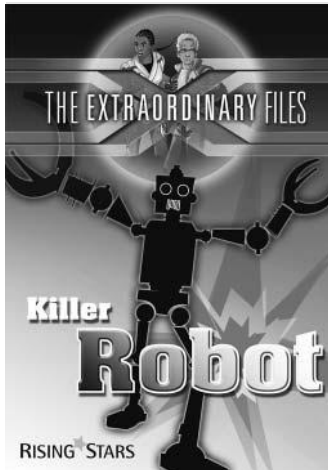


KILLER ROBOT



Story summary

Agent Laura Turnbull has a new boyfriend. His name is Scott Brown and he is a robot inventor. The story begins with Turnbull dragging a rather jealous Parker to see Scott unveiling his new invention, the house robot, to journalists. Things do not go to plan during the demonstration. Turnbull is horrified when the robot turns on its master and kidnaps him. The only clue to Scott's whereabouts is a ransom note with a demand for a million pounds. Turnbull is inconsolable.

The robot phones and asks the agents to bring Scott Brown's heart pills to the underground car park of the Hilton Hotel. The agents are shot at and Parker hides behind a car while, unknown to him, Turnbull gets chased and cornered by the robot. When Parker next sees Turnbull, she tries to strangle him. But it isn't the real Turnbull, but a robot, that looks just like her.

Agent Parker is lucky. The police save him. He meets Melanie, the inventor's old girlfriend, to see if she can shed some light on the kidnap. Melanie tells him about the Series Two robot which she and Scott had invented. It is a killer robot and Scott was hoping to sell it to the army for billions of pounds.

Parker learns that the Series Two robot has been programmed to shut down when asked a series of personal questions about the person it is imitating which it cannot answer. Armed with this information and with the ransom money, Parker and Melanie agree to meet the robot in a dry-cleaning factory in the middle of the night. When they arrive Melanie does a runner with the ransom money and leaves Parker to face the robot. He uses the personal questions trick and gets the robot to shut down.

The story ends with a twist. Turnbull is horrified to find that she has been dating a robot. Parker cannot hide his amusement. Luckily for the two agents, the Secret Service gets all its ransom money back when Melanie, the real inventor of the Series Two, is arrested.

Difficult words or phrases

Chapter One

inventor (page 4); University of Robotics (page 7); House Robot (page 9); CD-Rom (page 11)

Chapter Two

shadows (page 18); blacked out (page 21); disguise (page 22); electron pills (page 26)

Chapter Three

dry-cleaning machines (page 30); teeth started chattering (page 30); perfume (page 34); trouser press (page 36); winded (page 36); overtime pay rate for late nights (page 37); celebration (page 38)

Chapter Four

trendy (page 39); spying (page 39); sacked (page 43); radio-linked (page 43); small talk (page 44)

Questions to interrogate the text

- What do you know about robots and robot technology?
- Have you seen any science-fiction films about robots and robot technology? What similarities can you see between famous science-fiction films and this story?
- What sort of a relationship is there between the two detectives?

Role-play/drama suggestion

Melanie is the villain of this book. Ask a pupil to hotseat the character of Melanie and explain to the rest of the class her plan to make money out of her robot invention. Ask the rest of the pupils to prepare some questions to ask Melanie.

Answers to the copymaster sheets

Copymaster 1: True or false?

These are the correct statements in each pair: 2nd; 1st; 2nd; 2nd; 1st

Copymaster 2: Fill in the missing words

Scott, robot, robot, ransom, Turnbull, Parker, personal, blows, funny

True or false?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Read pages 3 to 8 of the story. Read each pair of statements.
Tick the statement that is correct and write it out.

Agents Parker and Turnbull were on their way to the cinema.

Agents Parker and Turnbull were on their way to a party.

Agent Turnbull had a new boyfriend called Scott.

Agent Parker had a new girlfriend called Melanie.

Agent Parker was dressed in smart casual clothes.

Agent Parker was dressed in a suit.

When Parker saw Scott, he took an instant liking to him.

When Parker saw Scott, he took an instant dislike to him.

Scott was showing his new invention, the house robot to reporters.

Scott was showing his new invention, the house cleaner to reporters.

Fill in the missing words

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Write out the passage, choosing the missing words from the word box.

funny blows personal Parker
Turnbull ransom robot Scott

In this story, Laura Turnbull has a new boyfriend called _____.
He is a _____ inventor. Scott's invention, a house _____
decides to kidnap him. It demands a _____ of one million pounds.
Turnbull is taken prisoner by the robot. The robot then makes itself look
like _____ and tries to strangle Agent _____.
Agent Parker gets the help of Melanie. She explains to Parker how he
can get the robot to self-destruct by asking it _____ questions.
At a romantic dinner, Turnbull asks Scott about himself and he
_____ up. Turnbull's boyfriend has been a robot all along.
Parker thinks that this is very _____.

2. Extension work

Continue the conversation between Laura Turnbull and her boyfriend, Scott, in the restaurant. Finish the conversation when Scott the robot blows up.

Turnbull: "Scott, darling, it was really great that we rescued you."

Scott: "I really missed you."

