

WASTED

Written by

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IN BLACK

The sound of something being crushed -- metal crunching, bones squishing -- a PNEUMATIC wheeze brings the noise to a shuddering halt. A dull THUD as...

CREDIT SEQUENCE:

WIPERS scrape mud away from a dirty windshield -- leave title words formed from mud left behind: WASTED!

THROUGH AND OVER a landscape of rubbish. Men and women bag up scraps of paper.

CLOSE ON

Hands piecing together shredded strips of paper...

SERIES OF SHOTS

Shredded strips of paper are pieced together.

A piece of screwed up paper is unwrapped.

Food is scraped off another sheet of paper.

A CREDIT CARD is joined together...

END SERIES

We're looking at the most basic form of data mining.

And now we're...

EXT. LANDFILL SITE - DAY

People pick amongst the rubbish. A piece of paper blows towards us -- wipes the frame and we're...

EXT. SUBURB - LEE HOUSE - ESTABLISHING

A row of houses. Clones of each other. Neat lawns. Up and over garage.

This house is a little more ragged than the one next to it. Money's tight in the Lee household and the lawn hasn't been kept and nurtured as well as it could have.

INT. LEE HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

A pair of LEGS poke out from under the sink. Could be a dead body for all we know. The legs tense up, there's grunts and CLANKING as the owner of the legs fights with something.

JAMIL (O.S.)

Oops, oh boy, it's gonna go, now
we're in trouble stand by with the
life boats...

ANOTHER ANGLE

A teenage girl MELISSA LEE, flicks through a fashion magazine at the kitchen table, phones trail from an ear, unfazed by the drama. The door opens and JIMMY LEE (12) bursts in.

JIMMY

Die infidels!

He wears a Karate costume, kicks his legs at an invisible foe. He's followed by his mother, ABBY LEE (30s), slightly stressed and carrying wrapping paper and boxes.

ABBY

Infidels won't be the only things
dying if this house isn't ready for
Thanksgiving. How's the waste
disposal going?

Melissa looks up, nods down at the legs.

MELISSA

Same as usual, a lot of noise and
not much action.

JAMIL (O.S.)

I heard that. Oh, now I got it, oh
yeah, here she comes...if I can
just...

There's a CLUNK and a terrific grinding noise as an ancient garbage disposal unit groans into life. Jamil starts screaming theatrically.

JAMIL

Ahhhhhhhh, my hand!!!!

He bursts out from under the sink clutching his arm, missing a hand, sleeve flapping.

Meet the smiling face of JAMIL LEE (30s), of Lebanese descent, an optimist and as such always a disappointment to someone.

For a millisecond Jimmy looks concerned. Melissa and Abby just shake their heads. They've seen it all before.

JAMIL

Wait a minute, there it is.

He reaches under the sink and pulls out a rubber glove, sticks it on the end of his empty sleeve, wriggles his arm and the glove fills with his hand.

JAMIL

Phew. That was close.

Abby dumps the wrapping paper onto the kitchen table. Jamil goes over to give her a kiss, thinks better of it when she freezes him with a look.

ABBY

I want that garage emptied, all the junk taken to the dump and this house cleaned from top to bottom before we celebrate Thanksgiving. You promised.

MELISSA

Yeah, and you also said you'd find that old Cindy doll I had...they're worth a lot of money now.

JAMIL

I'll find it.

(to Abby)

And Honey, have I ever let you down?

ABBY

Of course not, it's just sometimes you have a more optimistic view of your chances of success.

There's a BANG! And the garbage disposal unit disintegrates.

ABBY

Perfect.

Jimmy launches himself at Jamil, hands whirl, feet high kick. Jamil nimbly side steps and Jimmy goes crashing into a pile of presents and a festive wreath, sends them flying.

JAMIL

Always use your opponents own
strength against them grasshopper.

Abby looks at the mess.

ABBY

Right. You three to the garage, I
want it emptied and all the trash
taken to the recycling center.
Then we can work on making it
somewhere you can hang out with
your friends.

Jimmy picks himself up from the floor.

JIMMY

I've got to practise.

MELISSA

I said I'd meet someone.

Abby freezes them with a look. Jamil jumps in.

JAMIL

Why don't we make it a family
outing. I bet you've never seen a
recycling center before?

MELISSA

Oh yuk.

JIMMY

I bet it's really gross.

ABBY

Your father's right. It's about
time you learned the difference
between recyclables and non-
recyclables, otherwise by the time
you grow up you'll be under twenty
feet of garbage.

MELISSA

Aw mom...

ABBY

Aw nothing. And make sure your dad
doesn't bring back anything from
the dump, you know what he's like.

The kids groan and move slowly across the kitchen.

JAMIL

Hey. I'm still in the room.

Abby leans forward, gives him a kiss on the cheek.

ABBY

I know baby, but you tend to be a bit of a hoarder.

JAMIL

Some of it's history babe.

ABBY

And where does history belong?

JAMIL

I know, in a museum. But don't tell me you never had something old you wished you'd kept?

ABBY

Grandma had an old ballerina music box she used to get me to sleep.

(beat)

But that doesn't mean you have to keep every piece of junk. Now go sort out that trash, I've got a turkey to deal with.

EXT. LANDFILL SITE - DAY

Mounds of trash as far as the eye can see. Some makeshift sheds. Dump trucks weave around -- tipping more trash.

MIGRANT WORKERS wearing protective clothing and masks sift through piles of trash.

ANGLE ON

HANDS separating pieces of shredded and unshredded paperwork into clear plastic bags.

Which are carried into one of the large sheds on the site for data mining.

A large GARBAGE TRUCK sits at the entrance to the area

INT. KOWALSKI'S TRUCK HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Inside it has been converted into a cool looking living space. Fitted with couches, computers and a small kitchen section.

Dominating the area is BILLY KOWALSKI (60s) a little long in the tooth but able to snap the head off a man if needed. A worker, MILO (20s) stands in front of him, head bowed.

KOWALSKI

Info's a little light this month
wanna' tell me why?

Milo raises his eyes slightly. Speaks with a heavy east European accent.

MILO

People very careful, cross blade
shredder make job difficult.

Kowalski gets up, goes over to him. A SHREDDER sits on the desk next to him. Kowalski takes Milo's hand firmly, moves it towards the shredder.

KOWALSKI

Really? You think a cross blade
shredder makes it difficult for
you.

Kowalski flicks the shredder on. Milo screams as the machine makes a grinding noise. Kowalski turns it off. Pulls Milo's arm up. His shirt sleeve's chewed off.

KOWALSKI

You come up light again, you'll
find something that makes a job
more difficult. Wiping your ass
with one freakin' hand.

He pulls out a memory stick from a laptop. Opens the battery compartment of an old leather covered 1960s DECCA DEBONAIRE DELUXE.

Puts the memory stick inside and closes it. Hands it to Milo.

KOWALSKI

Get outta here.

Milo hurries out of the door.

EXT. LEE HOUSE - GARAGE

Jamil stands outside the door to the garage clicking the remote control. It makes a weak beep.

The door remains closed.

JAMIL

C'mon baby, open wide for daddy.

He rubs it between his hands, tries to coax it into life. Melissa and Jimmy stand watching -- bored.

ANGLE ON

Jamil's next door neighbor. MR FRANKS (40s), and a couple of well scrubbed kids load spotless plastic containers full of recycling into the back of his immaculate RV. Nods at Jamil.

MR FRANKS

Might need a bit of oil on the mechanism.

Jamil gives him a tight smile. Mr Franks gets into the RV, his kids jump into the back.

He drives off with another irritating wave.

Jamil watches him leave.

JAMIL

I should follow him. He probably leaves a trail of oil wherever he goes.

MELISSA

You were going to mend it.

Jamil presses the button futilely. Goes over to the door, heaves at the handle.

BANG! It explodes open -- boxes, toys and furniture sweep over him.

He disappears under a Tsunami of trash.

His hand bursts out of the heap clutching a CINDI doll. Its head falls off.

JAMIL (O.S.)

I got it.

EXT. LEE HOUSE - STREET - LATER

Jimmy and Melissa heave an old bicycle onto a pick-up truck piled high with the trash from the garage.

Abby comes out of the house. Looks at the empty garage.

ABBY

That it?

Jamil wipes sweat off his forehead.

JAMIL

If I empty out my pockets that's everything I own.

Abby smiles, gives him a kiss.

ABBY

Don't be melodramatic.
You haven't been into that garage since the children were born.

Jamil reaches into the back of the pickup -- pulls out an old metal licence plate. Looks at it fondly.

JAMIL

This is from the car we did our courting in.

MELISSA

Oh yuk.

JAMIL

The light from the stars shining down on us...

ABBY

Yeah, through the buckshot holes my daddy put in the hood when after he caught us making out.

She takes the licence plate. Places it back into the pickup.

ABBY

Besides, we have better souvenirs of our courting days hon.

She looks over at Melissa and Jimmy.

Off Jamil's face. That's for sure.

EXT. RECYCLING CENTER - DAY

Piles of computers, white goods -- household rubbish and garden waste.

Trucks and Utility Vehicles jostle for position.

Jamil pulls up in his truck.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Jamil and Jimmy drag an old TV over to the electrical pile.

Jamil and Jimmy heave an old bike into the metal area.

Melissa drops an old doll into plastics.

All three of them drag a rusty washing machine to join a heap of them.

Jamil models some old clothes from his teenage years, dumps them into a clothes pile.

END SERIES

Jamil places his treasured licence plate carefully in a skip.

JAMIL

Heavy duty Detroit steel. Don't
make 'em like that anymore.

Milo drives past the site office in a PICKUP and pulls up.

Milo climbs out clutching the Decca Radio we saw him handed earlier. Heads towards the site office passing a...

EXT. GARDEN WASTE DUMPSTER

A bottled blond Cougar struggles to lift a bag full of leaves into a dumpster -- shows a substantial amount of cleavage as she attempts to tip the bag in.

Milo notices. Puts the RADIO down on a table full of electrical appliances and moves to help her out.

Jamil comes over to the table. Jimmy and Melissa trail behind.

JAMIL

Lot of these old radios are fine,
just some corrosion on the battery
terminals...

He picks up the Decca radio, admires it. Melissa pouts.

MELISSA

Dad.

JAMIL

Just looking.

In the distance Mr Franks and his two children empty their neat trash into the relevant skips. He heads towards Jamil.

MR FRANKS

Hey.

Jamil pretends not to hear. Franks calls out again.

MR FRANKS

How's it going?

JAMIL

Oh Hi. Yeah, all good.

MR FRANKS

You gotta be real hard on yourself.
Hang onto this stuff it's gonna
come back and bite you in the ass.

JAMIL

Yeah, right.

He reaches into his pocket and pulls out some tickets.

MR FRANKS

I got some spare tickets for the
little league game if you guys want
to join us?

JAMIL

Oh, well that would be great, but I
still have a load of stuff to sort,
and I doubt if the kids would want
to...

Melissa and Jimmy grab the tickets and run towards Mr Frank's RV.

JIMMY

Cool.

MELISSA

See you later dad.

Mr Franks shrugs.

MR FRANKS

Kids huh. Well, you enjoy
yourself' I'll drop them back later
okay?

JAMIL

Yeah, sure, that fits in really
well. Thanks, have a good one.

He watches as the RV drives off. Shakes his head.

ANGLE ON MILO

He helps the woman with her bag of leaves.

Turns on the charm. Chats to her. She laughs.

JAMIL

Looks around -- table full of old electrical appliances and
the Decca radio -- the dumpster full of scrap metal.

