

DESERT BELLES

Written by

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Inspired by the women of the Rebelle Rally, a women's eight-day off-road vehicle rally held every October covering over 1500 miles in the Nevada and California deserts.

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**EXT. DESERT - NEVADA - DAY**

Scrub brush, jumbled boulders and dirt on a desert ridge. Below, a dry valley. Beyond, mountains with a light dusting of snow at the top.

In a narrow gully, a HELMETED PERSON crouches ahead of a vintage 1966 JEEP WAGONEER, guiding it with hand signals. The person points to their left. The Jeep maneuvers, crawls over a jagged boulder.

The WHINE OF THE JEEP'S ENGINE as it climbs into view at the top of the ridge followed by a cloud of dust.

Through the windshield, the desert valley spreads below.

The helmeted driver abruptly stops the Jeep. Dust momentarily engulfs the 4X4.

The passenger holds a topographic map, compass and chart.

Together they flip their visors up to get a better look... revealing they are WOMEN. The navigator is GERI (63) and the driver is her daughter, KAYLA (30).

Geri takes a compass reading, then uses a ruler to find a point on the map. She points slightly left.

GERI

Over there is the hidden  
checkpoint.

KAYLA

No one else is headed there.

GERI

Because it's a HIDDEN checkpoint.  
Do you doubt ME?

KAYLA

You're always right, Mom.

Kayla shifts into four-wheel low. The hood dips. Through the windshield there's a severe drop through a washed out ravine.

CREAKS AND BANGS as the Jeep slowly descends.

A breeze kicks up dust in front of a knobby front tire as it inches up a boulder, fights gravity, then BANG, it drops.

Inside Kayla and Geri bounce as the Jeep teeters its way down. Kayla muscles the steering wheel as Geri smiles.

KAYLA

Oh, Oh... Mom! Did you have to pick  
the most dangerous route?

GERI

You're doing great, sweetheart.

KAYLA

Urgh.

**EXT. GERI'S JEEP - NEVADA DESERT VALLEY - DAY**

A cloud of dust billows behind the Jeep as it speeds along a dirt road in the middle of the valley.

**EXT. FINISH ARCH - DAY**

The Jeep powers through the inflatable finish line arch and slides to a stop. On the arch: the DESERT BELLE RALLY LOGO in purple and black surrounded by the text: RENO QUALIFIER.

Rally official BRENDA (50s), rules and procedures are her jam, bats the dust away, runs up to the Jeep's passenger side. Geri lowers the window.

BRENDA

You made it with two seconds to spare.  
But you came in way too hot, Kayla. You  
do that in the Desert Belle Rally and  
we'll dock points.

Geri gives Kayla an "I told you so" look.

**EXT. RALLY STAGING AREA - DAY**

Kayla shuts off the JEEP'S ENGINE and takes off her helmet.

GERI

Pretty good performance,  
sweetheart. Solid in the boulders  
but, just a bit overly exuberant at  
the end.

Kayla sticks her tongue out, slides out of the Jeep.

Geri grins, gingerly climbs down from the passenger side. She removes her helmet, reveals striking short white hair with a dashing purple streak.

Geri and Kayla meet at the front of the Jeep and gaze at it fondly. Geri puts her arm around Kayla's shoulders.

GERI  
You don't need my coaching anymore.

KAYLA  
You're right. Again.

Kayla leans her head onto Geri's shoulder.

KAYLA  
Mom, you're a great teacher.

BEAT

GERI  
Grandpop would be pleased.

**EXT. RALLY STAGING AREA - DAY**

Geri and Kayla pack up gear.

Brenda hustles up with a clear plastic envelope containing two cell phones and hands them to Geri and Kayla.

Kayla turns on her phone. PINGS as messages come in. She swipes and taps furiously.

KAYLA  
I really hate not being able to use our phones during the rally.

BRENDA  
Too tempting to cheat.

KAYLA  
I wouldn't use my phone to navigate.

BRENDA  
Well others have tried.

GERI  
There's always someone who wants a shortcut. Navigating with just a compass and map--

KAYLA  
Means you have to know what you're doing.

GERI  
Means you have to know what you're doing.

Kayla rolls her eyes as Geri and Brenda nod in agreement.

KAYLA  
Brenda! How'd we do?

BRENDA

You got the most bonus points today  
for the hidden checkpoints... And  
first place in four-wheel-drive.  
You've qualified to drive in the  
Desert Belle Off-Road Rally.

Kayla and Geri exchange a vigorous high-five.

**INT. RENO SPORTS BAR - NIGHT**

The bar is filled with teams from the off-road rally. Table  
after table of BOISTEROUS WOMEN. The few MEN are boyfriends,  
husbands, or sponsor reps.

Geri and Kayla sit at the bar, nurse bottles of beer and  
finish the last of their burgers and fries. They idly watch a  
Las Vegas Raiders football game on the bar TV.

JEFFERSON SIMMS (58) approaches. He's a seasoned "corporate  
suit", car guy, focused and all-business.

JEFFERSON

Hello ladies.

KAYLA

Hi.

JEFFERSON

Great driving today.

KAYLA

Thank you. Have we met?

Jefferson glances at Geri who shrugs.

JEFFERSON

My apologies. I'm Jefferson Simms  
with the Jeep Innovations team.

Jefferson reaches his hand to Kayla. She shakes it  
enthusiastically.

JEFFERSON

Hello, Geri.

GERI

Jefferson.

JEFFERSON

It's been a while.

GERI  
You finally decide sponsoring a  
women-only off-road rally has some  
value?

JEFFERSON  
Yes.

GERI  
Good.

KAYLA  
You know each other?

GERI  
I know lots of people.

JEFFERSON  
(to Kayla)  
We like to keep our eye on up and  
coming talent.

Kayla grins.

JEFFERSON  
I know you're a fan of Jeep.

KAYLA  
We love classic Jeeps.

JEFFERSON  
What about the latest Electric  
models?

KAYLA  
We love those too.

JEFFERSON  
That's good, that's good. We want  
to sponsor another electric team  
for the Desert Belle Rally. We  
think you might be a great fit.

KAYLA  
Wow!

GERI  
Electric?

JEFFERSON  
They've come a long way, Geri. You  
represent Jeep's legacy  
(gazes at Kayla)  
and our future.

GERI  
Are you inferring I'm old?

Kayla's eyes bounce between the two of them.

JEFFERSON  
No. Of course not... Kayla, we're  
interested in you as a driver.

KAYLA  
Really?

JEFFERSON  
Yes.

KAYLA  
Awesome.

JEFFERSON  
And, Geri. We'd like you to, uh,  
coach the team.

GERI  
Coach? What about competing? With  
Kayla?

JEFFERSON  
Well, uh. We want to partner Kayla  
with one of our EV engineers.

GERI  
Ah... Of course you do.

KAYLA  
That sounds...wonderful.

Geri covers her disappointment with a sip of beer.

JEFFERSON  
Can I introduce you to the other  
members of the team?... See what  
you think about joining us?

KAYLA  
Oh yeah!

Kayla hops off the bar stool.

KAYLA  
Come on, Mom.

GERI  
Nah.

JEFFERSON

Geri, think about it.

Geri looks away and gazes at the bar TV as they leave.

She watches MELANIE GIL (58), a noted sideline sports reporter, interview a Las Vegas Raiders football player.

INSERT BAR TV SCREEN

Melanie exhibits the perky, yet sexy reporter look: a fitted yellow dress shows off her curves, massive long blond curls.

BACK TO THE BAR

Geri takes a long drag of beer.

PAT WEXCOMB (50s), over-confident, brash VP of marketing for the WattVX electric truck start-up company, approaches Geri.

PAT

Hey, Geri.

GERI

Pat.

Pat eyes Kayla at Jefferson's table.

PAT

A major manufacturer as a sponsor?

GERI

What of it?

PAT

That was our dream.

GERI

Until you dropped me for WattVX.

PAT

That was business, Geri. Nothing personal.

GERI

Are all your decisions business?

PAT

Pretty much.

GERI

What do you want, Pat?



PAT  
I'm looking forward to taking you  
and Jeep down a peg.

GERI  
Ah, business.

PAT  
No, it's personal!

Pat struts off. Geri GROWLS, gulps her beer, watches the TV.

LATER

VICTORIA (55), the dynamo director and impresario of the  
Desert Belle Rally sits on the bar stool next to Geri.

VICTORIA  
Good result today, Geri.

GERI  
Hmm. Surprised?

VICTORIA  
No. No. Of course not.

Victoria slides an empty beer bottle to the BARTENDER and  
holds up one finger.

Victoria notices Melanie on the screen.

VICTORIA  
That hair is... big!

GERI  
Probably takes hours to get  
"Melanie On Your Sideline" put  
together.

VICTORIA  
What's it take you? Five minutes?

Geri rubs her hand over her short hair.

GERI  
One.

Victoria CHUCKLES. She glances at Kayla's table.

VICTORIA  
Congratulations on getting Jeep  
interested. Good promotional  
exposure for all of us.

GERI  
For Kayla. He wants me to COACH.

VICTORIA  
I heard.

GERI  
Do you know everything?

VICTORIA  
That's a benefit of being director  
of the Desert Belle.

GERI  
Hmph.

VICTORIA  
Coaching could be a good  
opportunity for you. A nice way to  
segue out of competition.

GERI  
Dad and I planned and prepped for  
two years so I can compete with  
Kayla.

VICTORIA  
Life has a way of shaking up plans.

The Bartender pops open a beer bottle and slides it to Victoria. His attention is drawn to the TV where Melanie interviews Raiders player TONY SPAN.

INSERT BAR TV SCREEN as--

A player backs into Melanie and she stumbles. Tony grabs Melanie to keep her from falling. Gets caught in her hair.

As Tony scrambles to unhook himself, Melanie frantically grabs her hair. They tug and pull in an awkward dance and then the hair slips off.

It's a wig! Underneath is Melanie's matted head of gray hair.

BACK TO BAR

The Bartender turns up the volume as Victoria GASPS and Geri LAUGHS.

BAR TV SCREEN

Tony grabs the wig as it falls. He gapes at the tangled blond wig in his hand and Melanie grabs for it.

TONY  
What the...?

Tony shakes the wig, then playfully puts it next to his cheek and pets it. LAUGHS hard.

MELANIE  
Give me that!

The camera jiggles.

HANDHELD CAMERA OP (O.S.)  
Ha, ha, ha, ha.

Melanie reaches for the wig. Tony holds it high, then he looks at her messy gray hair and inspects her face.

TONY  
Damn! How old ARE YOU?

MELANIE  
Asshole!

LAUGHTER turns to a SQUEAK as Melanie knees Tony in the balls and grabs the wig. He GROANS as he collapses to the ground.

BACK TO BAR

The Bartender grimaces.

GERI  
Whoa! A knock down!

VICTORIA  
Spunky!

Geri and Victoria raise their glasses in salute.

#### **INT. HOTEL BALCONY - NIGHT**

An ice bucket holds a half-full bottle of wine. The lights of Reno's casinos illuminate the night skyline.

Jefferson relaxes in his bathrobe and pours two glasses of wine. The SLIDER OPENS and Geri ambles onto the balcony in Jefferson's shirt. As she sits he hands her a glass.

GERI  
Thank you.

They savor the wine and watch the lights of the city.

JEFFERSON  
About the team.

Geri gazes speculatively at Jefferson.

JEFFERSON  
What?

GERI  
Are you bribing me?

JEFFERSON  
Is it working?

Geri glances away.

JEFFERSON  
This is a chance for you to achieve  
your goal of having a big name  
sponsor. You can't get much bigger  
than Jeep.  
(softly)  
And I really want you on the team.

GERI  
Why the coach?

JEFFERSON  
We want to win and we need you to  
get the girls ready.

GERI  
Girls? What century are you in?

JEFFERSON  
Sorry, sorry. Ladies.

Geri shakes her head.

JEFFERSON  
Okay! Competitors.

GERI  
But, I'm a competitor, too.

JEFFERSON  
Yes. You are the best. That's why  
we want you to pay it forward and  
mentor Kayla and the gir-- team.

Jefferson gazes intently at Geri.

JEFFERSON

We also want to do a marketing campaign around honoring the legacy of Jeep as we embrace the future... I'd like you and your classic Jeep in the campaign. Your father would've loved that.

GERI

Yeah, he would've.

JEFFERSON

Do it for all of us.

GERI

I'll think about it.

**EXT./INT. JOE'S DESERT MOTORSPORTS - DAY**

WHIRRING OF A PNEUMATIC IMPACT WRENCH.

In an aging industrial park, Joe's Desert Motorsports is a custom auto shop with two bays in a metal building.

In one bay, a hard-core, off-road Jeep Wrangler is high up on a lift. Underneath a mechanic works on the suspension. In the other bay Kayla changes a tire on Geri's Jeep Wagoneer.

In the customer area a shelf holds off-road event trophies: KING OF THE HAMMERS, BAJA 1000, and DESERT CHALLENGER.

A framed black and white photo shows a man in overalls next to an old customized Willys Jeep with number "1" on the hood. This is JOE, in his 20s at the time.

Next a framed newspaper article shows an older Joe and teenaged Geri. The headline: "Joe and Geri: Father, Daughter Racing Duo."

