

Picture it, Hugh.

The New World.

The Lantern Age.

No money, no markets, no yachts, no rockets, no stock tickers — just two former titans of industry standing over a dented metal trash can outside Community Kitchen #14.

Both are holding biodegradable gloves.

Both are trying to pretend this is totally fine.

THE GREAT GARBAGE NEGOTIATION

(A post-rupture comedy)

Elon squints into the trash can as if it's a launch window.

"Jeff, statistically speaking, *I* should handle this. I have superior throughput. I optimized orbital logistics. I can optimize banana peels."

Jeff smirks, adjusting his apron like it's a Fortune 100 tie.

"Elon, please. I built the world's most efficient supply chain. I was reorganizing warehouses before you were tweeting in diapers. Stand aside. I know how to deal with... refuse."

Elon: "Refuse? You mean like the comments under your old Prime Day ads?"

Jeff: "Careful. I've still got the laugh that can summon thunderstorms."

Elon: "Do it. Maybe it'll blow the smell away."

Jeff tries the laugh — the infamous HA-ha-HA-HA-HAaaa —

but instead of thunder, it startles a raccoon, who pops out of the compost bin wearing a suspiciously intact Amazon box as a helmet.

Elon gasps.

"Jeff... he's wearing your packaging. You *created* him."

Jeff rolls his eyes.

"Elon, everything used to wear my packaging."

The raccoon salutes and trots off into the bushes, presumably to start a guerrilla recycling cooperative.

Round Two: Technical Justification Phase

Elon waves a banana peel like a white flag.

"Look, Jeff, trash is basically... entropy. And managing entropy is what I *do.*"

I understand thermodynamics. I PRed warp drives. I can take out the garbage."

Jeff counters:

“Elon, you also once set a car into space for no reason. We are NOT launching this trash can.”

Elon: “I never said we would. I said we *could.* Big difference.”

Jeff: “You say that about everything you shouldn’t do.”

Elon shrugs. “True.”

Round Three: The Final Gambit

Jeff folds his arms:

“Elon, I’ll take the garbage this time if you clean the kitchen next time.”

Elon smirks.

“I don’t do kitchens.”

Jeff leans in.

“No one *does* kitchens, Elon. That’s why they get dirty.”

Elon sighs dramatically, like a man forced to admit gravity exists.

“Fine. But I get naming rights.”

Jeff: “Naming rights for taking out the trash?”

Elon: “Yes. This can will now be known as... the Musk Refuse Optimization Apparatus.”

Jeff: “I’m not calling the trash can an MROA.”

Elon: “You will. Everyone will.”

Jeff: “I assure you — absolutely no one will.”

At this moment, a passing teenager pops their head in:

“Hey, could one of you empty the Musk Refuse Optimization Apparatus? It’s overflowing.”

Jeff stares at the kid.

Elon stares at Jeff.

Jeff mutters: “We created this world. And it is already punishing us.”

Elon beams:

“See? Branding matters.”

CLOSING SHOT

Both men roll up their sleeves.

The trash is carried jointly, equally, imperfectly, and with much complaining —
which is exactly how cooperation looks in a world where nobody owns anything anymore.

Two former billionaires,
one smelly trash can,
and the first honest work either of them has ever done entirely for someone else.

Comedy... but also a little justice.