

# Salvage

An original short piece

by

Robert G. Newcomer (Bert)

FADE IN:

EXT. A LONELY STRETCH OF HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The far ends of this two-lane truck route disappear into black infinity. But there is a single street lamp on a crooked wooden pole. A small oasis of light.

This lamp illuminates the front gate of a junkyard. A sign above the locked gate reads "DONNIE'S RED DOG AUTO SALVAGE", and beneath that, "Used parts good as new!"

EXT. JUNKYARD

Ten acres of rusting autos ensconced by tall chain-link fencing. A muddy trail wends its way through aisle after aisle of wrecked or wasted jalopies, most bearing the scars of some high-speed highway trauma.

A few windshields have round, bulging cracks formed by forceful impact with a human head. Some even have a matching set -- one right, one left.

Just inside the gate is a small business office with a "CLOSED" sign tacked to its door. Behind the office is a doublewide trailer. The windows of the trailer are alight.

Through one of these windows, DONNIE can be seen sitting before a computer on a cluttered desk.

Donnie is a shaggy, hefty man in his 40's. His pale stomach pooches out from between his oil-splattered jeans and his way-too-tight Korn tour shirt.

INT. TRAILER

Donnie is looking at internet porn. Close to the monitor, he runs his finger along the saline-enhanced breasts of a pouting blonde with heavy makeup.

DONNIE

Don't look so sad, baby. Donnie's here for you.

A loud BUZZER sounds. Donnie is first startled, then furrows his brow, annoyed.

DONNIE

What the fuck?

The buzzer sounds again. And again. And it keeps going.

DONNIE

Sonuva...

Donnie gets up from his chair and lumbers like an angry bear over to a window. He peers outside.

THROUGH THE WINDOW

A tow truck is at the front gate. A wrecked convertible, its front wheels gone, is attached to the lift.

A dark figure presses a button beside the gate, and another grating blast echoes through the trailer.

INT. TRAILER

Donnie flings open the window and shouts at the man.

DONNIE

Hey! Cut it out! I ain't deaf, alright?

The man at the buzzer waves.

EXT. JUNKYARD - NIGHT

Donnie approaches the gate as the DRIVER busies himself unhooking the convertible.

DONNIE

What do you think you're doing, man?

The tow truck is black, sleek, and unmarked. It's powerful engine, though idling, rumbles with vigor.

The driver himself wears a black trench coat, far too warm for the weather, and a Rolling Stones cap with a wagging tongue on it.

The driver answers without looking up from his work.

DRIVER

Got a good one for you here.  
Broken tie rod.

He nods at the flattened car.

DRIVER

Flipped her like a pancake.

The driver chuckles at the very thought of it.

Donnie is at the gate now, but he leaves it locked.

DONNIE

You can't leave this here.

The driver continues unhitching the car.

DONNIE

Hey! I'm serious.

And now the driver is done, tossing his chains into the back of the truck.

DONNIE

Look, I don't know who you are with, but I'm telling you this ain't the right place. You leave this here and your boss will have your ass, man!

The driver, now climbing into his truck, turns to Donnie.

The light from the lamp overhead is blocked by the bill of his cap, pulled low, shadowing the man's features.

DRIVER

No. This is the place. Man.

The driver shuts the door and starts his truck.

DONNIE

Hey! Asshole! This wreck ain't mine!

The driver guns his motor.

DONNIE

You can't leave this here!

The truck's wheels spin furiously in the gravel, showering Donnie with pebbles as it screeches into the night.

Donnie screams after the truck, clutching the fence and shaking it with rage.

Donnie only grows more furious as the driver sticks his arm out the window to flip him off.

INT. WORKSHED - NIGHT

Donnie pulls into the shed atop a rumbling tractor, dragging the wreck behind him. He shuts off the tractor, then climbs down to examine the car.

DONNIE

Well, let's see what we got.

He tugs on a door, but the crushed metal won't give.

He grumbles when he discovers that the opposite door is stuck as well.

He removes a box cutter from a pegboard wall of tools, thumbs the blade, and then begins to slice the battered cloth top of the flattened convertible.

