

DIRT - AN AUDIO DRAMA
Chapter 12 Transcript
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****Warning****

This is a complete written transcript of the entire Chapter 12 audio file and is full of spoilers from start to finish. To avoid ruining surprises, read along as you listen—but don't read ahead!

Link to audio files: <https://www.dirtaudiodrama.com/#listen>

(Sound of Joseph frantically breathing and running through forest)

(Sound of Joseph running on dirt road)

(Sound of Joseph running on pavement)

(Sound of Joseph stopping at car)

(Sound of steady rain falling)

(Sound of Joseph unlocking car and quickly putting things in the back seat, then closing door)

(Sound of opening front door)

(Sound of Joseph stopping)

JOSEPH:
What?

NARRATOR (JOSEPH):
I step back and look at my car's front and rear left tires.

JOSEPH:
Huh.

NARRATOR:
They're both flat.

JOSEPH:
Oh no!

What the... (Grunt)

NARRATOR:

There's broken glass from discarded beer bottles on the shoulder all around the car that I hadn't noticed when I first parked.

JOSEPH:

(Breathing) Okay....

(Sound of Joseph getting phone out of pocket)

(Sound of smartphone assistant being engaged)

Call Mel...

No no, wait!

(Sound of smartphone assistant disengaging)

(Sound of Joseph breathing)

(Laughing to self)

(More laughing to self, pacing)

(Groan) Maybe I just walk away...

(Laughing to self, breathing)

No.

Nope.

(Sound of Joseph pacing, breathing)

(Sound of smartphone assistant being engaged)

JOSEPH:

Call Mel.

(Sound of smartphone assistant disengaging)

(Sound of Joseph's phone dialing)

MEL:

(On phone) I told the investigators what you said...

JOSEPH:

Mel...

MEL:

...they're fine with it. They're just gonna...

JOSEPH:

Mel.

MEL:

...wait here until you—

JOSEPH:

You've done so much for me and I'm grateful for it all. Incredulous, actually. But now I have to ask you to pull off your biggest magic trick yet. (Exhales) I have two flats, and only one spare. This car isn't going anywhere. So...I need you...

MEL:

(Inhale/exhale)

JOSEPH:

...to figure out how to get me to the office in time for the Molecular meeting.

Mel?

Mel...

MEL:

Hold please.

(Sound of Mel putting Joseph on hold)

JOSEPH:

(Chuckles) Sure. I'll hold.

NARRATOR (JOSEPH):

When Mel told me yesterday that the police knew we had the traffic cam footage, I figured it was just a matter of time before they'd come knocking, asking us why. But if they're at the office and asking for *me*, specifically, and not saying why...

JOSEPH:
It can't be good...

NARRATOR (JOSEPH):
And, with the police AND Molecular at the office at the same time, it'll be some kind of entrance for me at work. If I get there at all.

MEL:
Okay. I assume you're still at the address I sent you?

JOSEPH:
Yeah.

MEL:
About a mile south of you is a lake. It's a state park. You can access the main entrance off the road that you're on. Walk there now, and fast. I'll call back soon with details.

(Sound of Joseph getting things out of car)

JOSEPH:
Okay.

(Sound of closing car door)

Anything I should be—

(Sound of phone hanging up)

Prepared for...

(Sound of Joseph locking car and starting to walk down side of road)

(Sound of carrying metal detector and duffle bag)

(Sound of cars driving by)

NARRATOR (JOSEPH):
I really don't know what happened back there in the woods a short time ago, with the old house and the coyote. But just to make sure it *did* happen, I reach inside my duffle bag with my hand, to make sure that there really are now *three* treasure boxes in there—a box from Pe Ell, a box from Maryhill, and now, a box from Cumberland.

JOSEPH:
(Exhale) Yep. Three of them. And a broken drone...

