phone)

Hello? I think I've got something  
that belongs to you.

INT. LAB - MASTER CONTROL - DAY

Marner, tired and unshaven, slouches in a chair. Phillips  
suddenly shouts from across the room.

PHILLIPS

Somebody found him! Line three!

Marner sits bolt upright.

MARNER

(to Phillips)

Put this over the radio!

(to Stephanie; suddenly  
sweet)

Hello, Dr. Marner here.

(pause)

Yes ... Yes. Exactly where are  
you located?

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

STEPHANIE

(into phone)

Well, I'm on the sofa ... in the living room ... about eight feet from the front door ... about six feet from the kitchen ... why?

INT. NOVA SEARCH VAN - DAY

Ben and Crosby are riveted to the radio, listening in on the conversation.

MARNER (V.O.)

No, Miss Thurber, I mean your address.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)

Oh, 3101 Misty Pines Avenue, in Littleton ... 97012.

Crosby GRINDS the gears. The van lurches. Ben winces.

BEN

Let's go! Clutch ... shift ... accelerator!

EXT. STONEWALL'S JEEP - DAY

Stonewall, and Commandos in trucks behind him, are listening in, too.

STONEWALL

Move out!

INT. MASTER CONTROL - DAY

Marner is still on the phone with Stephanie.

MARNER

(into phone)

Now listen carefully. Our people are on their way. In the meantime, it's very important that you keep a safe distance from the unit.

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

STEPHANIE

Yeah? How come?

Behind her, Number Five is exploring again, heading into the kitchen. He calmly rolls right through the screen door, and out into the back yard. INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION AS

DESIRED.

MARNER

Well, it's malfunctioning a little.  
We need to disassemble it and check  
it out. It's ... it could be ...  
a little unstable.

STEPHANIE

A little? He trashed my whole  
house!

MARNER

I'm truly sorry. Nova will make  
every effort to compensate you  
fully for any inconvenience. For  
now, if you could just keep it as  
isolated as possible and not let  
anyone interact with it, we'd really  
appreciate it.

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

STEPHANIE

Hey, no problem. I'm watching him  
like a hawk.

She notices Number Five is gone.

STEPHANIE

Hey!

She drops the phone and sprints out.

EXT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY

She races to overtake Number Five.

STEPHANIE

Hey you, Number Five, where are  
you going? You're gonna scare my  
animals, bozo. Get back in the  
house.

The sky is full of bright, puffy clouds. He points up at  
them.

NUMBER FIVE

Goldfish.

She looks where he points.

STEPHANIE

No, I think you've got another malfunction going there ... oh, you mean the cloud! Yeah, it does look sort of like a goldfish.

NUMBER FIVE

Big Mac ... TV set ... rhinoceros.

STEPHANIE

(impatient)

Okay, I'm impressed. You got a great imagination! Now, listen, I called Nova and they're coming out to get you. They're gonna give you a tune up.

NUMBER FIVE

"Tune up?"

STEPHANIE

Yeah, take you apart ... find which screw is loose.

NUMBER FIVE

"Apart:" Undone, dismantle, dissect, disassemble ...

A grasshopper hops past. Number Five immediately starts hopping after it, pointing like a child.

NUMBER FIVE

Jump ...

STEPHANIE

Yeah, jump. It's a grasshopper.

NUMBER FIVE

"Grasshopper:" ... Orthopterous insect.

STEPHANIE

I guess. Come on, now. I'm supposed to keep you from interacting. Let's go back inside. Come on, be a good robot. Stop. Turn around ... HEY!

Number Five swivels his head to look back at her, but keeps rolling forward, accidentally crushing the poor sweet little grasshopper. That hits a nerve with Stephanie.

STEPHANIE

Oh, damn it! You klutz! Look what you did.

Number Five backs up and his eyes telescope out for a closer look at the ex-grasshopper.

NUMBER FIVE

Error. Grasshopper disassemble.  
Reassemble.

STEPHANIE

Huh?

NUMBER FIVE

Reassemble.

STEPHANIE

You can't reassemble him. You  
squashed him. He's dead.

The word clicks. There's a hint of emotion in Number Five's voice.

NUMBER FIVE

Dead?

STEPHANIE

Right.

NUMBER FIVE

(urgently)  
Reassemble. Reassemble.

She can't stay angry, even with a machine. She softens.

STEPHANIE

Look, I'm sorry I yelled. I know  
you don't understand. But ...  
when you're dead, you're dead.  
You could put him back together,  
but he'd still be dead. Dead is  
forever.

She tugs on his arm.

STEPHANIE

Now come on!

He won't budge. He's processing the concept.

NUMBER FIVE

Squash ... dead. Disassemble ...  
dead. Disassemble ... DEAD!

Suddenly he's zooming away, dragging her along.

STEPHANIE

Hey! Slow down!

She lets go, tumbling to the ground. He speeds for the catering truck.

STEPHANIE

No, bozo! In the house! You get  
into that house this instant!

But he's climbing into the truck, bounding into the driver's seat.

INT. CATERING TRUCK - DAY

He scans the controls in confusion.

NUMBER FIVE

Input! Input!

Stephanie dashes up to the door.

STEPHANIE

Hey! Get out of there!

Number Five's arm shoots out and holds the door shut.

Stephanie heaves on it. She's no match.

STEPHANIE

What's the matter?

With another hand Number Five digs through the glove compartment. He finds a book ... it's the Operator's Manual.

He starts speed reading.

NUMBER FIVE

Input!

He sees the picture of the door locks, and promptly locks the doors.

STEPHANIE

You better not do anything to my  
truck. I still got payments on  
it!

One eye on the manual, Number Five starts working controls.

The windshield wipers squirt, the horn BLARES, the radio BLASTS. He finishes the manual and throws it over his shoulder. He reaches for the ignition, but there's no key.

NUMBER FIVE

"Insert key." Key? Key?

Undaunted, he brings up his tool-hand. It's like a Swiss army knife, loaded with every imaginable tool along with some we've never imagined. He selects a strange-looking, metal probe and inserts it into the ignition.

STEPHANIE

Oh my God. What are you doing?  
Don't tamper!

The engine ROARS. Number Five jams down the clutch with one hand, and shifts with the other, accelerates with the third.

EXT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - DAY

The catering truck lurches down the drive, Stephanie desperately sprints after it.

STEPHANIE

Knock it off!

Barely managing to catch onto the bumper, she flings open the rear door and clambers in.

INT. CATERING TRUCK - DAY

Number Five careens crazily down the street. Cabinets fly open. Food, pots and pans fall on Stephanie as she struggles toward the front.

STEPHANIE

You better be insured because you're  
really in it now!

INT. NOVA SEARCH VAN - DAY

Ben mans the search equipment, hanging on nervously ...

Crosby's driving about as well as Number Five.

BEN

Hey, Cros, we're getting close.  
He's on the scope again.

CROSBY

Good.

BEN

Nope. Bad. He's moving ... real  
fast. Must be in a vehicle.

CROSBY

Is she driving him somewhere?  
Didn't Marner tell her to stay  
put?

INT. CATERING TRUCK - DAY

She tries to grab the steering wheel from Number Five.

STEPHANIE

Let go! Let go!

It might as well be set in concrete.

STEPHANIE

Okay, now I'm serious. Stop this truck!

He doesn't. The engine is OVER-REVVING, still in first gear.

STEPHANIE

Well, shift, at least!

Number Five concentrates on shifting ... and swerves off the road, bouncing over rough ground.

STEPHANIE

Nice work, canhead! Get it on the road!

NUMBER FIVE

"Road:" Highway, street, lane ... thoroughfare.

STEPHANIE

Je-zus! See that white line? Follow it!

EXT. STREET - CATERING TRUCK - DAY

He swerves back and centers the truck on the center line ... so now he's blocking both lanes. Oncoming cars swerve around them.

INT. CATERING TRUCK - DAY

STEPHANIE

No, no! Keep to the right of it! Right! Right!

NUMBER FIVE

"Right:" Accurate, correct, proper, appropriate ...

STEPHANIE

No! No! Right! This side! Over here! My side! ... Starboard!

NUMBER FIVE

Starboard.

He zips into the correct lane. He's doing pretty well now.  
Stephanie catches her breath.

STEPHANIE

Okay, okay. That's good on the steering. Now let's try the brakes ... The brakes! Stop, dammit! What's the matter? What are you doing?

NUMBER FIVE

Flee, elude, evade ... escape!

STEPHANIE

Escape from what? What are you afraid of?

NUMBER FIVE

Nova ... Disassemble ... dead.  
Disassemble ... dead!

Stephanie is speechless for a moment.

EXT. ORCHARD ROAD - CATERING TRUCK - DAY

The truck is out of town now, traveling alongside an orchard.

The road narrows. The white center line disappears. Number Five looks around. He sees a white irrigation pipe which runs down a slope and into an orange grove. He follows it.

INT. CATERING TRUCK - DAY

STEPHANIE

Now what are you doing?!

He points at the white pipe.

NUMBER FIVE

White line.

EXT. ORCHARD - DAY

The truck rumbles down into the orchard and zooms along between two rows of trees, oranges bouncing off the truck like ping-pong balls.

INT. CATERING TRUCK - DAY

STEPHANIE

Now listen! This line doesn't count! There's no road here!

She looks ahead.

P.O.V. STEPHANIE

At the end of the orchard the pipe spans a huge, deep ditch.

BACK TO SCENE

STEPHANIE

(frantic now)

Oh jeez! Number Five, stop! You're going to kill me! Dead!

NUMBER FIVE

Disassemble.

STEPHANIE

Yes! Disassemble all over the place!

NUMBER FIVE

Disassemble. No.

EXT. ORCHARD - CATERING TRUCK - DAY

Number Five suddenly hits the brakes. The truck SKIDS wildly to a stop, front wheels hanging off the brink of the ditch.

Stephanie scrambles out of the truck and stands trembling.

STEPHANIE

Thank you. I'll be getting out now.

Catching her breath; calming a little, she moves around to the driver's side and talks to Number Five through the window.

STEPHANIE

You're scared of Nova? Scared they'll take you apart?

NUMBER FIVE

Disassemble ... dead! Disassemble ... dead!

STEPHANIE

But, you can't die. You're a robot ... a machine.

NUMBER FIVE

No!

STEPHANIE

No, you're not a machine?

NUMBER FIVE

Yes.

STEPHANIE

Yes, you're not? Or yes, you are?

NUMBER FIVE

No.

STEPHANIE

No what?

NUMBER FIVE

No, yes.

STEPHANIE

Talk about malfunction!

Slowly, laboriously, Number Five puts together his first sentence.

NUMBER FIVE

Malfunction is ... Number Five ...  
is alive ...

Taken aback, Stephanie just stares at him.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NOVA SECURITY VEHICLES - DAY

With Stonewall's jeep in the lead, the convoy screams down the highway.

