

After a long day of school, work and boredom, I plop down on my couch and tune into my favorite Sci-Fi show. It's about a dystopian society that isn't so perfect. In this world, every city is filled with happy citizens that have everything they could ever want: mansions, feasts, fancy attire and more. Outside of these flawless cities is something no one would ever imagine: government facilities filled with robots. These robots are not your ordinary robots. They're Specdroids: anatomically correct, humanlike machines that eat, sleep and live in their own communities. But here's the catch: the government can control them. They are not controlled all the time, but when they are, they are super amped fighting machines. Three friends, Melina, Max and Luke, have discovered this deadly secret, and have teamed up to stop the government at all cost. In tonight's episode, the gang has befriended a Specdroid and they are trying to escape Specdroid property. Their new Specdroid friend, Janice, told them that if they did not escape they would be discovered. Currently, Max is trying to hack into the central controls to unlock the gate.

"Anything yet, Max?" Melina calls over to Max from Janice's bed. The gang and Janice are in her dorm room. The white, lacy curtains are closed to not attract attention to the room. Max mumbles to himself as he attempts to hack the central controls. Luke is peering out Janice's window, looking at the beautiful fountain glistening in the bright sun. The hedge rows create a rather mystifying maze surrounding the fountain. No one else is in his or her room, rather wanting to enjoy the beautiful day outside.

"I got it!" Max cries and throws his arm up in victory. "I got past the firewall into the main system. Now to find the controls." Everyone circles around Janice and Max, gazing at the dull laptop screen.

"There!" Janice declares and shoots her finger towards the screen. "That's it! The central controls should be there. The thing is, if we do turn it off, we have to be quick. Every government official within a ten-mile radius will be notified."

"It's a risk I'm willing to take. Anything to get out of here." Melina says happily.

Max clicks the button, and rows and rows of numbers pop up on the screen.

“Holy cow, what kind of math problem is this? Max, I hope you got a plan ‘cause this looks hard.” Luke states.

Max shakes his head and says, “I have no clue how to do this. Hey, do you know?”

Max, Melina, Luke and Janice look towards me from the screen. I continue munching on popcorn, not realizing who they are talking to.

“Well, do you?” Luke says, hoping to get an answer.

Suddenly I realize who they are talking to. Me. They are talking to me. Before I can think twice, I walk towards my TV. Before I can give them my answer, my living room is completely transforms into Janice’s dorm room.

“Wait, where am I?” I cry as I start freaking out and start looking for a door or a window that will take me back.

“You’re in Janice’s dorm room, of course. Now, about this problem...” Max answers as he shows me the screen. Realizing this is just a dream and there is no way back, I look at the screen and quickly answer.

“Easy. After simplifying these equations, you get y^2 factorial is equal to x subtract 78, when y equals 3, so the answer is 362,802.” I reply with full confidence. Jaw dropped, Max enters in the number. Access to the central controls is granted, and the screen pops with what looks to be a keypad.

Janice pipes up and says, “Click the button, top row, second from the left.” Max obeys, and suddenly a piercing, screech screams from the intercom on the ceiling above.

“On no, the alarm!” Janice looks horrified. I feel just the same. What if they catch us? If they don’t, what’s next? What if this isn’t a dream? Will someone help me?

“Quick! Out the window!” Luke shouts and motions us towards the window. He opens it up with unbelievable strength. Janice and Melina unlock the latches and thrusts open the windows. Janice and Max jump first, followed by Melina.

Luke looks towards me and says, “Are you coming or are ya’ staying? If you stay, they’re gonna’ track the signal down to this spot.”

I look at him, beyond confused and respond, “I don’t know how I got here, or how I can get back. None of this makes any sense and”

Luke stops me, saying, “I don’t know how you got here either, but can we discuss this later? Are you coming or staying?”

I look at the computer and back to him. Before he can even flinch, I run forward and leap out the window and into the bushes, Luke following dangerously close behind.

Luke and I catch up to the others, meeting them at the gate. We push it open, when a cold voice meets our ears.

“Stop right now!” The government officials, I only imagine in my nightmares, are screaming and running our way. After pushing through the gate, we start picking up speed.

“Didn’t you hear me? Get back ‘ere!” Their powerful voices pound against my eardrums as I push harder. Ahead is a rain forest, which I learned from earlier episodes.

As I continue to sprint into the unwelcoming forest, the voices of the officials grow fainter and fainter, and the cold, frightening feeling is less effective. The others are barely keeping up and I can hear their footsteps growing louder and louder as their run turns into a fast trudge.

“I think we lost them.” Melina says as we reach the rainforest. We slow down to catch our breath, and I silently praise myself for running so.

