

"LONG WAY"

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FADE IN:

EXT. THERESA AVENUE PUB AND GRILL, ST. LOUIS, MO - DAY

This is a sprawling, modern-looking attraction attached to a six-story apartment building in St. Louis' Midtown area.

INT. THERESA AVENUE PUB AND GRILL DINING ROOM - DAY

NOT ONE EMPTY SEAT on this mid-May Friday afternoon.

CUSTOMERS of almost all ages gab, chow down, drink, and/or watch SPORTS EVENTS on big-screen TVs that line the walls.

Most people occupy tables for foursomes...other folks line the bar.

FOUR FOOD SERVERS (all wear black T-shirts) look after eaters at the tables.

Food server ALLYSON MARIE "ALLY" DELMEGE (24, independent, a bit slick) stands at a middle table...where FOUR MEN (20s-30s) chow their way through a hot-chicken-wing-eating contest...with only beer to drink.

Ally looks exhausted...some kind of exasperated.

MAN #1
(through bites)
Hey, Ally, you timin' this?

ALLY
Is St. Louis the home of Bud Light?

The four chicken eaters groan.

Ally sticks out her watch-laden arm...and Man #1 nods.

ALLY (CONT'D)
You've got one minute.

MAN #2
I don't think we're gonna make it.

MAN #3
(to Man #2)
Well, if you'd shut up and eat--

Man #2 picks up one of his remaining wings.

MAN #2
(studies that wing)
Here...goes...

ALLY
Gotta go. I've got other customers.

MAN #4
I'm done!

Man #2 wolfs down his wing...Man #4 pushes his own now-empty plate aside...Man #1 and Man #3 stare at Man #4.

MAN #4 (CONT'D)
I won!

Ally slips away from the table.

MAN #4 (CONT'D)
(to Ally)
Where's my T-shirt for winning?

SAME SCENE - A BIT LATER

Ally returns to the middle table...and stares at what the four wing eaters left behind.

Her mouth flies open when she eyeballs...a plate where...vomit covers a few remaining chicken wings.

ALLY
That sure ain't our new spicy
barbecue sauce.

And she attempts to clear the table.

EXT. DELMAR BOULEVARD - DAY

A 2010 Honda Civic blends in with the eastbound traffic.

INT. HONDA CIVIC - DAY

Ally drives; her car's stereo BLARES OUT a rock station.

Doggie bags from the eatery line the Honda's back seat.

She watches TWO TRUCKERS unload their big rig alongside a Chinese restaurant about a block ahead.

A smile of understanding crosses Ally's face.

EXT. STL PLASTICS - DAY

Part of a sprawling, one-story building along Interstate 64.

INT. STL PLASTICS PRODUCTION FLOOR - DAY

EMPLOYEES OF ALL GENDER IDENTITIES use a variety of machines to turn out various plastic products.

ONE PERSON (a woman in her 30s) creates thin plastic strips with a thermoline bending machine.

ANOTHER WORKER (a man in his 50s) operates a die-cutting press...and almost cuts himself.

SHERYL HASKINS (24, generous, unpretentious, Black) watches A THIRD FABRICATOR (a woman in her 60s) transfer plastic creations from another bending machine to a cooling fixture.

A SHRILL, PIERCING NOISE from the other side of the room catches everybody's attention.

SHERYL
That effing grinder!

Sheryl jogs to the other side of the room...when A SIMILAR NOISE in the same vicinity erupts.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
I should've brought my earplugs.

On the other side of the room, CODY MCCALL and RIVER CASHMAN (both 20s) leave their injection molding machines to go to their grinders...devices that CONTINUE TO SCREAM.

River and Cody look lost.

The two men head back to their machines.

Cody wads a sheet of newspaper on his table into a ball...

CODY
Hey, River, wanna play catch?

...when Sheryl arrives at the trouble spot.

RIVER
Sheryl?

Sheryl's is a slow nod.

RIVER (CONT'D)
I thought you were in HR.

She locates the "STOP" button on Cody's grinder and shuts the device off.

Cody sets the paper ball back on his table.

SHERYL

I AM!

Sheryl tries the "STOP" button on River's grinder.

It doesn't work.

So...she yanks the grinder's power cord out of the wall.

SHERYL (CONT'D)

Cody...River...don't you two
remember the video we showed you
about how to use a grinder?

River and Cody point to each other...both in confusion.

EXT. COMPTON AVENUE - DAY

Northbound traffic winces along due to an eighteen-wheeler at the very front.

Right behind the truck: A 2016 Ford Fusion.

INT. FORD FUSION - DAY

Driver Sheryl takes deep breaths in her silent ride home.

She reaches for the power button on her car's stereo...only to gesture herself out of the decision.

EXT. CORNER OF COMPTON AVENUE AND DELMAR BOULEVARD - DAY

The big rig's left turn signal comes on...the truck negotiates its way onto Delmar.

INT. FORD FUSION - DAY

Sheryl does a happy doubletake...

EXT. CORNER OF COMPTON AVENUE AND DELMAR BOULEVARD - DAY

...because the eighteen-wheeler's driver is A WOMAN.

INT. FORD FUSION - DAY

Sheryl shoots a brief glance upward while she stays on Compton Avenue.

SHERYL

Grandma Bernadine...you would've
been proud.

MAIN TITLES APPEAR OVER ACTION.

Bernadine's granddaughter pushes the stereo power button.

EXT. FRANKLIN AVENUE APARTMENTS - DAY

Sheryl's car pulls into the parking lot of a series of early-Twentieth-Century rowhouses converted into apartments.

She finds a space not too far from Ally's Civic.

INT. ALLY'S AND SHERYL'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Sheryl and Ally watch A TV NEWSCAST from a sofa in this smallish-but-well-furnished (maybe cluttered) space.

ALLY

Sheryl, those royals got it made.

Ally catches her roommate's puzzled look.

ALLY (CONT'D)

Prince Harry...Meghan Markle...I mean the Duchess of Sussex...King Charles...they might have their--

SHERYL

You think they've got it made?

ALLY

They might have their troubles...but those royals don't have to want for a thing.

SHERYL

Well...

ALLY

Well, they don't have to work at a restaurant where a million folks complain about a cockroach crawling out of a bowl of split pea soup.

A chuckling Sheryl grabs the clicker to MUTE the TV's sound.

ALLY (CONT'D)

And doing a terrible backstroke!

SHERYL

Ally...wouldn't that be enough to shut the place down?

ALLY

Nope.

Ally leaves the sofa, struts toward the kitchen, and...

ALLY (CONT'D)

Losing those crowds from Cardinals
games and Blues games and Billikens
games would shut the place down.

...returns with two doggie bags.

SHERYL

(setting clicker down)
I'll set up the trays.

Sheryl opens the closet, where she pulls out two TV trays.

ALLY

We don't have to worry about the
Battlehawks fans.

Now Sheryl unfolds the trays and sets them in front of the
sofa before she closes the closet.

ALLY (CONT'D)

They go to that sports bar over by
the dome.

Ally hands one doggie bag to Sheryl.

SHERYL

(accepts bag)
Speaking of having it made...

Both women sit back down on the sofa.

SHERYL (CONT'D)

Your Grandma Valentina and my
Grandma Bernadine had it made.

The twosome open their bags.

SHERYL (CONT'D)

They really had it made.

Ally pulls half a steak sandwich from her bag.

SHERYL (CONT'D)

Our grandmas made one Hell of an
over-the-road trucking team.

Sheryl observes her roomie's slow nod.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
I thought about them while I was
coming home from work.

ALLY
(takes a bite)
Me, too.

Sheryl looks surprised.

Her surprise increases when she removes an entire pizza
burger from her own sack.

She eyeballs her roommate.

ALLY (CONT'D)
The customer who ordered that told
me she didn't like pepperoni.

A nodding Sheryl takes a bite.

ALLY (CONT'D)
She wanted mushrooms on it.

Ally lifts some fries from her sack.

ALLY (CONT'D)
When I told her we were outa
mushrooms, she stormed outa there.

SHERYL
You know...trucking's better than
what we both do for a living.

Sheryl puts her bag on her tray...Ally follows suit.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
On my way home from work, I saw a
woman driving a big rig.

ALLY
Anybody give her a middle finger?

Sheryl shakes her head "no."

SHERYL
Somebody at that factory I work at
oughta give the middle finger to
that maintenance crew over in
production.

ALLY
Huh?

SHERYL
I had to go over there and fix two
of the grinders.

ALLY
(between bites)
Again?