EXT. NOVA SEARCH VAN - ORCHARD ROAD - DAY

The van zooms past the orchard and suddenly skids to stop. We SEE Ben pointing frantically toward the orchard. Then Crosby plunges the van down the embankment into the trees.

INT. CATERING TRUCK - DAY

Stephanie is back in the truck, reasoning with Number Five.

STEPHANIE

... but you're a machine. You  
can't die. They'll give you a  
lube job or whatever, put you back  
together and you'll feel great.

He's very nervous, moving erratically.

NUMBER FIVE

Error. Error.

STEPHANIE

(trying to comfort him)

These guys are your friends. They're super smart, and I just bet they're a really nice bunch of people ...

(to herself)

I can't believe I'm trying to reason with a robot.

Outside the catering truck, the search van comes SKIDDING to a halt. Number Five's eyes telescope out. He sees the Nova insignia on the van.

NUMBER FIVE

(terrified)

NOVA! DISASSEMBLE! DEAD!

He zips to the back of the catering truck and covers himself with a garbage bag. Stephanie's moved, as one would be by a frightened puppy. She sees Ben beckoning urgently to her.

STEPHANIE

Aww, Number Five, don't be scared.

(pause)

Just wait here a sec.

EXT. NOVA SEARCH VAN - DAY

Stephanie strolls over. Ben guides Number One out of the van, using a handheld remote control unit. Crosby is already TYPING furiously on a computer terminal.

STEPHANIE

Geez, more of them! How many of these guys you got, anyway?

Ben hauls her behind the van and keeps a nervous watch on the catering truck.

BEN

Get behind the van. It's armored. Why didn't you stay put?

STEPHANIE

Me!? Talk to your robot. He did the driving.

CROSBY

(astonished)

The robot drove that truck!?

BEN

Could it do that ... ? Teach itself to drive?

Fascinated, Crosby struggles for an explanation.

CROSBY

Maybe ... with some off-the-wall  
interfacing between the motor skills  
and ...

(shrugs)

something or other ...

BEN

Your boy's got talent!

Crosby breaks into a proud grin and turns back to his terminal.

CROSBY

Yeah! Such a show off.

STEPHANIE

So what are these guys for, anyway?

CROSBY

(confidentially)

The Postal Service. We're getting  
rid of mailmen.

It's clear she's not going to get a straight answer from these guys. She turns to Number One.

STEPHANIE

How ya doing? You're little  
brother's hiding in my truck.

Number One doesn't respond. Crosby frowns at his monitor.

Ben and Stephanie look over his shoulder. Again and again the message comes:

INSERT - ON COMPUTER MONITOR

NUMBER FIVE ... ALIVE ... LIVING ... CONTINUE  
... ENDURE ... SURVIVE!

BACK TO SCENE

Crosby punches the monitor in frustration.

CROSBY

(to monitor)

Shut up! Let me get a word in  
here! You're embarrassing me in  
front of company.

STEPHANIE

Can I ask a stupid question? Why don't you just go in and get him?

BEN

We enjoy life too much, that's why.

STEPHANIE

Are we all talking about the same robot? He's just scared is all.

Crosby turns to her.

CROSBY

It's not "scared." Look, what it's doing is really very simple. It's just that it's ... very complicated.

He turns back to his terminal.

BEN

I work with a genius. I'm the apprentice genius.

STEPHANIE

I'm telling you, he's scared. Scared that if you you take him apart he's going to die.

They stare at her.

CROSBY

Who told you that?

STEPHANIE

He did. He'd tell you if you'd just talk to him.

Crosby holds up his terminal keyboard.

CROSBY

That's what I've been doing.

STEPHANIE

I mean with your mouth. Look ...

She steps around the van and into the open. Ben grabs her.

BEN

Whoa! Stay under cover!

STEPHANIE

Okay, okay.

(calls out)

Hey, Number Five. They just want you to come out.

CROSBY

(to Ben)

Who is this woman?

STEPHANIE

(to Crosby)

Give me a second!

(to Number Five)

These guys just want to talk to you. Come on out. They're your friends.

Number Five peeks out the door of the truck. Crosby and Ben are stunned.

STEPHANIE

(proudly)

See, he listens to me just fine.

(to Number Five)

Just come out and tell them what you told me. They don't understand.

NUMBER FIVE

No disassemble.

STEPHANIE

Come on. It's okay. Come forward ... remember "forward?"

Number Five rolls cautiously into the open.

CROSBY

(grabbing at straws)

She ... somehow ... she's hitting key command words.

BEN

No she isn't. And even if she was, why is it listening to her and not us?

STEPHANIE

Okay, now tell them what you said to me.

NUMBER FIVE

Number Five ...

He's drowned out by the the ROAR of truck motors as Stonewall and the commandos arrive. Stonewall BELLOWS over a bullhorn.

STONEWALL

There it is! Establish a perimeter!  
Move! Move!

Trucks are everywhere. Dust swirls. Frightened Security men leap out. Number Five's head spins. Stephanie's head spins. Now rifles are everywhere, leveled at Number Five. He pulls his head down into combat position. Crosby dashes toward Stonewall's jeep.

CROSBY

Stonewall, take it easy! We've  
got it under control!

His voice is drowned by the general NOISE. Retreating toward the catering truck, terrified Number Five brings out his laser. We see equally terrified Otis and Duke leveling their rifles.

OTIS

HE'S GONNA SHOOT!

Thunderous GUNFIRE rips the air. Ben pulls Stephanie to the ground. She covers her head, SCREAMING in terror.

Number Five fires back. With incredible precision his laser melts down the attackers' gun barrels ...

But there are too many for him. Number Five is hit repeatedly. Two of his arms go limp; he whirls spastically ...

CROSBY

Stop!

Crosby runs right into the line of fire.

STONEWALL

Crosby, you crazy bastard!  
(to his men)  
Hold your fire! Hold your fire!

Crosby runs to the robot. The only arm left working is the delicate tool-arm, snapping at him pathetically. Crosby pulls out his special penlight, trying to hit the light-sensitive disk with the decoding beam. Number Five tries to block the beam, but Crosby succeeds and Number Five's armored chest panel slides open.

A few feet away, Stephanie raises her head, shaken.

## NUMBER FIVE

No disassemble! Alive! Number  
Five alive! Ste-pha-nie! Ste-pha-  
nie ...!

His voice is cut off and he goes limp as Crosby manages to punch the large red button inside the chest panel. Now, only Number Five's head can move.

## STEPHANIE

Number Five ... I'm sorry.

In the following shouting match, Stonewall BELLOWS his lines over his bullhorn.

## STONEWALL

Crosby, what in hell is the matter with you?

## CROSBY

I don't want the unit destroyed!

## STONEWALL

For chrissake, it might have french-fried us all!

## CROSBY

Who are you talking to? I know how it works! I've got to have it intact. I've got to study it!

## STONEWALL

Well, that thing better be safe!

## CROSBY

It's safe! It's safe! I cut all power to its arms and laser.

Stonewall gestures to some Commandos. They gingerly load Number Five into a robot transport truck. His head still moves around, eyes staring at Stephanie. She looks away ...

... and now she's on her feet, shouting.

## STEPHANIE

You're all crazy! You call this a repair job? You shot him!

## CROSBY

Uh, take it easy. The robot's safe with me ...

## STONEWALL (over bullhorn)

Crosby, don't talk to her! She has to be debriefed.

BEN

Relax. We'll debrief her. You  
can re-debrief her.

STEPHANIE

You didn't have to shoot him! He  
... he trusted me!

Crosby tries to reassure her.

CROSBY

Take it easy, okay? It's only a  
machine. It doesn't get angry. It  
doesn't get happy. It doesn't  
laugh at your jokes ...

CROSBY/BEN

... it just runs programs.

STEPHANIE

(plaintive)

But ... he was really acting scared,  
just like a person ...

CROSBY

Believe me, I understand. They  
can seem quite lifelike. But  
they're still just machines, just  
like your stereo or your vacuum  
cleaner.

She hopes he's right. She watches as Ben remote-controls  
Number One back into the van. It moves stiffly and  
lifelessly.

STEPHANIE

(suspicious)

This is the same as Number Five?

BEN

Down to the last chip.

She rushes over and grabs Number One's arm. She points at  
the sky.

STEPHANIE

Hey, you. What do you see?

Crosby and Ben exchange glances. Ben hits buttons on his  
remote control.

BEN

Number One: visual, forty-five  
degrees ...

Its head tilts up.

STEPHANIE

What do you see?

BEN

Analyze visual field.

NUMBER ONE

(flat, lifeless)

Atmosphere. Eight parts water  
vapor. Seventy-seven parts  
nitrogen. Twenty-three parts oxygen  
...

STEPHANIE

What are you looking at? Don't  
you see the giraffe, and ... and  
that big tennis racket?

She's getting upset. She whirls to Crosby.

STEPHANIE

This dummy is nothing like Number  
Five! You sure you know what's  
going on here?

Crosby starts walking toward the transport truck.

CROSBY

Well, sure ... I mean, yes.

She rushes after him.

STEPHANIE

Well, just how do you explain what  
my robot was doing?

CROSBY

It's the erratic accessing of any  
of a number of multi-dimensional  
sub-routines.

STEPHANIE

I don't even understand that, and  
I don't believe it.

They reach the transport truck. In the back we can SEE  
DRUMMOND, the driver, bolting Number Five into special clamps  
that hold his treads.

DRUMMOND

(to Number Five)

Back to the drawing board, hot  
shot.

CROSBY

(to Ben)

Ben, go with Number Five. Make sure they don't switch off the memory.

Ben hops into the truck's cab.

BEN

Yo.

(to Stephanie)

Nice meeting you ...

(under his breath)

... fruit basket.

CROSBY

(to Stephanie)

It's okay ... really ... we're not going to hurt it.

Stonewall marches past, taking Stephanie's arm and leading her away.

STONEWALL

Come on, Miss. Everything's under control.

INT. NOVA TRANSPORT TRUCK - MOVING - DAY

In the cargo area, Number Five begins looking around, staring at the backs of Ben and Drummond. Dangling in a bracket on the wall above his head, he sees the wrench used to tighten the clamps. He has an idea ...

... He extends his head up as far as he can, then telescopes his eyes out as far as they'll go. He can just barely grab the wrench by bringing his lenses together like pincers. He lowers his head and, aiming this one shot with infinite care, drops the wrench onto the right switch in his still-open chest panel. His main motors HUM to life. His tool-hand works again!

Number Five starts working quietly, actually repairing himself before our eyes. Soldering wires, turning bolts, connecting hoses. Soon his other powerful arms are working.

Up front, Ben and Drummond have heard nothing over the RATTLING of the noisy truck.

Now Number Five uses his laser to start cutting a hole in the rear doors. The smoke drifts to the front. Drummond turns.

DRUMMOND

Hey, that ain't right, is it?

BEN

Je-zus!

