

DEBUGGED

WRITTEN BY M. LATHROM



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FADE IN:

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

WARREN (47), a bald on top, a man more concerned with numbers than the fit of his short-sleeve button-up marches past panels of circuitry. Vacuum tubes and wires pepper the complicated machine.

He checks his watch, then speeds up.

SERIES OF SHOTS

A) Warren stands on a stool. He pulls a vacuum tube, checks it. He pulls a walkie-talkie from his belt.

WARREN
Clear on panel nineteen.

B) Warren closes a panel door. Pulls up his walkie.

WARREN
Clear on seven.

C) Warren plugs two wires back into their slots. Shakes his head.

INT. WAREHOUSE - LATER

Defeated, Warren wanders toward the exit door. To his left among a panel of lit up vacuum tubes, one in the middle flickers.

Warren looks up from the floor, notices the tube across the room, stops. Squints at it. Moves closer.

Warren inches toward it. As he gets closer, the light of the tubes glows on his face. They reflect off his thick glasses. He leans in to look at the tube.

CLOSE ON the flickering tube. Inside a moth flies around the electrical components.

Warren stares in awe. He lifts his walkie.

WARREN
Hey, Doris. Those Billings tubes we just put in... were they all checked?

DORIS (V.O.)
(walkie talkie)
Every one myself.

Like I said, everything was working fine. There must be a short somewhere.

WARREN

No, I think I found your bug.

DORIS (V.O.)

Strange. My diagnostics didn't indicate in your area.

Warren pulls the tube. The light inside of it fades out.

WARREN

Guess I'm just in the right place at the right time.

He holds up the tube, watches the little moth flying around.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Warren inspects a new tube. Shoves it into the slot the last one was in.

An electrical hum sounds as the tube lights up.

DORIS (V.O.)

(walkie talkie)

It's booting up. Come on back.

Warren smiles. Dusts off his hands as he walks back.

Then the electrical hum dies.

DORIS (V.O.)

Wait...

Warren freezes. Turns slowly.

POV OF THE PANEL. The new tube flickers.

CLOSE ON THE TUBE. Warren's hand pulls it out. The light dims.

DORIS (V.O.)

I think there's another bug in your area.

He holds it up. A moth flutters around inside. Warren regards it with curious wonder.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Warren pulls a fresh new tube from a pouch. He stares at it for a moment. Inspects it. Nothing inside.

He reaches for the flickering tube, about to pull it when--

Three men in suits burst through the door behind him. He startles, looks back. COMPANY MAN (40), a slick-haired man in a pressed blue suit leads the two other men in gray suits.

COMPANY MAN

Hold it there. We'll take care of that.

CLOSE ON Warren's other hand. He covertly slips the fresh tube into the pouch. Out of view.

COMPANY MAN

We're with Billings. Hear you've been having trouble with our tubes.

The three men stop near the panel next to Warren.

WARREN

I wasn't told anyone was coming to replace the tubes.

DORIS (V.O.)

Hey, Warren. Some guys from Billings--

Warren clicks off the walkie talkie, gives an awkward smile. He steps aside.

WARREN

Be my guest.

Warren walks toward the door. He looks behind him. Company Man pulls the tube. He points the men in gray suits to other parts of the warehouse. They head off.

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

Warren sits at the workbench in his garage. Half-built computer boards sit beside him. Family pictures pinned to the wall.

Warren pulls the panel off the CB radio, sets it aside.

He grabs the tube pouch from his leather briefcase on the floor. Pulls the tube out.

He plugs it into a slot on the CB radio.

He takes a breath, then flips on the radio.

The tubes inside light up.

CLOSE ON the Billings tube. Its warm light grows brighter. Brighter. Then it flashes.

Warren blinks at the bright flashes. Adjusts his eyes.

CLOSE ON the Billings tube. A little flicker as a moth flies around the inside of the tube.

CLOSE ON Warren. A look of awe dons on his face.

FADE OUT.

THE END