SHERYL
Again.
(taking another bite)
If they hired the two guys from
"Dumb and Dumber," they'd do a
better job.

Ally's mouth flies open.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
The two guys from "Dumb and
Dumber."

ALLY
Two guys...come to think of it, I
saw two guys unloading a truck
while I was coming home from work.

Sheryl rises from the sofa...

SHERYL
What would you like to drink?

ALLY
Anything's fine.

...and heads for the kitchen.

ALLY (CONT'D)
We have anything in there that's
eighty-six proof?

SAME SCENE - A BIT LATER

Ally and Sheryl continue to eat...but now, each woman also
has a bottle of water/pop/juice/tea.

The two buddies eyeball each other.

SHERYL
You've got a job where some people
use the dining room for a bathroom.

ALLY

And you've got a job where the maintenance crew spends more time in the bathroom than on the production floor.

SHERYL

(pointing to Ally)

Back in the day, our grandmas made the right move.

ALLY

Even if it wasn't easy.

SHERYL

Whaddya say we go into trucking, too?

ALLY

And team up like our grannies did?

SHERYL

We've been friends ever since grade school back in Des Moines...

Ally takes a swig...Sheryl takes a bite.

ALLY

We went to college together here in St. Louis...we're living together...in the same apartment...

SHERYL

Why can't we work together...in the same job?

ALLY

At the same company!

The two BFFs click their bottles.

ALLY (CONT'D)

The same trucking company!

One more click of the twosome's bottles before Ally's expression changes.

ALLY (CONT'D)

You know what, Sheryl? I forgot to bring dessert.

SHERYL

Don't sweat it. It's all right.

Ally and Sheryl click their bottles again.

EXT. STL PLASTICS - DAY

A big rig heads toward the loading dock.

INT. STL PLASTICS HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE - DAY

FIVE EMPLOYEES (three women, two men) sit and type on laptops at tables joined together into an "L."

At her desk, BLAIR WOODEN (40s) stares at her computer monitor while she works on the company's compensation-and-benefits packages.

Behind the "L," TRAVIS KUESTER (50s) shakes hands with CARSON WUEST (30s)...the only person in the room in jeans.

TRAVIS

Carson, welcome to STL Plastics,
Inc. You've made the right choice
by joining our team.

Sheryl jogs into the office...

BLAIR

(watching Sheryl)
Look what the cat dragged in...

...and plops herself into a seat at another table, where she powers her laptop on.

CARSON

Uh...thank you, Mr. Kuester.

TRAVIS

No, no, no, no! Call me Travis!

A few mouse clicks take Sheryl to the page she's after: One about company culture.

TRAVIS (CONT'D)

You'll find we're family around
here...we're a bit informal.

Carson and Travis break their handshake.

CARSON

I've...got it, Travis.

TRAVIS

We'll see you Monday morning at
eight o'clock.

The HR staff watches Carson wave goodbye on his way out.

CARSON
Thanks for everything!

With Carson out the door, Blair strides over to Sheryl.

BLAIR
Where ya been?

SHERYL
Well, Blair...take a guess.

Blair looks stumped...Travis wanders over to Blair's side.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
Cameron...the supervisor over in
production...got together with
Travis to send me to production to
fix a cooling station.

TRAVIS
Sheryl...you really are a pretty
good mechanic.

SHERYL
But, Travis, you hired me to be
part of the human resources
department...not production!

TRAVIS
(gesturing)
You know how hard it is for us to
keep good production people here.
Especially mechanics.

Sheryl eyeballs Blair...then Travis.

BLAIR
Well, don't look at me!

SHERYL
Blair, you're in charge of payroll!

Blair's is a slow nod.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
Now...about Carson...is he gonna be
our newest mechanic?

TRAVIS
Uh...no.

Sheryl's mouth drops open.

TRAVIS (CONT'D)
He's gonna run our public relations
department...starting on Monday.

And Sheryl takes a deep breath.

INT. THERESA AVENUE PUB AND GRILL DINING ROOM - DAY

FOUR COLLEGE STUDENTS (two men and two women; all in their
early 20s) sit at a middle table while Ally looks after
them...or tries to.

Each collegian nurses a beer.

MALE STUDENT #1
(stares Ally down)
Hey, Kristin, where's our food?

ALLY
You've only been here five minutes.

Ally points to her name tag.

ALLY (CONT'D)
See this tag? My name's Ally.

A couple of the customers nod.

FEMALE STUDENT #1
Like that road in back of this
restaurant?

ALLY
No. That's A-L-L-E-Y.
(thumbs her tag again)
I'm A-L-L-Y.

Both male students chuckle.

MALE STUDENT #2
But, no...where's our food at?

ALLY
You'll just have to wait. This
isn't McDonald's or Burger King.

FEMALE STUDENT #2
It isn't?

ALLY
 When you got here, did you see any
 arches in front of the building?

Male Student #1 scoots his seat back...

ALLY (CONT'D)
 And besides...all four of you
 ordered a whole lotta food.

...takes his shoes off, and...

FEMALE STUDENT #1
 (to Male Student #1)
 What in Hell are you doing?

...sticks his stocking feet on the table!

MALE STUDENT #1
 See these arches?

The four students break out in boisterous laughter.

Ally looks infuriated.

SAME SCENE - THIRTY MINUTES LATER

At last, the four collegians chow down...in a room now
 teeming with ADDITIONAL CUSTOMERS.

Between bites, the quartet AD LIB a conversation.

Ally hands menus to A FAMILY OF FOUR at a table nearby the
 college students' one...when Male Student #2 rises from his
 seat and grabs Ally by the wrist.

MALE STUDENT #2
 Hey, Kelly! I wanna talk!

She shakes Male Student #2 off.

ALLY
 I'm busy! And I'm Ally!

MALE STUDENT #2
 Aw, damn it!

He snaps his fingers as he returns to his seat.

INT. STL PLASTICS HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE - DAY

The workday draws to a close when Sheryl turns her laptop
 off, jumps out of her seat, and...

SHERYL
 Hey, everybody, I'd like to talk to
 you for a little bit.

...gathers her seven HR colleagues around her.

BLAIR
 (shrugging)
 This better be good, Sheryl.

As the huddle forms around Sheryl in back of the "L," Travis
 strolls into the room.

TRAVIS
 Who's taking bets?

SHERYL
 Nobody, Travis...but you can join
 our huddle.

TRAVIS
 Okay.

Sheryl and her cohorts make room for Travis in the huddle.

BLAIR
 (staring Sheryl down)
 What's on your mind?

SHERYL
 During my lunch break, I got to
 thinking about all the running
 around I've been doing here these
 last three years...between here and
 the production floor.

A few employees groan...Blair's nod is listless.

TRAVIS
 Sheryl...

SHERYL
 And I thought to myself: "If I'm
 gonna run around like this, I'd
 just as soon drive a truck."

Some coworkers laugh...across from Sheryl, colleague BENITA
 HERRERA (30s) looks lost.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
 My maternal grandmother drove a
 truck for a living.

BENITA
A little bitty truck?

SHERYL
No, Benita...an eighteen-wheeler.

BLAIR
You gotta be kidding...

SHERYL
She loved it...and I've decided
that's what I want to do for a
living from now on.

Travis shakes his head "no."

Blair grits her teeth.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
That's it...I quit...I'm moving on!

BENITA
But you don't look like a truck
driver, Sheryl!

SHERYL
That's what people said about my
maternal grandmother...and she
proved 'em wrong.

Sixteen eyes stare Sheryl down.

TRAVIS
Sheryl...it took you three years to
come to that decision?

SHERYL
Weren't you listening?

Travis yanks earbuds out of his shirt pocket.

INT. THERESA AVENUE PUB AND GRILL DINING ROOM - DAY

The four collegians have stopped eating...but they leave
plenty of food at their table.

Ally stops by with four receipts.

Each student groans upon receiving his or her bill.

ALLY
 Would any of you like us to put
 your leftovers in boxes? You can
 always take 'em home.

Four sets of eyes stare at Ally.

ALLY (CONT'D)
 No extra charge for boxes.

MALE STUDENT #1
 Can't you give us a discount?

ALLY
 Sorry...we don't offer discounts.

FEMALE STUDENT #2
 That's all effed up!

ALLY
 That's our restaurant policy.

MALE STUDENT #2
 (stands up)
 Callie, why can't I take you home?

Male Student #1 chuckles.

ALLY
 My name is Ally!