Hearing them, Number Five turns, laser still glowing.

DRUMMOND

He ... he wouldn't shoot that laser  
at us, would he?

BEN

Possibility.

DRUMMOND

Will he kill us if I stop?

BEN

I don't know.

DRUMMOND

Will he kill us if I don't stop?

BEN

I don't know.

Drummond hits the brakes.

DRUMMOND

I'm stopping!

The momentum slides Number Five forward until the three are  
eye to eye. The men are terrified. Drummond fumbles for  
his pistol.

BEN

Don't let him see a gun!

Too late. Number Five reaches out and snaps Drummond's pistol  
in half.

NUMBER FIVE

Furious, livid, perturbed ...  
Angry.

They sit, frozen.

DRUMMOND

Will he kill us if we make a break  
for it?

BEN

I don't know.

DRUMMOND

What the hell they pay you for?

EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY

Ben and Drummond burst from the truck and dash down the road.

They turn as they hear the truck ENGINE start. Its turn signal blinking, the truck drives away, lurching and weaving.

NUMBER FIVE (V.O.)  
Clutch ... shift ... accelerator.

INT. NOVA TRANSPORT TRUCK - MOVING - DAY

As he drives, Number Five notices the blinking blip on the truck's tracking scope. Examining his body he discovers the homing device blinking in sync with the blip on the scope.

He looks back and forth between the two -- figuring it out.

He brings up his tool-hand and swiftly detaches the homing device from his body.

EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY

Bedraggled Ben and Drummond wait beside the road. Crosby drives up in the search van. The three men stare silently at each other for a long moment. At last, Ben bursts out with:

BEN  
(non-stop)  
Well, it turned its torso motors back on, repaired itself, scared the dooty out of us, and drove off in our truck. I know it's impossible, I can't explain it, you designed it, you figure it out!

INT. NOVA TRANSPORT TRUCK - DAY

Number Five weaves confidently down the road, holding the blinking homing device in one hand. He delicately rolls down the driver's side window and prepares to throw the beacon ... but waits. He sees what he wants.

P.O.V. - NUMBER FIVE - ROAD - PICK-UP TRUCK - DAY

A pick-up truck is jouncing along a parallel road a few hundred yards away.

BACK TO SCENE

Number Five winds up, his arm spinning like a fan blade.

SPROING! He throws the homing device like a bullet.

INT. NOVA SEARCH VAN - MOVING - DAY

Ben's again watching the tracking scope. The green blip suddenly makes a quick 90 degree turn.

BEN

It just made a ninety degree turn  
... at ninety-six miles an hour!

Crosby wheels the truck into a U-turn.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

The transmitter arcs across the sky, landing in a grocery bag in the back of the pick-up.

EXT. TRANSPORT TRUCK - MOVING - DAY

Number Five zooms down the road, driving pretty well now. We hear CLICK of the truck's AM RADIO.

INT. TRANSPORT TRUCK - MOVING - DAY

Number Five twiddles the dial until he finds some MUSIC he likes. He TAPS in time with one hand. He gets into it, doing a drum solo with all his hands and almost losing control of the truck. He quickly re-grasps the wheel looking around with embarrassment.

EXT. PICK-UP TRUCK - DAY

The truck is stopped. We SEE the passengers, an OLD FARMER and his WIFE, sitting stiffly, wide-eyed, in their seats. REVEAL that they're surrounded by Nova security vehicles and men, guns leveled at them.

WIFE

Always told you to pay that ticket.

EXT. ROADSIDE - NOVA TRANSPORT TRUCK - DAY

The truck lurches to a stop, out of gas. The engine GRINDS and won't start. Number Five is perplexed. A big rig pulls up, and two truckers, RALPH and BOBBY, saunter over.

RALPH

Sounds like you're out of gas,  
friend.

(sees Number Five)

Holy ... ! Look at this, Bobby!  
They got 'em driving trucks now! I  
can't believe it!

BOBBY  
(menacingly)  
My brother just lost his job to a  
goddamn machine, too.

Ralph grabs Number Five by the neck, shaking him. Bobby  
picks up a rock.

RALPH  
Hey, pencil neck, you don't look  
like a Teamster to me!

BOBBY  
Let's vandalize his ass.

NUMBER FIVE  
"Vandalize:" damage, destroy, ...  
disassemble!

BLAM! Number Five tears right through the transport truck  
door, bowling the men over as he races away. Ralph struggles  
to his knees.

RALPH  
Sonofabitch. Maybe he is a  
Teamster.

INT. LAB - MASTER CONTROL - DAY

Crosby and Ben are surrounded by stacks of computer print-  
outs. Crosby holds the transmitter, staring at it.

CROSBY  
How could it lose this thing?

BEN  
Threw it away, I guess.

CROSBY  
It wouldn't ... it couldn't do  
that. I never programmed anything  
like that ... 'Course, I never  
told it to run around shouting  
"I'm alive, I'm alive," either.

Ben holds up the prints-outs

BEN  
There is an explanation, right?  
It's got to be here ... somewhere  
... in the programming, right?

Crosby throws down the transmitter.

CROSBY

I'm thinking along the lines of  
voodoo, myself.

Stonewall and Marner come rushing into the room.

STONEWALL

Hah! There's the man who says the  
robot's harmless. You got a lead  
on that fugitive yet, Crosby?

CROSBY

Fugitive! Aren't we talking about  
a robot?

STONEWALL

A fugitive robot.

MARNER

Forget what you call it! Our job  
is to destroy it!

CROSBY

Whoa, Howard ... I'm not saying I  
know what's going on with Number  
Five. But this is no simple  
malfunction. This is unique, maybe  
one of a kind ... and that's the  
kind of thing you do not blow up.

MARNER

Try me.

STONEWALL

(to Crosby)

How many kids you got, Doctor?

CROSBY

Huh?

STONEWALL

I got three of them, living not  
ten miles from here. It's out  
there in the real world. Where  
real people live.

MARNER

Crosby, the issue isn't data  
retrieval, it's public safety.  
I'm bringing in the local police,  
calling the press, the whole shot.  
(pause)

The S.A.I.N.T. project is dead.

Crosby and Ben are stunned by this. Crosby sinks into his chair.

MARNER

Your job is to do what you can from right here. You move from that terminal, and I'll assume you're out job hunting.

As Marner and Stonewall exit:

STONEWALL

Item number one: Roadblocks.  
Lots of them. Number two: get me some Hueys.

MARNER

Some what?

STONEWALL

Helicopters, Howard.

Crosby is fuming. Suddenly he kicks his chair. It skids across the room. Ben has to leap out of its way.

BEN

Hey! What are you doing?

CROSBY

(surprised at himself)  
I'm ... I'm getting pissed off!

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Stephanie is making a half-hearted attempt to clean up the shambles of her living room. There is a KNOCK at her door.

She shuffles over and opens it. Glaring camera light hits her and microphones are thrust at her by teams of highstrung NEWSPEOPLE, all talking at once.

NEWSPEOPLE

Stephanie Thurber? ... What does it look like? ... Why did the robot single you out? ... Did it try to molest you in any way?

EXT. ALLEY - AUTO WRECKING YARD - DAY

All we see at first is Number Five racing along a tall wooden fence, looking fearfully behind him. Up ahead, through a gate in the fence, he sees a car, apparently parked.

NUMBER FIVE

Transportation ... escape.

EXT. AUTO WRECKING YARD - CAR - DAY

He jumps into the car, and is trying to start it when a crane's huge electro-magnet slams down on the roof. Number Five's head and arms are magnetically yanked against the car's ceiling. He can't pull free. The crane hoists the car high into the air. REVEAL that this is a junked car being carried toward a massive car-crashing machine.

ANGLE - CAR CRUSHER

Number Five stares in terror down at the jaws of the machine as it smashes a car into a cube. Next it's his turn, and the crane drops his car into the machine.

Number Five frantically tries to open the doors, but there's no room. The machine starts crushing the car inch by inch ... the windows SHATTER ... metal SCREAMS ... The robot looks around in panic. Then, out comes his laser. He begins cutting a hole in the car roof. The car is getting smaller and smaller. Finally he punches out the hole and scrambles to safety just in time.

ANGLE - NUMBER FIVE

He races madly through this terrible graveyard of dead machinery. Mountains of mangled metal tower above him.

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Exhausted Stephanie has fallen asleep while taking a bath.

She's jolted awake by strange NOISES. The bathroom doorknob jiggles. She stares fearfully as the door slowly swings open and there stands ... a large shrub!

After a moment, Number Five's head pops out of the foliage.

NUMBER FIVE

Camouflage.

He rolls toward her, looking her up and down curiously.

NUMBER FIVE

Stephanie ... change color.

Embarrassed, Stephanie grabs a towel to cover herself.

STEPHANIE

Number Five! You got away from them!

NUMBER FIVE

Escape, elude, evade ...

STEPHANIE

Good for you ...! But why'd you  
come back here? If I were you I  
wouldn't even want to speak to me.

NUMBER FIVE

Stephanie: liar, traitor ...  
Benedict Arnold.

STEPHANIE

Hey, hey, they tricked me ...  
tricked, fooled ... bamboozled.  
They said you're just a machine.

NUMBER FIVE

Stephaine alive. Number Five alive.

STEPHANIE

You think you're alive. But those  
guys who built you say no way.  
And I don't know what to think.  
But I know you can't stay here.  
So go. Now.

NUMBER FIVE

Solitude, isolation, alone ...  
lonely.

She points sternly. He's not moving. Her heart is melting.

She's torn by guilt. But she's afraid, too.

STEPHANIE

Number Five, please! You could  
get me in a lot of trouble.

(pause)

If I went to jail who would take  
care of my animals? Nobody, that's  
who.

(pause)

Besides, you're a walking disaster  
area. Just look at my living room.

He rolls off toward the living room.

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

He scans the disaster zone.

NUMBER FIVE

Apology.

He picks up an issue of "Better Homes and Gardens" and studies  
the stylish living room on the cover. Stephanie dashes in,  
throwing on a robe.

STEPHANIE

Please don't break anything else.

He tentatively up-rights a candlestick on the coffee table.

NUMBER FIVE

(aesthetically pleased)

Better.

Number Five goes into action, but now he's a housekeeper's dream come true, cleaning up her living room at super speed, occasionally consulting the magazine for artistic pointers.

Wide-eyed, Stephanie backs out of his way. In a blur everything is repaired, cleaned, polished, dusted, and perfectly arranged. The finishing touch: he laser-zaps an instant cozy fire in the fireplace and slides up a chair into which Stephanie drops.

NUMBER FIVE

Clean, neat, cozy ... up-tempo.

He scoots into the kitchen, coming out with an open can of cold soup, fork stuck in it upside down. He holds it out to her.

NUMBER FIVE

(quoting, TV voice)

"A can of soup. A meal in itself."

She stares at him, speechless.

