

# WHY I WORK AT PIT 638



600-655  
THIS WAY  
←



**Tell them** I do not do it because I think they deserved to die. It is a lot more complicated than most people think.

I do not do it because I can find valuables in People's pockets. I don't know anyone whose main reason is that. Have I found anything of value during my duties? Yes.

I do not do it to get away from the Statute Officers. Although it's true, there is a kind of freedom out here. Since the SOs can't get through the mud, they leave us alone. I suppose their snipers can always pick you off from the tower if they want, right?

I do not do it because I can't handle being in the middle of what's happening. I buried my father, my grandmother, and both my children, by myself, inside the city.

Do you know how hard that is?

I do not do it because I'm looking for a particular person, although I admit, I always hope I will see Greta, or her twins, or my brother.

When I first started here, I tried to look at everyone's piles, to get even a split-second glance at every person. But halfway through my second day, Najmah risked two minutes idle to come over and tell me that I would never get a look at everyone; what I would get is fired. It's best, she said, to look at as many People in your piles as possible and ignore everyone else's.

So, with eight of us driving, including me, that means I miss about 87 percent of the People, if my math is right. Just one more necessary tradeoff. The last ten years has gotten us used to making those, right?

In 2060, when the Endroids leave, and

the Free Century begins, every last one of us is planning on coming back to search the Pits. For a little while, we tried to think of a way to organise the People so that later, when we get the chance, we will know where to start, maybe what we can skip because we've already seen everyone in Pit 749 or 1202 or whatever.

So why do I do it?

Because while I'm bulldozing those enormous piles of People who used to be people, who we all still call People — never *bodies* — sometimes I see a naked little kid with their eyes open. I ring this bell right here, and the other drivers move around slowly and use their dozers to shield mine

from the SOs, all the while pretending to be doing some task.

Then I hop down, leave their machine idling in the filth, and close that child's eyes, and wrap them in some of these huge fan-cleaning cloths, and put them on the top of the pile — as safe as can be given the circumstances, right?

The Endroids blast holes in us. In Earth. In these People, in their bodies. But we've all had a hole punched in our spirits, you know? And we Drivers feel this is one small spirit hole we can fill.

It ain't much, but it ain't nothing.

That's our motto here.

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