ANDRES CRUZ (30s; the manager on duty) strolls over to the
 four students' table.

ANDRES
 Ally, is everything all right?

Male Student #2 sits back down.

FEMALE STUDENT #1
 Andres, we want a discount!

ANDRES
 Sorry...we don't give discounts
 here at the Theresa Avenue Pub and
 Grill. That's our policy.

MALE STUDENT #1
 But we're regulars!

ANDRES
 But we've never seen you before.

Ally turns to Andres.

ALLY
You got that right!

The students AD LIB their displeasure.

INT. THERESA AVENUE PUB AND GRILL MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY

Andres sits at his desk in this small, modest office; Ally (now in her civilian clothes) saunters in with her black T-shirt in her hands.

ALLY
Andres...I'm pulling the plug.

His mouth drops open.

ALLY (CONT'D)
I'm quitting.

ANDRES
But...but...

ALLY
I just don't wanna see another puke-filled plate...or another guy trying to hit on me.

Andres rises from his seat.

ANDRES
Ally...listen...

ALLY
I've decided I wanna be a truck driver...like my granny.

ANDRES
Ally...listen to me...you don't look like a truck driver.

ALLY
That's what they said about my granny...who drove a truck for forty-two years.

Ally sets her black T-shirt on Andres' desk.

ALLY (CONT'D)
If you don't mind, let me try something. Stay standing.

ANDRES
Whatcha gonna do?

She rubs her hands.

ALLY
Stretch out your arms.

ANDRES
Uh...oh...kay...

Andres stretches his arms...Ally grabs him by his armpits.

ALLY
Don't worry. I won't hurt you.

It isn't easy...but Ally manages to lift him off his feet.

ALLY (CONT'D)
Just wanted to show you I'm strong
enough to handle a big rig.

Ally grits her teeth as she continues to hold Andres aloft.

ALLY (CONT'D)
In forty-two years of driving an
eighteen-wheeler, my granny didn't
have to worry about warehouse
workers puking on her truck...even
if some of 'em probably wanted to.

ANDRES
Okay, Ally...put me down.

She gently places him back on his feet, shakes his hands,
and...

ALLY
So long...it's been nice to know
you.

...heads out the door.

ANDRES
Ally, wait!

Ally stops at the door.

ANDRES (CONT'D)
Don't say "puke." Say
"regurgitate."

ALLY
 When you're puking, you can't say
 "regurgitate."

With Ally out the door, Andres sits back down.

ANDRES
 That's twenty people that quit on
 me since last month!

Andres rests his chin on his fists.

EXT. FRANKLIN AVENUE APARTMENTS - DAY

At the break of day, Ally and Sheryl lug their suitcases
 toward the latter's Ford Fusion.

SHERYL
 The sooner we get out of here, the
 sooner we get to clear our minds.

Sheryl opens her car's trunk.

ALLY
 You got that right! I don't ever
 wanna be on the wrong end of a
 flying cheeseburger again! The
 pickle juice blinded me for a week!

The two women stuff their luggage into the Ford's trunk.

MONTAGE SEQUENCE

EXT. INTERSTATE 70 (MARK TWAIN EXPRESSWAY) - DAY

Sheryl's car cruises westbound as it and other vehicles pass
 by an industrial complex.

INT. FORD FUSION - DAY

Ally rides shotgun...Sheryl drives...both count big rigs.

When either woman notices an eighteen-wheeler, Ally writes it
 down in a notebook.

EXT. INTERSTATE 70, NEAR COLUMBIA, MO - DAY

Ally breaks out her cell phone...to snap a photo of the
 unfolding road.

Then she takes a picture of a bewildered Sheryl.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE, INDEPENDENCE, MO - DAY

Sheryl checks her car's oil while Ally fills the car's fuel tank...and the twosome draw funny looks from PASSERSBY.

EXT. FAST FOOD RESTAURANT, KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY

Ally and Sheryl stroll toward the place.

INT. FAST FOOD RESTAURANT DINING ROOM - DAY

The twosome dine to their hearts' content.

Sheryl does a doubletake when Ally breaks out that notebook...to write a restaurant review.

EXT. INTERSTATES 29 AND 35, KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY

Kaycee's skyline watches Sheryl's Ford and other vehicles go their way.

EXT. INTERSTATE 35, MISSOURI-IOWA BORDER - DAY

Sheryl's 2016 Fusion crosses the border...

INT. FORD FUSION - DAY

...and triggers boisterous cheering from passenger Sheryl and driver Ally.

Sheryl now uses Ally's notebook to count trucks...and that page fills up fast.

END MONTAGE

EXT. GRAY'S LAKE PARK, DES MOINES, IA - DAY

It's the Sunday before Memorial Day at this attraction southwest of downtown.

Some light boats glide along Gray's Lake in peace.

SEVERAL JOGGERS use the trail alongside the Raccoon River.

SOME OTHER PEOPLE stroll the Kruidenier Trail...the one right over the lake.

THREE OR FOUR BIKERS enjoy a roadway several feet away from the joggers' path.

TWO CHILDREN take advantage of the playground swings...so does A PARENT (who almost breaks the swing he/she uses).

The southwest picnic area hosts a two-family get-together: Ally, Sheryl, and A HOST OF RELATIVES chow down, shoot the breeze, and enjoy the fresh air.

Many sit at picnic tables...others use folding chairs...still other people stand.

Sheryl, Ally, and VIRGIL HENRY (74, patient, a thinker, Black; Sheryl's paternal granddad) click their pop/water/juice bottles together at a picnic table.

VIRGIL

So glad you two could make
it...it's always nice to see you.

SHERYL

It's always nice to see you, too,
Granddad.

ALLY

(takes a swig)
If only Bernadine could be here.

Virgil and Sheryl nod.

SHERYL

Actually, Ally...
(pointing skyward)
Bernadine's here. Watching us from
way up there.

Ally snaps her fingers in understanding.

VIRGIL

Sheryl...I'm glad you took the
words out of my mouth.

Sheryl and Virgil click their bottles again.

VALENTINA AUGER MCCOMBS (68, adventurous, humorous; Ally's maternal grandma) saunters over to Ally's, Sheryl's, and Virgil's picnic table.

VALENTINA

Allyson Marie...

Ally jumps from her seat, sets her bottle down, and eyeballs Valentina...

ALLY

Granny!

...then the twosome hug.

ALLY (CONT'D)
How's the ol' legend doing?

VALENTINA
You mean Bernadine, don't you?

VIRGIL
(to Valentina)
Takes one to know one!

Tablemates erupt in laughter.

The chuckles draw Sheryl's parents DARRYL HASKINS (50, opinionated) and BRUNELLA HENRY HASKINS (49, whimsical) to the table.

BRUNELLA
Dad, are you teasing Sheryl again?

VIRGIL
Are you kidding?

SHERYL
(to her folks)
Speaking of teasing...Ally and I
have something to tell you.

Brunella and Darryl eye each other in glee.

ALLY
And we're not joking.

DARRYL
You two got raises.

SHERYL
Nope.

Darryl grits his teeth.

BRUNELLA
You're coming right back here to
Des Moines.

Ally shakes her head sideways.

DARRYL
It's where you two belong.

SHERYL
Sorry, Dad.

DARRYL

You mean to tell me you two like living in a segregated city like St. Louis?

VALENTINA

Darryl...it's not what you think it is.

DARRYL

Hey now, wait a minute! Don't you remember what happened in 2014--

Pop bottles in hand, Ally's parents NATALIE MCCOMBS DELMEGE (43, highly authoritarian) and TIM DELMEGE (42, kooky) hurry to the picnic table.

VALENTINA

I'm talking about Ally and Sheryl's big announcement.

Natalie stares daggers at Valentina.

NATALIE

Mom, this better be good.

VALENTINA

Don't worry, Nat. It's all good.

Tim catches Natalie's wrathful look.

NATALIE

Timothy...Allyson never told us about this.

TIM

Well, she's grown.

NATALIE

Back me up!

TIM

She's an adult.

AUSTIN HENRY (47; Sheryl's roll-with-the-punches uncle) catches wind of the conversation-cum-argument...

NATALIE

And another thing: I don't like it when Mom calls me Nat.

...and gathers other Haskinses and Henrys around him.

Tim looks confused...Valentina grins.

NATALIE (CONT'D)
Never did.

TIM
Now you tell me.

SHERYL
Speaking of tell...

SAME SCENE - MINUTES LATER

Austin, Brunella, Darryl, Natalie, Tim, Valentina, Virgil, and other relatives surround Sheryl and Ally...who both stand on a cleared picnic table.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
Can you hear us?