Above on the wall is a giant check with the Desert Belle logo. "Geri Leigh" and "Pat Wexcomb" is handwritten on the TO line. The amount is \$25,000.

Geri props the framed "Desert Belle Reno Qualifier" certificate on the shelf. Gazes at the memorabilia and lingers on the photo of her and her father.

LATER

Behind the counter, Geri pulls out a metal tool box and places it on the counter next to an old cash register.

She lifts the lid to reveal it's stuffed full of receipts, bills, order forms and who knows what else. She shakes her head as she organizes papers on the counter.

MITCH (40s), a pro off-roader flaunting his success with sponsor patches plastered on his leather jacket, saunters in.

GERI  
Can I help you?

MITCH  
Nah.

She watches, puzzled, as Mitch leans his back against the counter and plays with his phone.

GERI  
Do you need something?

MITCH  
Huh? Yeah. A coffee would be good?

GERI  
I don't get coffee.

Mitch's gaze dismisses her.

MITCH  
Right. I'll just wait for the owner.

GERI  
I am the owner.

MITCH  
What? Where's Joe?

GERI  
My father died two months ago.

MITCH  
That's too bad. I'd heard this was the place to go for pro off-road racing prep?

GERI  
It is. So, what can I help you with?

MITCH  
You? I don't think so.

Mitch heads off.

**EXT. JEEP SET - DAY**

Two plugin electric Jeep Wagoneer 4X4s are parked in a wash below a desert mountain near a swarm of trailers and semis.

A commercial video production team sets up camera equipment. Jefferson chats with the hip East Coast DIRECTOR (28).

Geri and Kayla drive up in Geri's Wagoneer. They get out, look around at the hustle and bustle.

Jefferson rushes up, nods at Kayla. A special smile for Geri.

JEFFERSON

Good morning, ladies.

KAYLA

Jefferson, this is so exciting!

GERI

What is all this?

JEFFERSON

This is what it takes for a national media campaign.

**ON THE SET**

In Jeep racing jumpsuits, LULU (30s), the bubbly driver, and CRYSTAL (30s), the detail oriented navigator, stand beside one Electric Jeep.

Kayla and AMBER (38), navigator and vehicle engineer from Jeep's EV division, stand beside the nearest Electric Jeep.

Geri and Jefferson watch a monitor from behind the camera as the four women mug awkwardly at the camera.

DIRECTOR

Cut, cut.

Geri SNICKERS behind her hand.

DIRECTOR

This time, smile sweetly like you're watching a child playing.

**EXT. JEEP SET - DAY**

Jefferson watches the crew set up for a shot of Geri's Jeep.

Behind Jefferson, Geri strides to an abrupt stop. She's in the costume of a retro 60's housewife: dress with sharp edged bodice and stiff skirt, white low-heeled pumps, matching pillbox hat and a white purse over her arm.

GERI  
Jefferson!

Geri gestures at her outfit.

GERI  
What the hell is this?

JEFFERSON  
It's what '60s housewives wore.

GERI  
To drive a Jeep?

JEFFERSON  
Wagoneers were family cars, a form of station wagon.

Geri pulls on the stiff fabric of the bodice.

GERI  
No wonder the Women's Movement  
boiled over in the '60s.

**INT. JOE'S DESERT MOTORSPORTS - DAY**

A new computer and monitor have replaced the old cash register. Geri pulls a receipt from a pile in front of the metal box and copies information into a bookkeeping program.

In strolls OTTO (70s), greasy coveralls, "Pennzoil" cap.

Geri taps the ENTER KEY, then tiredly rubs her eyes.

OTTO  
Straighten'n out Joe's filing  
system?

GERI  
Tryin' to, Otto.

OTTO  
Good girl.

Geri frowns at being called "girl".



OTTO  
Uh, have you gotten current with  
bills and all?

GERI  
I'm getting close.

OTTO  
Ah. That's good, that's good.

OTTO  
You doin' okay?

GERI  
Umm. I Keep looking at the clock  
wondering why he's late.

OTTO  
Yup, yup... Uh. If you need  
anything, you call me.

Geri clamps down her emotions as he ambles off.

#### **INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY**

In a large, pristine warehouse sit the two shiny new Electric Jeep Wagoneers. Amber works under the dash of one.

To the side, Geri stands in front of a table where Kayla, Crystal, and Lulu sit while Jefferson works on a laptop. On the table are topo (topographic) maps, rulers and compasses.

Amber sets two modules next to Jefferson.

AMBER  
Here's the navigation computer  
modules.

Jefferson nods and Amber sits.

Geri holds up a compass.

GERI  
Now for navigating the old way.  
Remember. Each morning you need to  
check your longitude and latitude  
and calibrate the compass so it's  
matching geographic north.

The women adjust their compasses.



GERI  
Like a relic of the 60's?

JEFFERSON (ON SCREEN)  
No. Geri. I wanted to capture how you're hip and classic at the same time. And we just accentuated your look to make it obvious it's old.

Geri jerks upright, then angrily strides away.

GERI  
Screw you, Jefferson! I'm out!

**INT. JOE'S DESERT MOTORSPORTS - DAY**

Geri reviews Accounts Payable items on the counter computer. Amounts due are displayed and several lack payment information. Geri frowns. She dials a number on her cell.

GERI  
Hello, Otto... I wanted to check on payment for our last order... It's three months past due?... Why didn't you say something?... I appreciate that. I hate to ask. Can I have a little more time?... Thanks.

Geri ends the call.

She makes a series of calls to vendors. Each gives her bad news.

Geri SLAMS HER phone down.

GERI  
Dammit, Dad!

She grimly paces around the shop. Halts at the shelf of memorabilia.

Geri's eyes land on a photo of her and her dad. She picks up the photo and stares at the two of them with their arms around each other and smiling.

She fights to regain her composure as she sets down the photo. Her eyes move to the large Desert Belle check.

**EXT./INT. OTTO'S MACHINE SHOP - DAY**

WHIRR, WHIRR, WHIRR OF A SAW CUTTING SHEETMETAL.

Geri and Otto are in his office.

GERI  
I have a proposition.

OTTO  
I'm listen'n.

GERI  
I want to propose we barter.

OTTO  
Barter?

GERI  
I'm gonna' enter the Desert Belle.  
I wanna trade what I owe you for  
promoting your business as a  
sponsor of my Jeep.

OTTO  
Hmm. That's interestin'.

GERI  
Otto's Machine Shop. On my Jeep, on  
shirts--

OTTO  
Fifty percent.

GERI  
What?

OTTO  
I'll trade half of what you owe me  
for the sponsorship. You pay me the  
balance after the Desert Belle. I  
think that's a fair business deal.

She thinks a moment, sticks out her hand.

GERI  
Deal.

**INT. JOE'S DESERT MOTORSPORTS - DAY**

Pacing behind the counter, Geri dials a number.

INTERCUT

Victoria is at work in her home office. Scenic desert photos  
from past Desert Belles cover the walls. Her phone RINGS.

VICTORIA  
Hello, Geri.

GERI  
Hi. I uh. I'm not with Jeep  
anymore.

VICTORIA  
I know.

GERI  
Of course you do... So, I, uh, need  
to compete in the Desert Belle.

VICTORIA  
Geri, I've only got one spot left.

GERI  
Great!

VICTORIA  
I'm looking for a team that can  
bring some promotional oomph to the  
Desert Belle. Who's your partner?

GERI  
I'm working on that. I do have my  
first sponsor, Otto's Machine Shop.

VICTORIA  
That's nice, but I don't think  
Otto's has any promotional value  
for me.

GERI  
Just hold the spot.

VICTORIA  
I can't promise that. If I get a  
strong team with a good sponsor the  
spot's gone.

**INT. JOE'S DESERT MOTORSPORTS - DAY**

Behind the counter, phone to her ear, Geri straightens things  
that don't need straightening.

GERI  
Hey... Thank you. He could be  
cantankerous, but I miss him...  
Anyway, I'm looking for a partner  
for the Desert Belle.

Geri listens then abruptly stops moving.

GERI  
A baby? Uh, that's, uh, amazing  
news!... Congratulations... Okay.  
Keep in touch.

Geri ends the call and crosses out the last name on a list.

**INT. JOE'S DESERT MOTORSPORTS - DAY**

The roll-up door CLANGS open as Geri trudges in.

By the door, Kayla's Electric Jeep silently glides to a stop.  
A DULL THUD as Kayla slams her door and angrily strides in.

KAYLA  
Mom! Where the hell have you been?

GERI  
Uh.

KAYLA  
You dump the team. I give you some  
time to cool off. And nothing.

Geri fires up the computer.

GERI  
I'm sorry. I've been preoccupied.

KAYLA  
Mom! I had to apologize to the  
entire team for you.

BEAT.

GERI  
The shop's in trouble.

KAYLA  
What? How bad?

GERI  
I'm working on getting part of what  
I owe written off as sponsorships  
for the Desert Belle. I'll pay off  
the rest with my share of the  
winnings.

KAYLA  
Oh, Mom... What if you don't win  
any money?

GERI

I sell.

Kayla slumps on the stool by the counter.

KAYLA

Who's your partner?

GERI

I'm still looking.

KAYLA

You're crazy.

GERI

And I need a big name sponsor to impress Victoria.

KAYLA

You had one.

GERI

Do you think Jefferson could help me find another sponsor?

KAYLA

I don't know. He was pretty upset when you quit.

**EXT. SPARKS MOTORSPORTS PARK - DAY**

Two Electric Jeeps are parked by a dirt race course on the outskirts of Sparks, Nevada.

Jefferson watches the two silent Jeeps leave.

Geri's Jeep comes to a stop behind Jefferson. She gets out, comes to stand next to Jefferson.

GERI

(subdued)

Hello, Jefferson.

Jefferson ignores her.

GERI

Can we talk?... Please?

**EXT. GERI'S JEEP - DAY**

Geri parks in front of the motorshop, shuts off the engine.

GERI

Don't you miss the rumble of the engine?

JEFFERSON

What do you want, Geri?

BEAT.

GERI

Dad, uh. Dad was behind on his bills when he died. He hadn't paid anything for several months.

JEFFERSON

That doesn't sound like your father.

GERI

I think he was struggling. Confused.

JEFFERSON

How much?

GERI

It comes to a bit over eighty thousand... I've talked some of the vendors into sponsoring me for the Desert Belle in exchange for reducing the amount I owe.

Geri stares at the shop.

GERI

Victoria won't let me in the rally unless she can get promotional mileage out of it. A big name sponsor would help me find a partner and satisfy Victoria. I thought maybe you could put in a word with some of your connections.

An uncomfortable pause as Jefferson eyes the shop.

GERI

Never mind. I'll figure it out.

JEFFERSON

(quietly)

We got a lot of negative response about our portrayal of Jeep's legacy.



GERI  
I'm not surprised.

JEFFERSON  
Yeah, well. We really need to do something to honor Jeep's legacy.

GERI  
Yeah, you do.

Jefferson reaches out and clasps Geri's hand, laces his fingers with hers.

JEFFERSON  
Jeep will sponsor you.

Geri looks up from their hands.

GERI  
Thank you... Maybe you can disprove that classic Wagoneers are only driven by outdated grandmothers.

JEFFERSON  
Uh, right.

**INT. JOE'S DESERT MOTORSPORTS - DAY**

In the nearest bay Geri's Jeep Wagoneer is elevated above her head on a lift. Geri GRUNTS as she uses a wrench to tighten the bolt on the bottom mount of a shock absorber.

A RING TONE echos in the quiet shop.

Geri quickly wipes her hands on a rag, digs her phone out.

INTERCUT

In the Jeep warehouse, Victoria talks on her phone and walks away from Jefferson who works alone by the Electric Jeeps.

VICTORIA  
Geri, I heard Jeep's back on board.

GERI  
How? I just talked--.

VICTORIA  
I like this legacy Jeep angle Jefferson's promoting.

GERI  
Am I in the rally?

VICTORIA  
Yes!

GERI  
Good.

VICTORIA  
Do you have a partner?

GERI  
I'm, uh, still looking.

VICTORIA  
Great.

GERI  
What?

VICTORIA  
I've got someone in mind.

**EXT. NEVADA DESERT - DAY**

In the desert east of Reno the base camp for the Desert Belle Off-Road Rally is UNDER CONSTRUCTION.

Workers assemble a massive white event tent.

**EXT. JEEP COMPOUND - DAY**

Off to the side of base camp, the Jeep compound consists of several RVs and a large Jeep Support Trailer.

Geri's Jeep is parked beside an enclosed car hauler trailer that sports bright graphics and the Jeep logo.

Lulu, Crystal, Kayla and Amber watch an Electric Jeep silently back down the ramp.

KAYLA  
The silence is still unnerving.

AMBER  
I love it. The silence hides a snake, ready to strike the unsuspecting.

**INT. JEEP SUPPORT TRAILER - DAY**

The support trailer is a well-appointed mobile office, training space and lounge.

Jefferson sits at a long table and types on his laptop. Gone is the suit, replaced by jeans and an oxford shirt with the Jeep EV logo on his breast pocket.

At the far end of the table Geri reviews topo maps.