(Sound of walking along road)

(Sound of cars passing)

NARRATOR (JOSEPH):

My clothes and shoes are wet and dirt-streaked from walking through the damp forest. To passers-by, with this large duffle bag and old detector, I must be quite a sight. I'm just glad that I'm out here, practically off the grid, where no one would ever recognize me.

After about twenty minutes I get to the sign for the state park, and walk in.

(Sounds of activity in background)

(Sound of stopping)

At a park signboard, I read that metal detecting *is* allowed here.

JOSEPH:

Good.

NARRATOR (JOSEPH):

So hopefully that'll stave off any questions anyone has about the Coinmaster.

I briefly consider registering for the required day pass, but I have no idea what Mel has in store for me here, and I don't want to leave a paper trail. So, I stick a twenty dollar bill in the registration slot instead, and make a beeline for some trees fifty yards or so away, above the shore of a small-ish lake, hoping to stay unnoticed.

(Sound of walking on pavement then grass)

(Sound of stopping and setting things down)

A few non-motorized boats are floating on the lake, each with one or two people in them, dangling fishing lines into the blue-gray water.

(Sound of waves lapping lakeshore)

(Sound of ducks in background)

With a view of it all through the trees, I check my work phone and see messages from Trudy, Angela, Rebecca, DeShawn, and a couple of Inner Six members. Some are regular work questions about projects or issues I need to know about. But some sound desperate, like...

JOSEPH:

"Will you be joining our rehearsal for the Molecular meeting?" Nope.

"Should we keep your section of slides in the Molecular presentation deck?" Good question.

"What's the deal with the two secret-service looking peeps who are here waiting for you?" Ugh.

NARRATOR (JOSEPH):

I don't want to make any promises, so I hold off on responding.

(Sound of text message arriving)

JOSEPH:

Ah, Mel. "What we're doing, isn't allowed. You're going to need to be fast and as discreet as possible when it gets there, and possibly...swim for it." Okay... "And it's not cheap. I put it on your card."

NARRATOR (JOSEPH):

I text back...

JOSEPH:

(Sound of typing on phone) Make it rain. (Chuckles)

NARRATOR (JOSEPH):

Mel follows right up with, "It should be there in a few minutes. The timing will be tight, but you should make it here just as the meeting starts. I'll meet you in South Lake Union with an Uber." I text back...

JOSEPH:

(Sound of typing on keyboard) Life saver. (Exhales)

NARRATOR (JOSEPH):

As I wait for whatever happens next, it occurs to me I haven't seen any of the traffic cam footage for myself yet. So I use an app on my work phone to access Motorpool's cloud server. I'm not sure what Mel calling is her project, so I scroll through the folders until I see one that was created on Wednesday, with the name Costumed Jaywalker Fun Facts.

JOSEPH:

That's gotta be it?

NARRATOR (JOSEPH):

I tap on the folder but I'm denied access.

JOSEPH:

Yeah...

NARRATOR (JOSEPH):

It totally makes sense that Mel would secure the folder. I consider texting Mel to ask for access, but then I remember...

(Sound of Joseph calling someone on his phone)

...she's already busy trying to make a miracle happen.

JOSEPH:

Hey! Ana... Yeah, it's Joseph Elo.

Yeah!

Heh, I know, it's I miss everybody there too. Heh. Heh, yeah...

Hey, sorry to call you direct like this. I know you're working on that traffic-cam project with Mel...

I know... The eyebrow! Oh, that guy...

Yeah. Yep! I'm wondering if you could email me all the cam video footage files.

Yeah. Yep, exactly.

(Laughs) Totally.

Yep, just in case there's anything I can contribute. Yep.

Yep, totally.

Oh, I know. I was gonna to ask Mel but I know she's super busy with something at the moment.

(Sound of email arriving on smartphone)

(Laughs) That was fast.

Yep, for sure.

(Sound of email arriving on smartphone)

Oh, I totally appreciate it. Yep, okay. Well, I'll get out of your hair now.

Yeah, thanks so much! (Laugh) Ok yep.

(Sound of email arriving on smartphone)

You too. Okay. Okay, bye.