TIM
Don't break the table!

Some in the throng laugh.

ALLY
We'll be all right, Dad!

Tim nods as his daughter and her BFF wait for crowd silence.

When the silence comes:

SHERYL
Anyway...Ally and I wanted to tell
you that we've quit our jobs.

Several audience members groan.

Natalie looks furious.

Darryl shakes his head back and forth.

Brunella slaps her own forehead.

Tim's confusion comes back...stronger.

ALLY
Sheryl and I are gonna become truck
drivers.

Virgil, Valentina, and Austin applaud...but Darryl and Natalie stare them down.

AUSTIN
They're grown.

More groans come from the throng.

AUSTIN (CONT'D)
They can do what they want.

SHERYL
We just wanted to follow in the
footsteps of my Grandma Bernadine.

ALLY
And in the footsteps of my Grandma
Valentina, too.

Many eyes turn to Valentina.

SHERYL
We've heard all the great stories
our grandmas told about being an
over-the-road trucking team.

ALLY
All the places they've been...

Natalie clenches her fists.

SHERYL
And we wanted in on that, too.

Austin, Valentina, and Virgil clap...only to field vicious
stares from Natalie, Brunella, and Darryl.

Others still look numb.

ALLY
Okay...any questions?

Natalie's hand shoots straight up.

ALLY (CONT'D)
Mom?

NATALIE
When you went to Saint Louis
University, what was your major?

ALLY
General studies.

NATALIE

What did you intend to do with the degree you got?

ALLY

Start my own business.

NATALIE

Instead, you became a waitress.

ALLY

Food server.

NATALIE

Don't talk back to me, young lady!

TIM

Natalie...that's what waiters and waitresses call themselves now.

Natalie glowers at Tim.

NATALIE

Timothy, you need to back me up!

SHERYL

That's right..."food server" is a gender-inclusive term.

DARRYL

(to Sheryl)

You're next on the witness stand.

Darryl watches Sheryl nod.

ALLY

Anyway...I was trying to raise the seed money to start my own business.

NATALIE

So what happened?

ALLY

I just got tired of facing rude customers...and I got tired of finding puke on people's plates.

Some in the throng groan.

ALLY (CONT'D)

Every single day.

A few relatives AD LIB their agreement.

VIRGIL
(to Valentina)
Ally's got a point.

ALLY
And besides, being a truck driver
is being your own businessperson.

VALENTINA
Ally, I like how you think.

ALLY
Thanks, Granny!

Austin and Virgil clap.

DARRYL
All right, Sheryl Haskins. Give.

Sheryl opens her mouth...but Brunella holds up her hand.

BRUNELLA
Sheryl...you studied management
science at Saint Louis University,
didn't you?

SHERYL
I did, Mom.

DARRYL
Instead of staying here in Des
Moines and going to Drake.

SHERYL
But they've got four major-league
professional sports teams in St.
Louis.

Austin counts on his fingers.

DARRYL
So?

BRUNELLA
At least you found a job that fit
your major.

A grinning Sheryl nods.

BRUNELLA (CONT'D)
Why'd you quit? They paid good!

SHERYL
Well, Mom, when STL Plastics hired
me, they put me in the HR
department like they promised.

DARRYL
So why'd you quit?

SHERYL
A year after they hired me, they
had me shuttling between the HR
office and the production floor.

In confusion, Austin turns to the woman next to him: MADELYN
VERSER (64), a sister-in-law of Virgil.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
I just got tired of them running me
ragged...they could've hired a full-
time mechanic instead of having me
do two jobs.

MADELYN
Uh huh...

SHERYL
I just wanted the kind of freedom
that Grandma Bernadine got from
driving a big rig.

MADELYN
(applauding)
Now you're talking, Sheryl!

DARRYL
Madelyn, you're outa your mind!

MADELYN
That's the same thing you said to
Bernadine...my sister!

DARRYL
Wait a minute--

BRUNELLA
See that, Sheryl?

SHERYL
I still want to drive a truck.

BRUNELLA
We didn't raise you to work in an
office that runs on diesel fuel!

Natalie and Darryl applaud.

SHERYL
 At least I'll get to see
 America...and not have to settle
 for elevator music.

Ally, Austin, Madelyn, Valentina, and Virgil cheer.

Tim joins them...and earns a dirty look from Natalie.

SAME SCENE - A BIT LATER

While other relatives clean up the picnic area, Virgil, Valentina, Sheryl, Madelyn, Austin, and Ally gravitate toward a nearby parking lot.

AUSTIN
 (to Madelyn)
 St. Louis has an MLB team, an NHL
 team, and an MLS team...but what's
 their fourth big-league team?

MADELYN
 Austin, they've got a UFL team.

AUSTIN
 I didn't know the UFL was a major
 league.

Madelyn nods.

MADELYN
 I figured if the networks are
 paying out all that good money to
 show the UFL, it ain't really a
 minor league.

VIRGIL
 Sheryl, I've got something to give
 you...in honor of your decision to
 become a trucker.

Sheryl looks stunned.

She, Virgil, Madelyn, Austin, Valentina, and Ally stop in their tracks.

MADELYN
 (nodding at Sheryl)
 And I've got something for you,
 too...for deciding to become the
 second trucker in our family.

Madelyn and Virgil eyeball each other.

VIRGIL
You first.

MADELYN
Uh...okay.

Bernadine's sister yanks a tiny box from her pants pocket.
She gives the box to Sheryl...who studies it.

AUSTIN
Open it up! It's all right!

Sheryl opens the box...and pulls out...a bottle cap!

SHERYL
Well, I'll be a...it's Grandma
Bernadine's lucky bottle cap!

Throng members cheer while Sheryl holds the bottle cap out
for all to see.

MADELYN
That cap came from the first bottle
of pop she drank on her first day
on the job at Mid-Continent
Bottlers...February twelfth, 1979.

SHERYL
Thanks, Aunt Madelyn!

VIRGIL
And she kept that cap with her
until the day she died...March
thirtieth, 2017.

A nodding Sheryl hugs Madelyn while colleagues cheer.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
I'll never forget that day.

VALENTINA
You're not alone, Virgil.

VIRGIL
Sheryl...this is for you, too.

Madelyn and Sheryl break their embrace as Virgil yanks...a
flash drive from his pants pocket.

Virgil hands the USB drive to his granddaughter.

SHERYL
 (accepts flash drive)
 Thanks, Granddad!

She holds the drive aloft for everybody to see.

VIRGIL
 It's a flash drive with all the
 songs your grandma ever liked...and
 Valentina ever liked.

Sheryl and her grandfather hug.

VALENTINA
 Good thing our last truck had a USB
 port. That flash drive kept me and
 Bernadine groovin' when we couldn't
 find a radio station.

Ally and Madelyn smile.

VIRGIL
 And you and Ally can put your own
 stuff on that flash drive.

VALENTINA
 Yeah...you'd be surprised how many
 songs you can put on sixteen gigs.

AUSTIN
 Every song ever made?

Brunella, Darryl, Natalie, and Tim wander toward the throng.

MADELYN
 Actually...you'd need five hundred
 and twelve gigs for that.

All eyes turn to Madelyn.

MADELYN (CONT'D)
 That's the biggest flash drive
 they've got!

VALENTINA
 Now, Ally...in honor of you
 deciding to go into trucking...

Valentina lifts a couple of big cigars from her shirt pocket.

VALENTINA (CONT'D)
 Have a stogie.

Tim gazes at the concrete...Natalie seethes.

And Ally looks dumbfounded.

ALLY

Granny...

VALENTINA

Last year, you put up an Instagram video where you were vaping.

Darryl grits his teeth...Brunella shakes her head...Tim continues to look downward.

Sheryl's mouth flies open.

Natalie veers off to shrug wildly.

ALLY

I didn't like it.

VALENTINA

I saw it...you shot it after work...in back of the pub and grill you worked at.

ALLY

Hit me up.

Valentina hands her granddaughter a cigar.

DARRYL

Brunella...that's our daughter's roommate.

BRUNELLA

Yep.

Ally and Valentina fire up their cigars with the latter's lighter...as the rest of the throng watches.

And Natalie resumes her wild shrugs.

EXT. VALENTINA'S HOUSE, DES MOINES, IA - NIGHT

Sheryl, Ally, and Valentina stand in the driveway of a modest house in the northwest part of town...where a 2012 Mack Pinnacle sleeper truck tractor rests.