A TAP, TAP and then the door opens. Victoria leads Melanie who wrestles her giant purple suitcase up the steps.

Melanie's wig is chic and blond. Her makeup is ready for the camera. Her golf sportswear is unsuitable for off-roading.

Geri glances at Melanie, then LAUGHS.

GERI

It's the wig-wearing reporter. What are you doing here? There's no men to knock some sense into.

Jefferson sharply eyes Geri.

GERI

What?

VICTORIA

Right. This is Jefferson, your team sponsor.

Jefferson jumps up and shakes Melanie's hand.

JEFFERSON

Welcome to the Jeep team.

VICTORIA

And this is Geri Leigh, your driver. Geri, this is Melanie Gil... your navigator.

GERI

What the hell?

MELANIE

Navigator?

GERI

Whoa. Whoa. Whoa! Victoria! She doesn't know about navigation. There's maps, compasses, MATH!

VICTORIA

Melanie's going to report on what it's like to be a competitor in the rally while she navigates for you.

MELANIE

Math? I don't compete. I report. On the sidelines.

GERI

Jefferson. How can I win with a navigator who knows nothing?

MELANIE

Win?

JEFFERSON

Uh...

VICTORIA

Winning is not the point. Your goal is to bring the audience inside your Jeep. Show them what driving and navigating is really like.

GERI

You're crazy to think we can be a team.

MELANIE

I agree.

VICTORIA

(firm to Melanie)

You're reporting.

(to Geri)

And you're driving.

Victoria strides to the door.

VICTORIA

Alright... Jefferson. I will see you at the sponsor reception.

JEFFERSON

Of course.

A fuming Geri and frustrated Melanie stare daggers at Jefferson.

JEFFERSON

Ladies. Ladies! We're Jeep for God sakes... We have two days, let's make the most of it.

Jefferson tosses two plastic wrapped packages of clothing on the table.

JEFFERSON

From now on you represent the Jeep team.

**EXT. JEEP COMPOUND - DAY**

On her cell phone Melanie paces behind Geri's Jeep and the two EVs, the clothing package bunched in her hand.

MELANIE

Are you kidding me? This is my last option?

INTERCUT

CLAIRE (40s) is a no-nonsense sports agent.

CLAIRE

Do you want a reporting job or not?

MELANIE

There's got to be something else.

CLAIRE

Do you want to work? Or retire?

MELANIE

What! I'm not gonna let them force me to retire.

CLAIRE

Well then. Victoria is the only one who returned my calls. Sorry.

END INTERCUT

MELANIE

Shit!

Melanie rips open the clothing bag. A bright colored Jeep racing jumpsuit unfurls.

MELANIE

Hmm. At least the color's fun.

**INT. COMMS BUS - DAY**

In their matching jumpsuits Geri and Melanie stand with Jefferson and listen to Victoria.

VICTORIA

This is Louise, my head of operations. Her team's setting up all the rally communication and tracking systems.

LOUISE (48) waves, goes back to supervising technicians.

Victoria leads them past ALBERTO (32), camera guru, who preps a pile of GoPro cameras that are spread across a work table.

Victoria stops at a slide out section where SHEENA (28) and RACHEL (50) work, points to a video console.

VICTORIA

All of our rally video coverage comes in here, including live feeds from the cameras in your Jeep.

MELANIE

Nice set up.

GERI

Cameras? There's more than one?

ALBERTO

There's cameras on both of you and a dash cam.

MELANIE

Excellent.

GERI

Oh great.

**EXT. GERI'S JEEP - DAY**

Melanie's in the passenger seat of Geri's Jeep. Alberto points at the GoPro on the dash.

ALBERTO

This dash cam is always sending out a feed.

Alberto hands her a portable GoPro.

ALBERTO

You can use this for standups outside the Jeep. It'll transmit to the Jeep and then to us.

MELANIE

Got it.

He points at three GoPro cameras mounted on the windshield, taps the button on a camera, the red light comes on.

ALBERTO

We can see and hear you, but you won't be able to hear us.

MELANIE

That makes it tough to prep segments.

ALBERTO

You're like all the other teams. Outside communication is cheating.

MELANIE

Of course it is. Everything has to be as hard as absolutely possible.

**INT. JEEP SUPPORT TRAILER - DAY**

Melanie and Geri sit at a table. Maps, rulers, a road book, plotter and compass spread before them.

GERI

Have you used a map before?

MELANIE

Google Maps.

GERI

This rally is about navigating the old-fashioned way, with paper maps and a compass. No phones or nav systems allowed.

MELANIE

Crap.

Melanie picks up the topo map and brings it close to her face. Geri rotates it right side up.

GERI

Have you ever been off-roading?

Melanie looks at her blankly.

GERI

On dirt roads and trails?

MELANIE

I'm from the city.

Geri rubs her head in frustration.

**INT./EXT. GERI'S JEEP - LATER**

Kayla helps buckle a helmeted Melanie into the safety harness on the passenger side. Geri adjusts her helmet.

Kayla hands Melanie the topo map and a direction sheet. Geri grabs the direction sheet and uses a yellow wipe-off pen to write notes on the inside of the windshield.

MELANIE  
(to Kayla)  
What's she doing?

KAYLA  
Writing direction notes where  
they're easy to see.

MELANIE  
Huh.

Geri finishes writing, puts the clutch in and turns the key.

KAYLA  
Have a good practice run.

Tires spin as the Jeep heads off, surprising Melanie.

**EXT. DESERT DIRT ROAD - (DRIVING) - DAY**

Geri's Jeep travels along the road then slides around a curve, tires spitting up rocks and dirt.

**INT. GERI'S JEEP - (DRIVING) - DAY**

Bouncing in her seat, Melanie struggles to read the map.

They come to a fork in the dirt road. Melanie locates it on the map as Geri glances at her notes on the windshield.

Confused, Melanie looks at the left road, then the right and back down at the map.

Geri turns the wheel left. They head onto the left road.

MELANIE  
Do we go...right.

GERI  
Nope.



Melanie looks up, sees they went left.

MELANIE

Huh?

The red camera lights come on. Melanie instantly goes into perky reporter mode.

TO HER CAMERA

MELANIE

Welcome to our coverage of the  
Desert Belle off-road rally.

IN VIDEO CONTROL

Rachel taps keys and switches between cameras while Sheena records the feed. Victoria and Jefferson watch the monitors. We see and hear Melanie on the monitor.

MELANIE (VIA MIC)

I'm Melanie Gil and I'm here with  
Geri Leigh. I'm the navigator and  
Geri is our driver--

BACK IN THE JEEP--

MELANIE

for the Desert Belle Off-Road Rally  
which starts tomorrow. We're one of  
55 teams competing. Yes, 55 teams  
of women...Over the next eight days  
we'll give you an inside look at  
what it's like to compete in the  
Desert Belle... Today we're  
practicing our navigation skills  
with paper maps and a compass. No  
tech or phones. What a great way to  
get to know each other, right Geri?

Geri ignores her.

Melanie looks at the map, then points slightly left.

MELANIE

That way.

IN VIDEO CONTROL--

VICTORIA

This is gonna work.

On her camera monitor, Geri glares at Melanie.

GERI  
What the hell are you pointing at?

VICTORIA  
Sheena, cut that last comment.

SHEENA  
Sure thing.

IN THE JEEP

The red camera lights go off.

MELANIE  
I'm just trying to bring our viewers into the experience.

GERI  
By faking it?

MELANIE  
That is the way we just went.

GERI  
Ah. Right. Sell them the illusion of reality.

MELANIE  
This is gonna be eight days of fun.

**INT. JEEP COMMAND TRAILER - NIGHT**

All six team members and Jefferson do final prep.

Geri intensely studies a pile of topo maps.

On her phone, Melanie speed researches all she can on the rally. She writes lots of notes on a reporters pad.

Melanie questions Kayla, Amber, Lulu and Crystal.

**EXT./INT. BASE CAMP TENT - DAY**

The large event tent is the main structure in the competitor's area of the bustling Base Camp.

Inside, staff set information packets at each seat.

Outside the medics erect a medical tent.

At the edge of camp a worker levels a latrine trailer.

**EXT. EV CHARGING STATION - DAY**

The two electric Jeeps drive towards the semi trailer that's the charging station. Lulu and Crystal are in the number 105 Jeep. Kayla and Amber are in 106.

Lulu and Crystal pull into a spot. Vehicle 97, an aerodynamic, brushed aluminum pickup truck with "WattVX Motors" embossed on the side cuts Kayla off and pulls into the spot next to Lulu.

**WATTVX TRUCK**

Navigator Pat presses buttons on the dash. The truck lowers, the side mirrors retract and the cargo lid raises.

The sharp-edged founder and striving CEO of WattVX, HEATHER (40s), is in the driver's seat. She taps the touch pad on the steering column. The truck powers down

Heather locks eyes with Amber in the Electric Jeep Wagoneer and smiles.

Amber swallows nervously.

**EXT. GERI'S JEEP - DAY**

All the doors are open on Geri's Jeep. Camping gear, tools, spare tire, ice chest and boxes of supplies are visible.

Melanie wedges a sparkly purple makeup case behind her seat.

Geri PLOPS down a case of moist towelettes on the tailgate.

MELANIE

That's a lot of towelettes.

GERI

I don't want to run out.

MELANIE

But a case?

GERI

For when we dry camp.

MELANIE

Dry camp? What is that?

GERI

In the desert there's no water. So on the nights when we camp on our own, it's dry.

MELANIE

Wonderful.

**INT. COMMS BUS - AFTERNOON**

Victoria hustles into the communications area.

VICTORIA

Are we ready?

Louise nods. She and the techs flip switches.

A large monitor illuminates and shows an animated color map of the area. Small, numbered rectangles swarm within the base camp.

LOUISE

All the vehicles are transmitting.

Victoria joins Rachel at the video control console and they look at the monitor showing Geri's dash cam.

VICTORIA

Okay. Geri and Melanie are checking in. That's the last team.

Victoria CLAPS her hands.

VICTORIA

It's go time.

**EXT. VEHICLE IMPOUND - DAY**

At the end of a row of vehicles, rally official FELICE (30s) waves Geri's Jeep, number 162, to a spot next to a white SUV with black cow spots and the number 133.

Geri opens her door, gawks at the SUV.

GERI

What is that?

MELANIE

A cow on wheels?

Melanie GIGGLES. Geri stifles a smile.

Felice looks at her watch.

FELICE

You have four minutes.

Geri hefts her backpack, hustles to the back.

GERI  
Grab your stuff.

Melanie gets her makeup case and purse, slings the strap of her duffle bag over her shoulder.

Geri crawls onto the tailgate, drags out two bags. She climbs down, shoves one bag into Melanie's arms, closes the back.

MELANIE  
What's this?

GERI  
The tent.

MELANIE  
Tent?

Geri jogs to Felice, hands over the Jeep's keys. Felice puts the keys in a clear envelope labeled 162.

FELICE  
Okay you cleared, no penalty.

Geri heads off. A laden Melanie hustles to catch up.

**EXT. TENT AREA - DAY**

Melanie stares at a folded flexible tent pole. She turns it around, rubs her chin. She pulls on the end section, the bungee cord stretches. She lets go, it bounces back.

GERI  
Never slept in a tent?

MELANIE  
Uh, no.

Geri shakes her head.

**INT. BASE CAMP TENT - NIGHT**

The Jeep team: Amber, Kayla, Lulu, Crystal, Melanie and Geri, are seated around a table with two vacant seats between Amber and Geri. They read through their information packets.

CHAIRS SLIDE. Heather and Pat take the empty chairs.

HEATHER  
Hello ladies.

Heads snap up around the table.

Melanie thoughtfully observes each reaction.

Lulu and Crystal are curious. Amber intently studies the duo. Geri stiffens. Kayla looks from Pat to Geri.

GERI

This is a private table!

PAT

(sarcastic)

Come on Geri, Victoria wants us all to support each other. Have a kumbaya moment.

Geri and Pat glare at each other.

MELANIE

So you're WattVX. Start up EV company, darling of the venture capitalists. Trying to beat the old school auto manufacturer?

HEATHER

That's what we came to do.

MELANIE

A classic underdog story.

Heather smiles smugly. She turns to Amber.

HEATHER

How are you enjoying working for OUR competition?

AMBER

Leaving WattVX was the best career decision I ever made!

PAT

Remember that when we beat you.

In unison Heather and Pat stand and strut away.

Melanie GUFFAWS.

MELANIE

They're hilarious. Wow! I never expected that type of chest pounding here.

**EXT. CAMPING TENT - NIGHT [BEFORE SUNRISE]**

CRICKETS CHIRP, then REVEILLE BLARES loudly.

Lights pop on inside tents.

INSIDE THE TENT

Melanie jerks awake, thrashes in her sleeping bag.

Geri sits up, puts a headlamp on her head, turns on the light.

MELANIE

Ah, ah, ah.

GERI

Wake up call.

Melanie gets the sleeping bag off her face.

GERI

Might want to fix that.

Geri's headlamp sweeps over Melanie's head revealing her blond wig is about to fall off. Awkwardly, Melanie tugs the wig into place.

Geri shakes her head and climbs out of her bag fully dressed.

MELANIE

What time is it?