“Even I, who am built to run at incredible speeds, can’t run that fast.” Janice congratulates me.

Max nods and responds, “I almost forgot you were a Specdroid. I know this is a little late to ask this but, are you entirely sure about abandoning your world to stop the governments evil raid, when in the process you might possibly be destroyed?”

Janice replies, “Absolutely. I refuse to be controlled in any way, shape or form.”

Suddenly everyone quiets down and stops panting. An uneasy, awkward feeling fills the atmosphere. I look up at the umbrella-like trees and admire the nature.

“Well, let’s not just stand here. We have to make a game plan.” Luke announces, “If we stay in one spot while plotting our next attack, they’re bound to find us. We have to stay mobile. Max, Janice you two look for firewood. We should be able to build a small enough fire that the smoke won’t escape the trees, giving away our location.

“Melina, you stay here and set up a temporary camp.” Luke motions to me and says, “We’ll go find some food. What we’ve got in the backpack won’t last us long.” I admire how charismatic Luke is when it comes to leading a group. He is blonde, but it doesn’t show (metaphorically, of course).

We each head off, working on our separate tasks. Soon, we all make it back to camp. Melina has constructed two tents out of two woolen blankets she had in a burlap backpack she brought with her, and Max and Janice have made a fire big enough to cook on, but small enough that the smoke doesn’t rise above the trees.

Everyone pitches in as we attempt to cook three squirrels and a rabbit, which results in burnt meat chunks. Though the chunks are barely edible, the berries and bananas are ripe and so full of flavor it washes away the taste of squirrel thigh.

In the middle of dinner, Melina pipes in and declares, “How rude are we. We haven’t even bothered to introduce ourselves to our new friend. I’m Melina, this is Max –“she pointed to the skinny, brown-haired boy with freckles and rectangular glasses, the brains of the group- “Janice,” she then motioned toward a female red-head who, being a robot, was perfect in every way “and that’s Luke” She pointed to the tall, blonde leader of the group. Melina herself is a black-haired girl who is of average height and weight, and likes to keep a cool head at all times, but fails occasionally. I have accumulated the knowledge that all these kids are of the age of 17, and so am I, except for Janice. Her age is unknown. Melina looks towards me again and asks, “So, what’s your name?”

I smile, and say the usual, “My name is Emmy Martin.” Every one says the usual ‘nice to meet you’, and we continue with our conversation a little longer.

Janice says, “We should be getting to sleep. We’ve got a long day ahead of us.”

We all agree, and clean up our cooking mess (so as not to leave traces for the government officials to find) and put out the fire. Luke and Max retreat into the smaller of the two tents, while Melina, Janice and I take the other. We say ‘good-night’ and head to bed.

When I wake up, the ground below me is extremely moist. My back is covered in wet dirt, so I brush off as much as I can. Melina and Janice are still asleep, and when I walk outside, I can hear the Max and Luke are sleeping as well (I learned that Luke snores, but I thought it would be best to keep that revelation to myself).

I sit on a patch of dry grass and stare at the scenery around me. Our temporary camp reminds me of a small haven, or cove, being that Weeping Willow trees on three sides surround it. Suddenly I here footsteps and yawning, and I know I am not the only one awake now. The first movement comes from my tent and Melina pokes her head out and waves. I decide not to bother her. She looks like she could use some caffeine.

Not much after Melina and Janice wake up so do Luke and Max come out too. We grab a quick bite and quickly pack up our things, not even leaving a footprint behind. Max's compass shows us north, which will take us closer to the main headquarters of the government, according to Janice. Later, when she and I are alone, I ask, "I know this sounds weird, but can't the government just control you to come back to the officials?"

Janice shakes her head and reassures me, "According to Max, they don't have satellites in these parts of the forest. He doesn't think they have explored it yet.

I nod my head. The sun is blaring through the sky and our legs ache, as though we have been walking through the Sahara. Luke wipes his forehead and mutters, "We should probably set up camp and call it a day."

I hear a rustling noise coming from behind me. No one else notices it, so I shush them and utter, "Did you hear that? That faint, rustling noise?"

Everyone shakes their heads so I walk towards the sound of the noise, each step worse than the one before. I am so close; I can feel the inhabitant and sense its presence.

"EMMY!" Melina screams. I jerk my head around to see a coldly familiar face: the government official who had been chasing us earlier. Before he can tackle me I karate-kick him and he stumbles to the ground. I suddenly realize that he is not alone. Two more officials are attempting to get a hold of us.

One of the other officials jumps towards Luke and Melina. The man brushes up against Melina, but her quick reflexes allow her to throw him off easily. Luke darts over and pins him to the ground. The other official, a female with amber hair, kicks Max in the shins. Janice punches her right on the nose and tackles her to the ground.