The longer Ally and Sheryl inspect the Mack, the more they look impressed.

VALENTINA

This was actually me and
Bernadine's second cab.

Sheryl and Ally nod.

VALENTINA (CONT'D)

We got our first one in 1998...when
we went to work for a trucking
company after Mid-Continent
Bottlers got sold.

SHERYL

I barely remember that.

VALENTINA

That 1998 Peterbilt was great. But
this Mack has everything!

ALLY

I forgot it was a '98.

VALENTINA

How'd you two like to learn how to
handle ten gears?

The two BFFs eye each other, then turn to Valentina.

SHERYL

Valentina, I'm up for it.

Ally looks bewildered.

MONTAGE SEQUENCE

EXT. VALENTINA'S HOUSE, DES MOINES, IA - NIGHT

The Mack sleeper lurches out of the driveway...

INT. MACK PINNACLE - NIGHT

...with Ally behind the wheel and Valentina coaching from the
shotgun seat.

Sheryl tests the bottom bed.

EXT. 45TH STREET - NIGHT

Valentina's truck tractor continues to lurch southbound.

Across the street: Glendale Cemetery.

INT. MACK PINNACLE - NIGHT

Ally stares in longing at Valentina.

EXT. 45TH STREET - NIGHT

The truck comes to a stop in the middle of the street.

INT. MACK PINNACLE - NIGHT

Ally moves to the bottom bed...Sheryl becomes the driver.

EXT. 45TH STREET - NIGHT

That Mack truck heads northbound...

INT. MACK PINNACLE - NIGHT

...as Sheryl handles the Pinnacle in confidence (and earns a "thumbs up" from Valentina).

EXT. MERLE HAY MALL - DAY

The Mack truck rests in a parking spot far away from other vehicles in the lot.

As Valentina watches and instructs, Sheryl looks under the hood...and Ally checks the tires.

Next: The two young women switch roles.

EXT. DOUGLAS AVENUE - DAY

The 2012 truck tractor moves alongside traffic quite well...

INT. MACK PINNACLE - DAY

...with Sheryl at the wheel and Ally in the shotgun seat.

EXT. 45TH STREET - DAY

Valentina's truck slowly-but-surely tools down the street.

INT. MACK PINNACLE - DAY

When Ally eases the Mack to a stop, Valentina nods approval.

EXT. INTERSTATE 35, MISSOURI-IOWA BORDER - DAY

Sheryl's Ford Fusion glides into the Show Me State.

INT. FORD FUSION - DAY

While Sheryl drives, Ally counts eighteen-wheelers.

EXT. INTERSTATE 170, ST. LOUIS, MO - DAY

Sheryl's car blends into traffic.

INT. FORD FUSION - DAY

A confident Ally now drives...and trades high fives with Sheryl.

END MONTAGE

EXT. FRANKLIN AVENUE APARTMENTS - NIGHT

A pickup truck passes by.

INT. ALLY'S AND SHERYL'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sheryl and Ally type on their laptops while the TV's on and the sound's MUTED.

SHERYL

As long as there's a truck driving
school close by us, we'll be fine.

Ally's nod is emphatic.

SHERYL (CONT'D)

And whatever they don't teach us,
we can always call up Valentina.

Sheryl's buddy beams.

ALLY

Whatever school we go to, we've
gotta make sure they pay trainees.

SHERYL

That's the truth.

Ally sets her laptop aside.

ALLY

You know, Sheryl...all the years
we've lived in this apartment
together, it's long been time I
paid my fair share.

Sheryl studies her bestie.

SHERYL
 Ally...Ally...it's all good.

Ally's BFF sets her own laptop to the side...and the two women break into the warmest of hugs.

ALLY
 Thanks.

When the twosome break the hug:

ALLY (CONT'D)
 Now...I wanna show you something.

Ally leads Sheryl to a desk.

The former opens a desk drawer and yanks out bill after bill.

Sheryl and Ally study the bills.

SHERYL
 You're right, Ally. If we hadn't dropped cable and switched to YouTube TV, we'd really be swimming in an ocean of trouble.

ALLY
 Yeah...I get to watch all the Hallmark movies I can stand.

Ally grins at Sheryl.

ALLY (CONT'D)
 At no extra cost.

EXT. SIMON RECREATION CENTER AT SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY - DAY

Sheryl's a bunch of steps ahead of a gasping Ally as the twosome jog around this large, modern-looking facility on this early Wednesday morning.

ALLY
 I don't remember my granny saying she trained for a trucking career like this.

SHERYL
 (looks back at Ally)
 Aw, come on! We can do this! You and I!

SOME STUDENTS stare at the jogging buddies.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
 The more we do this, the better
 we'll get.

Sheryl looks straight ahead...just in time to avoid a tree.

INT. SIMON RECREATION CENTER WEIGHT ROOM - DAY

Ally and a straining Sheryl work with barbells.

The latter lifts her barbells above her head...and quickly
 throws them down.

SHERYL
 Good...idea...you had.

ALLY
 Thanks, Sheryl.

Ally sets her own barbells down.

ALLY (CONT'D)
 I mean...who knows what they're
 gonna have us haul?

SHERYL
 Water heaters?

Sheryl watches Ally shrug.

EXT. KINGSHIGHWAY DRIVING ACADEMY - DAY

Here's a medium-size low-rise building alongside one of St.
 Louis' busiest streets.

INT. KINGSHIGHWAY DRIVING ACADEMY CLASSROOM - DAY

More like a conference room than a formal classroom.

On this early Monday morning before class, FOUR STUDENTS (men
 ages 20-50) sit around a table or two while instructor CALEB
 LEDWON (late 30s) stands at the front.

CALEB
 Anyway...I went to this bar over by
 Busch Stadium Saturday night...and
 I saw this chick.

The four male students perk up.

CALEB (CONT'D)
 This chick was ugly...

COOPER LARSON (20s) raises his hand when Ally and Sheryl hurry into the room...

COOPER
How ugly was she, Caleb?

...and take adjacent seats.

CALEB
She was so ugly...

Caleb's expression changes when he notices Sheryl and Ally.

CALEB (CONT'D)
Cooper, you better wait after class. Then I'll finish the joke.

Cooper grimaces...his male colleagues groan.

The two female students catch Caleb's withering look.

CALEB (CONT'D)
You sure you two come to the right place?

SHERYL
Doggone right we did!

Ally's nod is a sharp one.

Then she turns to her bestie.

ALLY
Sheryl...maybe we should've looked at that school in Belleville.

SHERYL
Which one? They've got three over there in Belleville.

Now all five men stare the two women down.

EXT. URGENT CARE CENTER - DAY

Ally and Sheryl stroll toward a modern, freestanding building near Interstate 44.

ALLY
That first class yesterday wasn't so bad.

SHERYL

Once we started telling Caleb about some of the things our grandmas went through when they started driving pop trucks back in the day.

ALLY

He told us:

(tries to mimic Caleb)

"That was then. This is now. You two got a lot to learn."

Sheryl holds the clinic's front door for Ally.

SHERYL

Funny...that's what your grandma said they told her and Grandma Bernadine. First day on the job.

Ally walks inside...Sheryl follows.

INT. URGENT CARE CENTER EXAM ROOM - DAY

CHINEY OKWARA (30s, Black), a physician here, examines Sheryl's blood pressure.

She reads Sheryl's rate...the two women look satisfied.

CHINEY

Is this the truth, Sheryl? You'd like to become a truck driver?

SHERYL

That's the truth.

CHINEY

All the years you've visited our clinic, I've never pictured you driving a truck.

A grin crosses Sheryl's face.

SHERYL

I've been getting that a lot lately, Dr. Okwara.

Chiney nods.

SHERYL (CONT'D)

Not that I mind...

SAME SCENE - A BIT LATER

Chiney checks Ally's breasts.

When it all ends, the latter breathes relief.

CHINEY

Close call.

Ally sighs relief again.

ALLY

I know...last year, I tried
vaping...and I posted the results
on Instagram.

Chiney's nod is slow.

ALLY (CONT'D)

Don't worry. I didn't like it.

CHINEY

Good.

ALLY

And besides, I got to thinking
about the woman in St. Petersburg
who went to the ER after her lungs
caught on fire after she vaped for
the first time.

CHINEY

It probably figures that it
happened in Russia.

ALLY

Nope...it happened in Florida.

The twosome chuckle.

ALLY (CONT'D)

I've got another confession.

CHINEY

Allyson?

