

THE TIN MAN

Written by

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EXT. NUCLEAR DESERT - DAY

A sea of bright orange grains and dunes spread across the horizon. The sun shines above, so strong it looks like it'll give out tumors like party favors.

SUPER: THE TIN MAN

CLICKING fills the air, as a Geiger Counter scans.

THUD. A tin foil wrapped boot slams into the ground, sending up irritated dust, as a man crosses the sand.

With tin covered pants, shirt, and long hooded jacket, this is the TIN MAN. A black gas mask covers his face and a Geiger Counter is strapped to his belt.

It sends out annoying beeps, as the Tin Man shambles along.

The man pulls out a canteen. Unscrewing it he pours out the contents. It's empty.

Frustrated, the man hurls the canteen, and falls exhausted to his knees.

The voice of a YOUNG GIRL calls out.

YOUNG GIRL (O.S.)

Daddy!

The Tin Man turns. Through wavy lines of heat, he sees a young blonde girl, six, in a t-shirt and shorts.

She stands waving both arms under an oak tree, with a rustic swing tied to one of the limbs.

YOUNG GIRL (CONT'D)

Come and push me!

The Tin Man hesitates, before turning away, and continuing his march forward.

Another voice calls out.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Hey Honey!

A WOMAN, 30s, stands in the sand in a floral dress, and a large cardboard box in her hands.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Could you help me bring this up?

The Tin Man doesn't turn. Closing his eyes he continues walking.

A chorus of voices fill his head, swarming and jumbled.

A NUCLEAR ALARM blares as the images of the woman and girl shift.

Reaching their hands towards the man their flesh disintegrates into a pair of burnt black skeletons.

The man falls to his knees, hyperventilating. He slams his eyes shut, and covers his ears, having a panic-attack.

The noise increases in volume and stress until...silence.

The man looks around. No woman, no girl.

Rising to his feet, the man surveys the land in front of him. His eyes widen.

In the distance, a spot of blue and green sits in the ocean of orange. An OASIS.

INT. OASIS, CAVE - DAY

Two filmy yellow eyes watch the Tin Man approach.

Half its face peeled away, and ribs stabbing out. This MUTATED COYOTE, watches as the Tin Man approaches its territory.

EXT. OASIS - NIGHT

The Tin Man stumbles into the lush foliage of the oasis. It's beautiful, with palm trees, and a bright blue lake. He activates the Geiger Counter...Nothing.

He rushes to the lake. He rips off his mask, revealing a middle-aged man with shaggy black hair, and a three-fingered scratch scarred into his cheek.

The Tin Man plunges his face into the water. He drinks as much as he can before toppling backwards, coughing.

The coughing turns to laughter, as he looks at the night sky.

A low deep chested growl sounds. The man's eyes widen, he raises his head to face the source of the noise.

Across the lake, eyes glowing in the dark, the Coyote releases a baritone growl.

The man scrambles up, as the Coyote moves around the lake. Moving cautiously the man keeps the water between them.

The Coyote pauses before curling its lip and letting out one monstrous BARK.

The Tin Man turns and runs to the tree line of the oasis.

EXT. NUCLEAR DESERT - DAWN

The man just exits the tree line before being tackled in the back, sending him tumbling across the sand.

Rolling to a stop, the Tin Man shakily stands, staring down the charging beast through blurred vision.

As the Coyote leaps for him, he grabs his Geiger Counter, slamming it into the peeled side of the Coyote's face.

With a YELP the Coyote tumbles off course and into the sand.

Getting to its feet, the Coyote swivels its eyes in their sockets with a look of pure malice.

The Coyote charges again, before the man can defend, it grabs the man's arm with its teeth.

The Tin Man lets out a SCREAM OF AGONY, trying to pull his arm free. CRUNCH. The man's left arm rips off.

Falling to his knees, he looks up at the Coyote. Opening its jaws, the man's detached arm falls to the sand with a THUMP.

The Coyote opens its mouth wider, preparing to kill.

The eyes of the Coyote contract with fear, as it sees the bright sun rising behind the Tin Man.

Panic-stricken the Coyote retreats to the oasis, as sunlight rushing across the desert behind it. A ray of light catches the canine's tail causing it to boil.

The man haggardly rises to his feet. He stares at the Coyote who stands in the shade of the tree line staring back.

The Tin Man steps forward, pausing then falling backwards onto the sand, unconscious.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. OUTSIDE HILL-SIDE BUNKER - DAY [FLASHBACK]

NUCLEAR SIRENS fill the air. The Tin Man, younger and in civilian clothes, jumps out of a minivan. Running to the passenger's door, he yanks it open, revealing the woman from before, holding the young girl. His WIFE and DAUGHTER.

The Tin Man grabs his daughter, as wife hastily exits the vehicle.

WIFE

Where's the bunker!?!

TIN MAN

It should be just up this hill!

The Tin Man points up the hill, showing a massive concrete door in the hill side. Hundreds of others are rushing inside.

The massive concrete doors begin to grind shut.

DAUGHTER

They're leaving us?

TIN MAN

No they wouldn't, we paid for our spot like everyone else!