He reaches towards the table...

INT. JAMIL'S PICKUP - DAY

HANDS fiddle with the tuning of the car radio. The old 50s
Coaster's track "Yakety Yak" fills the truck.

Jamil sits back in the seat. The pickup rattles along the
road. He sings along with the radio. Badly.

EXT. RECYCLING CENTRE - DAY

Milo looks at the empty space on the table where he left the
Decca radio. He goes over to one of the OPERATORS.

The operator points at the exit.

Heads back to his pickup. Two muscled Eastern Europeans with
necks the same width as their heads wait.

They climb in and the pickup roars off.

INT. PICKUP - DAY

Milo drives -- fast. Worried.

In the passenger seat, GREGOR (40s) a mountain of muscle, stoney faced.

He pulls out a handgun, checks the magazine. Speaks with a heavy east European accent.

GREGOR
Mr Kowalski not going to be happy
rabbit.

Milo stares straight ahead, dry mouthed. Looks at the gun.

MILO
There's no need for that, as long
as we get the radio back.

GREGOR
Mr Kowalski doesn't like...stray
hairs.

The heavy in the back seat coughs.

HEAVY
Is loose ends...

Gregor gives a thin smile.

GREGOR
Shut up, you have shit for head.

HEAVY (O.S.)
For brains...shit for brains.

Gregor shoots a fist backwards, it connects with a dull thud.

GREGOR
Now you shithead.

A moment of reflection as they hurtle along the road. The man in the backseat straightens his nose. Snuffles.

EXT. ROADSIDE - SAMETIME

Jamil is pulled over by the side of the road.

INT. JAMIL'S PICKUP

He fiddles with the Decca radio. Opens the battery compartment. The USB stick falls out. He looks at it. Puts it into his pocket. Looks at the corroded battery terminals.

JAMIL
Little bit of sanding and you'll be
good to go.

INT. MILO'S PICKUP - SAMETIME

MILO
Why does he use that old radio
anyway?

GREGOR
When Kowalski's old man did his
first hit, that radio was playing
in the room. It's his lucky tails.

A muffled voice from behind.

HEAVY (O.S.)
Talisman...

Gregor turns, but before he can do anything...

MILO
There he is.

They spot Jamil's pickup at the side of the road. There are
no other cars in sight. They swerve off the road. Brake hard
behind Jamil. Hit the bumper. Shake the pickup.

INT. JAMIL'S PICKUP - SAMETIME

Jamil looks behind him. Puts the radio back on the passenger
seat.

JAMIL
Jackass!

He climbs out.

EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY

The heavy and Gregor exit the pickup. Jamil stands his
ground.

JAMIL
What's your problem?

GREGOR
You have something of ours.

JAMIL

What? You're crazy. I've never seen you before, I don't have anything of yours.

Gregor moves closer to him. Reaches for his gun.

GREGOR

You got radio.

JAMIL

You guys were at the recycling plant? Oh I get it, well listen up buddy, first come first served. You wanna' piece of junk you're going to have get up early.

Gregor turns to the heavy who nurses a bloody nose with a handkerchief.

GREGOR

I understand. Early worms yes?

The heavy repeats the mantra.

HEAVY

Early worms.

Gregor moves over to the pickup. Looks in and sees the radio. Yanks the door open.

JAMIL

Hey!

He grabs at Gregor's arm...which comes out with the gun.

BANG. BANG.

The gun goes off.

JAMIL.

Staggers backwards -- slides down the side of the pickup, eyes rolling up.

Gregor looks at his gun. Shrugs.

GREGOR

Put him in back.

Milo and the Heavy throw Jamil into the back of their pickup. Gregor opens the door to Jamil's pickup.

Reaches over to the passenger seat and grabs the radio.

He carries it over to his pickup.

The heavy climbs into the vehicle. Gregor gets into the passenger seat -- nods to Milo.

GREGOR

Okay. First we get rid of stray hairs, then we take radio to Mr Kowalski.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - DAY

Trash litters the alleyway. A stinking DUMPSTER is surrounded by junk. A rotting mattress, an old bicycle, CAR BATTERIES, TV set. Box of TOYS. A couple of old ZIMMER frames.

Something stirs behind two dumpsters. A wagging tail reverses out from between them.

A dog licks it's lips clean of food residue. Meet T-BONE, a scruffy but adorable street dog whoe lives on his wits.

He wanders round the dumpster, nose sniffing at something tasty inside.

He jumps up at the side of the dumpster -- slides down, it's too high up. He looks around.

ANGLE ON

T-BONE.

Eyes flicking from the dumpster, to the mattress, to the T.V -
- calculating distances and trajectories. He prepares to leap. His ears prick up at the sound of a car approaching

MILO'S PICKUP

Screeches to a halt alongside the dumpster. Gregor and the heavy exit the vehicle. Look around, open the back.

Lift out the body of Jamil and heave it into the dumpster.

They slam the lid of the dumpster shut.

GREGOR

Recycling. Mr Kowalski will be very happy.

(to Milo)

Go.

The pickup roars down the alleyway. Silence. Then a scratching sound from inside the dumpster.

A heartrending whimper echoes round the alleyway. T-Bone is trapped.

INT. KOWALSKI'S TRUCK HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Kowalski sits in his favorite chair -- the Decca radio lies with its back off on a table in front of him.

The other Heavy, Milo and Gregor fill the rest of the space.

Kowalski stares at Milo.

KOWALSKI

So let me get this straight. You, who I believe I had a little chat with a coupla' hours ago put the radio down in amongst the trash...

MILO

There was a women in trouble...

KOWALSKI

Don't give me that knight in freaking armor shit, you left it lying around and some hick took it.

MILO

We got it back...

KOWALSKI

Great work, until some genius decided to waste the guy before checking you had the memory stick.

GREGOR

You always say no stray hairs, so I pick up stray hairs.

KOWALSKI

Listen up meatloaf, if he was still alive we'd be able to ask him where the information is. But now you're going to have to find it or no one's having freakin' turkey. Understand?

He looks around at them. They understand.

KOWALSKI

Okay. Go back to where you dumped
the stiff and check his pockets,
then his car. Go!

There's a stampede as they all try to get through the door at
the same time.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD - ESTABLISHING - DAY

Traffic streams along Hollywood Boulevard. Past the Chinese
Theatre, Tattoo and costume shops.

Outside The DOLBY (Kodak) Theatre, actors dressed in
superhero costumes work the tourists.

And through this throng of cars and people...

A GARBAGE TRUCK, an Electric Hybrid, barrels along the road.

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK - TRAVELLING - DAY

Three MEN occupy the front seat. WEEDS (50s) drives, an old
timer from the Bronx who works the system his way and does
the bare minimum.

Alongside him two LITHUANIANS, brothers. Both in their 20's,
GUSTO and DURK who both share a lack of English and a
commonality of purpose. To get through their shift as fast
as possible.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - DAY

The truck pulls up alongside the entrance to the alleyway.
Air brakes HISS.

Weeds hops out of the cab and goes around to the control
panel at the back of the truck.

Removes a plastic bag held in place with an elastic band that
covers the control buttons.

Durk and Gusto come around and watch as he presses the
hydraulic control buttons. He taps the plastic bag.

WEEDS

Seals gone. Water gets behind the
panel the compactor goes
squirrelly.

ANGLE ON

The compactor grinds backwards crushing the load in preparation for it's next pickup.

ALLEYWAY

At the other end of the alleyway a HOMELESS GUY pours the leftovers from a crate full of empties into one bottle -- makes up a cocktail of beer and spirits -- slugs it back.

Looks like this is what passes for breakfast. He necks the last of the dregs from his bottle.

Licks his lips and burps with satisfaction.

He studies the garbage truck as it idles.

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK - DAY

Weeds starts to roll a cigarette with what looks like a very special mix. The brothers wait -- impatient to get on.

WEEDS

Okay, this is your first day so we're gonna' go over a few of the ground rules.

Gusto, the brains of this ill equipped pair nods.

GUSTO

Absolutely.

Weeds studies him for any signs of irony. Satisfied there isn't any, he continues.

WEEDS

Right. First rule, we don't collect no shit that 'ain't allowed. Household shit is okay, any other shit like furniture, paint, chemicals and car batteries we do not load.

He looks at the brothers to see if they're taking this in.

GUSTO

Absolutely.

WEEDS

As well as the recycling shit we also gotta avoid electrical appliances, sports goods, bicycles...

(beat)

Any kinda scrap metal, 'cos that shit'll it'll mess with the hydraulics.

He taps the hydraulic pressure gauges on the dashboard.

WEEDS

You overload that shit we'll have to shut down and repressurize the whole system, and you don't wanna be losing money while that's going down, am I right?

Gusto nods sagely, strokes his chin and gives a look that passes for deep thinking in Lithuania.

GUSTO

Absolutely.

DURK

No shit.

WEEDS

Okay. Now Get the hell outta my cab.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - DAY

Gusto and Durk leap down from the cab. Gusto reels off instructions in Lithuanian at high speed to Durk as they rush around the alleyway.

At the other end of the alleyway an Afro American BLIND MAN, taps his way along the alley.

Plonks himself into position. He carries a beat up old ACCORDION -- plops a hat down. Begins to play the kind of music alley cats petition against.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Wheeling the dumpster to the back of the truck.

The dumpster being emptied by hydraulic arms into the back.

Gusto throwing bike frames into the back.

Durk chucking a TV, mattress and car batteries into the truck.

Gusto and Durk form a two man chain, throwing boxes and cans of paint and chairs to each other and into the truck.

END SERIES

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK - DAY

Smoke wafts through the cab. Weeds draws deeply on his cigarette -- a contented smile on his face. Settles back into his seat. Enjoys the moment.

The door bursts open. The brothers slam into the seat next to him. Weeds looks at them in astonishment.

WEEDS

Damn, that was fast. Got myself a some regular G.I Joes. You sure you put all the stuff into the right areas?

GUSTO

Absolutely.

Weeds shrugs. Hits the compressor switch. The giant hydraulic rams flex their muscles as the pumps WHINE -- build up pressure.

INT. CRUSHER UNIT - CONTINUOUS

PITCH BLACK

The whine of the pumps echoes round the steel tomb. An electronic warning voice accompanied by a BEEP fills the dark.

FLASHES of YELLOW hazard lights bleed into the dark space. Cut through the gloom. Illuminate our surroundings. Diesel fumes drift into the crusher. Light bouncing off the haze.

SERIES OF SHOTS

FLASH: A HAND dangles limply amongst rubbish.

FLASH: A discarded Childs doll stares blankly.

FLASH: A FOOT, sticking out from between trash bags.

FLASH: Two yellow orbs reflect light -- another doll?

FLASH: Jamil's dead face. Squashed between a baby's soiled diaper and a half eaten BURGER -- onions hanging loose.

EXT. TRUCK - ALLEYWAY - CONTINUOUS

Hydraulic RAMS drive the huge metal jaws of the compactor back into the body of the truck.

A CACOPHONY of sound as pieces of metal and glass explode. The compactor RAM recedes into the truck.

INT. CRUSHER UNIT - CONTINUOUS

A wall of steel advances. Paint tins are squashed -- EXPLODE! Rubbish bags burst open -- shower the steel container with rotting food.

A BICYCLE FRAME begins to buckle -- jammed between the moving jaws and the side of the container -- the hydraulic rams straining as they meet unexpected resistance.

The metal wall nudges a dangling hand -- pushes a foot further towards the stinking mess of rubbish at the back of the truck.

A wall of rubbish advances on Jamil's cold face.

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK - DAY

The readouts on the instrument panel head into overload.