ALLY

Three weeks ago at a family get-
together, I tried one of my
grandmother's cigars.

Chiney cringes.

ALLY (CONT'D)

The truck driver.

CHINEY
And you'd like to emulate her.

ALLY
Just the truck-driver part.

CHINEY
(nodding)
Allyson...promise me one thing...

ALLY
Don't worry, Dr. Okwara. I'll go
cold turkey.

Ally locates a sanitizer dispenser.

She pumps a few drops of sanitizer onto her hands before she trades high fives with a surprised-and-elated Chiney.

INT. ALLY'S AND SHERYL'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ally and Sheryl not only read their Missouri CDL manuals...the twosome use their laptops as extra study aids for good measure.

SHERYL
At least we should have no problem
with CB lingo. Hasn't changed too
much from when our grandmas drove.

ALLY
(looks up at Sheryl)
Check this out.

SHERYL
All right...

ALLY
Here's something our grannies
didn't have to go through when they
got started.

Sheryl eyeballs Ally.

SHERYL
I think I know what you mean...aw,
what the heck. Go ahead.

ALLY

We've gotta provide information to the State Driver's License Agency about the type of commercial motor vehicle operation we'll drive in or expect to drive in with our CDLs.

SHERYL

As long as we do it, we'll be fine.

Ally beams.

SHERYL (CONT'D)

I've found something in Section 2.2 I'm gonna have to get used to.

ALLY

Sheryl...you skipped ahead.

SHERYL

Couldn't help it.

Sheryl watches Ally flip pages until the latter reaches Section 2.2 of Missouri's CDL training manual.

SHERYL (CONT'D)

It says to use your parking brake when you leave your vehicle.

Ally nods...then shudders.

ALLY

How strong are the regular brakes on a big rig...really?

SHERYL

Don't tell me you forgot when we both drove Valentina's Mack truck!

Sheryl studies Ally's sheepish grin.

EXT. MAPLEWOOD DMV LICENSE OFFICE - DAY

This is an office near the east end of a shopping center near Deer Creek.

INT. MAPLEWOOD DMV LICENSE OFFICE - DAY

CUSTOMERS fill every seat in the waiting area; A FEW OTHER PEOPLE stand in line at counters to do business with A SMALL STAFF on the other side.

Ally and Sheryl sit in two of the chairs in the waiting area. Both women study the appropriate paperwork for the situation.

When an AD LIBBED argument between AN ELDERLY CUSTOMER and an employee named GWYNETH ADLER (40s) breaks out, everybody else in the room stares at them.

ALLY
(to Sheryl)
We coulda gone to the Creve Coeur
driver's license station.

SHERYL
This one's got a better Google
rating.

Ally turns her attention back to the argument, then right back to Sheryl.

ALLY
It does?

The argument ends...the elderly customer leaves...the line thins down...and:

GWYNETH
Allyson M. Delmege!

ALLY
Uh oh...

GWYNETH
Get up here!

Ally bolts up from her seat and hurries to the counter...paperwork and all.

ALLY
I'm here to get my commercial
learner's permit.

Gwyneth sizes Ally up...

ALLY (CONT'D)
I'm gonna become a truck driver.

...and busts out in loud laughter.

ALLY (CONT'D)
Just like my maternal grandmother.

Gwyneth's laughter grows louder. It gains her stares from coworkers, too...as well as a scowl from Ally.

SAME SCENE - A BIT LATER

NEW CUSTOMERS file in while Gwyneth turns to a fellow employee, ROZANNE WEHRMEISTER (60s).

GWYNETH

Hey, Rozanne...next time a woman lookin' for a CDL comes up here, send her to me.

ROZANNE

Uh, I don't think so, Gwyneth.

Gwyneth stews.

ROZANNE (CONT'D)

Sheryl R. Haskins, are you ready?

SHERYL

You bet!

Sheryl (paperwork in tow) rises from her seat and meets Rozanne at the counter.

ROZANNE

What can we do for you?

SHERYL

I'm going after my commercial learner's permit.

Gwyneth watches the transaction between Rozanne and Sheryl.

SHERYL (CONT'D)

My paternal grandmother drove an eighteen-wheeler for a living...thirty-eight years.

Sheryl presents her paperwork to Rozanne, who perks up.

ROZANNE

My youngest daughter's a trucker.

A nodding Sheryl looks ecstatic.

ROZANNE (CONT'D)

She says it's the best job she's ever had in her life.

Gwyneth glares at Rozanne and Sheryl...

GWYNETH

You're makin' me puke!

...then at the crowd of customers.

GWYNETH (CONT'D)

NEXT!

EXT. KINGSHIGHWAY DRIVING ACADEMY - DAY

Caleb holds a flashlight while Ally opens the hood of a recent-model Freightliner truck tractor.

Attached to the tractor: A trailer with the name "KINGSHIGHWAY DRIVING ACADEMY" on both sides and on back.

Ally pulls the dipstick from the truck's oil crankcase.

She uses the dipstick as a pointer...Caleb turns the flashlight on.

ALLY

The exhaust system's securely mounted...nothing's cracked or broken...no parts are missing.

Caleb looks incredulous.

ALLY (CONT'D)

And there's no black soot to indicate any leaks.

CALEB

Are you sure?

ALLY

You can check it again if you want to, Caleb.

He hurries to the tractor to check the exhaust system.

ALLY (CONT'D)

But remember: I learned a lot from the best trucking instructor in the whole wide world.

CALEB

Thanks, Ally.

ALLY

Actually...I meant my granny.

Caleb sticks his tongue out at Ally...she follows suit.

SAME SCENE - A BIT LATER

Caleb uses the flashlight in Sheryl's inspection of the same Freightliner truck tractor.

She utilizes the same dipstick as a pointer.

SHERYL

My rear exhaust is securely mounted. It's not missing any hardware. Nothing's cracked, bent, or broken.

He shakes his head up and down.

SHERYL (CONT'D)

And there's no black soot to indicate any leaks.

CALEB

Uh...okay.

Student and teacher strut to the next part in question.

SHERYL

Here's the alternator. It's not cracked, bent, or broken. It's not missing any parts.

CALEB

Okay.

SHERYL

And since this alternator's belt-driven, I'll check the belt itself.

Teacher and student examine the serpentine belt.

SHERYL (CONT'D)

It's securely mounted. Nothing bent, torn, or frayed. And no more than a quarter inch of play, regardless of direction.

For good measure, Caleb tugs the belt.

He nods at Sheryl in approval.

SHERYL (CONT'D)

I studied some YouTube videos on my own to get ready for today.

CALEB

You...did?

SHERYL
Doggone right, Caleb.

A grin crosses Caleb's face.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
And I learned a lot from Ally
Delmege's grandma.

Caleb now flashes an "I should've known" look.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
And my own Grandma Bernadine.

CALEB
I thought you told me she died!

SHERYL
March thirtieth, 2017.

CALEB
Did you hold a seance?

A laughing Sheryl shakes her head sideways.

SAME SCENE - STILL LATER

Ally uses that dipstick to point to the truck's fuel tank
before she eyes Caleb.

ALLY
The fuel tank's securely
mounted...not cracked or
broken...no sign of leaks.

Caleb nods.

ALLY (CONT'D)
Cap's on tight...and you'll notice
the rubber seal to prevent metal-to-
metal contact.

Ally notices Caleb's grimace.

ALLY (CONT'D)
I mean metal-on-metal contact.

CALEB
You got that right.

The twosome walk to the back of the tractor.

ALLY

Now...the air vents...they're
securely mounted...they're not bent
or broken...not missing any
hardware...no sign of a leak.

CALEB

You're sure.

ALLY

Take a look.

Caleb does just that...he looks satisfied.

The twosome take their inspection to the trailer.

ALLY (CONT'D)

(fondles a turning light)
The right-side lights on the
trailer are securely mounted.

Under Caleb's hawkish eyes, Ally fondles each turning light.

ALLY (CONT'D)

They're not loose or broken...they
aren't cracked...and by the way,
each one's amber in color.

Ally starts for the trailer's other side.

ALLY (CONT'D)

Whaddya say we check the left-side
lights while we're at it?

CALEB

You know better than that.

ALLY

Just...checking.

SAME SCENE - LATER YET

Sheryl continues to use the dipstick as a pointer while Caleb
continues to watch.

The duo stand between the tractor and the trailer.

SHERYL

And I've got enough space between
my bearings and my headerboard to
make a turn.

She points to the trailer's left-side tires.