(Sound of phone hanging up)

Nice.

(Sound of email arriving on smartphone)

MALE VOICE FROM BEHIND (CARL):
Buddy.

(Sudden sound of rustling of bushes)

MALE VOICE FROM BEHIND (CARL):
Boo!

JOSEPH:
Ah!!

(Breathing) Dude!

Wha—Carl?!? How did you find me??

CARL:
Well, it wasn't hard. I saw you walk right through the parking lot.

JOSEPH:
(Exhale)

CARL:
You're pretty easy to spot, carrying that stuff.

JOSEPH:
What are you doing here? *And it better be good...*

CARL:
I'm just here with some buddies fishing—

JOSEPH:

Have you been tracking me?? Carl, one call and I will get you fired, or worse...

CARL:

Woah, woah, woah, there buddy! Just hold your dinglehopper. I told you I'm not gonna do any more of that kind of stuff.

JOSEPH:

Wait, you said you saw me in the parking lot? Don't tell me...

CARL:

Don't tell you what...

JOSEPH:

You drive an old Datsun.

CARL:

Old Datsun... (Laughs) I don't think you'll ever catch me in one of those. I'm a GMC man myself.

(Sound of plane in distance)

JOSEPH:

Carl... How is it that you're here, right now, at the exact same time as me? I've never been here, in my life! We're in the middle...of frickin' nowhere!

CARL:

Well, maybe you being from the city and all, I can see why you might say that. But this is not nowhere. This here is one of me and my buddies' favorite fishing spots. We're taking a break from the coin show. You know, the one at the Tacoma Dome I told you about, in my message? You did get my message...

(Sound of plane getting closer)

JOSEPH:

Yeah! I got it!

CARL:

So Joe... I might ask *you* the same question. What are **YOU** doing here? Maybe you're following *me* around!

JOSEPH:

(Exhales) This is unbelievable!

CARL:

Ah, there's that old Coinmaster I love so much. I'm telling ya, I think that thing must have a mind of its own. Hey that bag looks a lot fuller than the last time I saw you. Did you find another one?

Woah, that plane is coming in low... I think it's gonna...

Oh, let me guess. That's for you...

(Sound of Joseph grabbing Coinmaster and duffle bag)

CARL:

Now look, Joseph, I meant it when I said I think I can help. Just say the word. I have connections, you know. Whatever you're doing, well... I gotta tell ya, it's got my brain going alright.

(Sound of floatplane starting to taxi close by)

JOSEPH:

You want to help Carl? You really want to help? You can help by not saying a word about any of this. To anyone.

CARL:

Well, I did tell a few buddies, okay? I mean, when you see one of them old detectors, you can't help but brag about it!

(Sound of float plane taxiing closer)

But hey, don't worry, these guys are solid. They're very trustworthy. I've seen them pull things out of the lake that you're not supposed to keep and they kept and they know I kept my mouth shut so they owe me.

JOSEPH:

I also mean about this plane. Landing here.

(Sound of plane propeller turning off)

More than a few people could get in trouble for this.

CARL:

(Laughs) No kidding. I've *never* seen one of those things land *here* before...

PILOT:

(From distance, sound of metal plane door opening) (From distance) Mr... Archer? Sterling Archer?

JOSEPH:
Not a word, Carl?

CARL:
Ok Joe. Mum's the word.

(Sound of Joseph walking toward lake)

PILOT:
(From distance) This is as close as I can get. Hurry it up, we gotta boogie.

(Sound of Joseph wading in to water, getting closer to plane)

NARRATOR (JOSEPH)
I do my best to hold the Coinmaster and duffle bag up above the water's surface.

PILOT:
Here, I'll take those.

(Sounds of Joseph handing over stuff and climbing onto pontoon and then into the plane)

JOSEPH:
Sorry I'm gonna get your plane all wet.

PILOT:
It's okay.

(In cockpit, sound of pilot's door closing)

There's a towel right there.