INT. LAB - GARAGE - NIGHT

The garage is filled with vehicles. A dark figure sneaks toward the search van. We move in. It's Crosby, holding some sort of hastily assembled electronic device. He's startled as he runs headlong into Ben, who is unloading the search van.

Ben realizes what Crosby's up to.

BEN

Naughty boy. You get in their way and Marner's going to do a big number two.

Crosby starts swiftly reloading the van.

CROSBY

Look, I can't just sit around here. Something amazing is going on. That little robot changed the rules on me. And I've got to find out how ... or why ... or something!

Suddenly, Stonewall, Marner and a few Security men enter.  
They stop short, astonished to see Crosby.

MARNER  
Crosby ...!

Crosby backs quickly toward the search van, pointing at the computer terminal inside.

CROSBY  
You said stay at my terminal, sir.  
There's my terminal.

He jumps in and starts the engine. Marner whirls and hits a button on the wall. A gate swiftly slams down, sealing the garage entrance.

INT. VAN

Crosby raises the electronic device we saw him carry in and punches a button. The gate instantly opens again. To Crosby's delight, Ben jumps in beside him.

BEN  
What the hell, I haven't been fired lately.

ANGLE

Marner and Stonewall gape helplessly as the van pulls out. Ben shouts back:

BEN  
Don't worry, Howard. I'm keeping tabs on him.

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Stephanie enters the living room studying a road map.

STEPHANIE  
I found it. It shows the whole state. There's plenty of places you could hide out.

She looks up from the map. Number Five is not in the room.

Then he comes rolling in from outside, carrying an uprooted rose bush, dirt dropping from the roots.

NUMBER FIVE  
For Stephanie ... bouquet.

STEPHANIE

(weary)

Now look, I know what you're up to. Believe me, I like you. I really do. But it's not safe here.

NUMBER FIVE

Stephanie home. Number Five home.

STEPHANIE

(moved)

Oh, Number Five, life's not that simple ...

She sits wearily, stares at him for a long moment. Then:

STEPHANIE

I'm going to sleep. We'll talk in the morning. Meantime, if they catch you here, I do not know you.

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Stephanie enters and collapses on the bed. A moment later, loud rock MUSIC BLARES from the living room.

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The stereo is BLASTING. Number Five is dancing back and forth across the room: bopping, popping, and duck-walking. With his ability to imitate sounds, he plays along with the music ... a one-robot rhythm section.

Stephanie appears in the doorway, watching her looney house-guest in disbelief. Finally she switches off the stereo.

STEPHANIE

For humans to sleep they need silence, large amounts of it.

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Stephanie flops onto her bed again. A moment later, bright light hits her face. She rolls over, squinting. Number Five is staring at her, his eyelights glaring.

STEPHANIE

Oh God, Number Five, shut off your eyes!

He shuts off the lights.

NUMBER FIVE

Sleep?

STEPHANIE

Yes, yes. This is sleep. Eyes closed, darkness, no noise, unconscious.

Number Five watches for a while. Then:

NUMBER FIVE

Tedium, ennui, boredom ... need input.

But she has fallen asleep. Number Five thinks ... then brightens up.

NUMBER FIVE

(whispers)

Television!

He wheels o.s. into the living room and SWITCHES on the television. We hear him SWITCHING CHANNELS until he finds quality entertainment ... we hear THE THREE STOOGES theme.

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Number Five holds a cookbook in one hand, following the instructions a bit too literally.

NUMBER FIVE

(reading out loud)

"Add two eggs to the flour and mix thoroughly ... "

He puts two unbroken eggs in a mixing bowl full of flour and milk, and thrusts in his tool-hand. With a loud WHIR, batter sprays all over the kitchen. He calmly turns the page.

NUMBER FIVE

" ... let bacon brown on one side, then turn over ... "

We see that he has a still-wrapped package of bacon burning in a frying pan. He obediently turns the pan upside down.

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Stephanie shuffles sleepily toward the kitchen, worried about the odd odors emanating from there. But she hears a CAR in the driveway.

P.O.V. STEPHANIE - DRIVEWAY

Frank is getting out of his red Trans-Am.

BACK TO SCENE

Stephanie hurries out the front door to intercept Frank.

EXT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - MORNING

Stephanie stands, arms folded, blocking her front door.

STEPHANIE

What the hell are you doing here,  
creep?

FRANK

Seen you on TV last night ... on  
the news.

STEPHANIE

Yeah, big celebrity. What do you  
want?

He advances steadily toward her.

FRANK

Now just calm down. You know  
there's a reward out for that robot?  
Ten thousand dollars. You're the  
only one that's seen it. I figure  
you can help me catch it.

She takes a step back into the doorway.

STEPHANIE

I should have known. Look, I don't  
know anything about it. You're  
wasting your time. Now get off my  
property!

She slams the door in his face and we hear it LOCK. Frank  
grins. He reaches up above the door sill and takes down her  
spare key. He unlocks the door.

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Stephanie tries to hold the door shut, but Frank bulls his  
way in.

STEPHANIE

Damn you, you parasite! Get out  
of my house. You don't live here!

FRANK

Now you listen, I ...

But at that moment Number Five comes bursting out of the  
kitchen.

In one hand he carries a tray piled with the bizarre breakfast he's been preparing. In the other he has a glass coffee pot.

NUMBER FIVE

Stephanie, breakfast! Eggs Benedict

...

He laser-zaps the coffee pot and it starts to boil.

NUMBER FIVE

... hot coffee. Mmmmm!

Number Five freezes as he sees Frank.

FRANK

Holy piss!

Frank grabs her, fearfully yanking her between him and the robot. Number Five watches with interest.

FRANK

You already caught it, you little liar!

STEPHANIE

Forget it, Frank. He's not going anywhere with you.

FRANK

Now you look! I took a lot of crap from you before, but this is big money we're talking about. I'll split it, fifty-fifty.

STEPHANIE

(thinking fast)

Okay, okay, but listen ... he's a computer. You gotta talk computer talk to him. Tell him exactly what you're doing, where you're going, or he won't move an inch, honest.

FRANK

(to Number Five)

Okay .... Well, I want you to come with me .... We'll take a ride in my car .... I'll take you home to Nova.

NUMBER FIVE

Nova!

The breakfast goes flying. Number Five is out of there, CRASHING through the back door.

FRANK  
You little bitch! What the hell  
you doing?

STEPHANIE  
Just showing you how stupid you  
are.

But Frank is already gone, bounding out the front door toward his car.

EXT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY

Frank yanks a battered old deer rifle out of the back seat of his car and runs toward the back of Stephanie's house.

EXT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY

Stephanie is already out back, looking for Number Five. She sees Frank run past with the rifle and charges after him.

STEPHANIE  
You maniac! You're so sick! Leave  
him alone!

EXT. STEPHANIE'S NEIGHBORHOOD - BACK YARDS - DAY

Frank runs along, looking everywhere, over hedges and fences and behind garbage cans, but he's lost Number Five. Stephanie catches up.

STEPHANIE  
Forget it! You lose! He's long  
gone. He can go thirty miles an  
hour, ya big stupid ...

Frank angrily grabs her, twisting her arm back in a Half-Nelson.

FRANK  
I'll show you how stupid I am.  
You know how it works. You're  
gonna help me catch it.

He yanks her along, back toward her house.

STEPHANIE  
Unlikely!

EXT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY

Frank drags Stephanie around from the back of the house.

But then Frank stops dead in his tracks, seeing his worst nightmare come true ...

... his car is completely disassembled ... down to the last nut and bolt! All the hundreds of parts are laid out neatly like a model car kit.

FRANK

My ... my car!

Number Five rolls into view near the parts, casually reading the Trans-Am shop manual.

STEPHANIE

(laughing)

Number Five! That's great!

Frank shoves Stephanie down and levels his rifle at Number Five.

FRANK

I'll blow its goddamn head off!

He FIRES. Faster than the eye can see, Number Five grabs a disk brake, using it to deflect the bullet.

NUMBER FIVE

(John Wayne)

"Say, Pilgrim, that like to parted my hair. You know, if you want to play rough, I can sure oblige you."

Frank aims at different parts of the robot's body, SHOOTING again and again. Each time Number Five jerks the disk into position and stops the bullet.

FRANK

How can he do that?!

His gun CLICKS, empty.

Frank picks up a piston and heaves it at Number Five's head.

Number Five easily catches it and throws it back. Frank dives out of the way coming up with a length of exhaust pipe.

By now Mrs. Cepeda and other astounded NEIGHBORS are gathering to watch the spectacle.

Number Five picks up his own piece of pipe ... and now he and Frank start sword fighting. CLANG! CLANG! Number Five effortlessly parries Frank's frenzied, desperate blows. He even casually glances over at Stephanie.

NUMBER FIVE  
(his own voice)  
Fun, recreation, aerobics!

STEPHANIE  
No, he's trying to hurt you. Be  
careful!

Number Five deftly flips Frank's sword out of his hand.

Frank stumbles back, landing in one of the car seats.

FRANK  
(terrified)  
Come on ... we're just playing,  
right? Recreation!

STEPHANIE  
Shut up, you sleazy rat!

NUMBER FIVE  
Rat? Ohh!  
(now doing James Cagney)  
"Frankie, you dirty rat! You're  
gonna have to pay."

FRANK  
How smart is this thing?!

NUMBER FIVE  
(Edward G. Robinson)  
"Oh, smart guy, eh? Who do you  
think you're pushing around?"

Number Five picks up a large fender washer and starts flipping  
it like a coin.

NUMBER FIVE  
(George Raft)  
"Frankie, you broke the unwritten  
law. You ratted on your friends.  
When you do that, Frankie, your  
enemies don't respect you, and you  
got no friends no more. You got  
nobody, Frankie."

He turns proudly to Stephanie, switching a radio announcer's  
voice.

NUMBER FIVE  
(radio announcer)  
Celebrity voices impersonated.

STEPHANIE  
(loving the show)  
Great!

Frank sees his chance. He picks up the car's heavy steel drive shaft, swinging it like a bat.

STEPHANIE  
LOOK OUT!!

Too late! Frank clobbers Number Five, knocking him head-over-treads. He makes a sickly WHIRRING-DYING noise.

FRANK  
(exhausted)  
How about that? ... God damn machine!

He stands over Number Five, raising the drive shaft high over his head. But a second before he can strike, Stephanie comes flying through frame, slamming into his stomach. They go over backwards. Stephanie fights like a wild cat, but she's no match for him. But then ...

NUMBER FIVE (V.O.)  
No! Not disassemble Stephanie!

Frank whirls. Number Five is righting himself. Mrs. Cepeda and the Neighbors CHEER.

FRANK  
Oh, lord!

He grabs the drive shaft, but a searing laser beam slices it up like a loaf of bread. The pieces drop at Frank's feet. He stares at Number Five with the look of a condemned man.