SHERYL (CONT'D)

Now we come to the tires. Both of 'em are securely mounted. No abrasions, bulges, or cuts.

Sheryl notices a wad of chewed gum in a tire groove. She yanks a pair of tweezers from her pants pocket...

CALEB

Be careful, Sheryl!

SHERYL

No problem.

...and oh-so-carefully pulls the gum from the tire groove.

When Ally's BFF flings the gum out of the way, Caleb breathes a sigh of relief.

SHERYL (CONT'D)

Old trick my Grandma Bernadine told me about.

Caleb grimaces.

SHERYL (CONT'D)

Anyway...these tires aren't missing any hardware. They're evenly spaced.

Sheryl points at the two sets of duals nearest the gap between the tractor and the trailer.

SHERYL (CONT'D)

No daylight between my duals. No gaps at all.

Caleb's is a slow, slow nod.

SHERYL (CONT'D)

The tires are inflated to between a hundred and a hundred ten PSI. And they're the same size.

CALEB

How can you tell that's a hundred to a hundred ten PSI?

SHERYL

I figured you'd ask.

Sheryl dredges a tire gage from another pants pocket. She sets the dipstick aside and uses the gage to measure the air in each tire.

Caleb crouches to tire level for a good look.

CALEB

Uh...okay.

Now Sheryl puts the gage away, then points at a tire rim with that dipstick.

SHERYL

There's no debris between my tires.
And the rims are securely mounted.
They're not cracked, bent, or
broken.

She taps the dipstick on the tire rim.

SHERYL (CONT'D)

No missing hardware. No illegal
mounts or drill holes.

Sheryl pokes the dipstick inside a hole in the rim.

SHERYL (CONT'D)

The lugnuts are securely mounted.

CALEB

Prove it.

He watches Sheryl set the dipstick aside...to pull a wrench from yet another pants pocket (or overalls pocket).

Caleb looks incredulous.

CALEB (CONT'D)

You sure your real name ain't
MacGyver?

INT. ALLY'S AND SHERYL'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sheryl and Ally relax on the sofa while A HALLMARK MOVIE plays on the TV.

SHERYL

(eyeballing Ally)

I don't think Caleb treated Cooper
the way he treated me when we
inspected the training truck.

ALLY
Yeah...that goes double for me.

SHERYL
Seems like Cooper likes Caleb's
jokes the best.

The two women share a large bowl of popcorn on a TV tray.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
Next time, I oughta bring my
toolbox...just in case he asks me
again to prove all those parts are
securely mounted.

Sheryl tries to lean back.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
Last thing I need is a cramp in the
same leg where I had a tire gage in
my pants pocket.

A COMMERCIAL comes on...Ally bolts from her seat.

ALLY
I'm gonna get us something to
drink. What would you like?

SHERYL
Whatever you're having.

Ally heads for the kitchen when A RINGTONE emanates from her
pants pocket.

She comes back with two bottles of pop/water/tea/thirst
quencher...while the ringtone CONTINUES.

Sheryl's buddy places the bottles on the TV tray, then yanks
the phone from that pants pocket.

ALLY
(into her phone)
Hello?

INT. DEN AT NATALIE'S AND TIM'S HOUSE, DES MOINES, IA - NIGHT

Cell phone against her ear, Natalie sits in a lounge chair
alongside Tim, who reclines in his own lounge chair.

A PROCEDURAL SHOW airs on the TV in this busy-looking, nearly-
cluttered space.

NATALIE
Well! So you're home, Allyson!

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

ALLY
I was tied up at the moment, Mom.

Ally sits back down alongside Sheryl.

NATALIE
Have you fallen flat on your face
yet since taking up trucking?

ALLY
No!

A flummoxed Tim gazes at his wife.

ALLY (CONT'D)
I'm only getting started. I'm gonna
make it...just like my granny did.

NATALIE
Hmph.

ALLY
And besides, with me and Sheryl
studying together and working
together, we're gonna make it.

Sheryl applauds.

NATALIE
You would've been better off at
that bar and grill and remaining a
waitress. You would've been safer.

TIM
Food server, Natalie.

Natalie stares daggers at her husband...Sheryl grabs a
handful of popcorn.

ALLY
Mom, I just wanna branch out...be
free...live the kinda life Grandma
Valentina and Sheryl's grandma had.

NATALIE
Don't get me started about Sheryl.
She threw away a good--

ALLY
We'll be fine!

Sheryl eats that handful of popcorn...then reaches for another handful.

ALLY (CONT'D)
Me, I won't have to worry about rude customers...or customers puking in their plates.

Natalie looks fit to be tied.

NATALIE
Listen here, young lady: You're a college graduate. You need to sound like it.

Ally rolls her eyes...Tim rolls his, too.

NATALIE (CONT'D)
Stop saying "puke." Start saying "regurgitate."

ALLY
Mom...when you're puking, you can't say "regurgitate!"

And Sheryl stares at the popcorn in her hands.

EXT. KINGSHIGHWAY DRIVING ACADEMY - DAY

Caleb and Sheryl stand alongside the Freightliner's tractor.

CALEB
You ready to get in?

SHERYL
Yes, I am.

CALEB
You sure?

SHERYL
Doggone right I am!

Sheryl opens the tractor's driver's-side door...

CALEB
You really sure?

SHERYL
Did the Rams once call St. Louis
home?

...and climbs inside.

Caleb slowly nods before he enters the tractor on the
passenger side.

INT. FREIGHTLINER TRUCK - DAY

Sheryl and Caleb fasten their seat belts.

CALEB
Whaddya know about the Rams?

SHERYL
Oh, you'd be surprised.

CALEB
Start 'er up, Sheryl. You're gonna
learn how to parallel park.

Caleb's student starts the truck, then pushes the trailer
brakes and tractor brakes in.

CALEB (CONT'D)
You're gonna try to get this into a
space twelve feet wide and fifteen
feet longer than the truck. Got it?

Sheryl answers Caleb's smirk with her own smile.

SHERYL
I see all the cones.

She puts the eighteen-wheeler in gear and goes forward.

CALEB
Go past the parking space until the
rear of the trailer's next to the
front cone.

EXT. KINGSHIGHWAY DRIVING ACADEMY - DAY

Sheryl guides the big rig along according to Caleb's rule.

INT. FREIGHTLINER TRUCK - DAY

Caleb casts one eye toward the parking space and the other
eye toward Sheryl.

CALEB
Turn the wheel clockwise as far as
it'll go.

SHERYL
Don't worry...I saw a video on this
on YouTube.

Caleb's mouth flies open.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
(turning steering wheel)
Then I saw another video...my
Granddad Virgil taped my Grandma
Bernadine parallel parking.

CALEB
Her car?

SHERYL
No. One of these big rigs.

EXT. KINGSHIGHWAY DRIVING ACADEMY - DAY

Slowly but surely, Sheryl maneuvers the Freightliner into the
parking space.

Teacher and student jump out of the truck to inspect it all.

Perfect!

Caleb stands there in openmouthed shock...Sheryl tries to
revive him.

SAME SCENE - A BIT LATER

Caleb and Ally lean alongside the Freightliner's tractor.

CALEB
Okay, Ally. Let's go.

ALLY
Thought you'd never ask!

They climb into the tractor...Ally in the driver's seat,
Caleb in the passenger's seat.

INT. FREIGHTLINER TRUCK - DAY

The twosome fasten their seat belts.

Before Caleb can say a word, Ally starts the truck and
engages the trailer brakes and tractor brakes.

ALLY
We're learning parallel parking.

Caleb's is a slow nod.

CALEB
Now...let's see you put this thing
in a space twelve feet wide and
fifteen feet longer than the truck.

ALLY
Granny was the boss at this.

CALEB
I know...the best trucking teacher
you ever had.

EXT. KINGSHIGHWAY DRIVING ACADEMY - DAY

Ally pulls past the parking space until the trailer's rear is
next to the front cone.

So far, so good.

INT. FREIGHTLINER TRUCK - DAY

Caleb watches Ally turn the steering wheel clockwise as far
as it'll go.

She takes her left foot off the clutch pedal and her right
foot off the brake pedal, then nods three sharp times.

CALEB
I don't hear you counting to three.

ALLY
I'd rather nod.

The teacher grimaces.

ALLY (CONT'D)
It worked for my granny.

The student turns the wheel counterclockwise...

EXT. KINGSHIGHWAY DRIVING ACADEMY - DAY

...until the tractor and trailer are in line.