GERI

Five am.

MELANIE

Argh.

GERI

Better hurry if you don't want to wait to pee.

MELANIE

You slept in your clothes?

GERI

No time to waste.

Geri rushes off and leaves Melanie in darkness.

**INT. BASE CAMP TENT - DAY**

Teams mill around the tent.

SUPER: 6:00 AM

Geri eats breakfast with Kayla, Lulu, Crystal and Amber.

Hair styled, camera-ready makeup on, Melanie scurries to the table with her breakfast box and a large, insulated coffee mug. She sits, takes a reverent smell of her coffee, then takes a long sip.

MELANIE

Ah. Keep the coffee coming.

GERI

Took you a while.

MELANIE

I need time to get ready for the camera... And I, uh, had to wait for the toilet.

Geri smirks.

VICTORIA (O.S. VIA MIC)

Find your seats please.

PODIUM

Victoria stands at the podium flanked by Brenda and Louise.

VICTORIA

Helllooo Desert Belles!

APPLAUSE, WHOOPS from the audience.

VICTORIA

Are you ready to drive?

More APPLAUSE and WHOOPS.

VICTORIA

The Desert Belle will push you and your vehicles. Your stamina, ingenuity, and problem-solving will be tested. You'll each have moments your skills will take center stage. Enjoy these moments, but make time to take in the gorgeous surroundings that few get to see.

Victoria looks at her watch.



VICTORIA  
 Okay. Navigators, head to the  
 tables at the back to get your  
 route packets and maps for today.

**EXT. START/FINISH ARCH - DAY**

SUPER: 7:00 A.M.

The Cow SUV idles next to Brenda at the start line. Brenda drops her hand, it departs.

**INT. GERI'S JEEP - DAY**

Geri writes the last of her notes on the windshield. She turns the key and the Jeep slowly RUMBLES to life.

Melanie nervously tightens her helmet as Geri backs out.

Geri turns the Jeep onto the road intent on getting in line when the WattVX truck cuts her off.

GERI  
 What the Hell.

MELANIE  
 Ah the lovely WattVX team.

GERI  
 I'm gonna beat those bitches.

MELANIE  
 That's a solid plan!

Geri sides eyes Melanie and subtly grins.

**AT THE START FINISH ARCH**

ASHLEE (26), energetic sports reporter, and camerawoman JAN (30) step up to the navigator's side of the WattVX truck.

Reporter Ashlee holds a wireless stick mic.

ASHLEE  
 (to the camera)  
 This is Team WattVX.

Ashlee turns to the truck and points the mic at Pat.

ASHLEE  
 Good morning, Pat and Heather.

HEATHER

Morning.

PAT

Hello, Ashlee.

Ashlee leans back, gazes at the truck.

ASHLEE

Tell us about this unique vehicle.

PAT

This is the WattVX Rattler Electric Truck. Silent power and striking impact.

Pat HISSES like a snake. Ashlee steps back.

ASHLEE

Okay. I'll try not to get bit.

The WattVX truck drives off and Geri's Jeep pulls up. Ashlee turns to the camera.

ASHLEE

Our next team is providing the competitor's view of the rally.

Ashlee steps close to Melanie's window.

ASHLEE

Morning Melanie and Geri. Melanie, I understand this is your first time off-roading?

MELANIE

It sure is.

Melanie looks into the camera lens.

MELANIE

If you're new to off-roading then you'll be right there with me as I learn all about it. If you're an old hand then you can laugh at my newbie mistakes.

Melanie cheerfully CHUCKLES and Ashlee smiles.

ASHLEE

Good luck.

Brenda watches her stopwatch, then drops her hand.

Geri pops the clutch and they drive off.

**EXT. DESERT RIVER WASH - DAY**

Dirt billows behind Geri's Jeep as it drives along a dirt road then goes down an embankment into a dry river wash.

**INT. COMMS BUS - DAY**

Louise and her tech team monitor assorted screens that track all 55 teams' progress along the course.

Victoria watches the topo map on the screen. Numbered white squares move along a road. She heads to Sheena's station.

VICTORIA

Record the animated map showing  
Geri and Melanie's progress.

Sheena taps her keyboard and the topo map shows only the "162 square" moving toward a blue checkpoint flag. A readout on the bottom of the screen ticks off "TIME 32:10", "DISTANCE 13.38 mi", and shows "SPEED 25 mph".

Victoria looks at the route direction sheet then turns to Rachel at the video control console.

VICTORIA

Just in case, be ready for a  
standup from Melanie when they get  
to the blue checkpoint.

Rachel nods.

**EXT. DESERT RIVER WASH - DAY**

Geri's Jeep bounces across the wash and stops by a blue checkpoint flag.

Inside the Jeep, Melanie reaches for the door handle.

GERI

Stop! Let the dust settle.

Geri grabs the handheld YB Tracker geo location device, notes the dust has settled and gets out.

MELANIE

Wait! I need to do a standup with  
you and the YB Tracker.

GERI

What? No. That'll get us off our target time for the next checkpoint.

Melanie slides to the ground, grabs the portable GoPro camera, attaches it to a selfie stick.

MELANIE

Get used to it. This is what I need to do to report our story.

GERI

We're also competing. I need to do well.

MELANIE

So do I.

LATER

A fuming Geri holds the YB Tracker. Beside her Melanie taps the camera button and aims the GoPro for her standup.

MELANIE

Standby.

Geri fidgets as Melanie holds up three fingers, then two, then lowers her hand.

MELANIE

Geri and I are at the first checkpoint. We'll log we're here by clicking our YB geo tracker, provided by Yellow Brick Tracker. Geri?--

Melanie turns her head toward Geri-- who does nothing.

MELANIE

Geri, check us in?

Geri awkwardly raises the YB Tracker, clicks the button.

Melanie looks back to the camera.

**INT. VIDEO CONTROL - DAY**

Rachel watches Melanie's feed.

MELANIE (VIA SPEAKER)  
 There you have it. Stay tuned for  
 more updates. From inside the  
 Desert Belle, this is Melanie Gil.

**EXT. GERI'S JEEP - DAY**

Geri holds the map. Melanie grabs it, insistent.

MELANIE  
 I'm the navigator.

GERI  
 You think you can do this?

MELANIE  
 Of course.

GERI  
 Right... What's the heading for the  
 green checkpoint?

Melanie juggles the map, ruler, compass and direction sheet.  
 Geri rolls her eyes, takes the ruler and map.

Melanie raises the compass, pulls back the string and sites  
 over the compass. She turns slightly left.

Geri lays the map on the hood. Melanie grabs the ruler, lays  
 it over the map, draws an X with a pencil.

MELANIE  
 There. And this is our route.

Melanie runs her finger across the map to the X.

GERI  
 That's the route?

MELANIE  
 Yes.

GERI  
 Sure.

Geri strides to the driver's door.

Melanie scrambles to get in the Jeep.

**EXT. DESERT HILL - DAY**

Boulders and washed-out sections cover a trail down a hill.

Out of view the Jeep's ENGINE RUMBLES. RATTLES and CLUNKS as it climbs the backside of the hill.

The distinctive grill of Geri's Jeep peeks over the top.

Through the windshield the hood of the Jeep points to the cloudless blue sky. Geri eases to a stop as the hood levels.

MELANIE

Oh my God. How--

Geri puts the Jeep in low, the hood dips. Melanie flails, then grabs the handhold and down they go.

Geri wrestles the steering wheel, angles over obstacles.

A front tire goes up a boulder, hangs in the air, a rear wheel spins, the Jeep BANGS down.

Geri and Melanie jerk and bounce. Melanie shouts over the BANGS and CLANKS--

MELANIE

Are you crazy?

GERI

You picked this route.

MELANIE

I didn't know it was like this.

GERI

The map showed the topography.

MELANIE

But... Why didn't you correct me?

GERI

How else are you gonna learn! AND it's a short cut.

The Jeep hovers a moment.

MELANIE

Is making a point worth killing me?

The Jeep slides, then bounces into a rut. Geri LAUGHS as she expertly guides the Jeep.

Melanie squeezes tight on the grab bar, closes her eyes. She bounces from side to side, her eyes jerk open. She puts her left hand on her stomach.

MELANIE

Uuuhh.

GERI

No getting car sick in my Jeep.

MELANIE

Then slow down!

**INT. GERI'S JEEP - (DRIVING) - DAY**

The Jeep bounces along a trail.

Melanie GROANS, squeezes her legs together.

MELANIE

How long till a rest stop?

The Jeep crests the hill.

Geri pulls off the trail, turns off the engine.

MELANIE

What are you doing? I need to pee.

GERI

So pee.

Melanie scans the area. Only a few small scrub bushes, no tree or bush in sight.

MELANIE

Where?

GERI

Here.

MELANIE

There's no porta-potties.

Geri stares at Melanie.

MELANIE

There's no privacy.

GERI

Open the door and squat. There's no one for miles.

MELANIE

You're here.

GERI  
What's the big deal? I know you've  
been in lots of locker rooms.

MELANIE  
I didn't show my hoojaa in the  
locker room.

BEAT.

MELANIE  
Okay, okay. Don't look.

Geri shrugs, grabs a package of moist towelettes, throws it  
at Melanie who fumbles the package and slides to the ground.

Between the door and the Jeep, Melanie contorts herself like  
a flailing fish as she peels the driving suit down.

In her stodgy bra and panties, she awkwardly grabs the  
dangling suit out of the way and squats.

An antsy Geri looks towards Melanie.

MELANIE  
Hey!

GERI  
You're taking too long.

MELANIE  
This stupid suit.

GERI  
Didn't you notice the zipper. Goes  
from one inner thigh to the other.

MELANIE  
Huh?

GERI  
It's for women. To pee. Without  
undressing.

MELANIE  
Shit!

GERI  
Helps with that too.



**INT. GERI'S JEEP - [DRIVING] - DAY**

The Jeep has no air conditioning so the afternoon heat is sweltering. Melanie fans herself with the route directions.

They ride along in uncomfortable silence.

Melanie wipes the sweat from her eyes, smudging her eyeliner, making her look like she has black eyes.

MELANIE

God. It's hot.

GERI

Yup.

MELANIE

So Geri Leigh, what's it feel like to be an off-road racer... rallier...?

GERI

That is such a stupid question.

MELANIE

I beg your pardon?

GERI

Why do reporters always ask, "how do you feel"?

MELANIE

Uh.

GERI

I mean, an elite athlete, decades of training, their whole life preparing... They just won! It's some version of YAY! Or, I'm going to Disneyland, if they have a good agent.

MELANIE

Hmph. One point to Geri Leigh.

Geri glances at Melanie, notices the black eyes.

GERI

You might want to do something about your face.

Melanie turns the rearview mirror her way.

MELANIE

Oh my gawd!

**EXT. BASE CAMP TENT - EVENING**

Competitors mill around a large display screen outside the Event Tent reviewing the day's points and placements.

For each place, the vehicle number, competitor names, total points and percentage of points possible is listed followed by columns of points and percentages for the checkpoints.

Kayla's eyes hunt for NUMBER 106 and sees she and Amber are in 13th place and Crystal and Lulu (#105) are in fourth.

Kayla steps away and passes Geri and Melanie.

GERI

Well?

KAYLA

Thirteenth.

Kayla shivers.

GERI

It's early days.

Geri continues. Melanie hustles to catch up to Geri.

Melanie's eyes anxiously bounce around the columns of points and percentages.

MELANIE

Is this Money Ball?

Geri frowns as she scans the display and finds their NUMBER 162 in ninth place.

GERI

Hmm.

MELANIE

What?

Geri points at their #162 placement.

GERI

Ninth.

A serious Geri strides away.

MELANIE

Is that good or bad?

GERI

Our rocky jaunt today didn't help.  
If we want to finish in the money  
we need to cut the mistakes.

MELANIE

You could've prevented that if you  
didn't have to make a point.

GERI

You won't make that mistake again,  
will you?

MELANIE

No!

GERI

Then it was worth it.

**INT. CAMPING TENT - NIGHT [BEFORE SUNRISE]**

REVEILLE BLARES loudly out of speakers.

Melanie jerks awake.

Geri puts the headlamp over her head and turns on the light.

This time Melanie is dressed. She darts out after Geri.

**EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY**

Along the road vehicles spray up dust at two minute intervals as they head out from Base Camp.

**EXT. DESERT ROAD INTERSECTION - DAY**

Kayla's Electric Jeep is stopped while Amber takes a compass reading near the intersection of two dirt roads.

Amber slides into the Jeep.

KAYLA

Which way?

Amber points to the right.

**EXT. DESERT PAVED ROAD - (DRIVING) - DAY**

A two-lane paved road heads off to a distant point.

The BUMP AND SPIN OF TIRES ON DIRT, then Kayla's Electric Jeep comes into view from the left. It slides to a stop.

INSIDE

KAYLA

How'd we end up here?

AMBER

I, um. I must've made a miscalculation.

A frustrated Kayla jams the Electric Jeep into reverse and yanks the steering wheel to turn around.

The Electric Jeep spins tires and spews dirt as it heads back the way it came.

**EXT. GREEN CHECKPOINT - DAY**

On a hill a green balloon floats above a shade canopy.