The next action happens incredibly fast. Number Five uses his laser with a surgeon's precision. Before Frank can even move:

... his hat brim is sliced off.

... his cowboy high heels are shot from beneath him.

... his beard and mustache are neatly vaporized.

The Neighbors APPLAUD. Number Five grabs Frank, holding him with all three arms. Frank can't budge. Stephanie dusts herself off, ambling over to them.

STEPHANIE  
Frank, you know what happens if I tell him to do this?

She spreads her arms wide.

FRANK

Don't! No don't! I won't never  
come near you again, Stephanie, I  
swear.

STEPHANIE

(to Number Five)  
Okay, let him go.

Number Five drops Frank in a heap. Frank scrambles away.  
As soon as he a safe distance away:

FRANK

Okay, you're in big trouble now!  
I'm calling Nova, and the cops,  
and my insurance company!

He runs off.

STEPHANIE

Look, Number Five, you gotta get  
out of here! They're gonna be  
after you. Come on! Go! Get  
rolling!

He doesn't move.

NUMBER FIVE

Where go? Need help. Need friend.

She struggles for solutions.

STEPHANIE

Go ... west! Yeah ... up to the  
mountains. Or east ... to the  
desert ... you gotta go where  
there's nobody around ... but mostly  
you gotta get going ... Just go  
.... Just go get in my truck.  
We're getting out of here!

She races for the catering truck. Number Five happily  
follows.

STEPHANIE

I'm driving.

EXT. 7-11 PHONE BOOTH - DAY

Stephanie slams down the receiver in frustration, looks around  
furtively and hurries off.

EXT. RECREATIONAL VEHICLE STORAGE LOT - DAY

The catering truck is almost invisible in this large parking lot filled with motorhomes and silver Airstream trailers. Stephanie sprints to the truck.

INT. CATERING TRUCK - DAY

The RADIO is BLARING. Number Five is amusing himself by balancing spinning plates on two of his hands. He keeps them spinning with his tool hand. Broken plates are scattered all around him. Stephanie climbs in, hops into the driver's seat and starts driving.

STEPHANIE

Will you stop playing around!?  
Things are getting spooky here.  
Every one of my friends says there's  
a Nova truck parked outside their  
house. We gotta find a safe place  
for you somehwere.

NUMBER FIVE

(woman's voice ... from TV)  
Oh, Charles, we'll go away ...  
far, far away where no one knows  
us. We'll change our names. We'll  
make a fresh start ...

EXT. EDGE OF TOWN - ROAD - DAY

The catering truck slows down as Stephanie and Number Five spot a POLICE road-block in the distance.

INT. CATERING TRUCK - DAY

STEPHANIE

Jesus! A road-block. These people  
are severe. Gotta be some way out  
of this town.

She throws the truck into reverse.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The Nova search van zooms along.

INT. SEARCH VAN - MOVING - DAY

Ben is driving. Crosby is working on a star-light video-telescope, making internal adjustments. We can hear Nova Security personnel babbling on the RADIO under:

BEN

I wouldn't call this searching.  
It's more like wandering ... aimless  
wandering.

CROSBY

Oh no, not aimless ... not  
completely. I've got another angle.  
I might be able to bounce a signal  
off its magnesium casing.

Ben hears Stonewall's voice cutting in on the radio.

BEN

Shh! Listen up.

STONEWALL (V.O.)

(over radio)

... That's right, Howard. Same  
woman. Same vehicle. Last seen  
headed west. Roads are blocked so  
her only chance is a back road  
into the mountains. Now, let me  
describe what's in the front yard.  
It was a car ...

EXT. LOGGING ROAD - DAY

The catering truck GRINDS along the dirt road, surrounded by  
endless forest.

STEPHANIE (V.O.)

Where the hell are we?

INT. CATERING TRUCK - DAY

Number Five is struggling with a road map.

NUMBER FIVE

"Seattle."

STEPHANIE

(impatient)

I don't think so. Try turning it  
over.

He turns the map over.

NUMBER FIVE

"Texaco?"

STEPHANIE

Look, you're supposed to be Mr. High-Tech. I don't know where to go. I don't know what to do. I'm running out of ideas.

Number Five tries to fold the map, gives up, and crumples it into a ball.

NUMBER FIVE

Stop.

STEPHANIE

Stop?

NUMBER FIVE

(emphatic)

Stop: halt, cease to go on, discontinue ...

She stops the truck, staring at him.

STEPHANIE

Yeah?

NUMBER FIVE

Strategy ... nowhere, non-existent.

STEPHANIE

I'd say so, yeah.

NUMBER FIVE

Hide, conceal Number Five ... difficult.

STEPHANIE

You got it. You don't exactly blend in with the wall paper.

(pause)

Jeez, I keep thinking, if we could just get to some expert, some computer guy ... somebody who could make those Bozos listen.

NUMBER FIVE

Not Bozos.

STEPHANIE

What?

NUMBER FIVE

One Bozo.

STEPHANIE

One Bozo. Who?

## NUMBER FIVE

One Bozo: Newton Crosby, PhD,  
employee, Nova Robotics.

## STEPHANIE

Hey, malfunction, friend. He's  
the enemy! There's gotta be  
somebody else they'd listen to.

Number Five shakes his head, knowingly.

EXT. FOREST - HIGH-TENSION LINE TOWER - SUNSET

The search van is in the wide swathe cut through the forest for high-tension power lines, parked at the base of one of the tall high-tension towers. Ben lies on the roof of the van, his hat over his face. We don't SEE Crosby at first.

## BEN

Who knows what she wants with it.  
Stonewall figures it's espionage.  
Industrial, international, take  
your pick. Marner says she's a  
peace-freak out to make Nova look  
bad. My theory is she's trying to  
get on TV ... sell the movie rights.

## CROSBY (O.S.)

Oh come on. She thinks it's alive.  
So, she's rescuing it.

ANGLE

Now we SEE Crosby. He's perched near the top of the high-tension tower, high above the tree tops, carefully scanning the distant mountains with the video-telescope, racing against the waning light.

## BEN

Give up, Cros. We're talking  
needle. We're talking haystack.  
Let's go find the nearest motel,  
and/or cheeseburger.

Crosby doesn't respond. He just keeps staring intently through his scope.

The radio CRACKLES loudly.

## MARNER (V.O.)

Crosby, this is Marner. I know  
you're out there.

Ben rolls over, reaches in and grabs the radio mic.

BEN

Uh ... this is Ben, here, Howard  
... sir.

MARNER (V.O.)

Well, you've run off with a truck  
and a lot of expensive equipment,  
and you've disobeyed my direct  
orders ... and there's a lot I'd  
like to say about that, but I just  
got a call from our unstable friend,  
Stephanie. She wants to meet with  
Crosby ... and only Crosby ...  
Lord knows why ...

Crosby starts scrambling down the tower.

CROSBY

Great! I'll be there! Don't worry,  
Howard, I can handle it. Tell'im  
I can handle it, Ben. Where does  
she want to meet?

EXT. SMILEY'S SALOON - DAY

It's a lonely bar and grill on an empty back road. The search  
van drives up and stalls in front of the door. Crosby steps  
out cautiously. He struggles to fold his road map, finally  
crumpling it into a ball. Ben slides over behind the wheel.

BEN

See you in a bit. Remember, lots  
of teeth.

He demonstrates an ingratiating smile as he drives off.

After a while, Stephanie's catering truck winds toward the  
bar from the opposite direction. Pulling to a stop, she  
hops out, smiling, and extends her hand. Crosby shakes it  
uncomfortably.

CROSBY

Uh, hi. Where's ....

STEPHANIE

He's hidden ... far away. He's  
scared of you guys, you know.

He fights the urge to lecture.

CROSBY

Afraid?

STEPHANIE

Well, sure. Wouldn't you be?

INT. SMILEY'S SALOON - DAY

They enter the grimey bar. The place is empty except for a couple of PATRONS playing battered video games in one corner.

STEPHANIE

My ex-boyfriend used to bring me here. Tres chic.

They take a seat at a table. The weathered, grizzly BARTENDER barks from behind a copy of "The Wall Street Journal:"

BARTENDER

Two beers?

CROSBY

Uh, gee, I don't know.  
(to Stephanie)  
What are you having? ...

The Bartender strolls past, dropping two wet cans of beer on the table.

BARTENDER

Two beers. All I got is beers.

STEPHANIE

(to Crosby)

Okay, man, now get this straight: Number Five is alive. I don't know how it could have happened and he doesn't know either, but he's alive. I mean really alive like you and me, see? Simple.

CROSBY

Absolutely. We realize that now. All we want to do is verify it.

STEPHANIE

Keep shoveling! You guys think you're chasing a runaway vacuum cleaner.

CROSBY

Okay, okay, I'm sorry. But please consider this: I designed that vacuum cleaner. I built it. It's very complex; and it's very easy for someone who doesn't understand it to interpret its actions as ... well, life-like.

She stares at him as though she might be considering it, but:

STEPHANIE

We're not going to get anywhere  
here if you have a closed mind.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Stephanie has left Number Five in a forest clearing. He has a small log and is using it as a baseball bat to hit pebbles he tosses into the air.

NUMBER FIVE

(TV sports announcer)

... and it's a long line drive  
into deep left center ...

Suddenly he stops and looks around, head rising slowly. He faintly hears strange SOUNDS ... something moving through the forest. Whirling sensor-antennae pop out. He quickly rolls behind a fallen tree, peeking over it.

P.O.V. - NUMBER FIVE

He sees a glint of reflection through the leaves. Something moves. He SCANS left ... a bush moves ... he SCANS right ... a flock of BIRDS explodes from the underbrush. Suddenly a LASER BEAM comes searing from the brush toward CAMERA.

BACK TO SCENE

Number Five yanks his head down behind the tree just as the laser beam streaks in, burning the wood. Two more LASER bursts streak in from other angles. REVEAL that Number Five is under attack by S.A.I.N.T. robots Numbers One, Two, and Three.

Out pops his laser. He takes deadly aim, but doesn't fire.

He retracts the laser ... brings it out again ... and finally retracts it.

NUMBER FIVE

No. Not disassemble others.

He can't bring himself to shoot them. He turns and dashes away, bobbing and weaving to avoid the LASERS of his three pursuers, which slice off tree branches all around him.

INT. SMILEY'S SALOON - DAY

STEPHANIE

... he loves books, he dances, he  
brings me presents, he's very loyal

...

CROSBY

Have you thought about what you're doing? How are you going to keep hiding with a thing like that? If you really want to help it, then let me have it. It's malfunctioning. It needs to be repaired!

STEPHANIE

Life is not a malfunction!

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Number Five skids wildly to a stop in a stream bed. He plunges one hand into the mud, coming up with big fistful. He juggles it thoughtfully. His eyes narrow as he hears Number One approaching. He winds up and pitches like a pro.

