

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

A marker squeaks against a whiteboard as MRS. WELLES writes 'THE ANTI-INTELLIGENT TECHNOLOGY ACT' in big letters.

MRS. WELLES

The final and most important part of today's lesson is The Anti-Intelligent Technology Act. Who can tell me what that is?

The class is quiet out of boredom. LANDON tentatively raises his hand.

LANDON

It banned all sentient technology back in 2025, right?

MRS. WELLES

Very good, Landon! Yes, it banned all kinds of technology that was programmed to run independent of human interference.

LANDON

Wasn't that just the first part of it?

MRS. WELLES

Correct! In addition to it, they added the 28th amendment: all technology created beyond and including the Internet is banned.

Another student, BROOKE, laughs.

BROOKE

My parents say they banned fun with it!

The class snickers.

MRS. WELLES

Not true! Just because they recalled all phones, tablets, and computers with Internet doesn't mean they recalled fun.

BROOKE

Sounds like it to me, Miss.

The dismissal bell rings. Students pack up and hurry out.

MRS. WELLES
 (yelling after them)
 See you tomorrow, class! Do your
 homework!

Landon approaches his teacher's desk.

LANDON
 I have another question, ma'am.
 What happened to the engineers and
 scientists who used to make
 technology that got banned?

MRS. WELLES
 They were rounded up and forced to
 take an oath that they'd never do
 it again.

LANDON
 Jeez, that's a bit harsh. But
 anyhow, thanks Mrs. Welles. See you
 tomorrow.

Mrs. Welles nods and Landon leaves the room.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Landon sits on the steps waiting to be picked up. Across the
 street, he sees his friends from class, Brooke, HAYDEN, and
 GEORGIA playing soccer in the park.

The ball goes flying across the street and bounces to
 Landon's feet. He scoops it up as his friends run to him.

HAYDEN
 Hey man! Thanks for grabbing that
 for me.

LANDON
 No problem. Have fun with your
 game, it looks cool!

GEORGIA
 Why don't you join us? The teams
 would be even that way!

LANDON
 Oh I can't, my parents don't let me
 play sports. They're paranoid about
 me getting injured or something.

BROOKE
 Aren't you the delicate flower?

HAYDEN

Jeez, your parents sound like a whole lot of fun! Come on, live a little! It's just soccer.

Landon looks between his friends and the street. His mother's car is nowhere in sight.

LANDON

(standing)

You know what? Let's play!

Cheers sound from the group and the four run across the street to the park. Landon throws the ball and Georgia runs forward to kick it.

LANDON (CONT'D)

Wait! How do you play this?

HAYDEN

Just kick it, don't use your hands. Me and you will be a team. Try to get the ball to the goal by the tree, okay?

GEORGIA

We'll go easy on you this time!

Landon nods and runs after Hayden, trying to block Georgia from scoring. The teams chase each other up and down the field.

LANDON

This is great! Hayden, pass it to me!

Hayden kicks the ball to Landon. Georgia tries to intercept it, but Hayden blocks her. Landon hurries toward the goal.

HAYDEN

Go, go, go! Hustle!

Landon's lungs heave as he struggles for air. Brooke runs up beside him and tries to kick the ball out from under him.

While trying to hit the ball, her foot hooks around his ankle and Landon drops and skids across the ground. Pain explodes in his leg.

The other three kids rush to Landon's side as he rolls over, his leg gushing blood. Rocks and dirt cake the wound.

GEORGIA

I said to go easy on him, Brooke!
Why would you trip him?!

BROOKE

Oh my God, I'm so sorry, Landon! I
didn't mean to trip you. I didn't
mean to, I swear!

HAYDEN

Shut up! One of you go get my keys
in my bag. I'll get him to the ER.

Landon's head shoots up as Georgia dashes away.

LANDON

No! My parents hate doctors,
they'll kill me if I go to a
hospital! They're already going to
be mad that I played soccer!

HAYDEN

It's too late now! You probably
need stitches, so we are going to a
hospital right now!

Georgia comes back with Hayden's keys. Brooke and Georgia
help pick Landon up while Hayden hurries to turn his car on.

The girls meet Hayden at the curb and lower Landon into the
backseat. Hayden speeds off as soon as the door shuts.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY

Hayden bursts through the doors. The RECEPTIONIST's head
shoots up.

HAYDEN

(out of breath)
My friend needs stitches!

RECEPTIONIST

(yelling into the back)
Somebody get a stretcher and get
Dr. Faust!

A NURSE runs out of the emergency bay with a stretcher, DR.
FAUST following close behind. They follow Hayden to his car
and lift Landon out of the backseat.

DR. FAUST

What happened to him, son?

HAYDEN

We were playing soccer and he tripped. I guess he slid across a sharp rock or something, I don't know! It just happened in the park a few blocks away.

Dr. Faust nods and wheels Landon away. The receptionist grabs Hayden's arms and keeps him from following the doctor.

HAYDEN (CONT'D)

(calling after him)

His name is Landon Barclay!