(Sound of propeller starting back up)

(Sound of Joseph closing his plane door on his side)

Get your seatbelt on... and that headset too, right next to you.

(Sound of plane starting to taxi on water from inside cockpit)

(From headset) It'll be a quick flight. You want some music?

JOSEPH:

(From headset) Sure, why not.

(Sound of plane picking up speed on water)

PILOT:

Good thing you don't have more stuff or we might be too heavy to get outta here before the lake ends. It's gonna be close!

PILOT:

Okay, here we go!

(Sound of plane going full throttle for takeoff)

PILOT:

Come on...

(From inside, sound of plane starting to leave water)

PILOT:

Come on, baby!

(Sound of engine going into higher pitch)

Woohooohooo!!

NARRATOR (JOSEPH):

We leave the water and start to fly.

PILOT:

Alright!! Never doubted it for a second!

NARRATOR (JOSEPH):

The plane's pontoons just seem to clear the tall firs and cedars at the end of the lake. The plane banks hard to the left, and from our gaining altitude, under the low ceiling of clouds, I can already start to make out the watery cutouts of Lake Washington and Puget Sound in the far distance, and beyond them, the foothills of the Olympic Mountains. And there, in miniature from our vantage point, sitting in the middle of it all, the urban jumble of Seattle's skyline and its sprawling suburbs.

I turn my gaze to my side window and downward, scanning below. I see the glimmer of a small creek that feeds into the lake we just left. Somewhere down there, among the thick tangle of

evergreens and ground cover, is the wreckage of an old house—and the reverberations of a past, that with each passing moment, seems to be defining my future.

(Fade out plane noise)

During the flight, I download the traffic cam video files from my work email to my phone, and then upload them from my phone to my personal cloud storage. Whatever fate awaits me, I want to at least be able to watch and memorialize as much of my stint as the costumed jaywalker as I can, for myself.

(Fade out all sounds)

(End scene)

(Fade in sound of plane taxiing to dock in Seattle from inside cockpit)

(Sound of shutting off plane, waves lapping against pontoons and dock)

JOSEPH:
Thanks for the lift.

PILOT:
Sure thing. Just like it never happened, right?

JOSEPH:
Right.

(Sound of opening plane door, sound of Lake Union and boats and city outside)

(Sound of Joseph walking down dock carrying Coinmaster and duffle bag)

NARRATOR (JOSEPH):
Mel meets me at the dock, just as she said she would.

MEL:
Wet pants, muddy shoes, dirty jacket. Hey, nothing says buy my company like *this* ensemble.

(Laughs) What is *that* thing?

JOSEPH:
Yeah.

(Sound of both starting to walk on dock with dock and city noises)

It's...something that belonged to my grandfather. I need to make sure it and this bag are kept safe. Very safe.

MEL:
I'll handle it.

(Sound of stepping onto sidewalk)

(Sound of Uber arriving)

(Sound doors opening, including trunk)

DRIVER:
I can put those in the trunk for you.

JOSEPH:
Okay.

(Sound of doors and trunk closing)

(Sound of being inside Uber as it pulls away)

DRIVER:
Back to Motorpool?

MEL:
Please. And we're in a hurry. Thank you.

(Sound of being inside Uber while driving)

JOSEPH:
Well, I gotta hand it to you. You certainly pulled *that* off.

MEL:
All in a day's work around here. These days.

JOSEPH:
(Laughs) Yeah.

(Sound of Mel handling plastic item)

MEL:
You sure you want to do it this way?

JOSEPH:

I am.

MEL:

Well, okay.

(Sound of Mel handing plastic item to Joseph)

JOSEPH:

Thanks.

(Sound of Joseph opening plastic bag and applying items)

JOSEPH:

How do I look?

MEL:

Like about ten other people I've seen walking around town today.

JOSEPH:

(Nervous laugh)

(Fade out sound of being inside car)

(End scene)

(Sound of elevator chime and elevator doors opening)

(Fade in sound of office noises, background chatter)

(Sound of Joseph and Mel walking out of elevator)

JOSEPH:

Hi there. I believe you're here for me?