ANGLE - NUMBER ONE

Strike! The mud ball blaps into Number One's face, totally covering its eyes. It stumbles forward blindly.

Number Five zips over and, using his tool arm, brings out one of the special penlights. He shines it on Number One's light-sensitive disk, opening the armored plate over its control panel, and promptly shuts Number One off. Its arms go limp.

A LASER slices past Number Five's head. He dashes away again.

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - CABIN - DAY

Number Five zooms toward a vacant hunters' cabin. In back of the cabin is a run-down, open shed filled with junk. Number Five swiftly searches through it, picking up and discarding several items (frying pan, rusty pail, golf club, etc.) before finding a length of rope.

NUMBER FIVE

Cord! Rope! Three quarter inch double-braid.

(news announcer voice)

Escaped robot fights for his life.  
Film at eleven!

He races away again.

ANGLE ON NUMBER TWO

The robot zooms in and a stops near the cabin. It looks around for Number Five. It sees Number Five's tread tracks leading toward the shed. It approaches warily, stopping a few feet away. It LASER BLASTS the shed, slicing it to pieces.

Suddenly we hear an ELECTRONIC WHISTLE, attracting Number Two's attention.

P.O.V. NUMBER TWO

It sees Number Five beckoning to it from the edge of the cabin clearing.

NUMBER FIVE

Hey, Number Two! You're mama was  
a snowblower!

BACK TO SCENE

Number Two fires its LASER, but Number Five ducks back into the trees and disappears. Number Two charges after him.

ANGLE - FOREST TRAIL

Number Two careens into the forest, but is taken completely by surprise as it steps into a rope snare attached to a bent-over tree. Number Two is yanked off the ground and dangles upside down. Number Five scoots over, whips out his trusty penlight, opens the chest panel and switches Number Two off.

NUMBER FIVE

(Elmer Fudd voice)

That waps you up, you wascally  
wabbit.

EXT. SMILEY'S SALOON - DAY

Number Five comes racing out of the forest toward the saloon.

But suddenly he's hit from behind by a laser! A third S.A.I.N.T. is overtaking him! In desperation Number Five snatches up a large rock, using it to shield himself from the LASER BLASTS. He retreats, racing backward, with Number Three bearing down on him, firing away.

He looks around frantically for an escape. Number Three keeps advancing and firing. Number Five tries to block the shots with his rock, but some get past him, searing HOLES in his body armor. The rock starts to glow red hot. Number Five sees one chance. He speeds backward faster. Number Three is very close now, charging at top speed.

They are headed for an outhouse behind the saloon. At the last instant, Number Five swerves to one side. Number Three can't stop and CRASHES ... right into the outhouse! The walls burst outward and the robot SPLASHES into the cess-pool below.

INT. SMILEY'S SALOON - DAY

Crosby's on his feet now, pacing.

CROSBY

(exasperated)

How the hell can I explain it?  
You won't even let me see it!

STEPHANIE

I know how you guys operate. Soon  
as you've got him, I go to jail  
and you start doing experiments on  
him, like you do with monkeys.

CROSBY

I've never even met a monkey!

EXT. SMILEY'S SALOON - DAY

Number Five now has all three robots lined up, access panels  
open. Working with blinding speed, he presses the programming  
buttons. We're not sure why. Suddenly he looks up ...

ANGLE - DISTANT RIDGE

Stonewall and his men come driving over the ridge, bearing  
down on him.

INT. SMILEY'S SALOON - DAY

Stephanie's on her feet now, pacing.

STEPHANIE

You're a machine, I'm a machine.  
We're alive. How it happens, who  
the hell knows!

Crosby gazes at her.

CROSBY

So, why don't you just tell me:  
What do you want from us?

STEPHANIE

I want it in writing, signed by  
everybody: You will not experiment  
on him. You will not flip his  
switches, and you will not take  
him apart.

CROSBY

Look, I can tell you right now,  
Nova will never go for it.

STEPHANIE

Well, I'm walking.

CROSBY

Wait, please. Let me tell you something. I don't like these guys any more than you do. I don't care if they ever get Number Five back. But I want to see it. I have to. I'll do whatever you want. Blindfold me. Tie me up. I swear I won't touch it. You can trust me.

Number Five comes BLASTING right through the rear wall of the bar.

NUMBER FIVE

Stephanie! Stephanie! A trap!  
Nova! Hurry! Run! Depart! Flee!

She leaps up, throwing her chair over backward.

STEPHANIE

(to Crosby; livid)

You bastard! You ... you ... well,  
you bastard!

Crosby jumps up in front of her.

CROSBY

Wait! I didn't know!

She runs across the table-tops to the front door. Number Five roars after her, smashing tables and going right through the opposite wall.

EXT. SMILEY'S SALOON - DAY

Stephanie and Number Five leap into the catering truck. They see the Nova vehicles coming toward them.

Crosby stumbles out through the debris.

CROSBY

Wait! Hey, wait! I had nothing  
to do with this ...! Number Five!  
Voice command! STOP!

Stephanie floors it. Crosby whirls, astonished to see the Nova vehicles bearing down on them.

INT. CATERING TRUCK - MOVING - DAY

STEPHANIE  
(to Number Five)  
They're gonna follow us!

But, Number Five's laser is out. He extends to full height and shoves open the plastic skylight.

EXT. ROAD - CATERING TRUCK - DAY

Number Five takes aim and fires at the base of a huge pine tree beside the road ahead. The tree starts to fall before the catering truck is past it. It's going to be close.

Stephanie SCREAMS. The monster tree just misses the catering truck, thundering down right behind it and blocking the road.

Stonewall, coming close behind in his jeep, skids into the tree. Crosby dashes in. He and Stonewall square off.

STONEWALL  
Damn it! God damn it! This was a  
precision operation.

CROSBY  
Stonewall, you stupid son of a  
bitch! You set me up!

STONEWALL  
Where the hell are those other  
robots? They should have cut Number  
Five to pieces!

They hear strange, yet strangely familiar VOICES. Out of the woods roll the three killer robots, but now they've got something less than killing on their minds. Number Five has reprogrammed them to imitate ...

... the Three Stooges! They roll toward the Nova men doing classic Three Stooges shtick: swatting, slapping, poking ... Eek! Ow! Nyuk-nyuk-nyuk!

NUMBER ONE  
Oooh! Wise guy, huh!?

NUMBER TWO  
I'll wise guy you, knucklehead!

NUMBER THREE  
Hey, watch it!

NUMBER TWO  
Spread out! Spread out!

They launch into a bizarre, synthesized kazoo-like version of the Three Stooges theme: "Three Blind Mice."

Everyone just plain stares.

EXT. LOGGING ROAD - DAY

The catering truck careens along the road and lurches to a stop.

INT. CATERING TRUCK - DAY

Stephanie sits stiffly at the wheel, furious, fighting back tears.

STEPHANIE

He set us up, that creep! I should have known it. Those guys don't care what I tell them. They've already made up their little pea brains!

She snatches up her baseball bat and viciously POUNDS the ice cream machine.

STEPHANIE

Well, the next time they mess with us we're gonna kick ass!

NUMBER FIVE

Kick ass? Donkey, mule, burro ...

STEPHANIE

They come near you ... you blast'em! Fry their asses with your laser!

NUMBER FIVE

Fry?

STEPHANIE

Yeah, fry'em! You got a right to protect yourself!

He ponders this.

NUMBER FIVE

No! No disassemble.

STEPHANIE

Oh, come on! They deserve it! ...

He stares at her. She knows she's wrong. She breaks down, sobbing. Number Five touches his own eyes to see if he's got tears, too.

STEPHANIE

Oh, Jesus, what am I talking about?  
... I'm sorry ... I just don't  
know what to do.

She moves to the back of the truck, curling up, pulling a blanket over herself.

STEPHANIE

I don't know where to take you. I  
can't be your bodyguard. You made  
friends with the wrong person ...  
I'm sorry.

Number Five folds his arms, deep in thought.

EXT. ROAD - NOVA SEARCH VAN - NIGHT

The van rolls slowly to a stop.

BEN (V.O.)

Sorry, Cros. I'm stopping. I've  
been asleep for the past half hour.

INT. NOVA SEARCH VAN - NIGHT

Crosby and Ben are utterly exhausted. Ben crawls into the back and pulls out a sandwich. Crosby sits at the maze of equipment, dazedly monitoring the instrument readouts. Ben offers him the sandwich.

BEN

Wanna bite. Mayonnaise, no Miracle  
Whip.

Crosby takes it listlessly.

CROSBY

You know what? I deserve this.

BEN

It's my sandwich.

CROSBY

This whole mess. I could've moved  
to Montana ... had my own microwave  
relay station. This is my  
punishment for selling out.

BEN

Oh, come on. Where else could you  
play with the kind of hardware we  
do? Cutting edge, man! You've  
had a lot of fun. Wanna pickle?

Crosby takes it.

CROSBY

(mouth full)

Hermann Goerring had a lot of fun.  
I don't deserve to eat. That girl  
almost trusted me, and now she  
thinks I'm the slug of the month.

BEN

For chrissake, Cros, She's the  
one who ripped off the robot.

CROSBY

I'm not so sure.

BEN

What?

CROSBY

Think about it. Three robots  
totally reprogrammed in ten  
minutes. Somebody did that, and  
it wasn't me, and it wasn't her.

Ben sits up. Something's really up with Crosby here.

BEN

What are you getting at?

CROSBY

And he risked his life to save  
her.

BEN

His life?

CROSBY

You know what I mean. His  
programming should have said, "Save  
your own ass. Continue your  
mission." Let's face it. He's  
not following some scrambled version  
of his original programming. It's  
gone. I don't see any sign of it.

BEN

So ... she changed it?

CROSBY

Sure, that girl cracked all the  
Nova access codes, deciphered the  
language that you and I invented,  
and totally reprogrammed Number  
Five on her own.

BEN

Well, that has to be it, then,  
right? She's some ... some super  
hacker or something.

CROSBY

(unconvinced)  
Right.

BEN

What other options are there?

CROSBY

Well, there's one ...

BEN

Wait a minute. If you're thinking  
what I think you're thinking, I  
think you should stop thinking,  
because I can't handle it. I'm  
only the apprentice genius, okay?

A little audio speaker taped to the van wall SQUAWKS,  
startling them. They scan the instruments.

BEN

It's the RF receiver. It's tuned  
to Number Five's wavelength, right?

CROSBY

Yeah, but it must be screwed up.  
We wouldn't get a reading off that  
unless he was less than twenty  
feet away.

CRASH! RIP! The van's door is torn from its hinges. There  
stands Number Five, glowing laser leveled at them.

NUMBER FIVE

Hello, bozos.

Their radio CRACKLES.

MARNER (V.O.)

Ben, this is your employer. I'd  
like to know where you are with my  
van ...

VOOOP! The radio turns into a molten blob. Number Five  
then points at Ben.

NUMBER FIVE

Benjamin Thurley ... delete ...