Felice and a RALLY OFFICIAL sit at a table with a green sphere in the center.

Kayla's Electric Jeep and the WattVX truck are nearby next to the Cow SUV.

Kayla and Amber trudge back to their Jeep.

KAYLA

We missed our time window. No points for this checkpoint, plus a penalty!

AMBER

I'm sorry. I, I, uh... I promise I'll do better.

**EXT. SMALL VALLEY - DAY**

The WattVX truck slows, then stops in the middle of a valley.

INSERT COMMS BUS

On her computer Brenda scans the animated topo map for the locations of all the competitors. She finds the number 97 white square far off the route.

BRENDA  
Team ninety-seven?

Louise reads the competitor list.

LOUISE  
That's WattVX.

BRENDA  
They're way off course.

IN THE WATTVX TRUCK

Pat looks up from the map on her lap, scans the area.

HEATHER  
Where the hell are we?

PAT  
I'm rusty. I miscalculated.

HEATHER  
Screw this... VX connect.

DING DONG.

WATTVX TECH (VIA SPEAKERS)  
Hey boss. What'a ya need?

HEATHER  
We're off course. Send the  
directions to the AI driver.

WATTVX TECH (VIA SPEAKERS)  
Sending now.

A CHIME, then the dash lights up with a map.

AI (VIA SPEAKERS)  
AI Driver engaged.

Heather lets go of the steering wheel. It spins to the left.

IN THE COMMS BUS

On the animated topo map the #97 square reverses direction.

BRENDA  
They figured it out.

LOUISE  
Hopefully that mistake didn't use  
up too much battery.

**INT. GERI'S JEEP - (DRIVING) - DAY**

Geri muscles the steering wheel as they bounce over the uneven terrain.

Melanie squeezes the grab bar and struggles to hold the map and navigation tools with her other hand.

The steering wheel wrenches to the right. Geri can't straighten it.

GERI

Dammit!

Geri down shifts, stops the Jeep.

The nearly flat right front tire HISSES as it deflates.

Geri jogs to the passenger side.

Melanie points her camera at the tire as the HISS fades.

MELANIE

Well folks, we have a flat tire.

Geri marches to the back of the Jeep and opens the tailgate.

GERI

Stop wasting time.

Melanie puts the camera away and hustles to the back.

Together they wrestle the spare tire out. Geri pulls out a lug wrench.

GERI

Take these to the front and I'll set up the exhaust air jack.

Melanie takes the wrench and rolls the tire to the front. She wedges rocks in front and behind the rear tire.

Geri picks up a rock.

GERI

Put a rock in front and behind the back tire so the Jeep won't roll.

Melanie rolls her eyes. Grabs the lug wrench. Muscles one lug nut part way loose.

Geri pulls the inflatable exhaust air jack onto the tailgate.

Melanie loosens the last lug nut.

Geri carries the exhaust air jack to the front, slides it under the frame behind the front wheel.

GERI  
I'm going to hook this up to the snorkel.

Melanie looks blank.

GERI  
The exhaust pipe.

A confused Melanie watches Geri remove the top of the snorkel and slide the hose over the pipe.

Geri picks up the lug wrench.

GERI  
This is a lug wrench. We loosen each nut now, when there's resistance from the ground.

Geri kneels, places the wrench over a nut, puts some force into turning it.

The wrench spins easily. Geri topples over.

GERI  
What the--

MELANIE  
I already loosened them.

A surprised Geri stands, dusts herself off.

MELANIE  
When you grow up poor, and have a car, you learn how to do a lot of things yourself.

#### **EXT. BASE CAMP - EVENING**

In the repair area, Geri's tailgate is down and Geri and Melanie drag the flat tire out.

Geri slowly rolls the tire, scans for the puncture. She stops, sees the shaft of a screw with the head worn off.

MELANIE  
Is that?

GERI  
A screw... Or what's left of one.

MELANIE

What. We found the only screw in  
hundreds of miles of desert?

GERI

Huh.

**EXT. GULLY - DAY**

Geri's Jeep drives up a gully and stops beside a rugged,  
washed-out trail that heads up to the ridge above.

Melanie pops out with her camera and the YB tracker.

She stands at the base of the trail and does a report.

MELANIE

Right now I'm standing where we  
think there's a hidden checkpoint.

Melanie clicks the YB Tracker, reads it and smiles.

MELANIE

Got it.

She does a little shimmy while trying unsuccessfully to keep  
the camera steady.

MELANIE

Oops. Sorry.

**EXT. GULLY - DAY**

Geri and Melanie eat their lunch on a checkered tablecloth in  
the shade of the gully's walls.

Melanie wipes sweat from her brow, then takes a long sip from  
her water container.

The sound of GRAVEL and ODD CLUNKS nearby.

The ODD SOUNDS get louder, then WattVX appears in the gully.

GERI

Dammit.

Heather stops the truck. Pat jumps out and clicks the YB  
Tracker to log the checkpoint. Pat smiles snarkily at Geri,  
hops in the truck and they maneuver up the trail.

GERI

How the hell did she find this one?



MELANIE

She seems to take great pleasure in baiting you.

GERI

We used to be partners.

Geri packs up the food.

MELANIE

I see. Team mates who split up and now play for opposing teams.

GERI

Yup.

MELANIE

So. What. Happened?

GERI

Huh. We were partners. We got invited to enter the inaugural Desert Belle. Placed third.

MELANIE

A podium finish? What went wrong?

GERI

Our last event... Pat wanted to get creative, take advantage of loopholes in the rules. I didn't. Then Pat gets courted by Heather. I wasn't interested in WattVX, so Pat dropped me.

MELANIE

So then you and Kayla start competing?

GERI

Yup.

Geri continues packing while Melanie chugs water.

The sun disappears behind a cloud.

MELANIE

Ahh. That helps.

FAINT THUNDER.

GERI

We need to get going.

MELANIE  
I'm finally cooling off.

GERI  
I want to catch Pat and Heather--

Geri eyes the sky, frowns.

GERI  
before it rains.

MELANIE  
Rain sounds wonderful.

**EXT. TOP OF GULLY - DAY**

The back tires of Geri's Jeep spin as it climbs onto the ridge at the top of the gully.

Below is a dry river bed that snakes down a canyon from the mountains where black clouds amass high above the peaks.

INSIDE THE JEEP

Melanie intently studies the map.

MELANIE  
The green checkpoint should be...

Melanie looks up, sees the green checkpoint on a hill far beyond the riverbed. She points and smiles triumphantly.

MELANIE  
Right there.

Geri scans the canyon, sees WattVX crossing the riverbed.

Melanie consults the topo map and points left.

MELANIE  
The best route down is there.

GERI  
No.

MELANIE  
I know I'm reading the topo map correctly. That's the easiest route.

GERI  
No.

The red lights on the cameras come on. Melanie forcibly adopts her upbeat reporter mode.

MELANIE

Hello. I'm glad to report that the temperature has dropped from sweltering to hot.

INSERT VIDEO MONITOR OF MELANIE AND GERI'S CAMERA.

MELANIE (ON SCREEN)

We're headed to our next green checkpoint on the other side of this canyon.

The monitor changes to the dash cam as the Jeep's hood dips and they head down a gully into the canyon.

MELANIE (O.S. VIA MIC)

What are you doing?

GERI (O.S VIA MIC)

A short cut.

The image on the dash cam bounces and tilts, then shows nothing but the dirt of the gully.

END INSERT

In the Jeep the camera lights go off.

Melanie holds the grab bar tightly as Geri muscles the steering wheel.

MELANIE

Do you have a death wish?

GERI

Nope.

MELANIE

This is crazy.

GERI

I. Am. Not letting those bitches win.

MELANIE

But it's a rally. Not a race!

GERI

Err!

Geri's Jeep bounces and BANGS over boulders. The tires spin in the dirt. Rocks spray.

The WattVX truck slides and kicks up rocks as it climbs out of the riverbed on the far side.

Beyond, Lulu's and Kayla's Electric Jeeps near the Green Checkpoint.

Angry clouds darken the sky above the mountains.

**EXT/INT. GERI'S JEEP - (DRIVING) - DAY**

Geri's Jeep slides onto the riverbed.

The dark clouds capture Geri's attention.

GERI

It's raining in the mountains.

MELANIE

That's refreshing.

GERI

The desert isn't "refreshing" when it rains.

Geri guns the engine.

IN VIDEO CONTROL

Victoria paces as she and Rachel watch Geri's dash cam.

VICTORIA

I don't like the look of those clouds.

(yells)

Louise, call Felice about this weather.

**INT. GREEN CHECKPOINT - DAY**

RUMBLE OF THUNDER.

Pat strides up, clicks the YB Tracker over the green sphere.

PAT

Team 97.

Felice makes a note, nervously glances at the other Rally Official and takes a SHAKY BREATH.

FELICE  
We're holding for the storm.

Pat frowns, then joins the team members squeezed under the canopy: Kayla, Amber, Lulu, Crystal and Heather.

PLOP OF RAIN DROPS, then a DELUGE.

CRYSTAL  
This isn't rain. It's biblical.

LULU  
I'm glad we're here and not on the course.

Kayla squints at the riverbed where Geri's Jeep is crossing.

Sheets of water flow off the canopy.

The ROAR OF WATER coursing down the riverbed.

KAYLA  
Mom!

A wall of water heads toward the Jeep.

INSIDE GERI'S JEEP

GERI  
Christ!

Melanie GASPS as she watches the churning water approach.

Geri mashes the gas and wrenches the steering wheel so the Jeep faces down stream.

GERI  
If we go under, uh, wait for the water pressure to stabilize. Then we'll try to open the doors.

Water crashes over the Jeep as Melanie SCREAMS.

AT THE GREEN CHECKPOINT

The women watch in horror as the water hits Geri's Jeep.

Geri's Jeep rocks and teeters as the water propels it like a surf board.

INSIDE THE JEEP

Water sprays the windows as Melanie and Geri are tossed around.

Melanie yells over the ROARING WATER.

MELANIE

Are we gonna drown... In the middle  
of a desert?

The front of the Jeep tips up.

BANG. The Jeep slams down and wedges at a cockeyed angle on a  
high bit of land.

MELANIE

What's happening?

GERI

Good news. We're not gonna drown.  
Bad news. We're stuck here.

MELANIE

Can we do something?

GERI

When the water goes down. Maybe.

AT THE GREEN CHECKPOINT

A tense Kayla sees Geri's Jeep perched on the high spot.

KAYLA

Thank God!

Pat eyes the muddy water then whispers to Heather.

PAT

That's gonna be a trick getting out  
of there.

The corner of Heather's mouth lifts slightly and they sneak  
off to their truck.

Felice paces as she talks on a satellite phone and stares at  
Geri's Jeep stuck in the middle of the riverbed.

FELICE

We've got a situation here.

**INT. GERI'S JEEP - DAY**

Geri POUNDS HER HAND on the steering wheel in frustration.

Melanie jerks at the sound.

MELANIE

Is this rivalry with Pat worth  
this?

Geri calms herself, barely succeeds.

GERI

I need my cut of the prize money.

MELANIE

Figures. It's always about money.

GERI

Winning matters, too.

MELANIE

Right.

Melanie looks around at the water.

MELANIE

Kinda hard to win now. Or finish.

GERI

I'm not a quitter.

**EXT. GERI'S JEEP - DAY**

The water slowly recedes as the storm moves east and reveals a morass of mud, tumbleweeds and boulders while rays of sun sparkle on the walls of the canyon and Geri's stranded Jeep.

At the side of the riverbed Kayla looks at Geri's Jeep through binoculars.

KAYLA

(yells)

Mom!

Geri climbs onto the window and looks over the roof.

GERI

Hello honey.

KAYLA

Help should be here soon.

GERI

We're not quitting.

KAYLA

Mom! It's over.

GERI  
No. It's not.

KAYLA  
(to herself)  
God damn it.

LATER

Victoria, Rachel, Sheena and Alberto watch Melanie.

INSERT TV SCREEN

MELANIE (ON SCREEN)  
We're fine. I'll update you when we  
figure out what we're gonna do.  
This is Melanie Gil somewhere in  
the surprisingly wet Mojave Desert.

Victoria shakes her head and looks at Alberto.

VICTORIA  
Damn, Geri is stubborn. I admire  
her grit, but let's send a drone up  
to keep an eye on things. And if  
things look bad, I will pull the  
plug and rescue them no matter what  
Geri wants.

**EXT. GERI'S JEEP - DAY**

A drone hovers above Geri's Jeep.

Below, Geri and Melanie are in front of Geri's Jeep. Both  
have muddy shoes and mud stains up their pant legs.

INSERT DRONE SCREEN

The drone lowers closer to Geri and shows her holding the  
hook at the end of the winch cable. She gingerly moves  
forward while Melanie unspools the cable.

Geri steps into the mud. Sinks to her crotch.

END INSERT

Geri works a foot out of the mud. Wiggles and pulls, then  
loses her balance and falls on her stomach.

GERI  
Shit!



Their Electric Jeeps near the edge of the riverbed, Kayla, Amber, Crystal, Lulu and Felice watch. WattVX is gone.

Geri pushes up and balances on her knees. With a mighty heave she raises upright...loses her balance and flops on her back.