The cab starts to shake. A GRINDING noise.

An alarm sounds. The mechanism shudders to a halt.

WEEDS

Aw hell.

He jumps out of the cab.

EXT. GARBAGE TRUCK - ALLEYWAY - DAY

Weeds looks around. Everything that was in the alleyway has gone -- it's all in the back of the truck.

Weeds looks at a jumble of hydraulic hoses -- fluid leaks.

WEEDS

Aw great. Good job numbnuts.

The brothers jump out. Wander round to the back of the truck.

WEEDS

Now we got a problem. We go back to the yard and report this we're in deep shit and my thanksgiving dinner is gonna be in the dog by the time I get home.

GUSTO

Absolutely.

WEEDS

What sort of morons would do exactly the opposite of everything I told them?

The brothers just stare at him. Weeds gets it.

WEEDS

You haven't understood a word I've said have you? Okay, I think you should both climb into the back of the truck and check to see if it's working while I activate the rams.

(beat)

What do you think of that idea.

The brothers take their cue from his smiling face.

GUSTO

Absolutely.

Weeds throws his hands up in despair.

WEEDS

Get back in the cab. We got a late start after the holidays, we'll have to pretend it just happened after we check in.

He climbs into the cab.

WEEDS

You're gonna have to work your nuts off to cover the cost of the overtime...got it?

GUSTO

Abso...

Weeds cuts him off with a glare.

WEEDS

In the cab.

They climb in. Weeds hits the gas and they roar away.

INT. LEE'S HOUSE - DAY

Abby is listening on the phone. Anxious.

ABBY

Hi baby it's me. Just a little worried, you've been gone a long time and I don't know what's happening...

There's the sound of a vehicle pulling up outside the house and doors slamming. Abby smiles.

ABBY

Okay, never mind, I think that's you now.

She puts the phone back and goes to the door. Opens it. Melissa and Jimmy burst in all excited.

JIMMY

That was awesome.

MELISSA

Yeah, exactly how many hot dogs did you eat?

JIMMY

Hey, I'll need the weight if I do Sumo...

Abby looks outside. Mr Frank's car sits in his drive.

EXT. MR FRANK'S GARAGE - DAY

The electric door hums open. Mr Franks waves -- gives her a cheesy smile. Drives into the garage. Abby closes the door.

ABBY

Where's your Dad?

Melissa shrugs.

MELISSA

Dunno. We went to the little league game with Mr Franks. Left Dad drooling over some scuzzi radio.

JIMMY

Isn't he home?

ABBY

No. If he brings home any trash he's really in the shit, and so are you two.

She dials on her cell.

EXT. CALIFORNIA - NIGHT SKY - DREAM SEQUENCE

A star filled sky. The moon full and bright. The cosmos in all its glory. And from this we drop down to discover...

JAMIL and ABBY

Lying on a rug beneath the stars. A pack of beers nearby. Abby's eyes shine in the moonlight.

They kiss. It's long and hungry.

JAMIL

How does it feel to be Mrs. Lee?

ABBY

It feels pretty good.

She smiles.

JAMIL

I want this night to last forever.

ABBY

Me too.

Jamil looks up at the stars.

JAMIL

Can you hear that?

ABBY

What?

JAMIL

The sound of the heavens singing their approval.

Abby sniffs.

ABBY

What's that smell...is that you?

Above them the sky seems to shrink and the music grows as we...

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK - CRUSHER UNIT - DAY

Looks like a starlit sky -- dots of green and blue light wink in the dark. Broken and abandoned luminous numerals on old wrist watch dials, flicker like stars in the gloom as...

A CELLPHONE chirps.

Each flash illuminating Jamil's face. He's squashed amongst the bags of rotting vegetables -- the diaper drips goo down his forehead.

Something twitches in the darkness -- moves slowly towards his face. A HAND -- the muscle spasm of a dead man?

EYES flick open. WIDEN as Jamil jerks out of unconsciousness, hand scrabbling for the cell. Finding it, hitting the button. An enormous effort as he focusses.

JAMIL

Hello...

INTERCUT JAMIL/ABBY

INT. LEE HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Abby is relieved to hear his voice, she covers it with anger.

ABBY

Where the hell are you?

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK - CRUSHER UNIT

Jamil looks around in the dark -- vague shapes, junk, rotting food bags -- the stench of garbage.

JAMIL

I don't know...I got shot. I remember an accordion, French music. It's dark -- there's rubbish, smells bad.

ABBY

You got shot! What? Are you hurt?

He reaches inside his jacket. Pulls out the metal licence plate -- two dents where Gregor's bullets impacted.

JAMIL

I'm okay, a bit shook up.

ABBY

Oh my God. I'll call the police, they can trace you through the cell.

Jamil rubs his face -- his hand hits the soggy diaper. Fluids run down his arm. He looks around, eyes straining to see in the gloom. Shocked by his mortality.

JAMIL

I think I'm in a garbage truck.

ABBY

...hello?

Jamil looks at his cell -- it's dead. Battery flat.

INT. LEE HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Abby listens to static on the line.

ABBY

Jamil, Jamil? Baby...

She stares at the phone. Redials. Listens to the answer machine.

ABBY

Baby, we got cut off...ring me back on the home line, I'll ring the police on my cell. We'll find you, just hang in there.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - DAY

The pickup screeches to a halt alongside the dumpster. Gregor and Milo exit the vehicle. Gregor heaves open the dumpster -- strains to see inside.

GREGOR

Can't see shit. Here, you get inside, he must be at the bottom.

Milo looks at him.

MILO

What?

GREGOR

Little bit of shit on your shoes
now...or in big shit later.

Milos climbs resignedly up and onto the side of the dumpster. He balances precariously on the edge like a gymnast -- then, slips and plunges down into the rubbish.

MILO (O.C.)

You're shitting me!

DUMPSTER

Milo gingerly feels in amongst the rubbish. Pulls his hand out dripping with rotting vegetables. He finds a SHOE, holds it up.

MILO

He's gone.

GREGOR

No. I fill him with bullets...

MILO

Maybe he's injured, can't get far.

They look around the alleyway. The homeless guy sits against a dumpster at the end of the alley. He gnaws on a chicken bone. Grease drips down his chin. He gives a knowing smile.

HOMELESS GUY

Garbage truck's already been...you
missed the good stuff. You snooze
you lose.

Gregor goes over -- punches him in the head. He rolls over, out cold.

GREGOR

You snooze.

Milo looks at him, shakes his head.

MILO

Now he can't tell us anything.

GREGOR

We find garbage truck, we find him.
Easy.

Off Milo's face. Yeah right.

PRELAP the sound of a tinny police SIREN as we...

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK - CRUSHER UNIT - DAY

Blue light dances on the face of Jamil.

Colored lights from an old clockwork toy police car bring relief to the cold dark prison Jamil finds himself in. He winds the toy up -- uses it to look around.

The toy siren makes a sad whoop which echoes off the walls.

ANOTHER ANGLE

A clearer look at his circumstances. The floor of the unit is covered with plastic trash bags.

Behind him a wall of fetid garbage and broken household appliances that could give way at any moment and bury him under a ton of stinking trash.

The flickering lights from the toy begin to die, Jamil keeps winding the little key, desperate to bring light into the darkness.

He finds a soggy box of matches, just a few inside. He winds the key again as he looks around. See's a half eaten birthday cake as the light dies -- winds the key again until...

SNAP! The key sheers off in his hand -- the light dies. The toy gives one last despairing whoop.

JAMIL

Hey! Anybody there? Help! Help! Can anybody hear me?

EXT. GARBAGE TRUCK DEPOT - CONTINUOUS

Pulling out high and wide to show Jamil's location. And for the first time we see the futility of his situation.

The truck is just one of hundreds sitting in a secure depot -- isolated, closed for the holidays and a long way from anyone.

Jamil's shouts are snatched away by the wind.

INT. KOWALSKI'S TRUCK HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Kowalski sits behind his desk -- fingers steepled, face grim. Milos and Gregor try not to catch his eye, which is awkward as he fixes them alternately with a piercing look.

Milo eyes the shredder nervously -- holds his hand in a tight grip with his other hand, keeping it safe.

KOWALSKI

So what do we think here? He just got up, dusted himself down and walked away?

GREGOR

I shoot him in the heart, he's dead, I swear.

KOWALSKI

Really? That's priceless, because the way I see it, either he's not dead and he's running around with my property, or we're looking for a freakin' Zombie.

MILO

We looked everywhere.

KOWALSKI

Everywhere?

GREGOR

In the alley...

KOWALSKI

Well here's a thought. Why don't you genius's try looking in the right place. Jeez, I could hire chimps with smarter fleas.

He looks from one to the other.

KOWALSKI

Go check out the nearest landfill and recycling sites. Find the stiff and bring me my data.

Gregor nods.

GREGOR

Yes boss. No fleas on us.

Milo leans over, whispers something in Gregor's ear.

GREGOR

Flies.

KOWALSKI

Get outta here before I dump you
both in the crusher.

They head for the door at speed.

INT. LEE HOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

Abby paces. Phone clamped to her ear.

ABBY

His cell cut out before he could
tell me anymore.

(listens)

I know it's Thanksgiving tomorrow,
I know you're understaffed, but he
could be in danger, he said he'd
been shot...

Abby shakes her head.

ABBY

I don't know who shot him, I
already told you, we got cut off.

(listens)

I was calm, it's you that's making
me angry...cut backs? You're
joking.

Abby paces round the room.

ABBY

(listens)

There must be someone you can send.
...I need to find my husband.

She turns and makes a frustrated face to her children.

ABBY

A P.I? Well if that's all you
have. Okay, thank you.

She hangs up. Turns to Jimmy and Melissa.

ABBY

They're sending someone over.
A Private Investigator from out of
town.

JIMMY

Why would someone shoot dad?

ABBY

I don't know sweetie.

MELISSA

He can be pretty annoying.

ABBY

This is serious. Your dad's out
there somewhere, he could be in
danger.

JIMMY

Will he be back for Thanksgiving?

Abby rumples Jimmy's hair.

ABBY

You know your dad, he can find a
turkey in a snowstorm.

PRE-LAP

The sound of Turkeys gobbling. And under this...

DISPATCH (V.O.)

He's a private investigator, used
to be on the force. Lives out of
town now, he had some issues, but
he's a good man.

EXT. FARM - ESTABLISH - DAY

A rundown small holding somewhere in the country.

INT. BARN - SAMETIME

HANDS pull on leather gloves over tattooed knuckles. One
knuckle reads *ZERO*, the other *TOLERANCE*.

Chickens and Turkeys wander around a barn. A leather clad
figure sits astride an ancient MOTORBIKE and SIDECAR. We
only see him from behind.

He pushes his hair back as he slides a HELMET on.

CLOSE ON

A tattoo on his neck: "TO PROTECT AND SERVE"

EXT. BARN

The motorbike roars out. Scattering chickens.

MUSIC PLAYS: *Steppenwolf "Born to be wild"*

INT. CRUSHER UNIT - DAY

Dark. Something moving around. A scuffling noise. A match flares -- reveals Jamil's face. In the flickering light of the flame he looks around -- searching for something.

ANGLE ON

Next to his feet the half eaten birthday cake -- some candles jutting out of the mouldy icing. Jamil bends down and carefully pulls the candles out.

Lights them with one of the matches. He holds the candle up. Looks around his stinking prison. Something whimpers from behind a black bag bulging with trash. Jamil leans down.

Pulls the bag carefully away. Two eyes stare balefully up at him. T-Bone, trapped in the dumpster, sits, lonely and frightened -- shivering with fear. Jamil reaches out...