He encounters an obstruction, but muscles his way through it. It makes a very odd ripping sound.

Confused, Donnie pulls out the blade. It is covered in blood. And skin. And hair.

A slow-growing bloodstain now blossoms on the cloth roof.

Donnie pales and staggers back from the car. The blade slips from his fingers.

DONNIE

Sweet Jesus...

INT. A POLICEMAN AT HIS DESK

BOB KIMBER has his feet up on the desk, reading an Elmore Leonard novel. He's a barrel-chested 52, just a little gray, and comfortable in his uniform.

He makes a face as the phone rings. He puts down his book, then his feet, and answers the call.

KIMBER

Kimber.

INT. TRAILER

Donnie's knuckles are white as he grips the phone.

DONNIE

Hey. This here's Donnie...down at Red Dog?

INTERCUT

KIMBER

Evenin', Donnie. What can I do you for?

DONNIE

Listen, I got a wreck down here...and this car...now this is gonna sound crazy, but this car's still got bodies in it.

KIMBER

Now that just ain't possible, Donnie.

DONNIE

I know it ain't! But they are out in my garage right now, I tell ya'! Fuckin' bodies, man!

KIMBER

Sounds to me like somebody might be havin' a little fun with you. You still feudin' with them Fitchner boys?

DONNIE

Fuck them. All I know is there's something bleeding in this car and you need to come check this shit out. You hear?

Kimber casts a forlorn glance at his book.

KIMBER

You drunk, Donnie?

DONNIE

No, God-dammit!

Kimber sighs.

KIMBER

All right. Settle down. Just sit tight and I'll be out there in about fifteen, OK?

Now Donnie sighs, relieved.

DONNIE

Thank you. You buzz me soon as you get here.

EXT. JUNKYARD - NIGHT

Kimber pulls up in his police cruiser. He gets out of the car, walks to the gate, and presses the buzzer.

Donnie emerges from the trailer. He calls out to Kimber.

DONNIE

Just a minute. Let me get the gate for ya'.

Kimber steps back to his cruiser, and upon reaching it, he is suddenly illuminated by headlights. He shields his eyes and looks to the source.

With a ROAR, the black tow truck smashes into Kimber and the cruiser, shoving the cruiser sideways across the dirt lot and crushing Kimber's body between the autos.

Donnie watches, stunned, as the truck backs away from the wrecked cruiser, Kimber's body plastered to its grille.

Now in reverse, the truck swerves until it faces the gate. Its lights on Donnie now. The truck ROARS once more.

Kimber's body slowly peels free of the truck's mangled grille work, dropping to the ground.

The truck charges the gate. Its headlights bounce as it thumps over Kimber's lifeless body.

The truck tears through the gate, snapping the flimsy chain that holds it in place.

The truck bears down on Donnie. Donnie dives at the last moment, rolling on the dusty path.

The truck barrels past him.

Donnie turns and watches the fading taillights of the truck as it disappears into the bowels of the junkyard.

INT. WORKSHED - NIGHT

Donnie is sweating. Shaken. He pulls open a drawer on the workbench and extracts a large revolver.

He flips it open and checks the chambers.

Yeah. It's loaded.

EXT. JUNKYARD - NIGHT

Donnie moves cautiously amongst the wrecked cars, darting from auto to auto, his eyes flicking right and left.

He suddenly finds himself illuminated by headlights.

This is followed by the ROAR of an engine. Donnie turns.

The black tow truck is barreling towards him.

This time, Donnie stands his ground.

He raises the revolver and looses several rounds into the windshield. The windshield shatters.

The truck swerves, careening wildly before smashing into the ancient remains of a VW minibus.

The truck's engine dies. Its headlights dim. Steam blasts from beneath the hood.

Donnie waves the gun and gives a victory whoop.

DONNIE

Ha-ha! How do you like me now,  
mother-fucker?

Donnie rushes to the truck and yanks open the door.

DONNIE

How do you like me...

Kimber's maimed body flops out of the car

Donnie jumps back from the bloody carcass in horror.

Kimber stares back at him with lifeless, glassy eyes.

Donnie turns, waving the gun and shouting in every direction at no one.