Melanie LAUGHS.

The drone hovers above Geri. She looks up at the drone, mouths an obscenity.

Geri slides sits up and uses her thighs to loosen her foot until it pops free. SQUOOSH. She works the other foot free.

Geri rolls onto her stomach. She wiggles around and faces shore. Grabs the cable and crawls.

AT THE RIVERBED'S EDGE

The Electric Jeep's winch cable unspools as Kayla grabs the hook and scrambles down the side of the riverbed. Her professional demeanor masks her distress at Geri's situation.

Geri and Kayla slowly crawl to each other.

Only a little cable remains on each winch.

KAYLA

What were you thinking?

GERI

These winches are made for this.

KAYLA

You and your fuckin' winches... You know better than to cross a riverbed in a storm.

GERI

I, uh...

Melanie gets to the end of the winch cable.

MELANIE

(yells)

That's it.

The winch on the Electric Jeep continues to unspool a moment then jerks to a stop.

Kayla stretches the cable but it won't reach.

KAYLA

How you gonna fix this, Mom?

Geri eyes the Electric Jeeps.

GERI  
(yells)  
Lulu. Hook to the other Jeep.

**EXT. RIVERBED - LATER**

Beside the riverbed a tow strap stretches taught between the two Electric Jeeps. The front Jeep inches toward the edge.

In the riverbed Kayla has more cable and crawls forward. She reaches the hook toward her mother. Just a bit more to go.

The front EV Jeep teeters at the lip of the riverbed.

Behind, Lulu brakes to keep the other Jeep from going over.

Kayla reaches toward Geri. A little more...

SUCCESS!

Kayla and Geri connect the hooks and loop the cables together.

They slide on their butts, out of the way.

Geri waves at Amber and Lulu. They shift their Jeeps into reverse and begin pulling together.

Tires SPIN. Gravel kicks up.

NOTHING HAPPENS!

A CREAK. SQUOOSH. The mud releases its grip on Geri's Jeep.

Melanie quickly scrambles clear and splats in the mud.

**EXT. BASE CAMP - EVENING**

Hands set a bucket of water next to boots and pant legs caked with dried mud. This is Geri who's covered in dried brown mud like she was dipped in a vat of chocolate.

Melanie sports the same caked mud covering. The two are as dirty as the Jeep.

Melanie squeezes Ivory dish soap into the bucket and Geri sprays water from a hose creating a mound of bubbles.

Moving to the side of the Jeep, Geri sprays water underneath while Melanie dunks two sponges in the bucket.

Sweat trickles into Melanie's eyes.

MELANIE

It's even hotter than before.

A shower of water rains down on Melanie as Geri sprays water over the hood of the Jeep soaking Melanie.

MELANIE

What the...

GERI (O.S.)

(singsong)

Rain sounds wonderful.

Melanie pops up sputtering, then enjoys the cooling water.

She walks to Geri's side and stretches her arms wide.

MELANIE

Hit me.

Geri LAUGHS as she soaks Melanie with water, rivulets of mud flowing onto the ground.

GERI

My turn.

Closing her eyes, Geri turns in a slow circle as Melanie sprays her with the hose.

Melanie gets a bit aggressive with the spray.

GERI

Enough!

Melanie grins as she shuts off the spray of water.

Geri spits out water, rubs her eyes, then runs her hands over her head to knock the water off. She ends by finger combing her hair into a pouf at the top and smooths the sides flat.

GERI

I'm good.

LAUGHTER.

KAYLA

What the fuck are you doing?

Geri and Melanie slowly lose their smiles as a pissed off Kayla approaches them.

GERI  
Kayla!... What's it look like we're  
doing?

KAYLA  
Mom! This isn't a joke... You  
almost died.

GERI  
Off-roading is risky.

KAYLA  
You get off on it don't you?

GERI  
Well, I--

KAYLA  
You're 63 years old!

GERI  
Yeah. I am. So what?

Kayla's angry gaze snaps between Geri and Melanie.

Melanie moves next to Geri. They face Kayla together.

KAYLA  
This isn't what--

GERI  
Sixty-three-year old women should  
do?

KAYLA  
I didn't say that.

MELANIE  
Your body language says it.

KAYLA  
I just... Why is winning so damn  
important you'd risk your life?

GERI  
All my life I've had to work  
harder, be better. So you could  
even get the chance to  
participate... When I win? No one.  
No one questions I belong.

KAYLA  
You don't have to prove anything  
anymore.

GERI  
So I should sit in a rocking chair?  
THAT would kill me.

Geri turns away, aggressively shoots water at the Jeep.

Melanie watches Kayla stride off.

MELANIE  
For the record. I don't think  
you're, we're, too old to do  
anything.

GERI  
Damn straight.

**INT. GERI'S JEEP - [DRIVING] - DAY**

Geri shifts into a lower gear as the Jeep climbs a slope.

Melanie fans herself with the route sheet.

MELANIE  
You couldn't have added air  
conditioning?

GERI  
It didn't come with A/C. And I get  
better performance without it.

MELANIE  
How am I supposed to keep my makeup  
from melting?

GERI  
Don't use it.

MELANIE  
I need to look good on camera.

GERI  
Why?

Melanie SPUTTERS.

GERI  
It's 98 degrees. In the desert.  
You're good at what you do. That's  
what matters... And lose the wig.  
No one can see it with the helmet.

**EXT. BLUE CHECKPOINT - DAY**

A blue checkpoint flag hides behind a rock outcropping and flutters in the breeze. Geri's Jeep comes around the outcropping and slides to a stop.

Melanie jumps out with the YB Tracker and her camera on the selfie stick. She captures her jog to the flag where she clicks the YB Tracker.

Back at the Jeep, Geri throws a towelette package at Melanie.

A brief hesitation and then Melanie rips off her helmet, pulls off the wig and wipes the makeup off her face.

Geri throws a water bottle to Melanie who tears off the top and pours water over her head.

MELANIE

Ahhhh.

**EXT. TENT AREA - NIGHT**

All the tents are dark but one, then its light goes out.

The WHO-WHOWHO-WHOA of a desert spotted owl is followed by a TENT ZIPPER opening.

**EXT. EV CHARGING STATION - NIGHT**

The beam of a small flashlight illuminates the electrical cable plugged into an Electric Jeep.

A gloved hand loosens the plug, the green ON light goes off.

**EXT. EV CHARGING STATION - NIGHT [BEFORE SUNRISE]**

REVEILLE BLARES loudly out of speakers.

CLICK OF A FLASHLIGHT. The beam illuminates the Jeep's empty electrical connection.

The gloved hand SNAPS the charging plug back in place. The green light illuminates.

**INT. KAYLA'S JEEP - DAY**

Kayla presses the START BUTTON. The instrument panel lights up. The charge meter shows a 30% charge.

KAYLA  
What the hell?

AMBER  
What's wrong?

KAYLA  
The charge is only at thirty  
percent.

Amber leans over, looks at the instrument panel.

AMBER  
Hmm. Maybe there's a problem with  
the charge system.

Amber jumps out of the Jeep and plugs the charge cable in,  
then leans in her door.

AMBER  
I've got a green light.

Kayla watches the charge meter.

KAYLA  
It's charging.

Amber looks at the route direction sheet, then at her watch.

AMBER  
We can squeeze in a few minutes of  
charging. If we take things easy  
and only go for the mandatory  
checkpoints we might make it.

**EXT. START/FINISH ARCH - DAY**

Geri's Jeep heads left. In the distance Kayla's Jeep kicks up  
dust as it drives ahead.

**EXT./INT. GERI'S JEEP - DAY**

Geri's Jeep stops at the top of the ridge.

Below, she sees Kayla's Electric Jeep is stranded in the  
middle of the trail. She frowns and shifts into low gear.

LATER

Uncomfortable, but professional, Geri and Kayla stand by the  
Electric Jeep.

GERI  
What's the problem?

KAYLA  
We ran out of charge.

Geri shakes her head, gets a tow strap.

Recording on her camera, Melanie interviews Amber.

MELANIE  
I'm here with Amber, an engineer with the Jeep Electric Team. How does running out of power happen? From what I read, the rally sets a course that ensures the EVs have plenty of charge.

AMBER  
Uh. I'll be checking the power distribution system tonight.

MELANIE  
What does that mean--

GERI  
(yells)  
Alright, let's go.

**EXT. GREEN CHECKPOINT - DAY**

Geri's Jeep tows Kayla's. They stop by a green checkpoint. Further down the road the Cow SUV tows Lulu's Electric Jeep. Geri and Kayla disconnect the tow strap.

KAYLA  
Thank you.

The WattVX truck goes by.

GERI  
So how'd both of you run out of charge at the same time?

KAYLA  
Something's wrong with the charging station.

GERI  
WattVX isn't having problems.



Kayla scrutinizes the WattVX truck.

**EXT. BASE CAMP - EVENING**

Pat and Heather smile at the results display screen which shows they're #97 in third place.

Geri and Melanie, #162, are in sixth, Lulu and Crystal, #105, are in eighth and Kayla and Amber, #106, have slid to 15th.

**EXT. DESERT HILL - DAY**

A sandstone rock formation perches majestically at the top of a hill strewn with boulders and cactus.

Geri and Melanie hike their way through the boulders. Binoculars hang from Geri's neck as she carries the YB Tracker. Melanie cradles the GoPro and selfie stick.

Melanie looks at Geri's Jeep below, then at the formation.

MELANIE

I know it's a hidden checkpoint.  
But isn't this a bit extreme?

GERI

I think the course designer is  
having some fun.

Melanie plops onto a boulder. Catches her breath.

MELANIE

Can't we just log it here?

GERI

I don't want to work this hard and  
then get points deducted for  
missing it. You can wait here.

MELANIE

No way.

**INT. WATTVX TRUCK - (DRIVING) - DAY**

Heather's hands are in her lap while the AI drives. Pat reclines, takes a long sip from an insulated cup.

PAT

We're close aren't we?

Heather double taps the steering wheel touch pad.

AI (VIA SPEAKERS)  
One point two miles.

**EXT. DESERT HILL - DAY**

Next to the rock formation Melanie pans the expansive view with the GoPro, then aims at Geri who points the YB Tracker to the sky, taps the button and reads the screen.

GERI  
Maximum points. That should move us  
up in the standings.

MELANIE  
Looks like it was worth the sweat  
and sore muscles. Melanie Gil  
reporting near... an elephant... no  
dinosaur... some wierd-shaped rock  
formation.

Melanie shuts off the camera.

In the distance a dust cloud attracts Melanie's attention.

MELANIE  
Who is that?

Geri raises binoculars, focuses on the vehicle.

GERI  
WattVX! Again.

In the cab she sees Heather's left hand on the grab bar and her right holding a water bottle. The steering wheel turns back and forth on its own.

GERI  
She's not steering!

MELANIE  
Let me see.

Geri hands Melanie the binoculars.

MELANIE  
Whoa. Who's driving?

GERI  
Not Heather.

**EXT. BASE CAMP - EVENING**

Geri frowns at the results display screen which shows she and Melanie are fourth and WattVX is in first place. In sixth are Lulu and Crystal while Kayla and Amber are 16th.

**INT. CAMPING TENT - NIGHT [BEFORE SUNRISE]**

Carrying breakfast boxes, Geri and Melanie join Kayla, Amber, Lulu and Crystal at their table.

Geri sees Heather and Pat at another table.

Melanie notices who Geri's looking at.

MELANIE

(whispers)

We think Heather and Pat are cheating.

AMBER

What?

CRYSTAL

You're kidding?

MELANIE

Yesterday we saw their truck driving without Heather touching the steering wheel.

LULU

That's cool.

CRYSTAL

No, its not.

GERI

It's cheating.

AMBER

What're you gonna' do about it?

GERI

Beat their asses.

Amber SWALLOWS, tentatively smiles, Kayla frowns.

BEAT

VICTORIA

Good morning, Desert Belles.

A SMATTERING OF APPLAUSE.

VICTORIA  
Come on. Let's get the energy up.  
It's our last rally day.

CHEERS and APPLAUSE.

VICTORIA  
That's better... Everything has  
been leading up to this day. The  
biggest challenge of the rally...  
The sand dunes.

OOHS and AHHS, some GROANS.

VICTORIA  
Stay focused. Be hyper observant.  
Have fun. And be ready to party  
after the finish!

WILD CHEERS and APPLAUSE.

Competitors exit as Pat and Heather come near the Jeep table.

Geri abruptly stands in front of Pat and blocks her way.

PAT  
Problem Geri?

GERI  
You're cheating.

PAT  
You're absurd.

GERI  
I saw the truck driving itself.

BEAT

PAT  
There's no rule that says the  
driver has to touch the steering  
wheel.

GERI  
You know that's the intention.

PAT  
Do I? You can worry about the  
rules, Geri, while I win.

Pat bumps Geri's shoulder as she heads off, Heather quickly follows her.

Geri whirls around, spitting mad.

**EXT. GERI'S JEEP - DAY**

Dust billows from vehicles speeding across the lakebed.

On the monitor of Geri's dash cam are the shifting peaks and valleys of mammoth sand dunes in the distance.

In the Comms Bus Victoria watches the monitor over Rachel's shoulder in Video Control. Jefferson joins them.