JAMIL

Hello little buddy, what are you
doing here?

He slowly offers his hand for T-Bone to sniff. T-Bone lunges at him -- sinks teeth into his hand.

JAMIL

Owww!

Jamil wrenches his hand away. Drops the candle, plunges them into darkness.

JAMIL (O.S.)

Son of a...

Another match flares. Jamil rubs his hand painfully. Lights a candle from the floor. T-Bone stares at him from between two trash bags.

JAMIL

Okay, I'm not going to hurt you.

He places a candle on a tin of paint. Bends down to peer between the trash bags. T-Bone looks up at him suspiciously. Jamil remains still and quiet.

T-Bone slowly slinks out from behind the bags. Looks up at Jamil. He pants. Pink tongue flicks over an impressive row of sharp teeth.

JAMIL

There we are, nothing to worry about. Just you and me and a whole lot of shit to get out from under.

T-Bone moves up to Jamil. Sniffs his pant leg. Cocks his leg -- pisses over Jamil's pants and the candle -- extinguishing it -- plunging them back into darkness.

JAMIL (O.S.)

Great. You and me are going to have to have a discussion. First thing is, you gotta stop pissing on me.

EXT. LEE HOUSE - STREET - DAY

The motorbike splutters to a halt outside.

CLOSE ON

The RIDER heaves himself off the bike. Removes the helmet, shakes out his long hair. Meet WALDO SMUGGS, 50s. A face that's seen more bad shit than good.

INT. LEE HOUSE - SAMETIME

Melissa stares out of the window. Eyes wide.

MELISSA

That's him?

Abby heads for the door.

ABBY

Thank heavens.

MELISSA

Looks more like a Hell's Angel.

INT. LEE HOUSE - SITTING ROOM

Abby, Melissa and Jimmy sit on the couch opposite Waldo, a little ruffled and out of shape. He's jammed into a chair.

Jimmy wears his favorite Karate outfit. On the coffee table in front of Waldo the remains of a cake.

Three other plates show evidence of biscuits that have gone the same way.

Waldo is a man who enjoys his food.

WALDO

Gee, that was great...

He licks his fingers in appreciation.

WALDO

What with all the rushing around I can't remember the last time I ate...

Melissa sniffs. Snorts a remark under her breath.

MELISSA

The 80s.

Abby shoots her a look. Melissa pouts. Waldo looks at Jimmy.

WALDO

Kung Fu huh?

Jimmy looks at him.

JIMMY

Krav Mage.

Waldo looks blank.

WALDO

Gee, they always gotta' have some fancy new name for it. I haven't done that stuff since...I don't know...

MELISSA

The 80s?

Abby jumps in.

ABBY

What are you going to do to find
Jamil?

Waldo rubs his chin.

WALDO

At least we know he's alive...

JIMMY

He's been shot!

WALDO

Well that's what he says...

ABBY

You think he's making this up?

WALDO

The truth is Ma'm, thousands of
people go missing every year, and a
lot of them...well they just don't
want to be found.

ABBY

Look Mr. Smuggs, I don't know what
you're getting at but we have a
happy marriage, and two wonderful
kids, Jamil has no reason to run
away.

WALDO

Yeah, that's what I thought about
me and Candy. We hit it off right
away...there was a spark, know what
I mean?

ABBY

Sorry?

WALDO

Oh yeah, we were living the dream,
got ourselves a nice little slice
of heaven up in the hills. She had
a job with a realtor, I was a fresh
faced young rookie with my eye on a
promotion...

ABBY

I don't think...

WALDO

I should have seen it coming,
staying out late with the clients,
the weekend conferences, cell
numbers scrawled on the back of her
business cards...

ABBY

Can we...

But Waldo plows on.

WALDO

I mean Jeez, I even put a pool in
and a hot tub...it's never enough
is it? They just want more...new
clothes, a better car yada yada
yada.

ABBY

Could we just...

WALDO

Next thing I know she's moving in
with some hippy dippy yoga teacher
who can twist himself into the
shape of a goddam pretzel.

Waldo reaches for the remains of the cake on the plate, crams
it into his mouth. Licks his fingers clean.

WALDO

So while I'm out on the streets
working my ass off keeping Joe
Schmo safe from the bag guys she's
banging this transcendental
huckster who's put her in touch
with her inner child...

ABBY

Sometimes women just need a little
time to find themselves...

WALDO

Find themselves? Oh yeah, she did
that alright. Found herself in bed
with schmucks. I mean I even had a
tattoo done for her...

He stands up and opens his shirt. We don't see the tattoo,
only the reaction to it.

MELISSA

Yeaw...gross.

JIMMY

What is that?

WALDO

It's a teddy bear...

MELISSA

Looks more like an alleycat.

JIMMY

Or a possum.

WALDO

I got a discount, two for the price of one...I can show you...

He turns round. Starts to ease his pants down his butt cheeks. As one they all yell.

ALL

Noooooo!!!

ABBY

Officer, I'm really sorry things didn't work out with you and Candy, but you have to believe me, Jamil isn't running away, he's trapped somewhere and he needs our help.

WALDO

Okay, sorry for the over share, but things have been pretty rough recently, losing my wife and having to leave the force. Made me realize that some people's marriages aren't always as solid as they think.

ABBY

Trust me, Jamil and I are solid. So. What are you going to do to find him?

WALDO

He mentioned garbage and French accordion music?

ABBY

Yes.

WALDO

Maybe he's trapped in a dumpster.

ABBY

But then he'd be able to climb out.
He thought he might be inside a
garbage truck.

WALDO

Maybe. The guys who shot him must
have thought he was dead. Put him
in a dumpster and he wound up in
the trash.

(beat)

Did he say if he was moving?

ABBY

No.

WALDO

Must be parked up for the holiday.

ABBY

So you can find him?

WALDO

I hope so.

ABBY

What do you mean?

WALDO

Well after the holidays they go
back to work...

The color drains from Abby's face as she works it out.

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK - CRUSHER UNIT - DAY

T-Bone sits looking at Jamil who pedals an ancient bicycle
balanced on a couple of old lead acid car batteries. A weak
light emits from a dynamo driven front lamp.

The bicycle wobbles precariously as Jamil pedals.

JAMIL

Thing is T-Bone, you don't mind if
I call you T-Bone?

T-Bone scratches his ear, breaks wind and sniffs the
resulting smell appreciatively.

JAMIL

I'll take that as a yes. We need to adapt to our environment. People just throw everything away these days. Nobody knows how to mend anything, if something breaks they just dump it.

T-Bone licks his paws.

JAMIL

That's how I make my living, I mend things for people that don't like to waste things. They're called poor people.

T-Bone stares at Jamil.

JAMIL

You however, exist on the leftover food thrown out by rich people. You see how everything has a balance. This is our universe in here, and we need to make us a spaceship to get us back into the real world.

Jamil starts to slow down, the pool of light flickers and gets weaker.

JAMIL

First thing we gotta' do is get us some proper light, 'cos my legs are killing me.

He increases his rate of pedaling, he angles the front wheel, shines the headlamp beam around the dark piles of rubbish. Searching for something. He stops moving the light.

JAMIL

Here we go.

He reaches over to the wall of trash. Carefully pulls out a rusty old torch. Tries the switch. Nothing. He struggles to open the torch up, finally gets it open.

A square battery with two coiled springs as terminals on the top is wedged inside. It's leaky and corroded.

JAMIL

Contacts are corroded.

He keeps peddling. Reaches into his pocket and pulls out a bunch of keys. Scratches at the white corrosion on the terminals until he's exposed some bright, clean metal.

JAMIL

Okay. Let's see what we have.

He slides a switch on the top of the torch. A weak light flares out from the bulb. Jamil shakes the torch and the light grows brighter, illuminating the interior of the truck.

JAMIL

This ain't gonna last forever so we need to get some things organized.

He climbs off the bike. Adjusts his crotch.

JAMIL

Gonna' need to put some padding on that saddle.

He looks around. The wall of rubbish towers over them oppressively. He rummages amongst the rubbish, pulls out a plastic LIGHT SABER.

JAMIL

Awesome.

He fiddles with the switch. The sabre glows into life. Bathes the truck in a blue glow.

Jamil swirls the sabre around as T-Bone looks on.

JAMIL

I am your father...

The saber dies. Jamil speaks in a YODA voice.

JAMIL

Broken I am...

He chucks the light sabre away.

JAMIL

We need to build a barrier so we don't end up buried under a ton of shit. And we need some sort of power supply.

Jamil looks around. Pulls a piece of electrical flex from the trash. He searches amongst the rubbish -- pulls out a rusty pair of garden cutters.

Strips the insulation from the wire.

He opens another corroded torch. Twists the wires around the terminals of the lamp inside.

Takes the bare wires. Winds one of them round the car battery negative terminal.

JAMIL

Let's see if there's any power left
in this.

He connects the other wire to the positive terminal. Nothing, it's dead.

JAMIL

Okay. We need to find another one.

EXT. TRANSPORT YARD - NIGHT

A full moon shines down on the hundreds of motionless trucks.

INT. CRUSHER UNIT - NIGHT

Jamil puts another CAR battery on top of a wall of them that he's built to contain the trash.

JAMIL

Looks like we're out of luck little
guy. Once this battery goes it's
back to the ball ache

T-Bone starts to whimper.

JAMIL

What is it little buddy...you
hungry?

Jamil looks around. Carefully pulls open some plastic trash bags. Rotting food spills out.

JAMIL

Yuk. That's a bit rich even for
your guts. What have we got here?

He pulls out rusty tin. Scrapes away at the side of it to try and read the label. It looks like a picture of a fish. Jamil squeezes the sides of the can.

JAMIL

No swelling. Should be okay if we
can just get it open...

T-Bone growls. Moves towards Jamil fangs showing.

JAMIL

Easy, we're a team here, share and share alike. I mean without me who's going to open the tin.

Jamil waggles his fingers.

JAMIL

I'm talking opposable thumbs buddy.

T-Bone rolls his gums back exposing more sharp teeth.

JAMIL

I'm warning you, don't come any closer or I'll...

T-Bone lunges at the can. His teeth crunch into it, a spray of juice squirts out as he starts to mangle the can.

JAMIL

Sure, go ahead why don't you, it's best you check it out first anyway.

There's a grinding noise as T-Bone rips into the can and then it's finished.

T-Bone licks his mouth, his paws. Breaks wind, cocks his leg and pees over one of the lead acid batteries.

JAMIL

Oh thanks for sharing, appreciate it.

T-Bone continues to empty his bladder on the battery. He seems to be smiling.

JAMIL

I don't know what your smiling at, we have to live here, this is our home...and you should never shit on your own doorstep.

Something starts to change in the crusher. It starts to get lighter -- the torch bulb wired into the battery grows brighter. Keeps growing in strength until -- BANG!

It EXPLODES!

JAMIL

Whoah! What the...?

He looks at T-Bone, looks at the battery -- takes in the pee that has flooded the cell holes in the top of it.

JAMIL

Your pee...it's acid, you've re-
energised the cells.

He looks at T-Bone. Holds out his arms.

JAMIL

Get up here you Little scamp.

T-Bone launches himself at Jamil. Lands in his arms, knocks him off balance. Jamil hits the deck. Laughs.

JAMIL

You did it buddy, we got power!

INT. CRUSHER UNIT - LATER

It's getting cold in here. T-Bone has been dressed in an old moth eaten SWEATSHIRT. He looks even cuter than normal. Yellow light from the torch bathes the grimy truck.