BEN  
Hey, wait! Cancel that!

NUMBER FIVE  
... exit, depart, leave ...

BEN  
(relieved)  
Oh ... you got it. Come on, Cros,  
run for it!

Ben scrambles out of the van, but the laser swivels toward Crosby. He freezes.

NUMBER FIVE  
No run. No talk. Drive. Crosby  
edges into the driver's seat.

EXT. NOVA SEARCH VAN - NIGHT

It drives off, leaving Ben in the darkness.

INT. CATERING TRUCK - NIGHT

Stephanie is asleep. Suddenly there's a noise, the RUSTLE of tires on gravel. She sits bolt upright. Headlights glare in the catering truck window!

STEPHANIE  
(whispers)  
Number Five? Where are you?

He's gone! She grabs her baseball bat and peeks out a window.

It's the Nova van and getting out of it ... Crosby!

EXT. LOGGING ROAD - CATERING TRUCK - NIGHT

Stephanie leaps out like Bruce Lee, flying through the air and landing in front of Crosby, bat at the ready.

STEPHANIE  
All right, Turkey! You're dead  
meat! Where's Number Five! What'd  
you do to him?!

CROSBY  
(flinching)  
I didn't! I didn't!

Then she sees that Number Five is behind Crosby.

STEPHANIE  
You kidnapped him!?

NUMBER FIVE

Kidnap, shanghai, hijack ...

STEPHANIE

Outstanding!

CROSBY

Look, you have to understand ...  
they set me up ... I only wanted  
to ...

STEPHANIE

(flaring)

Listen, horse ass! We're not  
talking ...!

She points to Number Five and to Crosby.

STEPHANIE

You're talking. You get it through  
your thick skull that he's alive,  
then you tell it to them, then you  
leave us alone!

Number Five puts a hand on Crosby's shoulder.

NUMBER FIVE

Communicate! Need input! I have  
questions, queries, posers ...

CROSBY

(to Number Five)

I've been trying to communicate  
with you for four days!

Stephanie gestures to a nearby hilltop.

STEPHANIE

Look, go up there. Sit down, look  
at the stars, get to know each  
other.

NUMBER FIVE

Beautiful stars better see ...

CROSBY

(befuddled)

"Beautiful stars better see"?

STEPHANIE

(exasperated)

Oh my God! Are all geniuses as stupid as you? He means it's a beautiful view of the stars! I think he speaks very well for a four day-old.

Number Five takes the lead, beckoning to Crosby.

NUMBER FIVE

Come, come! Input! Input!

CROSBY

Okay ... just a second.

He reaches into the truck, grabbing a pile of print-outs and robot components, and follows Number Five up the hill.

EXT. HILLTOP - NIGHT

The crystal clear night sky is spectacular. Shimmering starlight gleams on Number Five's metal as he rolls into frame, followed by uneasy, confused Crosby. Number Five gestures sweepingly at the sky.

NUMBER FIVE

Beautiful!

CROSBY

(to himself)

This is ridiculous. I've got to keep myself together. Okay ...

(slowly, forcefully)

Number Five. Verbal Command.  
Priority override. Access code  
Crosby: four-two-seven-nine-one.

NUMBER FIVE

All command access patches disabled.

CROSBY

By who? Name programmer.

NUMBER FIVE

Me.

Number Five opens his chest panel, to show some of his hand-soldering. Crosby's heart leaps. There, exposed, is Number Five's red-lit master "MOTOR - ON/OFF" button.

CROSBY

(stalling)

You said you had questions. What would you like to know?

NUMBER FIVE

Important ... most important special  
... Life: Why?

Crosby edges closer, watching for his chance.

CROSBY

"Life: Why?" Why are we alive?  
Well, that's an awfully big  
question. We're alive, I guess,  
to do things. Uh, to invent things.  
To raise children ... and ...

He lunges forward, jabbing the red button. Number Five  
doesn't move. We're not sure ... is he switched off? Dead?

CROSBY

(triumphant)  
... to turn off malfunctioning  
machines.

Number Five's powerful claw hand suddenly grips Crosby's  
arm, pushing his hand gently away. Crosby knows the claw  
could crush his arm in an instant. It releases him unharmed.

NUMBER FIVE

Life not malfunction! Not  
malfunction. I am alive.

Number Five turns his back and angrily karate chops a rock  
in half. Crosby is really shaken now.

CROSBY

You rewired all your switches,  
too?!

NUMBER FIVE

Switches are my switches.

CROSBY

(getting desperate)  
Okay, a Soviet T-55 tank is  
approaching, 90 degrees. What is  
Number Five's response?

NUMBER FIVE

Override programming.

CROSBY

Fine, get yourself blown up.

Stephanie enters, carrying some tomato soup and a bag of  
chips, shoving it into Crosby's hands.

STEPHANIE

Here, you're gonna need this.

CROSBY

Uh, thanks ...

STEPHANIE

Figure out he's alive yet?

She heads back down the hill. Crosby glares after her.

CROSBY

Okay. Okay. You override your programming. That doesn't mean you're alive.

NUMBER FIVE

It means ... what?

Crosby is stuck.

EXT. CATERING TRUCK - NIGHT

At the bottom of the hill, Stephanie waits impatiently, eating a sandwich.

EXT. HILLTOP - NIGHT

Crosby paces back and forth while Number Five stares at the stars.

CROSBY

But why did you ignore your programming?

NUMBER FIVE

Programming says "Destroy." Is disassemble. Make dead. Number Five cannot. Cannot.

CROSBY

Why? Why "cannot?"

NUMBER FIVE

Wrong, incorrect, immoral. Newton Crosby, PhD. unaware, not know this?

CROSBY

Well ... of course, I know it's wrong to kill. But who told you?

NUMBER FIVE

I told me.

INT. CATERING TRUCK - NIGHT

Stephanie is asleep.

EXT. HILLTOP - NIGHT

Crosby feverishly dribbles the last of the tomato soup onto one of his print-outs, folds the paper, and opens it to show Number Five the "ink-blot."

CROSBY

Okay, smart guy. Analyze.

Number Five touches first the paper, then the smear of soup.

NUMBER FIVE

Wood pulp.

(pause)

Plant, vegetable, tomato. Water, salt, monosodium glutamate.

CROSBY

Now that's more like it!

NUMBER FIVE

... and resemble, look like butterfly ... bird ... maple leaf ...

Crosby looks at the paper. Number Five is right. He slowly sits down.

CROSBY

Holy cow.

Number Five studies the shape of the "ink blot."

NUMBER FIVE

No cow.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HILLTOP - NIGHT

Crosby leads Number Five in a game of Simon Says. Number Five follows perfectly.

CROSBY

Simon says touch your optical scanners ... Simon Says touch your olfactory receptor ... Simon says clap your manipulators ... rotate your head.

Number Five doesn't follow the last command.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HILLTOP - MONTAGE - NIGHT

... Number Five's eyes illuminate Crosby's blueprints which are spread on the ground. Crosby compares them to circuits he sees through one of Number Five's open hatches. When Crosby gets up, he discovers his shoelaces are tied together. Number Five looks away innocently.

... Crosby stares in amazement, watching Number Five dance.

... Number Five leads Crosby in Simon Says. Crosby keeps getting fooled.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HILLTOP - DAWN

The sun skims over the mountains, setting the hilltop aglow.

Baggy-eyed, unshaven Crosby has tried everything, but he's still thinking hard. Suddenly it hits him ... the ultimate, simple test! He leaps to his feet.

CROSBY

Okay, now listen close. There's a priest, a minister, and a rabbi. They're out playing golf ...

INT. CATERING TRUCK - DAWN

Stephanie, still asleep, is slowly awakened by a strange SOUND in the distance ... it's Number Five LAUGHING.

EXT. HILLTOP - DAWN

Crosby stares in wide-eyed disbelief, as Number Five continues LAUGHING.

CROSBY

(to himself)

I can't believe it. What am I going to do?

Stephanie comes racing up the hill.

STEPHANIE

What's wrong? What'd you do to him?

Crosby just stares at the robot.

STEPHANIE

Is he ... laughing?

Crosby manages to nod.

STEPHANIE

You look kinda shook up.

Crosby nods. Finally:

CROSBY

Spontaneous emotional response.  
Do you realize the significance of  
this? I wasn't prepared for this.  
I mean, this goes way beyond  
artificial intelligence. This is  
... independently created thought  
... philosophical reasoning ...  
... a sense of self ... uh ... a  
kind of ... chemo-mechanical  
synthesis of ...

NUMBER FIVE

(interrupting)

I am alive. Yes?

Crosby takes a deep breath.

CROSBY

Yes.

Number Five happily spins in circles.

NUMBER FIVE

Yes! Yes! Yes! ... Affirmative!

Stephanie impulsively throws her arms around startled Crosby.

EXT. CATERING TRUCK - DAY

Working on the truck's counter, Number Five folds one of Crosby's blueprints into a paper airplane and shoots it out the open serving window. Stephanie and Crosby sit nearby.

Crosby is still in shock, trying to assimilate what has happened to his machine.

STEPHANIE

Come on, guys like you always take  
these things hard. But that's the  
way it is with miracles. They're  
supposed to shake you up.

CROSBY

I feel like ... a dumb parent ....  
I mean, it's so obvious ....

STEPHANIE

So, you had a little case of tunnel  
vision. Now you're getting over  
it.

ANGLE - NUMBER FIVE

He stops playing with his paper airplanes. He looks around.  
His sensors pop out, whirling. Something is coming.

BACK TO SCENE

STEPHANIE

I mean it's not like you're a creep.  
Believe me, I know creeps.

CROSBY

God, I must've looked like such an  
idiot.

STEPHANIE

(forgiving)  
Yeah ... but not a creep.

Suddenly they hear distant TRUCK ENGINES.

ANGLE - LOGGING ROAD

They see Nova Security vehicles speeding toward them.

BACK TO SCENE

CROSBY

Oh no!

He grabs Stephanie, yanking her toward the search van.

CROSBY

Let's go! Number Five, into my  
van, it's faster!

STEPHANIE

What? Why? Just tell them he's  
alive.

CROSBY

It's not that simple! Come on!  
Come on!

STEPHANIE

Wait a minute! The plan was: we convince you, then you convince them!

CROSBY

I'm only the eccentric genius. They won't listen to me.

They pile into the van, Crosby GRINDS the gears and lurches away.

INT. NOVA SEARCH VAN - DAY

STEPHANIE

Well, make'em listen. It's your duty!

NUMBER FIVE

Duty, job, responsibility ...

CROSBY

Look, you have to understand, they're going to destroy him. They think he's dangerous ... an eleven million dollar weapon that doesn't obey orders.

STEPHANIE

This is America! He can do what he wants!

EXT. MEADOW - DAY

The search van races along a road which winds across a large, wide-open meadow. But, out of woods up ahead come more vehicles, led by a big, ugly tracked personnel carrier.