VICTORIA

Well Jefferson. What do you think?

JEFFERSON

We're very pleased. This has driven lots of social engagement with Jeep.

VICTORIA

Yeah. We're getting great viewership numbers for our daily shows. And it doesn't hurt that Geri and Melanie are coming down to the wire with a chance to finish in the money.

Jefferson rubs his palms and beams.

**EXT. GREEN CHECKPOINT - DAY**

Geri slows as they approach the green checkpoint at the base of the sand dunes. She parks in a long row of vehicles that includes the Electric Jeeps and the WattVX truck.

LATER

Felice and the other Rally Official smile as Melanie clicks the YB Tracker over the green sphere.

**EXT. GERI'S JEEP - DAY**

AIR HISSES as Melanie video records Geri letting air out of the front passenger tire.

MELANIE

Geri, explain what you're doing.

GERI

We need more grip in the sand.  
Lower tire pressure helps.

Geri attaches a tire pressure gauge. She removes it, lets out a bit more air. Reattaches the gauge. It shows "15 PSI".

Geri pockets the gauge and heads over to Lulu's Jeep.

Melanie takes shots with her GoPro of the other teams releasing air.

AT GERI'S JEEP

A gloved hand sets a portable orange air tank down, clamps an air hose onto Geri's front passenger tire and adds air.

The pressure gauge needle rises, passes 45 pounds. POP of the air hose as its pulled from the tire.

**EXT. GREEN CHECKPOINT - DAY**

Geri and Melanie head back to Geri's Jeep.

Amber scurries towards them.

MELANIE

Good luck today.

AMBER

Yeah, yeah... You too.

**EXT./INT. GERI'S JEEP - (DRIVING) - DAY**

The Jeep claws its way up a sand dune.

Geri wrestles with the steering wheel, repeatedly muscles it to the right.

GERI

Come on. Quit fighting me.

The Jeep stops at the top of the sand dune. As the engine quiets there's the SOUND OF LIGHT WIND.

Below in a ravine is a blue checkpoint flag.

Melanie with her camera and Geri with the YB Tracker slip and slide down the dune to the flag.

Melanie's momentum increases until she's out of control. She trips, twists in the air to protect the camera and lands on her back flattening the flag.

Geri CHUCKLES.

Melanie SPITS OUT SAND. She cradles the camera and rolls onto her knees.

GERI

Touch down!

Geri CHUCKLES.

Melanie SPUTTERS, then LAUGHS with Geri.

Geri offers her hand to Melanie.

MELANIE

Thank you.

Geri pulls her upright.

Geri logs the location on the YB Tracker, then lifts the bent blue flag and rotates it until it stands.

GERI

No one else's been here.

MELANIE

Really? No WattVX?

GERI

Nope. If we find the hidden checkpoint, we'll have 100 percent of today's possible points and we can beat those bitches.

Melanie spikes a pretend football, does an elaborate touch down dance with duck walking and arm windmills.

GERI

Didn't the NFL outlaw that.

MELANIE

Screw the NFL.

GERI

So you want to win now?

MELANIE

We're so close. It's a great underdog story.

The blue flag SNAPS LOUDLY, then topples.

**EXT. TOP OF SAND DUNE - DAY**

Geri and Melanie rise from below the lip of the sand dune and head to the Jeep.

The WIND RUFFLES Geri's clothes. She looks off.

In the distance a dust storm brews.

**EXT./INT. WATTVX TRUCK - DAY**

On another sand dune sits the silent WattVX truck.

Inside, Heather looks at the dashboard map, taps the touch pad and the AI DRIVER takes control.

**INT. GERI'S JEEP - DAY**

Melanie takes a compass reading, points at a spot on the map.

MELANIE

Here.

GERI

I agree.

Melanie fist bumps Geri.

Looking out the window, Melanie eyes the dark brown sky blotting out the sun and frowns.

MELANIE

This storm?

GERI

We're close.

Geri puts the Jeep in gear.

**INT. VIDEO CONTROL AREA - DAY**

Victoria, Louise and Jefferson huddle behind Rachel as they nervously watch Geri's dash cam which show's swirling sand.

JEFFERSON

Visibility is getting worse.



VICTORIA  
(to Louise)  
Send out a satellite call to the  
teams still on course. We need to  
get everybody in.

Louise rushes to the comms area.

**EXT./INT. SAND DUNE - DAY**

Geri's Jeep traverses a dune through blowing sand.

Inside, the PING of sand hitting metal and glass. WIND  
WHISTLES through the roof rack.

Melanie grips the grab bar and glances at Geri who's fighting  
the steering wheel.

Nearby, the WattVX truck crests the top lip of a dune into a  
near brownout of blowing sand.

The WattVX dash lights up with error messages.

AI (VIA SPEAKERS)  
Communication link error. Manual  
control required.

GERI'S JEEP

Melanie looks at the map, then the compass.

MELANIE  
We should be close to the hidden  
checkpoint.

GERI  
You're sure.

MELANIE  
No. But keep going.

Melanie points slightly right.

Geri turns the steering wheel. The over-inflated right tire  
digs in. She yanks hard. Tires spin.

Through the windshield the dust briefly thins and the WattVX  
truck appears ahead. Dust swirls and it vanishes.

WATTVX TRUCK

Heather frantically grabs at the steering wheel.

AI (VIA SPEAKERS)  
 Communication link error. Manual  
 control required.

The WattVX truck continues forward out-of-control. The driver's front tire hangs over air a moment, then the hood of the truck dips.

GERI'S JEEP

Melanie squints at the WattVX truck.

MELANIE  
 What are they doing?

AI (O.S. FAINTLY)  
 Communication link error. Manual  
 control required. Communication  
 link error. Manual...

WATTVX TRUCK

The WattVX truck pitches over the side. Tumbles end-over-end down the sand dune.

The AI drones on as Heather and Pat SCREAM. GLASS SHATTERS.

GERI'S JEEP

Geri downshifts. Punches the gas pedal. Heads to the lip where WattVX disappeared.

GERI  
 Hang on.

Geri shifts into gear, points the Jeep over the lip of the dune. The Jeep lurches and the rear wheels slide.

GERI  
 Come on baby, grip!

The over-inflated right front tire digs in and the rear end slides out. The Jeep teeters precariously on two tires.

SLOWLY the Jeep tips over and slides down the sand dune on its passenger side.

GERI  
 Shiiiiitttt!!!

MELANIE  
 Ahhhhhhh!!!

**EXT. FINISH LINE - DAY**

The brown sky blocks the sun. Dust swirls around the inflatable finish arch, it strains, then rips away.

Through the dust headlights appear.

Kayla's Electric Jeep rolls to a stop at the finish line. Rally official Brenda steps to Kayla's door.

Kayla rolls down the window, COUGHS, holds the YB Tracker out the window, presses the button.

Brenda takes the tracker, makes a note on her clipboard.

BRENDA

You're just a bit off time. Not bad in these conditions. Any problems?

KAYLA

No. We blew off the black checkpoint to get in.

BRENDA

Good decision.

KAYLA

How long's my mom been in?

BRENDA

They're not in yet.

**INT. COMMS BUS - DAY**

Victoria and Jefferson stare at the topo map monitor which is devoid of vehicle icons.

Louise and her team frantically tap buttons.

The WIND WHISTLES as Kayla wrestles the door of the bus open. Amber, Lulu and Crystal pile in.

Kayla notices Louise tapping. Sees the blank topo map.

KAYLA

What's going on? Where's my mom?

JEFFERSON

The storm is blocking all communication signals.

Victoria points to a spot on the topo map screen.

VICTORIA  
Geri and Melanie's last location.

Victoria points nearby.

VICTORIA  
And WattVX was last seen here.

**INT. GERI'S JEEP - DAY**

Geri's Jeep rests on its passenger side.

METAL CREAKS. GLASS FALLS. The WIND GUSTS.

Geri hangs sideways in her safety harness.

Melanie dangles below her over the passenger door.

AI (O.S. FAINTLY)  
Communication link error. Manual  
control required...

Blood oozes from a gash on Melanie's chin and there's a  
bruise on her cheek.

A cut at Geri's hairline seeps blood.

GERI  
Melanie?

MELANIE  
Yeah?

GERI  
Are you alright?

MELANIE  
Maybe...

Melanie assesses her condition. She rubs the gash.

MELANIE  
Esss!

GERI  
What's wrong?

MELANIE  
Banged up a bit, but I'll survive.  
You?

GERI  
Fine. I'm fine.

MELANIE  
Gawd. That was crazy.

GERI  
I'm sorry.

MELANIE  
Ehh.

Melanie rakes her eyes over the sideways Jeep.

MELANIE  
Okay! What's the plan?

A GUST hits the Jeep. They SPIT out sand.

GERI  
Puh!... Can you get out of your  
harness?

Melanie pushes on the release button. The harness releases and she PLOPS sideways onto the door.

MELANIE  
Ow!

Geri braces her feet on the dash, grasps the grab bar with a bloody hand, pushes the harness release button, then wrestles her way free.

She grabs the outside door handle through the broken window, hoists herself up and over the side of the door and tumbles onto the ground.

GERI (O.S.)  
Oomph.

MELANIE  
Are you okay?

GERI (O.S.)  
Fine, fine... I'll help you over.

Melanie grabs the steering wheel. Muscles herself up.

Out the broken window Melanie grabs Geri's hand.

Melanie slowly slides headfirst into Geri's arms.

Beyond Geri's Jeep the crumpled WattVX truck appears through the billowing sand, resting on it's roof. The AI drones ever quieter--

AI  
Communication link error. Manual  
control required. Communica--

The AI abruptly stops. From the undercarriage a wisp of smoke, a CRACKLE and then a flame.

Geri untangles from Melanie and races to the truck.

**INT. COMMS BUS - DAY**

Louise punches buttons on the satellite phone.

VICTORIA  
Any luck?

LOUISE  
No.

KAYLA  
It's my fault.

VICTORIA  
It's no one's fault.

KAYLA  
She wants to prove me wrong.

Jefferson looks confused.

KAYLA  
That she's too old.

VICTORIA  
Oh, Kayla.

JEFFERSON  
I'm gonna go out there, find them.

KAYLA  
I coming.

VICTORIA  
No one's going anywhere.

JEFFERSON  
We have to do something.

Victoria folds her arms, stands firm.

VICTORIA  
We'll act when it's safe.

**EXT. WATTVX TRUCK - DAY**

Heather and Pat hang upside down, unconscious. Heather MOANS, then her eyes flutter.

Geri slides to the ground on Heather's side and Melanie falls to her knees by Pat.

GERI

There's not much time. Get her out of the harness. Don't worry about being gentle.

A CRACKLE as the batteries chemically react and combust.

A dazed Heather squints at Geri.

HEATHER

Geri?

GERI

Yeah. This might hurt.

HEATHER

I'm sorry.

Geri presses the release button and catches Heather as she slumps. She quickly drags her away from the truck.

Melanie squats in the cab, releases the harness and the unconscious Pat drops on top of her in a tangle of limbs.

Flames engulf the exposed underside of the truck and black smoke swirls in the wind.

Geri stumbles to Melanie's side. Geri frantically pulls on an arm and then a leg and Melanie pushes.

GERI

Come on! Come on!

Melanie and Pat tumble onto the ground. Geri quickly grabs Pat's legs and drags her away from the burning truck as the cab catches on fire.

Melanie slumps next to Pat and sees the truck.

MELANIE

Oh, my God!

LATER

Heather and Pat lay next to each other in the sand. Heather sadly stares at the burning truck.

Geri bends over Pat with her water jug, pours some on a rag then wipes Pat's face.

Her eyes closed, Pat sputters and pushes at the rag.

PAT  
Stop it.

GERI  
Pat!

PAT  
Leave me alone.

GERI  
Wake up, Pat.

Pat opens her eyes.

PAT  
What happened to you?

GERI  
There's been an accident.

PAT  
Heather?

HEATHER  
I'm here.

Pat gazes at Heather who's staring at the burning truck. Pat turns her head toward the truck and cries out.

HEATHER  
It's over Pat.

PAT  
No, no, no!

A GUST OF WIND kicks sand up and Geri COUGHS.

GERI  
We need to get out of here.

Geri heads to Melanie and critically scans the Jeep.

GERI  
She might be drivable. Takes a lot to stop one of these old Jeeps.

Melanie skeptically eyes the Jeep on its side.



GERI

We just need to get the Jeep back  
on her tires.

MELANIE

So simple.

GERI

I've got an idea. Might work.

LATER

In the back of the Jeep Geri pulls a shovel from the jumble of gear. Drops it next to the inflatable exhaust jack, a metal high-lift jack, and MaxTrax traction plates.

Geri hands Melanie the shovel and picks up the exhaust jack.

GERI

I think we can get enough lift to  
push it over.

MELANIE

Really?

Geri digs sand out from behind the hidden front tire.

She sits on the sand and uses her feet to wedge the exhaust jack under the side of the Jeep.

Geri muscles the exhaust hose over the busted snorkel.

At the rear she digs. Slides in a MaxTrax. Wedges the high-jack (a tall metal jack) under the Jeep.

Geri eyes the two jacks thoughtfully.