Jamil wears a combination of stained sweatpants, torn anorak and a number of miss-matched T-Shirts to keep warm.

He has a pair of old trainers, odd rubber washing up gloves and a pink BEANIE.

T-Bone slurps water out of a rusty bowl. He looks a little hollow eyed. Wanders over to a battery. Cocks his leg. Nothing comes out. Jamil sits on an old CAR SEAT.

T-Bone mooches over to an old BABY car seat, slumps into it

JAMIL

Well dry huh? Okay. I guess we're
gonna have to wheel in the big
guns.

Jamil lugs a battery over, unhitches his pants. Pees into the battery. Hitches his pants. Carries the battery over to where the rest of them are stacked.

JAMIL

Okay. We got ten batteries, that's
one hundred and twenty volts.

He takes the end of a wire and twists it round a battery terminal. The wire leads to a string of CHRISTMAS lights draped around the crusher. Nothing happens.

JAMIL

Oh c'mon!

Jamil reaches up and tightens a bulb in a holder. The crusher is suddenly filled with multi-colored light as the bulbs wink into life.

Transformed into a kind of stinking Santa's grotto Jamil looks over at a snoring T-Bone.

JAMIL

Happy thanksgiving little fellah.

The lights go out. Then come back on, then go out. Then start to run patterns around the wire. Now it's like a really grungy night club.

JAMIL

Great. Now we just need some bad music to go with it.

And as if by magic that's exactly what they get. A cheesy pop song starts to grow in volume -- fills the metal space with it's tune.

JAMIL

What the...

And then Jamil realizes. It's the sound of an old cellphone...his only contact with the outside world.

But where's it coming from?

He starts to rip into plastic trash bags, tearing desperately through them.

JAMIL

Where the hell are you?

Stinking food waste pours from bags, he's getting covered in shit...and there it is, an old pre-pay cell. Covered in some sort of SAUCE. He grabs for it...

JAMIL

Come to daddy...

SNAP! T-Bone is onto it. Seizing the sauce covered morsel, crunching into it.

The cell sparks and dies. Jamil stares in disbelief as his one link with the outside world dies.

JAMIL

What!

T-Bone licks the cell clean. Looks up smiling. Starts to nose through the remains of the food waste, oblivious.

Jamil slumps onto the floor, devastated. Looks at T-Bone.

JAMIL

What is wrong with you?

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK - CRUSHER UNIT - LATER

Jamil has been rooting through the rubbish bags. The place is littered with bits of rubbish, food, broken toys and cans and plastic containers.

He has a pile of old CELL PHONES in front of him. He's trying to construct one working cell.

There's a pile of corroded batteries, various shells, cases and SIM cards.

JAMIL

Funny how we take communication for granted...you use peemail, I use email. You read smells, I text.

He fires up a CELL. The screen flickers on.

"INSERT SIM CARD"

He slips one of the SIM cards he holds into it and tries again.

"CONTACT PROVIDER"

JAMIL

No one leaves any credit on their cells. Just need a coupla minutes, one minute. Just so they can get a trace.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Prising the back off a Cell.

Inserting a SIM CARD.

Throwing a Cell onto a pile of broken cell phones.

Throwing a battery onto a pile of flat batteries.

Putting a BATTERY into a Cell.

END SERIES

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK - CRUSHER UNIT - NIGHT

Jamil has one Cell left. He slides the last SIM card into it and fires it up. The screen glows. A weak signal registers on the readout. It still has credit.

JAMIL

Yes!

He punches the air.

JAMIL

Who should I phone?

(beat)

Abby can't track me. It has to be the cops, I'll dial 911.

JAMIL

Okay little buddy, there's a turkey leg with your name on it when we get outta here.

He presses the keypad. 9-1-1. Letters come up on the screen. Jamil looks at it in disbelief.

JAMIL

Oh c'mon!

He stabs at the keypad again...and again. Just letters, the shift key isn't functioning. He can only input text.

He thinks this through. Frustrated.

JAMIL

Text! I can text her to get them to track it.

He texts Abby.

INSERT TEXT

"ABBY, IT'S ME, JAMIL. CONTACT POLICE. GET THEM TO TRACK ME. LOVE YOU."

He sends the text. Waits. PING! A message pops up on the screen.

INSUFFICIENT CREDIT - TOP UP NOW!

JAMIL

What!!!

He jumps up and down. On the cell phone, smashing it into pieces in his frenzy.

He gets down on the floor. Sorts through the mangled pieces of the cell phones.

From somewhere in the gloom. The tinkling SOUND of a music box drifts eerily across to them...then fades away.

Jamil looks over at T-Bone.

JAMIL
You hear that? This place is
giving me the creeps.

Jamil painstakingly tries to construct a working cell from the broken pieces.

JAMIL
I just need to get one working. I
can make an emergency call without
credit...

INT. CRUSHER UNIT - LATER

T-Bone looks up at Jamil.

JAMIL

Wobbles precariously. Balanced on a ZIMMER FRAME. He holds a CELL PHONE up. Searches for a signal.

CLOSE ON

The SCREEN. One bar signal. Fading.

Jamil leans over -- the signal grows.

AHHHH!

He falls off the Zimmer.

Tumbles into the bags of rotting food.

Somewhere below him a DOG TOY squeaks as he lands.

INT. CRUSHER UNIT - LATER

Jamil slumps down on the floor. Head in his hands. Desolate. T-Bone comes over, looks at Jamil. Licks his face, whimpers. Puts his paw on Jamil's arm.

JAMIL

I know, I'm an idiot. You're the smart one. I just need to get my head down for a few minutes.

T-Bone pulls something out of the trash. The SQUEAKY TOY! He starts chewing it.

SQUEAK! SQUEAK! SQUEAK!

JAMIL

I just need to sleep, I'll get us out of here, I promise.

T-Bone starts barking and wagging his tail. Jamil shakes his head.

JAMIL

You want to play?

T-Bone rushes around the floor. Seizes the squeaky toy. Jumps up and down with excitement.

OFF JAMIL This is the last thing he needs right now.

EXT. GARBAGE TRUCK - CRUSHER UNIT - THANKSGIVING - DAY

Dawn rises over the lines of parked trucks. A few stray cats work the area, foraging for scraps. The distant sound of a HOWLING dog drifts across the site.

INT. CRUSHER UNIT - DAY

Jamil is slumped over on an old cushion, snoring gently. An old ball clutched in his hand. T-Bone starts to howl.

Crudely taped to the wall are numerous cheap CLOCKS, they mainly display different times.

Enough of them show nearly the same time, and from this Jamil gets an average of the real time. And it's running out.

T-Bone increases the intensity of his howling. Jamil snaps awake.

JAMIL

Jesus!

T-Bone pants, licks his face.

JAMIL

Now what?

Jamil looks around.

JAMIL

You want something to drink? I guess we drained you to charge the batteries. Need to get some water.

Jamil looks around, T-Bone watches.

JAMIL

We need to make a still.

He rummages amongst the rubbish, finds a sheet of clear plastic and some old electrical flex.

JAMIL

Warm air hits the cold plastic and condenses to form water, which we can catch in a container...

Jamil comes up with an empty plastic water bottle. He makes a crude circle from the plastic sheet which he ties off to the corner of the garbage container.

He uses an old shoe to weight the centre of the sheet, which forms an inverse cone, under which he places the plastic water bottle container to capture the moisture that forms.

JAMIL

Okay, by tomorrow we should have our own supply.

T-Bone looks up at him. Scratches at his leg.

JAMIL

Okay, I know that look. You want something to drink now. Well then we need to dig deep.

He starts to carefully move sacks of rubbish, reaching inside, looking for something. He pulls out a plastic bottle of lemonade.

Opens the top, takes a sip from it. Screws up his face.

JAMIL

Well little Buddy, I've tasted worse.

He pours the contents of the bottle into an old cracked dish on the floor. T-Bone sniffs it, takes a cautious sip from it. He looks up at Jamil, wide eyes full of reproach.

JAMIL

I know, but we don't have a lot of choice right now.

Jamil sighs, starts to go through the rubbish bags again. Pulls out a dented tin of SPRITE.

JAMIL

Okay, now we're getting there, little too heavy on the sugar, but we ain't exactly on a diet here.

He pulls the ring -- liquid foams out. He tips some into the bowl for T-Bone, who laps it up. Then breaks winds, wags his tail and smiles up at Jamil.

JAMIL

Thanks for sharing. We're going to have to set up our own little waste disposal site. We don't want to be wading through our own shit do we little Buddy?

T-Bone wags his tail.

JAMIL

Okay, now we've got that clear, we need to work on busting out of here.

INT. LEE HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

An air of sadness hangs over the household. Abby, Jimmy and Melissa halfheartedly prepare for Thanksgiving.

MELISSA

What if he doesn't come back?

ABBY

Oh baby, of course he's coming back.

JIMMY

The man said loads of people go missing every year.

ABBY

I know sweety, but your daddy isn't missing, he's just...

MELISSA

Maybe he has run away. Sometimes you're really mean to him.

ABBY

Oh honey, that's not true, we're married. Sometimes it can seem like we're being mean to each other, but we're just joking around.

MELISSA

Like when you poured coffee on him in the diner...

JIMMY

Oh yeah, that was awesome.

MELISSA

You said he was looking at the waitress's ass.

ABBY

How do you even remember that? You were five.

MELISSA

I could have been scarred for life.

JIMMY

Yeah, a boy in my class's Father kissed his maid and his wife saw them and they got divorced...now when he hears anybody speaking Spanish he throws up. It's gross.

ABBY

Now you're just being silly. Sometimes I shout at your father because he leaves his tools lying around. It doesn't mean I don't love him.

JIMMY

The finest line a man will walk is between success at work and success at home.

ABBY

Where'd you hear that?

JIMMY

John Candy.

MELISSA

They made him watch "Trains, Planes and Automobiles" at school.

ABBY

Why?

JIMMY

To teach us how complete opposites can wind up friends if they have to work together.

Abby goes over to him, gives him a hug.

ABBY

I promise you when your father gets back I'll never shout at him again.

MELISSA

Huh, where's the fun in that.

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK - CRUSHER UNIT - DAY

Jamil works on a POWER DRILL. He's got the drill apart and is cleaning the motor contacts with a piece of sandpaper.

JAMIL

The thing you have to understand is, that a marriage is a partnership. It's not about what you want anymore, it's what's going to keep the peace.

ANOTHER ANGLE

T-Bone sleeps on an old cushion. Lined up next to him are a row of rag tag abandoned children's dolls, threadbare teddy bears, broken Action men and Transformers toys -- a captive audience.

JAMIL

Personally I like to watch action movies, she likes sappy love films. So how does it work? Well I'll tell you.

He snaps the cover on the drill back into place.

JAMIL

I watch sappy love films. Yeah, I know, looks like I'm the loser here right? No way, 'cos everything I can do to make her happy is money in the bank of screw ups.

T-Bone twitches in his sleep, chasing a rabbit or whatever rocks his boat. Jamil looks over at him and smiles.

JAMIL

And make no mistake, I will screw up and then it's time to cash that goodwill check...

He plugs the drill in. Presses the power switch, it whirs into life...smoke and sparks issuing from the air-slots.

JAMIL

And right now, this really feels like a screw up.

He puts the drill down. Looks around at his puppet audience.

JAMIL

We're a long way from pumpkin pie right now guys.

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK - CRUSHER UNIT - DAY

Jamil is sorting through a pile of discarded power tools spread out on the floor of the crusher.