The nurse wheels Landon into an open bay and transfers him onto the bed. Landon writhes, gripping his leg.

DR. FAUST

Landon, don't touch your leg. My name is Dr. Faust, your friend said you fell playing soccer?

LANDON

(through gritted teeth)

Yes. I knew I should've listened to my parents, but I just wanted to try it out.

DR. FAUST

You never played? What are you, a sophomore?

LANDON

They're protective that way, the helicopter type.

Dr. Faust stops the bleeding. The nurse preps stitching tools.

DR. FAUST

Nurse, can you look in the directory for Mr. and Mrs. Barclay? I'll do the stitches.

The nurse leaves. The doctor injects lidocaine.

LANDON

Is it going to hurt a lot?

DR. FAUST

It shouldn't, I just numbed the area. I take it you've never had stitches before?

LANDON
I've never been to a hospital
before.

DR. FAUST
I see. Can you tell me about your
medical history?

LANDON
My mom says I'm healthy, but I've
had these fainting spells since I
was little.

DR. FAUST
Narcolepsy. That shouldn't
interfere with this, nothing to
worry abo-

As the doctor pulls the skin aside to clean the wound, he
gasps and drops the syringe.

LANDON
What's wrong?

DR. FAUST
(in shock)
Didn't mention you had a shin
implant.

LANDON
I don't? What's going on?

DR. FAUST
Y-you... your bone is metal.

Dr. Faust taps the metal.

DR. FAUST (CONT'D)
You don't feel that at all, do you?

LANDON
No! What's in my leg? Where are my
parents?!

LANDON'S MOM and LANDON'S DAD burst into the ER.

LANDON'S MOM
Landon?!

LANDON'S DAD
(to the nurse)
Where the hell is my son?!

The nurse shows them to Landon and the doctor.

LANDON'S MOM
What happened to you?

LANDON
(on the verge of tears)
I just wanted to play soccer with
my friends, but I fell!

LANDON'S MOM
You're forbidden from sports, you
know that!

LANDON'S DAD
And you know how we feel about
hospitals! Where's your head at?

Landon's dad turns on Dr. Faust.

LANDON'S DAD (CONT'D)
And you, why are you touching my
son before his parents arrive? I've
got half a mind to sue!

DR. FAUST
You need to answer some questions
before you file a lawsuit, Mr.
Barclay. Why does this kid have a
metal bone he's unaware of?

The room goes quiet. Landon's parents look at each other,
afraid.

LANDON'S DAD
(quietly)
Discharge him. Now.

DR. FAUST
If you take him, I'm calling a
social worker. Something's not
right!

Landon's mom tugs on her husband's sleeve. Tears fall down
her cheeks.

LANDON'S MOM
I told you not to break your oath.
I told you we'd get caught!

LANDON
What are you talking about? Mom?
Dad?

LANDON'S DAD

No. No, no, no! This wasn't supposed to happen. Why couldn't you just listen, Landon?

LANDON

Why can't I ever do anything like everyone else? What's so different about me?

LANDON'S DAD

Stop asking questions, just get out of the bed and let's go!

LANDON

(now crying)

No! I'm just like everyone else, I need help!

LANDON'S DAD

You're not! You're not even human!

The room goes silent again.

LANDON'S DAD (CONT'D)

(breaking down)

I built you.

LANDON'S MOM

When we found out I was barren, your father wouldn't accept it.

LANDON'S DAD

I was a robotics engineer before the ban. When I saw we couldn't have our own child, I decided to build one.

Landon stares off in shock. The doctor creeps toward the door.

LANDON'S MOM

I know this is a lot to take in, but Landon, we have never loved you any less than we would a real child.

LANDON

(shouting)

You can't just say that and expect me to be fine! I'm not even human?!

LANDON'S DAD

Just try to understand-

LANDON

Do you know what this means? If anybody finds out, I could be destroyed!

Dr. Faust slides out the door, pulling a walkie-talkie from his pocket.

LANDON'S MOM

Wait, stop him!

Landon's dad lunges after Dr. Faust. They brawl for a moment before two SECURITY GUARDS rush over.

DR. FAUST

(as he gets up)

That boy is a droid! This man broke his oath and built him! Barclay is his name!

SECURITY GUARD 1

Mr. Barclay, you're under arrest for violating the Anti-Intelligent Technology Act!

Landon's mom shrieks and tries to push the other security guard away from Landon, but he shoves her aside and pulls the boy out of the bed.

SECURITY GUARD 2

What do we do with the droid?

LANDON

(panicked)

I'm not a droid, this isn't right, please-

SECURITY GUARD 1

You know what happens to all confiscated tech. We'll take it to the burner.

(to Landon's dad)

Where's the off switch?

LANDON'S MOM

No! Don't you dare-

Landon's dad's head hangs in defeat.

LANDON'S DAD

Nape of the neck. It won't hurt, son, it's just like your fainting episodes. Just close your eyes.

The security guard finds and hits the button. Landon slumps over. His mom cries. The other guard shoves his dad outside.

FADE OUT.