GERI

I think this will work. Maybe.

Geri GRUNTS as she crawls through the back of the sideways Jeep.

She hoists herself over the drivers seat. Hangs from the grab bar. Dangles her foot over the clutch, pushes it in and puts the stick into neutral.

She turns the key. The engine COUGHS, then RUMBLES to life.

The exhaust jack slowly inflates.

Geri tumbles out the back of the Jeep as Melanie pumps the handle up and down on the high jack.

The Jeep slowly lifts. The exhaust jack maxes out and Melanie gives a final pump on the high jack.

They stare at the Jeep.

NOTHING HAPPENS.

GERI  
Come on, baby.

Geri grabs the tailgate and hangs. Melanie joins her.

MELANIE  
Come on!

The Jeep teeters.

Geri and Melanie tumble off.

BEAT

Gravity takes over and the Jeep topples onto its tires.

MELANIE  
Woohoo. We did it, We did it.

Melanie does a short version of her touchdown dance.

Heather feebly CLAPS.

HEATHER  
The crowd goes wild.

Heather COUGHS, then MOANS and doubles over in pain.

Geri and Melanie exchange a look of concern, then Geri dashes over to the Jeep and quickly drags gear out of the back.

LATER

Geri carefully inspects the Jeep.

The front tire draws her attention. She touches the tire, frowns. Lets out air.

A BIT LATER

In the back of the Jeep Heather and Pat lay across the folded down back seat and cargo area. Melanie makes Heather comfortable while Geri tucks a sleeping bag around Pat.

PAT  
This wasn't supposed to happen.

GERI

Uh, huh. Just relax Pat. There's other trucks.

HEATHER

No. That was the last one.

GERI

You competed with your only truck?

HEATHER

We're out of money.

PAT

We needed to beat Jeep's EVs.

HEATHER

Potential investors want to back a proven winner.

GERI

So you cheated!

Pat SIGHS and closes her eyes.

PAT

Yes.

Heather COUGHS, then MOANS.

GERI

Let's go.

Melanie retrieves the satellite phone. No signal.

Melanie and Geri latch their safety harnesses and exchange a look. Geri turns the key and the Jeep RUMBLES to life.

Melanie holds her breath as Geri shifts into low.

The Jeep creeps forward. Geri muscles the steering wheel and the Jeep slowly turns. She lines up straight to the dune, lets out the clutch and increases speed.

They hit the side of the dune and the Jeep's tires spin, then grab. Heather and Pat GROAN.

MELANIE

Go, go, go, go!

They fishtail, then climb upward.

Momentum slows to a crawl.

Melanie pats the dash.

MELANIE  
Come on. Come on.

Tires spin sand.

TOP OF THE DUNE

The nose of the Jeep appears. It crawls to a stop.

Sand swirls, then lessens. A few yards of the dune appear.

Melanie looks at Heather and Pat.

MELANIE  
Heather. Pat. Are you okay?

PAT  
My head hurts.

MELANIE  
Heather?

There's no response from Heather.

GERI  
Try the tracker?

Melanie contorts to feel around the seat. On the side by the door she finds the compass and finally the YB tracker.

MELANIE  
There's a weak signal.

Melanie holds the YB Tracker out the window and CLICKS. She sees coordinates, finds the map, notes their location.

MELANIE  
Base camp is two miles away.

Determined, Geri throws the Jeep into gear.

#### **INT. COMMS BUS - DAY**

Louise's head rests on her outstretched arm and one finger rhythmically taps a key.

Kayla, Amber, Lulu and Crystal slouch against each other on the couch.

Victoria stares at the topo map monitor while Jefferson paces.



On her camera Melanie leans forward, retrieves the satellite phone from the glove box and answers.

MELANIE (ON SCREEN)

Hello?

VICTORIA

It's Victoria. What's your situation?

MELANIE (ON SCREEN)

Geri and I are okay. Pat has a concussion. Heather... I think Heather may have internal injuries.

VICTORIA

We'll send a rescue team to you.

GERI (ON SCREEN)

We're less than two miles out. Tell her we'll be to base camp before they can get to us.

VICTORIA

I heard that. Okay. We'll be ready.

Amber runs out of the bus.

**INT.GERI'S JEEP - (DRIVING) - DAY**

Melanie squints through the windshield. The lights of base camp are visible in the distance.

MELANIE

There.

Geri stomps on the gas pedal. They lurch forward, fast and bounce over a bump. Pat GROANS.

Headlights glowing Geri's Jeep spews out of a dust cloud.

**FINISH LINE**

At Base Camp Brenda notices the headlights and cloud of dust.

BRENDA

(yells)

Here they come.

Amber and two medics dash out of the Medical tent.

Ashlee and camerawoman Jan push through the crowd gathered at the finish line.

The crowd parts as the medics rush to the finish line.

Kayla and Jefferson follow in their wake.

GERI'S JEEP

The Jeep speeds toward the finish line.

GERI  
Give me the tracker.

PAT  
Always the competitor, huh Geri?

GERI  
I don't care if we're last. We're  
finishing this rally.

**EXT. FINISH LINE - DAY**

Geri's Jeep slows, then slides to a stop next to Brenda.

Geri points the YB Tracker out the window and CLICKS, hands it to a startled Brenda.

The medics descend on the Jeep.

Geri calmly gets out and is nearly tackled by Kayla.

Jefferson grabs both to keep them from falling and it turns into an emotional three-way hug.

Melanie crawls out Geri's door and Lulu and Crystal quickly surround her.

Behind them Amber hustles behind the medics and rally staff who carry Heather and Pat off on stretchers.

LATER

A medevac helicopter lifts off in the darkening sky as a CRYING Amber watches. Lulu and Crystal lead her away.

**INT. MEDIC TENT - DAY**

Melanie sits while Medic 1 cleans the gash on her chin.

Jefferson holds Geri's hand and Kayla is near tears. Geri flinches as Medic 2 gently scrubs the cut on her forehead.

JEFFERSON  
Sorry about your Jeep.

GERI

She's a testament to the Jeep  
legacy.

JEFFERSON

That she is. Your dad would be  
proud... I'm proud.

A disturbed Victoria fidgets.

VICTORIA

Melanie. This wasn't what I  
expected.

MELANIE

I won't lie, it was scary. But it's  
a great story!

Victoria smiles wryly.

Lulu and Crystal escort a tense Amber into the tent.

Melanie HISSES as Medic 1 stitches her gash.

Amber jerks.

Geri gazes thoughtfully at Amber.

GERI

Are you okay, Amber?

Amber tries to back away.

GERI

Your navigation errors. They  
weren't really mistakes were they?

KAYLA

What?!

GERI

And the charging problems?

Amber looks frantic.

GERI

The tires?

Amber MOANS, then CRIES.

Jefferson stiffens and Kayla angrily GAPES at Amber.

MELANIE

What the hell?!



**INT. JEEP SUPPORT TRAILER - EVENING**

On the couch Jefferson holds Geri's hand. On her other side Kayla's head is on Geri's shoulder.

Melanie is sprawled on a chair with Lulu and Crystal nearby.

Victoria bangs through the door.

VICTORIA

This is crazy. What the hell is going on?!

MELANIE

WattVX is out of money. They needed to win or at least beat Jeep.

GERI

Heather and Pat had help from outside and Amber was on the inside to sabotage the Jeep team.

VICTORIA

Kayla, I'm sorry I had to disqualify you.

KAYLA

I understand.

JEFFERSON

Amber played me! I'll be pursuing corporate espionage charges against all three of them.

VICTORIA

Damn. I don't want the Desert Belle to be about winning at all costs.

GERI

I agree.

KAYLA

Really? Now you don't care about winning?

Geri locks eyes with Melanie.

GERI

It's not the only thing that matters.

Kayla shakes her head.

Melanie jumps up.

MELANIE

We've got a gala to get ready for.

VICTORIA

Yes! Lets make the best of this for the others.

Lulu and Crystal pop up.

Kayla stares at Geri, hugs her and heads off.

Jefferson kisses Geri on the cheek and stands.

JEFFERSON

I agree.

Geri sits alone on the couch.

MELANIE

Alright girlfriend. Time to get primped up for the party.

GERI

Ehh. I'm not going.

Melanie muscled Geri to her feet.

MELANIE

Yes. You. Are.

**INT. JEEP SUPPORT TRAILER - NIGHT**

Geri, in black jeans, a T-shirt and work boots, reclines on the bed watching Kayla, Lulu and Crystal.

Melanie opens her purple suitcase and rifles through bright colored tops, scarves and blingy shoes.

Kayla, Crystal and Lulu GIGGLE as they squeeze out of the bedroom.

Melanie throws a shiny, silver dress on Geri's lap.

GERI

Nope. I don't do dresses.

Melanie pulls out a pair of red and gold sequined tennis shoes, then eyes Geri thoughtfully.

MELANIE

I can make this work.

GERI

No.

Melanie rubs the bandage on her forehead.

MELANIE

Ow.

GERI

God! Puppy eyes and pain.

Geri jerkily gets to her feet.

GERI

Lets get this over with.

**INT. BASE CAMP TENT - NIGHT**

Strings of party lights, colored spotlights and shiny fabric drapes turn the tent into a fancy banquet hall.

A DJ SPINS RECORDS providing an upbeat mix of dance music.

Kayla, Lulu and Crystal hold champagne glasses and chat with two other women competitors.

Jefferson strolls under the balloon arch entry. He looks sharp in his custom black suit. He looks around, then heads to Kayla's group.

JEFFERSON

Evening ladies.

Jefferson makes a slight bow.

Kayla, Lulu and Crystal GIGGLE.

Jefferson glances around the room.

KAYLA

Looking for someone?

Kayla looks to the entryway. Jefferson follows her gaze.

Paused in the entryway is Geri, dressed up and blinged up, her hair spiked and makeup done.

She's still Geri in black jeans, but there's a red silk top under a black leather jacket, a shiny gold scarf around her neck and the gold and red sparkly tennis shoes.

Jefferson's COUGH smothers a gasp.

Geri scans the crowd, then locks eyes with Jefferson as Melanie steps beside her. Melanie notices and smiles.

MELANIE

Alright girlfriend. Let's do this.

Melanie links arms with Geri.

As they stroll they're repeatedly stopped by competitors commending them.

Victoria steps to the podium. She wears a shimmery evening gown in the purple and black colors of the Desert Belle.

VICTORIA

Good evening Desert Belles!

The crowd hustles to tables.

Geri, Melanie, Jefferson, Kayla, Lulu and Crystal claim a table.

VICTORIA

Finishing the Desert Belle is a tremendous accomplishment. Congratulations to all of you.

APPLAUSE and CHEERS.

VICTORIA

A special thank you to our sponsors...

Geri, Melanie, Kayla, Lulu and Crystal gaze at Jefferson and vigorously APPLAUD as does the crowd.

Jefferson nods in appreciation.

VICTORIA (O.S.)

Who make this possible.

Louise and Felice carry giant checks and lean them against the back of the stage, only the blank back visible while Brenda hands a sheet of paper to Victoria.

VICTORIA

Now it's time for the giant checks.

More APPLAUSE, HOOTS and WHISTLES.

Victoria glances at the sheet of paper.

VICTORIA

This was the wildest final day ever, causing lots of changes in placements. Now that the dust has settled...

The audience SPUTTERS at her lame joke.

VICTORIA

Alright, alright... In third place.

Louise grabs a giant check, flips the check around. Written on the check is "Crystal Sampson and Lulu Ang".

VICTORIA

Team... 105! Sponsored by Jeep.

Crystal and Lulu jump up, laughing and screaming as they jog to the stage.

Jefferson and the other ladies applaud enthusiastically. Melanie WOLF WHISTLES.

Louise hands the giant check to Crystal and Lulu who bounce up and down.

Felice guides them off the stage where photographers take their photos.

VICTORIA

In second place... Team 133.  
Sponsored by Cali Dairy Producers.

The cow car team screams and races to the stage.

Geri shrugs at Melanie who CHUCKLES.

VICTORIA

Before I announce the first place finishers I want to give a shout out to the winners of today's stage... In a masterful show of driving... Congratulations Team 162. Geri Leigh and Melanie Gil.

Melanie's mouth drops open as Geri stares in shock at Jefferson who grins. The crowd APPLAUDS.

Melanie raises her palms up. Geri smiles and vigorously high fives Melanie.

VICTORIA

And one more thing...

The crowd GROANS.

VICTORIA

They are also the WINNERS of this  
year's Desert Belle!

The crowd erupts in APPLAUSE, CHEERS, WHISTLES.

Melanie jumps up and yanks Geri to her feet.

Melanie goes into her happy dance.

Geri grins and joins in the dance.

They shimmy and flail their arms to the stage in a routine  
worthy of a super bowl touchdown.

**INT. JOE'S DESERT MOTORSPORTS - DAY**

Hands hang the giant Desert Belle check on the wall. On the  
TO line is: "Geri Leigh and Melanie Gil". The amount is  
"\$100,000".

Geri steps back to stand beside Kayla who puts her arm around  
Geri's waist.

Kayla leans her head on Geri's shoulder.

KAYLA

Grandpop would be pleased.

They gaze at the check proudly.

FADE TO BLACK.