Drills, jig-saws, nail guns, hedge-clippers. If it has a power lead he's dragged it out. T-Bone watches.

JAMIL

Okay. We need to find the weak point.

He looks around at the heavy steel walls of the crusher. Running his fingers over the welds. Tapping the metal, listening for any change in sound.

He moves towards the crusher end of the unit. His knuckles make a lighter more hollow sound.

A square of metal is secured by star bolts. He taps it again, smiles.

JAMIL

Bingo. This is the access plate to the remote hydraulic controls. If we can get to that we should be able to pop the rear door.

He picks up a battered drill. Hefts it in his hand.

JAMIL

Wolf 236, quarter inch chuck, twelve-hundred RPM, the king of drills...this baby will cut through steel like a piece of pumpkin pie.

He spins the drill up into the air.

SLO-MO

As it spins above his head. Misses his outstretched hand.

Hits his foot with a dull THUD.

JAMIL

Son of a...I think I broke my foot.

INT. CRUSHER UNIT - LATER

Jamil limps around. Moves towards the wall of batteries.

He connects the drill into a six-way power socket wired into the wall of batteries. Presses the switch.

The drill makes a grinding noise -- sparks fly out of the motor housing lighting up the unit like fireworks on the fourth of July.

Jamil slips on a pair of cracked 60s sunglasses.

JAMIL

Okay, hold onto your ears little buddy, we're going in.

He presses the trigger and pushes the drill bit against the head of a star-bolt.

JAMIL

C'mon, you can do it.

The drill bucks in his hand, sparks and SMOKE pour out.

JAMIL

Okay Buddy, nearly there. Once I
drill through these bolts we're
outta here...

The drill sparks...dies.

JAMIL

Damn.

Smoke hangs in the air. Jamil sits on the floor where the
smoke is thinner.

JAMIL

Sorry little buddy. Sometimes
pumpkin pie is tougher than it
looks.

He starts to cough. T-Bone pants. As they both try and catch
their breath the smoke starts to drift away towards the other
end of the unit. Jamil stares at it. Realizes.

JAMIL

That smokes going somewhere...

He scrambles up the pile of rubbish. Claws his way to where
the smoke is moving.

He pulls some trash bags out of the way...follows the smoke.
Yanks a final bag out of the way.

He stares at a small heavily armored vent. A duct that
prevents gas build up in the unit. Impregnable.

He looks back at T-Bone.

JAMIL

No good Buddy, false alarm. Back
to plan A.

He clambers back to where the tools lie on the floor. Picks
up another battered drill.

Presses the trigger.

BANG! The drill snaps.

JAMIL

Perfect.

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK - CRUSHER UNIT

Jamil sorts through a pile of broken and bent drill bits -- tries to find a useful one. T-Bone looks at him as he works.

JAMIL

So what's your story little buddy?
I guess you lived on the streets,
must've been tough.

He peers at a masonry drill with a blackened end. Drops it onto the reject pile.

Selects another one, slightly bent but with a sharp point at least. He starts to fix it into the drill chuck.

JAMIL

Still, you don't pay no taxes, get
up when you like, see who you like.

T-Bone scratches an ear. Licks a paw.

JAMIL

What about your owners? Maybe they
just got tired of cleaning up after
you, maybe you ran away...were they
cruel to you?

T-Bone looks mournfully up at him.

JAMIL

Yeah, that's it. People like that
outta be shot. We get outta here
you ain't going back on the
streets, you're coming home with
me.

T-Bone pants, his eyes seem to shine as if he can understand every word that Jamil's saying.

Jamil presses the drill switch. The drill rotates -- wobbles slightly.

JAMIL

I won't lie to you little buddy,
there's slim to no chance of us
getting out of here in time for
Thanksgiving, and right now slim is
late to the party.

He goes over to the inspection plate -- rests the drill bit against the star bolt head. Presses the trigger.

The drill oscillates from side to side. He tries to hang on to it.

JAMIL

Damn!

The drill jumps from his grasp and flies across the unit -- drill bit still spinning, bits of rubbish and refuse bags catch on it -- form a rotating plastic and debris snowball.

The ball grows in size -- the drill jams -- overheats.

BANG!

In a flash of smoke and sparks the drill burns out. Jamil looks at T-Bone.

JAMIL

Looks like slim isn't coming to the party.

EXT. LANDFILL SITE - DAY

Birds flap around piles of trash. The pickup sits outside Kowalski's HQ truck.

INT. KOWALSKI'S TRUCK HEADQUARTERS

Kowalski holds court. Eats from a tub of chicken wings. Crunches the bones with his teeth -- noisily. He's watched by Milo and Gregor. Kowalski sucks the flesh from a wing.

Wipes his mouth and fingers with a napkin, burps, adjusts his pants around his crotch. Fixes the pair of them with his beady eyes.

KOWALSKI

So?

Milo and Gregor look at each other. Kowalski hurls a chicken wing at Milo, it bounces off his head.

KOWALSKI

You want me to come over there and stick you in the eye with a freakin' chicken bone?

MILO

No boss.

KOWALSKI

So tell me what you got?

Gregor clears his throat.

GREGOR

We did what you said, we checked
all of the local recycling sites,
but...

KOWALSKI

But what? Jeez, you're giving me
heartburn here. I'm trying to eat
my wings and I can't.

He chucks a gnawed chicken wing back into the tub.

KOWALSKI

You know why? Cos' I'm looking at
two freakin chickens in front of
me. You're making me feel like a
cannibal.

MILO

It's a holiday.

Kowalski shakes his head.

KOWALSKI

Holiday? No one goes on holiday
till I have my freakin' memory
stick back where it's meant to be
...in my freakin' hand.

Gregor clears his throat.

GREGOR

He means garbage people on holiday.
All of the trucks are parked up.
Can't find anything till after the
holidays.

KOWALSKI

You numbnuts. Once the holiday is
over, everybody goes back to work
and wherever the stiff is he's
gonna be dogfood along with the
memory stick. Yo= got less than
twenty-four hours to find it, or
you'll be joining him. Do I make
myself clear

Gregor drops his eyes to the floor.

GREGOR

Yes boss.

Kowalski throws another chicken wing at Milo. It hits him in the eye.

MILO

Oww! Sorry, yes boss.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - DAY

Waldo cruises past the end of the alleyway on his bike. Stops. Climbs off his bike.

Heads towards the sleeping figure of the homeless guy. The sound of an Accordion wafts down the alleyway.

Waldo walks past the homeless guy and continues on to the blind man who now plays a very bad version of "Frère Jacques".

WALDO

Excuse me, got a couple of questions...

The blind man continues to play.

WALDO

If you could just...

The man presses on. Waldo reaches down and puts his hand over the buttons. The blind man struggles to continue playing. Stabbing with his fingers at Waldo's hand.

BLIND MAN

Who's there? What do you want?
Just trying to earn an honest crust here.

Waldo puts his badge under the man's fingers.

WALDO

I'm a Private Investigator.

The blind man attempts braille on the badge.

BLIND MAN

P.R.A.T...

WALDO

It says Private Investigator. Trust me, I just want to ask you a few questions.

BLIND MAN

Okay.

WALDO

Were you here yesterday?

BLIND MAN

I'm here most mornings, people seem to be more generous in the morning.

WALDO

I can understand that, especially if they have a hangover.

BLIND MAN

Yeah, they really dig this Cajun shit.

WALDO

You always play this...Cajun stuff?

BLIND MAN

Yes.

WALDO

We're you playing when the garbage truck picked up yesterday.

BLIND MAN

Yes.

Waldo makes a note in his pad.

WALDO

Thanks.

He throws some coins into the man's hat.

WALDO

If you could hold off playing while I question someone else, that would be great.

The blind man feels in his hat. Rattles it. Waldo sighs, reaches into his pocket. Pulls out a five dollar bill. Drops it in the hat.

WALDO

Jeez, everybody's a business tycoon.

The blind man reaches in, pulls the note out...sniffs it.

BLIND MAN

That's what I'm talking about.

Waldo shakes his head. Moves back down the alleyway to the homeless guy. He leans over him. Looks for a clean spot on his filthy coat to shake him.

Can't find one, prods him with a toe. The man snaps away, flails at some imaginary demons.

HOMELESS GUY

Whasssup!

WALDO

Calm down, I just want to ask you some questions.

HOMELESS GUY

I got rights.

WALDO

I'm not accusing you of anything, I just need to know if you were here yesterday morning?

HOMELESS GUY

Might have been...

WALDO

Right, I guess it's difficult to keep track of all of your social engagements?

HOMELESS GUY

Sometimes I go to the park...

WALDO

Right, so did you?

HOMELESS GUY

No.

WALDO

So you were here. Okay, look, a man's life could depend on this. Did you see the garbage truck do it's pickup yesterday morning?

The man strains to remember.

HOMELESS GUY

Yeah, stinks the place out.

He fails to see the irony in this statement.

WALDO

Okay. Can you remember anything about the truck, a name on the side or what the men working it looked like?

HOMELESS GUY

What I can remember is that some guy came round after they left and smacked me in the head.

WALDO

Did you report it?

HOMELESS GUY

Oh sure, that'll be right up there with the other urgent stuff the police deal with.

WALDO

What did he look like?

HOMELESS GUY

Big guy.

WALDO

Anything else?

HOMELESS GUY

He had a beard.

Waldo nods. Sighs.

WALDO

Should be easy to track him down.

(beat)

So, the garbage operators. Anything about them you can remember?

The man seems to go into a trance with concentration.

HOMELESS GUY

Russian...

WALDO

Sorry?

HOMELESS GUY

Accent's were Russian, or something like that.

Waldo make a note in his pad again.

WALDO
Eastern European?

HOMELESS GUY
Yeah, maybe.

WALDO
I don't suppose you saw a license
plate or a contractor's name did
you?

The homeless man thinks long and hard.

HOMELESS GUY
Romans...

The accordian starts up, Waldo strains to hear.

WALDO
What?

HOMELESS GUY
Something to do with Greeks.

WALDO
Togas, ruins, Christians and lions,
the Parthenon?

The homeless man struggles to remember. Waldo draws his
gun...fires a shot in the direction of the Blind Man.

The accordion music dies as the instrument takes a direct
hit.

Waldo yells down the alleyway.

WALDO
Sorry...thought I saw a rat.
(beat)
Think. Was there a name on the
truck?

HOMELESS GUY
Don't shoot me.

WALDO
I'm not going to shoot you, just
tell me the name.

The homeless guy smiles...remembers, mind drifting away.

HOMELESS GUY
Something to do with...no it's
gone.

Waldo rubs his face with his hands.

WALDO

Great.

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK - CRUSHER UNIT - DAY

Jamil is surrounded by a pile of old and broken drills.

JAMIL

Okay, let's think this through. I went missing twenty-four hours ago, so I'm a missing person.

JAMIL (CONT'D)

The police have to at least try and find me. How many garbage trucks service L.A? A few thousand, how many companies, maybe a dozen or so, they're all on holiday now...

He thinks this through.

JAMIL

Somebody must have seen something, the guy with the accordion.

Jamil realizes that's a very long shot.

JAMIL

They could use a satellite, infra red heat cameras from a police helicopter...

T-Bone looks at him.

JAMIL

Yeah right, budget cut backs, life and death situations...we're not that desperate yet, are we?

His situation starts to hit home. He puts a brave face on it.

JAMIL

They'll find us. Those Chilean miners made it, and they were in much deeper shit.

He nods, this comparison seems to satisfy him.

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK - CRUSHER UNIT - LATER

Jamil leans into an old power drill as he bores into the side wall of the truck.

