

FADE IN:

EXT. DESTROYED CITY - MORNING

Eviscerated buildings and piles of rubble are all that suggest the former existence of a small city.

Smoke rises from several lingering fires as the blazing sun breaks over distant sandy hills.

A humanoid ROBOT lies still on a pile on rubble. Its body is scuffed and scorched. Its "head" resembles a small CRT TV monitor with an antenna protruding from it. The screen is blank.

The robot shifts slightly, then sits upright. The robot WHIRS and its monitor displays various lines of code as the robot reboots. The antenna blinks on and off and the screen reads:

"ESTABLISHING CONNECTION..."

After a moment, the ROBOT BEEPS, and the screen displays:

"ERROR: NO SIGNAL FOUND"

The robot stands, shaky on its feet at first. It walks across the rubble and looks around, taking in its surroundings.

Off-screen RUBBLE CLATTERS and a CHILD GASPS, several other CHILDREN'S VOICES SHUSH the initial voice.

The robot turns its head to see what the commotion is.

Five CHILDREN, JANNER (12), SUSAN (10), ADRIAN (9), EMILY (8), and TIMMY (5) and duck behind a large chunk of concrete.

Adrian pokes his head out to get a second look but is pulled back down by the others.

The robot takes a cautious step towards them and PAPER CRUNCHES under its foot. It looks down.

Beneath its foot is a crumpled drawing. The robot picks it up. It is a crude child's rendering of the five children and an adult woman standing outside of a colorful building.

The robot looks up from the drawing. The rubble near the children suggests the former existence of a structure there.

Emily chances a peek at the robot, it returns her look before she ducks back into the rubble pile.

EXT. DESTROYED CITY - DAY

The children creep out from behind the rubble, starting with the eldest. Adrian climbs on top of the pile.

As they stare at it with wide-eyed expressions, the robot finishes leaning sheets of metal siding together into an extremely crude semblance of a house. It then ties the sheets together with a length of wire and regards its creation.

The children laugh and cheer at the sight of their new home. Except for the Timmy, who just holds Janner's hand and looks at him.

The robot leans against the side of the makeshift hut, triumphant.

The structure CREAKS, shifts, and COLLAPSES with a RESOUNDING CRASH, taking the robot down as well. It BUZZES in surprise.

The children stop cheering and rush over to the robot. It sits up and shakes off the dirt, staring at its ruined creation.

The ROBOT lets out a sullen WHIR. The children all look at the ground, dejected.

Except for Timmy, who plops down beside the robot and plays with small bits of rubble.

He stacks the rocks on top of each other and knocks the pile over again, only to rebuild the stack once more.

The robot stares at the stone towers that the child is playing with. It sits up straight and scans the ruins.

Close by are the remains of a concrete structure.

The robot stands up, and motions for the children to look over at the ruins. Susan looks at the rubble, then at the Timmy's construction project.

She smiles.

EXT. DESTROYED CITY - NOON

Beneath the blazing sunlight stands the outline of a new square structure, about 14 square feet in area.

It consists of bits of concrete and cinder blocks stacked tightly on top of one another.

The robot, using a small laser embedded in its hand, carves a large chunk of concrete. It places it on the already three-foot-high structure, where it fits perfectly.

Most of the children stand in a line, passing bits of rubble from the demolished building to the construction project.

Timmy is taking a nap beneath the shade of some metal sheeting.

The Adrian tries to lift a piece of debris half as big as he is. He loses his grip and drops it. He sits down in a huff.

The robot picks up the chunk of debris with one hand, and adds it to the rubble it has tucked under its other arm.

Adrian follows the robot to the pile where the other children are depositing their building materials.

As the robot sets down its load, he climbs on top of its shoulders, cheering as it stands back up.

He slips and falls forward, SHOUTING in surprise, but the robot catches him and sets him down. He immediately dashes off to explore somewhere else.

The robot looks upward. Its antenna flashes and its screen reads:

"RETRYING CONNECTION LINK"

IT CHIMES and the screen displays:

"ESTABLISHING CONNECTION"

IT BEEPS and the screen reads:

"ERROR: NO SIGNAL FOUND"

DESTROYED CITY - EVENING

The construction project now looks like an actual home, albeit a very small one.

It even has a makeshift sheet metal door, and a window cut into the wall fitted with a piece of ill-fitting glass.

As the children watch and cheer, the robot extends its legs so that it can reach the top of the house, where it places a large piece of metal siding.

It secures the roof with large rocks, then lowers back down to ground level, regarding its new work with pride.

The children join in celebrating.

Timmy yawns and walks inside. The rest follow, visibly exhausted.

The robot hesitates at the door.

It presses a button on its chest which dispenses a large COIN-SHAPED DEVICE made of shiny silver metal with a blinking green light in the center.

It affixes the beacon above the doorway. Inscribed on the beacon are the words: "SOS - VERIFIED REFUGEE SHELTER"

INT. MAKESHIFT HOUSE

The robot ducks inside and is tackled by the children. They all fall to the floor and the children giggle.

The robot gathers them together, and the children snuggle close to each other and doze off.

Adrian leans against the robot, who is sitting beside the group.

It pats him on the head and he drifts off to sleep.

FADE TO:

INT. MAKESHIFT HOUSE - MIDNIGHT

Adrian wakes up.

The robot is gone.

He stands up, the other children are all still asleep.

A WHIRRING comes from outside. He hoists himself up onto the windowsill to look out.

EXT. MAKESHIFT HOUSE

The beacon blinks consistently from above the doorway. Its green light intermittently illuminates the robot, who stands a few yards from the house, facing away from it.

The robot's arm has opened, revealing the barrel of a gun.

ROBOT'S POV

A relatively intact building is highlighted in red

BACK

It raises its cannon and FIRES a brilliant red beam at the building, DECIMATING IT.

Over the horizon, the orange glow of fires mingle with frequent BURSTS of brighter light and the dull sound of DISTANT EXPLOSIONS.

Adrian GASPS.

The robot turns toward him. Its monitor, now visible, reads:

"CONNECTION ESTABLISHED - DIRECTIVE  
RECEIVED: CONTINUE LAST DIRECTIVE"

It levels the cannon at the house.

ROBOT'S POV

The beacon flashes green. Text appears beside it:

"REFUGEE SHELTER: NON-TARGET"

The house is highlighted green.

BACK

It lowers the cannon. Its antenna blinks and its screen reads:

"NEW DIRECTIVE RECEIVED: REPORT TO  
BATTLEFRONT"

IT BEEPS in response and walks towards the glowing horizon.

Adrian watches it walk away. His eyes fill with tears.

The robot stops for a moment, it turn back towards the house and raises its hand goodbye. IT DINGS softly.

The child waves goodbye, smiling though he is crying.

As the robot walks away towards the battle, the beacon shines on, illuminating the makeshift home with green light.

FADE TO BLACK.