The third government official, the head honcho, flails his arms out in a poor attempt to grab hold of me. I elbow him in the waist and he slams into a tree. Trying my best not to laugh, he just lays there on the ground. Maybe the officials aren't that tough after all.

“How did you find us?” was the first question Luke pounded onto the officials. We managed to tie them up with some rope, which wasn’t hard at all, and decided it would be best to interrogate them.

“How did you know we were here? Did the government send you? Or did you do this on your own free will? WELL?” Luke gave them the evil stare, until they answered his questions.

“Alright, alright!” the head honcho began, “We used her.” He pointed to Janice. “We used the tracker that they put in her. We don’t care about a few runaways but the government does, so we had to come and find you.”

Luke eyes him suspiciously and the man quickly said, “I swear! We ain’t got a clue!”

Luke turned to us and we stepped away from the officials shortly. He said, “Alright, I have come with two possible solutions: either these officials were sworn to secrecy and forced not mention anything about the big plan or the government hasn’t told them at all. I mean, that’s why the government wouldn’t want runaway Specdroids. If civilians found out about Specdroids, there would be uprisings everywhere.”

Max piped up, “I agree. Let’s try to get something out of them one more time. If they don’t know anything, well, I’ve got an idea.”

We walked back to the officials, who were all wearing grey and blue jumpsuits, the government official uniform, and their blue badges.

“Alright,” Luke started, “Why doesn’t the government want runaways, and why are you refusing to tell us?”

The officials looked at each other, completely perplexed.

“Well? Are you gonna’ tell us or not, because my friend over here will give you a good reason why you should tell us?” Luke pointed to Janice who was clenching her fists so hard her knuckles were white.

The men hastily looked at one another, panicking to come up with an answer. Eventually, one of the men mutters, “We don’t know why, but last time we had runaways, the government was all over us. Honestly, we don’t have a clue why.” All the other men were nodding in agreement, so Max took the reins.

Max stands up straight and stares intensely towards the men. He shouts out in a firm voice, “Alright. Since you refuse to tell us anything, you’re going to have to do a couple things for us. First, you need to evacuate the Specdroid city. Say something like, I don’t know, there is

minor toxic gas leak in the forest. Whatever you do, don't let the government headquarters find out. Okay?"

The all nodded their heads, doubtful, and Max continues, "Next, we need you to get us inside the city and into your office, headquarters or wherever you hang out."

The men remain silent this time, and completely motionless. Max looked toward us for our approval, and he continues, "You are going to get us access to *all* government information. Deal?"

The officials looked at each other uneasily, but when they see the look of anger on Janice's face, they quickly agreed.

Luke looked around the clearing in the forest and turned to the officials, asking, "So how did you guys get here anyways? Did you walk, or coming here through aerial machines?"

This place even has flying do-hickies that travel through the sky. Crazy, right?

"Hover car, it's in the bushes." the head honcho responds. "Alright, we notified the town, so it's safe to go back. And, could you at least untie us before we get going?"

We all simultaneously shake our heads, the officials groan, and we begin to start up the hover car. After packing in all the officials in the oversized trunk, Janice takes the wheels, having experience with flying hover cars, and the rest of us pile into the back seat. Janice takes off with incredible speed, and rest of us sit back and try to enjoy the ride. After an hour ride in the hover car, I am beyond nauseas. When we reach the city, it has an eerie atmosphere to it without all of its lively inhabitants. It takes me a minute to stand up straight on the ground again, and the officials take us to their government room.

"This is where we do our government business." One of the more shy officials begins, "It's quite convenient, being next to the laboratory, we can get updates from our top scientists."

The officials show us their computer that stores all their information. Max and Janice explore the computer, since they're the tech-freaks. Luke, Melina and I explore the laboratory. An official gives us a tour of their inventions, and one spikes my interest.

"This is the molecular transporter, our most recent experiment. It teleports things to our dimension. Nothing showed up, so we doubt it worked."

I quickly ask, "Wait, did you say they tried to teleport something from an alternate dimension to this one? Like maybe, I don't know a human being?"

He starts again, “The molecular transporter creates an entrance so something on the other side can come through. It’s possible a human could come through.”

I nod my head, and inquire, “Could this portal take the place of a TV?”

“Sure.” the man continues. “It could take the place of anything.”

I begin to explain my situation to him. After I finish, he nods his head and says, “I can’t be for certain, but it is quite likely. I can teleport you back, if you want.”

Before I reply, I think: *Is that really what I want? I’ve gotten this far.* With complete confidence I announce, “I think I might just stay here.”

To Be Continued...