He's using another bent drill bit -- it swivels from side to side the vibration causing his cheeks to flap like a cartoon dog.

JAMIL

Juuusssstttt oneeeee mmmooorrr to
go.

BANG! The drill EXPLODES! Pieces fall to the floor.

JAMIL

Oh what...seriously?

He rummages around, looks for a drill that's not completely useless. Finds an old, heavy HAMMER DRILL. He hefts it in his hands. Scrabbles around for a drill bit.

JAMIL

Here we go, old but gold baby.

He fits the drill bit in. Leans the tip of it against the head of the remaining star bolt.

Presses the trigger. His head vibrates -- his vision blurred as it hammers into the steel.

JAMIL

Ohhhh yeeeeee thattttttttss
whatttttt IIIIII'mmmmm
tallllllllkkkkinnng about...

His glasses vibrate, fall off. His sweatpants slide down around his knees...keys and coins hit the floor and vibrate as the hammer drill smashes into the back of the access panel.

BANG!

The drill punches through the last star bolt. It falls to the floor with a clatter. Jamil switches the drill off. Hitches up his sweatpants, scoops up his keys and coins.

JAMIL

We hit the motherlode buddy.

He looks at T-Bone who's snoring.

JAMIL

Like you care.

He pulls the access panel away from the opening.

ANGLE ON

A back view of a series of heavy duty SWITCHES, relays and a wiring loom that leads away into the chassis of the truck.

EXT. GARBAGE TRUCK - DAY

The front of the ACCESS PANEL is covered with a PLASTIC BAG that has torn loose and now FLAPS in the wind.

RAIN starts to patter down onto the cover, runs down it and pools in the bottom of the plastic.

More water drips down onto the front panel and leaks into the switch mechanism.

JAMIL (O.C.)

Okay, now we're cooking.

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK - CRUSHER UNIT - DAY

Jamil peers into the ACCESS PANEL -- tries to work out what's what.

JAMIL

We need to short one of these out,
get the back open. Need some cable.

He looks around for a piece of wire. Finds some electrical cable with a plug on it hanging out of a pile of trash bags.

He grabs the plug and cable -- heaves on it. It doesn't budge.

JAMIL

Don't get antsy with me, I do this
for a living.

He heaves at the wire -- it vibrates like a piano wire until...

WHAM!

A heavy steam iron flies out from the trash. Smacks Jamil in the head. He collapses onto the floor.

Rips the power lead to the batteries out as he goes down -- plunges the unit into darkness.

Hits the floor -- out cold.

EXT. GARBAGE TRUCK DEPOT - DAY

RAIN sweeps in sheets across the parked trucks.

CLOSE ON

The CONTROL PANEL -- a gust of wind tears the plastic bag from it. The bag blows away, floats high above the truck.

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK - CRUSHER UNIT - SAMETIME

The SOUND of the rain is loud in here. Jamil is still out cold on the floor. T-Bone licks his face, tries to wake him.

CLOSE ON

JAMIL, his eyes twitch.

INT. LEE HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY (DREAM SEQUENCE)

Jamil sleeps soundly in bed. His mouth hangs open, he snores gently. Abby lies next to him studying him as he sleeps.

ABBY

You look so sweet when you're asleep, like a little baby.

She sniffs at his mouth. Her nose wrinkles

ABBY

Smell a little like your nappy needs changing as well.

Jamil snorts in his sleep, shifts around, trying to get comfortable.

ABBY

Time for you to wake up, gonna use my special wake up kiss.

She nuzzles him, kisses his cheek, works her way round to his mouth. Starts to kiss him.

CLOSE ON JAMIL

As he starts to smile. His eyes snap open.

He stares into Abby's smiling face.

ABBY
Morning sleepy head.

Jamil rubs his eyes.

JAMIL
What's that sound.

ABBY
Rain on the window. Only one thing
worth doing when it's raining.

She moves in, kisses him deeply. Distant THUNDER rolls around the house. Lightning flickers on Jamil's face as we go to...

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK - CRUSHER UNIT - SAMETIME

As Jamil snaps awake. Stares into the panting face of T-Bone.

JAMIL
What the? Ow.

He rubs his bruised face. It's dark, but his face is still lit by what looks like lightening. But the SOUND, isn't thunder. It's the noise of the hydraulic crusher RAM...

It's grinding forwards -- then back, some sort of electrical activity is flickering in the exposed inspection panel.

INSPECTION PANEL

Rain water has drenched the cavity -- the electricity is arcing between the contacts of the switches causing the RAM to intermittently move backwards and forwards.

Jamil looks around.

Re-connects the electrical lead to the car batteries -- floods the unit with colored lights.

Realizes the full enormity of the situation as the metal crusher advances and retreats.

He grabs the rusty garden cutters. Edges over to the exposed contacts -- keeps one eye on the shuddering metal RAM.

JAMIL
Okay, just need to cut the power to
the rams...

He peers into the mess of crackling contacts -- there are at least SIX pairs of wires that lead away from the SWITCHES that control the RAM and the various dumpster actions.

He edges the cutters into the cavity. Sweating like a bomb disposal expert with an I.E.D.

JAMIL

Okay, there we go...

He pushes the cutters around a wire...

FLASH!

The electricity jumps up the cutters -- Jamil yells. Drops the cutters.

The RAM starts towards him -- he desperately searches for the cutter amongst the rubbish on the floor.

The RAM closes in on him.

JAMIL

Oh, c'mon.

The RAM is a foot away, and then...

It heads back away from them. Jamil finds the cutters. Dives over to the inspection panel. Reaches in to cut a wire...

He pauses. Looks to T-Bone.

JAMIL

Which one do you think buddy? Grey or red...

T-Bone looks at him.

JAMIL

Just nod, bark, pee anything...red or...

T-Bone barks.

JAMIL

Okay, red it is.

He reaches in and snips the red wire. The RAM immediately starts to head back towards him.

Jamil looks at it -- incredulous.

JAMIL

What!

He frantically reaches into the inspection hatch. Tries to get a grip with the cutters on another wire.

Bags of rubbish are pushed towards him. He slips -- drops the cutters. They are overwhelmed by the bags moving as an unstoppable stinking plastic wave towards them.

Jamil dives beneath the moving surf of trash. His hand bursts out holding the cutters. He fights his way through the bags.

The steel wall is less than a foot from the inspection hatch. Jamil reaches into the hatch -- fights to get the cutters round the cable.

The steel wall is inches from hacking through his hand when --
SNIP! He cuts the wire.

The wall shudders to a halt. A millimeter from his hand. Gives a metallic groan as the hydraulic rams settle.

Jamil draws his hand back from the hatchway. Lets out a sigh of relief.

JAMIL

Damn, that was close little
buddy...T-Bone?

Something moves down the other end of the container. Plastic bags...but it's not T-Bone. The rear CRUSHER ram has activated. A wall of garbage is advancing on Jamil.

JAMIL

What the...

He turns and leaps towards the access panel. Sparks are shorting across a terminal. He starts ripping wires out. The wall of garbage keeps on coming.

JAMIL

Aw c'mon!

He yanks another wire out. The crusher blade grinds to a halt. Jamil sags to the floor.

JAMIL

T-Bone?

Jamil looks around frantically. Throws bags out of the way. Digging down deep.

JAMIL

T-Bone? T-Bone! Come on little
buddy, where are you?

He stops. Listens. There's a rustling. He throws some more bags out of the way. Reaches down, pulls out a lifeless bundle of fur.

A TEDDY BEAR!

He throws it away. Digs deeper. Can't find anything.

Then a NOISE.

A familiar bottom and tail reverses from out of a trash bag. Mouth clamped round something.

JAMIL

Jeez. Break my heart why don't you.
Let's not do that again.

(beat)

Whatcha' got there little buddy?

T-Bone drops the object at Jamil's feet.

ANGLE ON

A small MUSIC-BOX. Jamil reaches down. Opens it. Tinny music plays. A small ballerina twirls.

JAMIL

How on earth...?

T-Bone, smiles, pants. Starts his ritual paw washing. Jamil shakes his head. Puts the Music-Box on top of a battery.

He goes over the back of the open control panel. Peers into the mess of wires.

JAMIL

We need to move this baby back,
find the connections for the
tipper, and get the hell out of
here.

INT. MOTORBIKE - STATIONARY - SAMETIME

Waldo is on his CELL to despatch.

WALDO

Yeah, I'm drawing a blank here.
The guy in the alleyway said the
crew were Eastern European,
Russian's maybe...doesn't exactly
narrow it down.

DISPATCH(V.O.)

We had a report of a shooting in the vicinity...you hear anything?

WALDO

Uh, yeah, that was me. There was a rat...big as a dog. Came outta nowhere.

DISPATCH (V.O.)

Really? Well, seems some blind guy is suing the department for an accordion.

WALDO

Collateral damage, whatcha gonna do?

DISPATCH (V.O.)

Okay, report in if you get any leads on this Jamil guy. His wife's been onto the Chief and he want's a happy ending for Thanksgiving.

WALDO

The guy could be anywhere, there's thousands of garbage trucks in L.A, She didn't have time to get a fix on his phone and the depots are shut down for the holidays.

DISPATCH (V.O.)

We don't find this guy before the holiday's over he's gonna' be shut down for good.

OFF WALDO thinking this through.

EXT. MALL - ITALIAN FAST FOOD OUTLET - DAY

Waldo sits outside. Munches on a caesar salad with Garlic bread. A MAN dressed in a costume made from plastic PIZZA's in the shape of the leaning tower of Pisa lurches over.

Hands him a leaflet.

MAN

Two for one offer at leaning tower of Pizza restaurant. Just like they make in Athens.

WALDO

Yeah right, thanks.

He watches the guy shamle off in his costume. Looks at the leaflet. Sees the ATHENS SPECIAL PIZZA on the menu. Thinks.

WALDO

Romans!

Gets on the cell.

WALDO

Can you give me the address of the nearest Athen's truck depot to Hollywood and Vine...

DISPATCH (V.O.)

Okay, got one out on the Westside, I'll text you the zip code...

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK - CRUSHER UNIT - DAY

Wires trail away from the stack of car batteries to the exposed rear of the hydraulic's control panel. Jamil makes some final adjustments. T-Bone looks on. He's panting.

JAMIL

Okay, let's see if we've got enough juice.

He starts to cough, waves his hand around. A blue haze drifts around the batteries.

JAMIL

What is that?

He looks at T-Bone who pants heavily and drooling.

JAMIL

What's a matter Buddy, don't be scared we're soon going to be out of here.

He holds two bare wires opposite each other.

JAMIL

Here we go...hang in there Buddy

He touches the wires together.

There's a grinding noise as the pneumatic rams whine.

The wall of trash retreats. He connects another pair together and it heads towards them.

He disconnects them and the rams stop.

JAMIL

Okay, we just have to find the ones that control the tipper.

Jamil clears some rubbish bags away. T-Bone lies panting on his side, looks like he's in a bad way. Jamil scoops him up.

JAMIL

What's a matter Buddy?

He sniffs the air. Looks at the batteries, an acrid gas drifts up from the open cells.

JAMIL

Hydrogen. The batteries!

He rips a piece of rag into strips, forms a crude mask for himself and T-Bone.

He goes over to the back wall of the crusher, Moves a couple of Zimmer frames out of the way. Lowers T-Bone gently into the baby seat. T-Bone wags his tail feebly, eyes drooping.

JAMIL

Hang in there buddy I'm gonna get us outta here, I promise.

Off Jamil. Really worried now.