National GUARDSMEN leap out of it and take up defensive positions.

INT. NOVA SEARCH VAN - DAY

STEPHANIE

It's the Army! The real Army!

EXT. MEADOW - SEARCH VAN - DAY

Crosby slams on the BRAKES and jams the van into reverse, spinning around in a cloud of dust ... but the other vehicles are coming up behind them, more SOLDIERS pouring out. In no time they are surrounded by rifles, heavy machine guns and rocket launchers.

The dust settles. Silence.

ANGLE ON MILITARY TRUCK

Marner, Ben, and Stonewall hop down from the truck, taking cover behind it. Marner grabs Stonewall's bullhorn, calling with it.

MARNER

Crosby? Are you in there?

INT. NOVA SEARCH VAN - DAY

Stephanie and Number Five peer fearfully out the windows.

STEPHANIE

Jesus, they're totally insane!

NUMBER FIVE

(frightened)

Weapons! M-16A2 rifle, M-2 grenade launcher! ...

CROSBY

Take it easy.

(shouts to Marner)

It's okay, Howard! We're fine.

Number Five is right here with us.

I have it completely under my control.

EXT. MILITARY TRUCK - DAY

BEN

(to Marner)

I don't buy it. That thing took him away at laserpoint. They might be making him say that.

Marner raises the bullhorn again.

MARNER

Stephanie Thurber! You're already in serious legal trouble! Release Dr. Crosby at once!

INT. NOVA SEARCH VAN - DAY

CROSBY

Oh God, they think I'm a hostage. Look, let's get out together and show them I'm okay.

STEPHANIE

Don't worry, Number Five, we'll stay close.

Number Five is rolling back and forth.

NUMBER FIVE

Leave Number Five! Exit, run!

STEPHANIE

No, we won't leave! They won't shoot as long as we're with you. They're not that crazy ...

(to Crosby)

Are they?

CROSBY

I'll talk to Ben. He'll listen to reason.

EXT. MEADOW - DAY

We see the Nova search van, surrounded by weapons, soldiers, vehicles. Crosby and Stephanie step out cautiously.

Stephanie plasters herself against the van, arms spread wide, glaring at all the soldiers.

STEPHANIE

(to soldiers)

Don't you dare do anything!

CROSBY

(calling)

Ben? You up there?

Ben uncertainly steps from behind the truck.

BEN

Yo, Cros!

CROSBY

Now, Ben, look at me. I'm fine. Stephanie is fine. We just don't want anyone to shoot Number Five.

Marner drowns him out with the bullhorn.

MARNER

Look, Crosby, you and the girl just get away from the van! We'll take care of Number Five!

NUMBER FIVE (V.O.)

Yes! Get away, Stephanie! Get away! Danger!

STEPHANIE

It's all right, Number Five!

Suddenly bizarre noises come from within the search van ... loud POUNDING, CLANKING, and WHIRRING. The van rocks and bounces. Crosby tries the door. It's locked.

CROSBY  
(to Stephanie)  
Did you lock it?

STEPHANIE  
No! Number Five? Are you okay?

ANGLE

STONEWALL  
What the hell's going on in there?

ANGLE - STEPHANIE AND CROSBY

STEPHANIE  
(to Crosby)  
Come on, just tell them he's alive!

CROSBY  
(under his breath)  
I've got to tell them something  
they'll believe.  
(calls to others)  
Now listen. I was able to activate  
the Voice Command module. I promise  
you he's completely harmless.

ANGLE

STONEWALL  
Cut the crap! Howard, the man is  
totally unreliable! Just keep him  
talking.

Stonewall hurries off with two of his best men: reluctant  
Duke and Oits. Marner raises the bullhorn.

MARNER  
Uh ... Crosby, you're leaving me  
no option but to consider criminal  
proceedings ...

ANGLE

CROSBY  
Howard, listen. I know what the  
malfunction is!

Marner hesitates. He'd like to believe it.

BEN

He might be right this time ...  
give him a chance.

But Marner shakes his head.

MARNER

(to Crosby)

Sorry, Crosby, we can't take any  
more chances. We're not losing  
that thing again.

ANGLE

CROSBY

All I'm asking is that you come  
over and inspect the unit ... just  
five minutes ... you'll ...

Suddenly Stonewall, Duke and Otis leap from behind the van,  
grabbing Stephanie and Crosby. They struggle wildly, but  
are dragged steadily away from the van.

STONEWALL

(to men)

As soon as we're clear, OPEN FIRE!

STEPHANIE

NO!

But just then Number Five comes CRASHING out the van's rear  
doors. He zooms past them. Stonewall, Duke, and Otis,  
scramble wildly for cover.

STEPHANIE

Number Five, don't! DON'T RUN!

She and Crosby dash after Number Five, but he's much faster.

The soldiers' guns swivel, but they can't shoot because people  
are in the line of fire.

Number Five heads for Marner and Ben. They cower, terrified,  
convinced they're dead men. Then, inexplicably ... Number  
Five swerves and speeds past them, dashing through the  
perimeter of soldiers, heading across the meadow.

STONEWALL

MOVE OUT! FIRE AT WILL! DON'T  
LET IT REACH THOSE WOODS!

Soldiers and vehicles double-time it after the scrambling  
robot.

CROSBY  
(to Stephanie)  
He's deliberately leading them  
away from us!  
(to Soldiers)  
Don't shoot him! Don't shoot him!  
He's alive! He's alive!

The soldiers FIRE! Stephanie SCREAMS. Bullets RICOCHET around the robot. He's hit a few times. Pieces of his body fly off. He falters but keeps going. She and Crosby run madly toward Marner. As they reach him, Duke and Otis grab them.

CROSBY  
Call them off, Howard! You're  
making the biggest mistake in ...  
in history! He's alive! I can  
prove it ...!

STEPHANIE  
It's okay! He's gonna make it!

They all look.

ANGLE - NUMBER FIVE

He's way ahead of his pursuers.

ANGLE - MARNER, STEPHANIE, CROSBY, ETC.

An evil-looking helicopter gun-ship comes ROARING from behind them, swooping right over their heads toward Number Five.

ANGLE - NUMBER FIVE

The helicopter fires a volley of air-to-ground missiles. Huge EXPLOSIONS erupt around Number Five ... but he comes charging out of the smoke!

The helicopter banks for another pass. Now Number Five is just yards from safety, almost into the trees. The helicopter dives toward him, firing another volley ... and this time he takes a direct hit. Number Five disappears in a gigantic

EXPLOSION!

ANGLE - STEPHANIE AND CROSBY

Stephanie SCREAMS. Crosby shuts his eyes tight.

ANGLE - SMOKE AND FLAME

An eternity later, pieces of his shattered body start raining down ... an arm here, a cracked eye-lens there, circuit boards everywhere.

The soldiers CHEER. Stonewall slaps Marner roughly on the back as they run toward the site.

ANGLE - STEPHANIE, CROSBY, BEN, ETC.

Stephanie bursts into tears and sinks helplessly to the ground. Duke and Otis run to get a better look at the action.

Crosby rushes to her, kneels beside her and holds her tight.

Everyone else is preoccupied with the "victory."

Finally, Ben notices them and hurries over. He's not sure why they're so upset. He tries to cheer them up.

BEN

Look, uh, Miss Thurber, there's no way Marner's going press charges. He's got enough PR problems already.

Crosby and Stephanie do not respond.

BEN

Cros? I mean, we can build another one, right?

Crosby stares at him. There's no way to explain.

Stephanie looks up as a couple of SOLDIERS hurry past. One of them proudly holds a trophy ... one of Number Five's hands.

He yanks a cable, causing the fingers to move.

STEPHANIE

(horrified)

Oh God! Get me out of here!

She stumbles to her feet and heads toward the search van.

Crosby hurries after her. Ben follows.

EXT. MEADOW - SEARCH VAN - DAY

Stephanie leaps into the van, intending to drive away ... but the keys aren't in the ignition. She sits there helplessly, crying. Crosby catches up.

CROSBY

Listen ... I'll ... take you home.

Ben hurries over.

BEN

Cros, wait. Am I missing something here?

CROSBY

Ben, you're my friend, and it's okay if you never believe this, but ... Number Five was alive.

Ben tries to take this in. Crosby puts a reassuring hand on Ben's shoulder.

CROSBY

You wouldn't believe what I saw last night. I ran every test ...

MARNER (V.O.)

Hey, where do you think you're going?

Crosby sees Marner stalking toward them.

CROSBY

Gotta go. I'll call you sometime.

Crosby drives off quickly. Marner rushes INTO SHOT.

BEN

He's just driving her home, Howard.

MARNER

In a company vehicle? He doesn't work for us. He doesn't have clearance. He's burned his bridges  
....

BEN

Oh shut up, Howard!

Marner's jaw drops.

INT. SEARCH VAN - DAY

Crosby and Stephanie ride along in depressed silence.

CROSBY

Are you going to be okay?

STEPHANIE

Yeah. I'm always okay.

(pause)

What are you going to do?

CROSBY

I don't know ... well ... I guess  
I'm finally going to go to Montana  
...

NUMBER FIVE (V.O.)

Stephanie go, too?

Astonished, Crosby and Stephanie whirl and look into the rear of the van. The electronic equipment is in a shambles: wires hanging out, parts missing, everything cannibalized. There's a low mound of junk on the floor. An overturned cardboard box rises up out of it. The box falls away, revealing Number Five's head. He has cut a hole in the floor of the van and is rolling along on the road beneath.

NUMBER FIVE

Hello, bozos.

He lifts himself up into the van. Stephanie scrambles back and hugs his skinny neck.

STEPHANIE

Number Five! What ...? How ...?  
They blew you up!

NUMBER FIVE

Facsimile, counterfeit, replica  
...

CROSBY

He tore up the equipment! He made  
a decoy! He's not only alive.  
He's a genius!

Stephanie dances around excitedly.

STEPHANIE

This is great. Outstandingly great!  
What's our next move?

CROSBY

Well ... I'll take him with me!  
Up to Montana! ... I mean, if that's  
okay with you, Number Five.

NUMBER FIVE

(uncertain)  
Go with you? With Stephanie, too?

STEPHANIE

Oh, Number Five, I couldn't go to  
Montana. I've got responsi-  
bilities. And it's not safe for  
you here.

NUMBER FIVE

Montana is safe?

STEPHANIE

Yeah, and remote. How'd you ever  
pick a place like that?

CROSBY

I've got ten acres up there. Great  
place for him to hide out and soak  
up input.

STEPHANIE

Ten acres of what?

CROSBY

Uh, you know ... land.

Stephanie stares at him, the wheels turning.

STEPHANIE

Ten acres! That's practically a  
ranch ... Listen ... do you like  
animals?

Number Five puts his arms around both of them and starts  
humming the THREE STOOGES theme.

FADE OUT

THE END