INVESTIGATOR 1 (DETECTIVE HAWKINS):

We're actually waiting for Mr. Elo. It's...been some time now. Is he here?

JOSEPH:

Yeah. It's me.

INVESTIGATOR 2 (DETECTIVE PETERSON):

(Chuckles)

JOSEPH:

I'm sorry I've kept you waiting.

DETECTIVE HAWKINS:

(Exhales) Okay. Is this an agency thing? Dressing up the day before Halloween?

JOSEPH:

Well, tomorrow's Saturday. Most people won't be here.

DETECTIVE HAWKINS:

Right.

DETECTIVE PETERSON:

Could you...take off your sunglasses so we can see your eyes? And some identification too. Just to make sure it's you.

JOSEPH:

Umm, sure.

(Sound of Joseph handing over identification)

Here you go.

DETECTIVE HAWKINS:

Okay, thank you Mr. Elo. I'm detective Hawkins, and this here is detective Peterson. We have some questions we'd like to ask you.

JOSEPH:

Sure. And I'm sorry to ask this, because Mel here tells me you've been waiting a while already. I just need five minutes to do some important business first. Right down the hall from here. Has anyone offered you coffee or...anything from our kitchen?

DETECTIVE PETERSON:

I've had a couple cups already.

JOSEPH:

Right. I promise. Just five minutes. And then, we can do whatever it is we need to do.

DETECTIVE PETERSON:

Okay, but...we'd like to accompany you.

JOSEPH:

Sure.

(To Mel) Is everybody in the room already?

MEL:

Yes, just getting started.

JOSEPH:

(Exhales) Alrighty then.

(Sound of Joseph and Mel and investigators walking through the office to the meeting room, with sounds of random reactions from people who see them)

(Fade in sound of Angela's voice in the distance, sounding closer as they walk, leading a meeting)

ANGELA:

...And one that's *already* paying off incredibly in the work we're doing together on our two shared global clients...

JOKSEPH:

Those are my lines...

(Sound of group walking closer to meeting room)

ANGELA:

...Canary Piping, and Tojomaka.

JOSEPH:

She says it well...

ANGELA:

(Voice getting louder as approaching meeting room) So that's why, when we talk about modality and methodology, two of our foundational pillars here at Motorpool...

ANGELA AND JOSEPH TOGETHER:

(Angela to room, Joseph to himself) ...we hope you sense how incredibly thrilled we are to not only be your hosts for this session today...

ANGELA:

(Voice loud now, right next meeting room) ...but to join the Molecular family of agencies.

(Sound of applause from group in meeting room)

(Sound of door creaking open, interrupting meeting)

(Sound of Joseph stepping into room)

ANGELA:

I'm sorry, can I help you?

ANGELA:

(Gasp) Joseph!

(Sound of murmuring and heads turning, desk chairs moving)

(Sound of room going silent)

(Sound of Joseph breathing)

JOSEPH:

Hello everyone. Hello Ingrid, Klaus, Jürgen. So great to see each of you, and all of your guests here today. Hello Angela. You're doing wonderfully. I promise I'll interrupt only for a moment.

(Sound of meeting room and typing on keyboard in background)

I know all of you were expecting me to be here, to help celebrate the historic partnership between our companies. Certainly many of you have been wondering where I've been all week. It's been... a week. So, to all of you, whom I've let down by being away... I sincerely apologize. I'm sorry.

(Exhale) But my shortcomings go beyond being absent for the week.

(Sound of someone taking a photo with their smartphone)

For the past several months, as some of people in this room know—especially Trudy here, who handles my expenses—I've been functioning under a strict behavior clause. I understand the reasons this was put into place. We all know that positive press, and certainly no bad or embarrassing press, is extremely important when a transaction like the one we're undertaking between our companies is in process.