DONNIE

Where are you, asshole? Come  
out where I can see you!

Then, the rhythmic sound of CLANGING METAL.

Donnie turns towards its source.

The sound is coming from the workshed.

INT. WORKSHED - NIGHT

Donnie enters, his revolver poised. The clanging has stopped. But there is another sound.

His eyes shift towards the convertible.

Something is GROWLING in the truck.

Donnie steps warily up to the car. He levels his revolver at the trunk.

He squeezes off several rounds, emptying the gun into the trunk. He continues squeezing the trigger, clicking through empty chambers.

The growling stops. Donnie relaxes and lowers his gun.

But then the growling resumes.

Donnie pockets the revolver and backs away from the car.

He steps to his pegboard wall of tools and lifts off a large, heavy wrench.

He steps over to the convertible, then, pulling back for a baseball swing, he pounds the lock on the trunk.

The trunk springs open.

Donnie leaps back, horrified at the sight of a mangled dog gnawing its way through the back seat of the car.

Its front limbs are nearly detached, hanging by fibers of sinew. But its jaws work ravenously, flinging spittle in every direction.

The wrench slips from Donnie's hand.

The dog stops to lock eyes with Donnie, then resumes chewing its way into the trunk with renewed vigor, snarling more fiercely than ever.

Donnie slams the trunk closed.

DRIVER (O.S.)

I don't think he likes you.

Donnie turns to find the black-coated driver standing at the entrance to the workshed.

The driver is holding the two halves of a long, snapped metal rod. He bangs them together as he enters the workshed -- the rhythmic CLANGS Donnie heard before.

DONNIE

What do you want from me?

The driver tosses the broken rods. They land in the dust at Donnie's feet. One of the halves bears a stamp.

The stamp reads "Red Dog Auto Salvage".

DRIVER

Broken tie rod. Flipped us like a pancake.

Donnie looks back up at the driver.

The driver now removes his cap to reveal that a full quarter of his skull is missing -- a diagonal shear that ends just above his right cheekbone.

Wet shards of flesh dangle from the wound. The pulpy meat inside his skull throbs and writhes.

The driver grins at Donnie.

DRIVER

Hurt like a bitch, too.

Donnie backs away from the driver, horrified.

Donnie now hears RIPPING behind him. He turns, and pales at what he sees.

Bloodied fingers worm themselves through the ripped canvas of the convertible top, tearing at the fabric.

As the rip widens, the blood-soaked bodies of a WOMAN and CHILD slowly emerge from the car.

The child squirms as he works his way through the torn fabric with only one arm. His other arm is missing, and a pale stub of bone protrudes from his shoulder.

The woman has been ripped in half -- she has no legs. Her spine and entrails dangle from her ribcage as she pulls herself from the car and flops to the ground.

She raises her eyes to meet Donnie with a furious gaze, then begins pulling herself towards him. A thick, red smear, glistening and sticky, trails behind her.

DRIVER

Over and over again...once  
the wheels came off, seemed  
like that damn car would never  
stop rolling. No better than  
a meat grinder.

The driver steps to the pegboard wall of tools and takes down an ax. He tests its weight, and nods, satisfied.

Then the driver turns and advances on Donnie with the ax.

Now the boy jumps from the trunk to the ground, advancing on Donnie as well.

The snarling from the trunk reaches a fever pitch.

DRIVER

An arm here, a leg there...it  
all adds up, you know?

Donnie backs away from all of them, but finds himself backed into a corner.

He pulls the revolver from his pocket with shaky hands.

DONNIE

What...what do you want?

DRIVER

(shouts)  
Used parts good as new!  
(quieter)  
That's what I heard, anyway.

The driver continues to advance on Donnie with the ax.

DONNIE

I...I didn't know. How could  
I have known?  
(raising the gun)  
No! Stay back!

Donnie fires the useless gun as the driver draws ever closer, but the hammer falls on empty chambers.

DRIVER

You see, my family and me...  
we're here for more parts.

EXT. WORKSHED - NIGHT

Donnie's screams echo from the shed.

His screams are soon interspersed with the wet, butcher-house sounds of metal on meat.

FADE OUT.