The Tin Man, daughter in his arms, and wife closely behind rush towards the bunker, squeezing past other families.

The doors are almost closed now. The man hands his daughter to his wife.

TIN MAN (CONT'D)

Take her, I'll slow them down!

INT. HILL SIDE BUNKER - DAY [FLASHBACK]

The man rushes inside, seeing a dozen CITIZENS on each side working together to force the doors shut.

The Tin Man begins punching and throwing the citizens off the door.

TIN MAN

HURRY!

A voice from a RANDOM MAN in the crowd shouts.

RANDOM MAN

If those doors stay open we're all dead!

A hand grabs the Tin Man's face, pulling him back, and leaving three scratch marks across his cheek.

More hands grab him, restraining him, as the crowd pulls him away from the door.

TIN MAN
(hand covering his mouth)
NO!

The man breaks free from the crowd, as the doors shut. Rushing to the thick door windows he watches a mushroom cloud rise in the distance, releasing a wave of heat.

His wife and daughter reach their hands towards him as the wave hits, reducing them to charred skeletons.

CUT TO:

EXT. NUCLEAR DESERT - DAY

The Tin Man's eyes fly open. He shoots up, and stares at the oasis, just as the tail of the Coyote enters its cave.

The man looks to the sky, seeing the bright sun shining directly above him. It's midday.

He falls back to the ground. Slowly he cranes his neck to look at his dismembered left side. It oozes blood.

The man looks back to the sky, and closes his eyes, defeated.

A voice softly speaks in the Tin Man's ear, like a whisper.

WIFE (V.O.)
Not yet...

The Tin Man shoots upright, looking around. Nothing. His eyes fall on his detached arm, still in the sand in front of him.

He takes a deep breath readying himself.

He yanks the foil off of his injury, allowing the heat of the sun to cauterize his wound, SCREAMING in the process.

The Tin Man shakily gets to his feet. He shambles over to his arm, falling to his knees, but rising again.

He reaches the arm, looking at it from above. Then RIP, the Tin Man tears off a piece of foil from the arm.

CUT TO:

EXT. OASIS - DAWN

The Tin Man stands in front of the Coyote's cave. In his hand, he holds his detached limb, stripped of foil.

The man tosses the arm into the cave which lands with a THUD...A familiar growl rumbles inside.

Two glowing yellow eyes stalk towards the opening of the cave.

As it gets close, its face becomes visible. Clenched in its mouth, the bone of Tin Man's arm. The Tin Man smirks.

TIN MAN
Still hungry, aren't you?

The Coyote drops the bone CLATTERING against the stone. It leaps at the Tin Man, who barely evades with a roll.

The Coyote skids on the sand quickly turning and leaps again.

Crouched from the roll, the man grabs a fist of sand, hurling it at the Coyote's eyes.

Taking the Geiger Counter out of his pocket, he slams it into the already damaged side of the Coyote.

The man repeats the attack again, before being shoved away.

The Tin Man gets to his feet, just as the Coyote shakes the sand out of its eyes. They lock eyes.

To the Coyote's surprise the Tin Man darts in a separate direction, running to a particular spot in the sand.

The Coyote catches up with ease, slashing the man's back.

The man tumbles forward, rolling onto a X marked in the sand.

Kneeling on the X, the Tin Man looks up at the Coyote, just as the sun rises again.

Its rays stream across the desert, reflecting off something.

A piece of tin foil placed in the desert. The light bounces again landing on another carefully placed tin foil on a tree.

The light continues bouncing off of different pieces of foil.

The Tin Man smiles, as the beam reflects to hit the Coyote. HOWLS fill the air, as the light burns the animal.

Fleeing, the Coyote scrambles back towards its cave.

The Tin Man stands, letting the beam of light hit the ground.

Calmly the man rips a piece of tin foil from his torso and bends it, redirecting the light into the cave.

Preparing to finish the job the Tin Man approaches the cave.

INT. OASIS, CAVE - DAWN

The Tin Man enters the cave, noting the beam of light hitting the ceiling.

He peels off another piece of foil in preparation.

He spots the Coyote huddled in the corner. Terrified.

The Tin Man raises the foil to the light, ready to redirect it.

Inches away from the light, he notices something on the ground. A pair of canine bones.

One is large yet slender, and the other much smaller. A female, and a pup. They are both seared black.

INSERT - Flash of the Tin Man's family's death.

The Tin Man lowers his arm and foil. He crumples it with a fist, and drops the foil to the ground, then exits the cave.

EXT. DESERT OASIS - DAWN

The man calmly walks over to the foil bouncing the light into the cave. He bends it, sending the light into the distance.

His work completed, the Tin Man walks silently to the edge of the water, sitting down exhausted and closing his eyes.

The sound of pawed footsteps approaches, the man smiles, ready to die, as the Coyote draws near.

A beat. Nothing happens. Confused, the man opens his eyes and looks down, seeing the face of the Coyote lying in his lap.

Hesitantly, the man lowers his hand down to the head of the Coyote and carefully strokes the creature.

Both man and beast stare off into the horizon of the rising sun. Together.

MUSIC CUE: "Coyote Caller" by Joshua James.

CREDITS