So I'm here, dressed like this, not to poke fun at the news frenzy of the week, but to acknowledge that I've broken this clause.

(Sound of people taking pictures with their smartphones)

Further, I made no attempt to report my behavior to company management, and, in fact I fled town soon after it happened. The reasons I did so are private and not related to this organization. But...the impact of my actions is likely about to become very public—or I guess,

better understood by the public. This getup...isn't just a trendy costume I decided to wear for office dress-up day.

(Fee laughs from meeting attendees)

(Chuckle) I am, in fact, the *real* costumed jaywalker.

(Sounds of muted reactions, some small giggles)

WOMAN IN ROOM:

What?

MAN IN ROOM:

What?

JOSEPH:

The two officers that some of you have seen here today...

(Sound of more people taking pictures with their smartphones)

...and who are waiting outside this room right now, are here to question me.

OTHER MAN IN ROOM:

Woah.

JOSEPH:

...and we all know how these things play out in the media, regardless of intention. So, while I hope a sincere apology will be enough, just judging by those of you taking pictures and texting about me right now... (exhales) I know it won't be nearly enough for the press, when they get a hold of this information.

So, in the best interest of all parties here today, and for the future of this company that I founded and proudly grew into what it is—with a help of so many of you in this room...

I hereby resign my position as CEO of Motorpool, effective about one minute from now.

(Sound of people in room murmuring)

ANGELA:

Joseph, please—

JOSEPH:

Angela. You've been a terrific partner all these years. (Chuckle) We disagree at times, but doing good work has always your highest priority. You're determined, detailed, and passionate. Our clients love you. And these guests of ours here clearly love you.

So, in my final seconds, before this all likely gets really nuts, I appoint you as CEO of Motorpool, in my place.

(Sound of murmuring from meeting attendees)

I would also... (exhales)

I would also like to endorse my assistant, Mel, for a role in project management. And I suggest putting her on your toughest clients. Mel has proven to me that she will always do what's needed, to get the job done.

INGRID:

(Phrase in German) This is highly unusual.

JOSEPH:

Ingrid. You're right, it is. But that's on me. The alliance between Molecular and Motorpool becomes that much stronger today with my departure. Please don't stop now. You're gonna love what this agency does for you.

(Sound of more people taking pictures with their smartphones and sound of texts being sent)

(Claps hands) Okay. I'm sorry I've taken up your time. I believe Angela was just about to cement this deal.

(Sound of Joseph leaving room, meeting attendees murmuring, meeting noises getting quieter as Joseph and group walk away)

ANGELA:

(From growing distance) Well, that was...interesting. Does everyone need a quick break, or should we just keep going?

(Sound of Joseph, Mel, and two investigators walking away from meeting room)

DETECTIVE HAWKINS:

Is every day around here like this?

JOSEPH:

(Laughs)

DETECTIVE PETERSON:

You know... we didn't know *you* were the costumed jaywalker. And it frankly doesn't matter to us.

(Sound of stopping walking)

JOSEPH:

What?

DETECTIVE PETERSON:

We're just here to see if you have any insight you can provide to us, about the videos you've been analyzing. We asked for you personally because your name is on the contact sheet given to us by Lingcod, as the responsible party.

DETECTIVE HAWKINS:

The car that almost hit the pedestrian—or, I guess we can now say *you*—turns out it ran a *red* light. You stepped in to the crosswalk right when the sign went to walk. So you're actually not in any kind of trouble, at least not with the police. We're just looking for details and analysis about the car.

JOSEPH:

Oh.

DETECTIVE HAWKINS:

You want me to...go back in there? And put in a good word for you, before we do *our* thing?

JOSEPH:

(Exhale) (Laughing to self)

So, I didn't have to do any of that...

(Laughing to self)

(Sigh) No. I'm good.

What's done is done.

(Sound of group walking again)

(Fade out all sounds)

(End music)

(Sound of Coinmaster metal detector buzzing in background, then going silent)

[End chapter]