EXT. KOWALSKI'S TRUCK HEADQUARTERS - SAMETIME

Kowalski bursts out of his office accompanied by Milo and Gregor.

ON KOWALSKI

KOWALSKI

Where's the freakin' pickup?

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

A tiny car, speeds past. A "FIAT 500" - JOE'S GARAGE - COURTESY CAR emblazoned down the side.

INT. FIAT - TRAVELLING

Tense. Squashed in like sardines in a can. Kowalski shifts uncomfortably.

KOWALSKI

You sure it's the right depot?

GREGOR

My cousin knows one of the drivers that works for them...he says the alleyway we dumped him in is on their route.

KOWALSKI

How come you didn't think of that before?

GREGOR

My cousin was out of town for nice hooker convention.

Milo leans over, says something into Gregor's ear.

GREGOR

Hockey...for ice hockey convention.

KOWALSKI

Geez. Lucky you geniuses weren't in charge of the space race. We'd probably be on Pluto by now.

Gregor smiles.

GREGOR

Pluto, he's a funny dog, yes?

Off Kowalski. Deadpan.

INT. LEE HOUSE - KITCHEN

Preparations for Thanksgiving remain half completed. Abby, Melissa and Jimmy sit around the table.

MELISSA

What if he doesn't come?

ABBY

We discussed this. We don't celebrate Thanksgiving without your father.

JIMMY

Could we at least have a piece of
pumpkin pie?

Abby's look gives him his answer.

EXT. GARBAGE TRUCK DEPOT - SAMETIME

The MEN arrive for work. Trucks are hosed down. Engines are checked. Hydraulics are tested, re-pressurised.

But what interests us is a small gang of three MEN that head towards one particular truck. Weeds, Gusto and Durk.

WEEDS

Okay, we'll run the compactor up,
make a big song and dance about it
when it jams, say it must have
happened over the holidays, some
sort of seal failure, nothing to do
with us. Got that.

GUSTO

Absolutely.

Durk nods furiously.

WEEDS

Yeah right. Just let me do the
talking.

GUSTO

Absolutely.

Weeds grunts. Heads along a line of trucks...

EXT. GARBAGE TRUCK - SAMETIME

Weeds arrives at their truck. There's a muffled BARK -- with all the noise of the trucks it's difficult to locate where the sound's coming from.

Weeds pauses at the door to the truck.

WEEDS

You hear that?

Durk and Gusto shrug.

WEEDS

Okay, lets run this sucker up.

Durk and Gusto climb into the cab after him.

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK - DAY

Weeds hits the starter. The truck rumbles into life. He shoots a conspiratorial look

WEEDS

Okay. Let's see how the compactor's feeling today.

He turns to Durk and Gusto with exaggerated innocence. He presses the compactor button.

The hydraulics begin to pressurize. The gauge moves over to maximum.

WEEDS

Okay, let's hit it.

He punches the button. The compactor grinds into action.

The sounds of bottles exploding and bags compacting come from behind them.

EXT. FREEWAY - MOTORBIKE - SAMETIME

Waldo ROARS along the freeway.

EXT. FREEWAY - FIAT - SAMETIME

The Fiat ROCKETS past. Engine screaming.

EXT. GARBAGE TRUCK - DEPOT - SAMETIME

The hydraulic rams strain. The noise is hideous. Nothing could survive the crusher as it compacts it's load.

EXT. GARBAGE TRUCK DEPOT - CONTINUOUS

The Fiat brakes hard. Milo and Gregor squeeze out and run along the line of parked trucks looking at the licence plates.

They arrive at the rear of Weed's garbage truck. Look at the license plate.

GREGOR

This is it...

Kowalski sounds the horn.

KOWALSKI

C'mon move your asses!

The two heavies turn round as...

The back of the garbage truck flies up, hydraulics screaming.

Tons of trash pour onto the heavies, burying them in stinking black bags which burst open -- shower them with rotting food.

WALDO'S MOTORBIKE

Slides to a halt behind the Fiat.

FIAT

Kowalski turns -- sees Waldo. Starts up the Fiat.

Waldo heaves himself out of the saddle. Whips a TAZER out of his pocket and fires it into the bodywork of the Fiat.

Kowalski howls in agony. The car stalls. Waldo goes over. Handcuffs a dazed Kowalski to the steering wheel.

WALDO

Well if it isn't the king of trash.

KOWALSKI

You can't hold me. What's the charge.

Waldo thinks.

WALDO

'bout ten thousand volts I guess.

TRASH PILE

HANDS wave from beneath the surface -- Milo and Gregor pop out from the heap of rotting food, faces slimy with goo -- spitting out pieces of sludge.

CLOSE ON MILO

As a jet of liquid sprays down and onto his head.

MILO

What the...?

He looks up, gets something in his eye.

MILO

Shit...what is that?

JIB UP

Following the stream of liquid to discover...

GARBAGE TRUCK - TIPPER DOOR

Jamil and T-Bone dangle from the back of the Garbage Truck door.

They are in the old car seat and the baby seat. Suspended from the back of the tipper unit -- held in place by a collection of elastic bunji's and straps.

They look like cut price astronauts. Each of them has one of the old ZIMMER frames strapped over them. Like primitive roll-cages, they've been protected from being crushed.

JAMIL

Could do with some help here.

EXT. GARBAGE TRUCK - CRUSHER UNIT

Jamil looks down at Milo and over at T-Bone who pants weakly.

JAMIL

Atta boy, you hang in there.

A couple of GARBAGE OPERATIVES operate the rear door -- it swings down so they can unhitch T-Bone and Jamil.

Jamil cradles T-Bone in his arms.

EXT. GARBAGE TRUCK DEPOT - SAMETIME

Waldo walks away from Kowalski.

KOWALSKI

Hey, I got rights.

WALDO

Yeah, park your ass there rights.

He goes over to the garbage truck and Jamil. T-Bone's eyes are half closed and he's panting for breath. He doesn't look good.

Jamil hands the MEMORY STICK to Waldo.

JAMIL

That's what they were after.

He pulls the license plate from under his top. Touches the two bullet dents.

JAMIL

And they were pretty determined to get it.

Waldo goes over to his bike. Pulls out a laptop -- sticks the memory stick into the USB port. Information streams across the screen.

Passport I'D's, Bank Codes, Credit Cards.

WALDO

Data mining.

Waldo looks over at Kowalski. Takes his shades off, mimics CSI Chief Horatio's classic sign off.

WALDO

Well Kowalski, looks like your numbers up.

The sound of SIRENS grows in the distance. Jamil looks at T-Bone.

JAMIL

We need to get the little guy to a vet.

WALDO

Okay. I'm gonna have to stay here till the cops arrive. You ride a bike?

JAMIL

Sure.

WALDO

Okay. Take mine, second gear's a little sticky. I'll let your wife know you're okay.

Jamil nods. Waldo hands him the keys. Jamil wraps T-Bone in his jacket, lowers him gently into the side car. Stamps on the kick start. The engine roars. They race off.

EXT. GARBAGE TRUCK DEPOT - LATER

ANGLE ON

A PATROL CAR bubble light cluster. Flashing blue in the dusk.

BACK TO SCENE

A statuesque FEMALE police officer, GINA (30s), wipes gunk off her uniform as she approaches.

GINA

Jeez, I only got this cleaned yesterday.

WALDO

It's always the way. I get drunks throwing up over me when I've just come out of the shower.

GINA

You should think about changing your tennis club.

Waldo smiles. Slaps his belly.

WALDO

Sometimes that's the price you gotta pay to stay in shape.

GINA

Still saving up then.

WALDO

You crack me up.

GINA

Yeah, I'm a riot.

(beat)

How'd you work out where he was trapped?

WALDO

Basic police work, with a touch of genius thrown in.

GINA

Heard the dog barking huh?

WALDO

That was a factor, obviously. But there was a lot of number crunching involved.

GINA

Would've been even more crunching if they hadn't had a late start for maintenance after the holiday.

WALDO

Yup, sometimes you just have to believe that fate has a plan for all of us.

GINA

Amen to that.

She looks around. Flicks a candy wrapper from her uniform.

GINA

There's never a hot tub around when you need it is there?

Waldo smiles, leans closer.

WALDO

Well, as you brought it up...

And as they start to look at each other in that special way we move away to...

INT. LEE HOUSE - KITCHEN

Abby carries the last of the Thanksgiving meal through to the sitting room.

ABBY

Okay guys, everybody to the table, this bird won't eat itself.

There's the sound of a heavy engine outside. The room is lit by flashes of multicolored light.

INT. VIEW THROUGH WINDOW - NIGHT

A GARBAGE TRUCK pulls up outside the house. Festooned with Christmas Tree lights winking in the dusk.

INT. LEE'S HOUSE - SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The doorbell goes. Melissa and Jimmy run past Abby.

JIMMY

Dad!

Abby puts the turkey on the table. Runs into the...

HALLWAY

Melissa is already there, she opens the door. Jamil stands there. Jimmy and Melissa look behind him.

Their faces fall. Abby gives Jamil a huge hug and a kiss. Pulls back. Looks at his chest.

ABBY

What you got in there?

Jamil pulls the licence plate out.

JAMIL

Just some junk I was gonna' throw.

Abby takes it from him. Puts it on the shelf in the hall.

ABBY

No way. That goes in a frame.

(beat)

Waldo rang, said you were bringing home a little friend?

JAMIL

T-Bone?

Jamil smiles, turns around. There's nothing behind him

JAMIL

He was here a second ago...

JIMMY (O.S.)

Mom!

They all turn round and there he is. A raggedy dog grinning from ear to ear, the leg of a turkey clenched between his teeth, eyes bright, tail wagging furiously.

Abby smiles, shakes her head. Turns back to Jamil.

ABBY

Welcome home.

Tommy and Melissa race after T-Bone who tears off through the house clutching his turkey leg. Jamil moves closer to Abby, they kiss. She pulls away.

ABBY

I said you'd find your way home.

JAMIL

Wild Turkeys wouldn't stop me.

Abby nods towards the sound of the children running after T-Bone.

ABBY

Well you'd better get after that one while there's still some left.

Jamil smiles, strokes the back of her neck.

JAMIL

I'm sorry about keeping all of that shit baby.

ABBY

That's alright, you're home now.

Jamil looks at her. Takes a deep breath. Gets it all out.

JAMIL

No. You need to hear this. I kept all that stuff because it reminded me...

He pauses, this is difficult for him.

JAMIL

It reminded me of how things used to be before...

Abby nods.

ABBY

The kids? Having to keep a family. I know it's been tough on you hon.

JAMIL

But I was wrong, I have a beautiful wife and a wonderful family, I don't need to live in the past when I was a carefree jerk...

Abby silences him with another kiss.

ABBY

You were never a jerk. A slob
maybe.

JAMIL

Not anymore.

He reaches into his pocket. Pulls out the Music Box. Hands
it to Abby.

JAMIL

T-Bone found it in the trash.

Abby opens the box. The music tinkles out. The ballerina
dances. Abby's eyes shine.

ABBY

I guess she found her way home,
like you.

Jamil nods at the license plate on the shelf.

JAMIL

Maybe we should celebrate the
return of our license to love.

Abby laughs.

ABBY

On a full stomach?

Jamil kisses her. Takes her by the hand.

JAMIL

Who says we're eating first?

And from that affirmation of love we...

MUSIC PLAYS: THE COASTERS "Yakety Yak"

THE COASTERS

"Take out the papers and the
trash...or you don't get no
spending cash. If you don't scrub
that kitchen floor...you
Ain't gonna' rock n' roll no
more...Yakety Yak, don't talk
back."

FADE OUT.