Ally oh-so-slowly backs the truck until the rear of the
trailer crosses the boundary of the parking space.

Things look good thus far...until...CRUNCH!

The duo jump out of the tractor to examine the damage.

They stare at a crushed cone.

Caleb picks up the cone, exhales, and shows the cone to Ally...who grits her teeth.

CALEB

Did your granny teach you this?

Ally shrugs.

MONTAGE SEQUENCE

EXT. KINGSHIGHWAY DRIVING ACADEMY - DAY

The Freightliner training truck backs into the parking space with ease.

Caleb crawls out to inspect it all. He looks satisfied.

He gestures the driver to come out of the tractor.

Ally does just that...and she high-fives Caleb.

SAME SCENE - HOURS LATER

Sheryl jumps into the truck, then pulls it forward in an offset-backing exercise.

Easy peasy when it all shakes out.

SAME SCENE - A BIT LATER

In Ally's turn, she gets out of the truck to see if she's nailed the offset-backing lesson.

Success!

INT. FREIGHTLINER TRUCK - DAY

Caleb watches Sheryl steer the truck in an alley dock lesson.

EXT. KINGSHIGHWAY DRIVING ACADEMY - DAY

The exercise: Get the training trailer into the empty spot between two parked trailers.

But Sheryl hits one of the parked trailers...barely.

INT. FREIGHTLINER TRUCK - DAY

Now Ally steers the truck in her own alley dock exercise...

EXT. KINGSHIGHWAY DRIVING ACADEMY - DAY

...only to hit the same trailer.

SAME SCENE - A BIT LATER

Sheryl tries again...and succeeds.

SAME SCENE - STILL LATER

Ally backs the truck in successfully.

EXT. INTERSTATE 64 - DAY

The Freightliner negotiates traffic with great ease...

INT. FREIGHTLINER TRUCK - DAY

...with Sheryl behind the wheel.

EXT. INTERSTATE 64 - DAY

The same truck moves through traffic quite well...

INT. FREIGHTLINER TRUCK - DAY

...courtesy of its driver, Ally.

END MONTAGE

INT. MAPLEWOOD DMV LICENSE OFFICE - DAY

Rozanne and Gwyneth wait on A CUSTOMER EACH while Ally and Sheryl sit among OTHER FOLKS in a packed waiting area on this mid-July afternoon.

Sheryl and Ally hold each other's hands.

The transactions up ahead end...and:

ROZANNE

Sheryl R. Haskins...

Sheryl raises her hand and strolls to the counter.

GWYNETH

Allyson M. Delmege! Front and center! Right now!

A nodding Ally hurries to the counter.

Gwyneth opens her mouth...but Rozanne holds up a finger.

ROZANNE
 Congratulations, Ms. Haskins. You
 passed your CDL test. Great job!

SHERYL
 Well...thanks.

ROZANNE
 Step over here and we'll take your
 picture.

SHERYL
 You bet.

Sheryl follows Rozanne into another area in the office.

GWYNETH
 (to Ally)
 You passed.

Ally places her hand over her chest...and breathes relief.

GWYNETH (CONT'D)
 Let me ask you something.

ALLY
 Okay.

GWYNETH
 Did you two cheat?

Sheryl's BFF looks ticked off.

ALLY
 Is Queen Elizabeth still alive?

Eyeballs galore stare at Ally.

INT. ALLY'S AND SHERYL'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The two longtime pals recline on the sofa while A BASEBALL
 GAME plays on the TV on this Saturday afternoon.

The game's action HEATS UP...when Ally's cell phone RINGS.

ALLY
 Just when it's getting good.

Sheryl shakes her head "yes."

Ally pulls the device out of her shirt pocket.

ALLY (CONT'D)
 It better not be Mom.
 (into phone)
 Hello?

EXT. FRANKLIN AVENUE APARTMENTS - DAY

Cell phone against her ear, Valentina stands alongside Virgil, Madelyn, and Austin at the entrance to Sheryl's and Ally's rowhouse.

VALENTINA
 Hi, Ally. It's your granny.

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

Sheryl watches Ally raise a jubilant fist.

ALLY
 Really cool to hear from you. How's it going?

VALENTINA
 Great...especially now that you and Sheryl got your CDLs.

Austin, Virgil, and Madelyn cheer.

ALLY
 Are you at the game?

VALENTINA
 Nope...we're right outside your door. Me and Madelyn and Austin and Virgil. We're here to celebrate!

ALLY
 Stay there! We're coming!

SHERYL
 Yeah!

Sheryl shuts the TV off. She and Ally (cell phone still against her ear) head out.

EXT. SEAFOOD RESTAURANT - DAY

This one's an attraction near downtown.

INT. SEAFOOD RESTAURANT DINING ROOM - DAY

CUSTOMERS OF ALL AGES pack the eatery!

Ally, Austin, Madelyn, Sheryl, Valentina, and Virgil chow down at back-to-back tables in a Red Lobster type of place.

Festive...a bit noisy...fun.

VIRGIL

So proud of you two...for beating the odds.

ALLY

Well, it runs in the family.

Ally receives stares from her tablemates.

ALLY (CONT'D)

Both our families!

AUSTIN

That's more like it, Ally!

MADELYN

Just as important: Our two guests of honor are keeping a legacy going...keeping the flame burning.

A nodding Sheryl beams.

VALENTINA

(pointing to Madelyn)

Just think...when me and your sister Bernadine got started, we not only had to deal with all those sexist pigs trying to put out the flame...we had to deal with OPEC.

SHERYL

(to Ally)

Sounds like now.

Valentina's mouth flies open...

SHERYL (CONT'D)

(to Valentina)

But you and Grandma Bernadine were among the first to deal with OPEC.

...but she stuffs food into it with a nod.

From another table, Blair notices ex-STL Plastics colleague Sheryl and her tablemates.

ALLY
Sheryl...you ready for the big
announcement?

AUSTIN
Another one?

SHERYL
That's the truth, Uncle Austin.

Yet another table finds Cooper watching his two fellow trucking students and their relatives...and trying to eat at the same time.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
We wanted this to be a surprise.

Virgil's nod is slow.

MADELYN
Don't worry, Virgil. It'll be a
pleasant surprise.

Blair jumps up from her table...

ALLY
(rises from seat)
Ladies and gentlemen...

Cooper gets up from his table...

SHERYL
(jumps up from seat)
Ally and I will be going to work
for I&M Trucking, Inc.

...and Cooper and Blair meet at Sheryl's and Ally's table.

ALLY
Sheryl and I start driving this
coming Monday.

Virgil, Valentina, Madelyn, and Austin cheer themselves hoarse.

Blair and Cooper watch in openmouthed shock...then they point to each other.

BLAIR
You know Sheryl?

COOPER
Yeah...but...

Sheryl and Ally (still erect) grab their glasses.

COOPER (CONT'D)
How do you know her?

Austin, Madelyn, Virgil, and Valentina bolt up from their seats...and lift their glasses, too.

VIRGIL
All right, everybody! Let's drink a toast!

Ally, Sheryl, and their relatives hoist their drinking utensils skyward...

MADELYN
To St. Louis's two newest over-the-road truckers!

VALENTINA
To years and years and years of happy travels...and happy stories!

AUSTIN
And years and years and years of happy everything else!

...and drink up.

The cheering kicks back in while Cooper and Blair watch.

Blair and Cooper turn to each other.

BLAIR
How do I know her? Don't ask.

Cooper shrugs as he walks back to his own table.

COOPER
(along the way)
How the hell did they get their CDLs so damn fast?

EXT. I&M TRUCKING, MADISON, IL - DAY

Ally and Sheryl jump out of their cars, remove a suitcase from each car's trunk, then strut toward a vast, sprawling facility across the Mississippi River in one of St. Louis' Illinois suburbs.

SHERYL
I almost invited Blair Wooden from
STL Plastics to stay and drink a
toast with us.

ALLY
Good thing you didn't.

The two women continue on, arm in arm, luggage in tow.

ALLY (CONT'D)
She and Cooper Larson looked like
they were ready to break out
lighters and set fire to our table.

INT. I&M TRUCKING EMPLOYEE LOUNGE - DAY

Sheryl and Ally (luggage in tow) find seats at a table in a
nice, well-appointed space.

ALLY
Sheryl...you got your other stuff?

Sheryl feels every pocket in her overalls.

SHERYL
Lucky bottle cap...USB...I'm good.

Ally searches every pocket in her own overalls...and breathes
a sigh of relief.

ALLY
Didn't wanna leave without my
pepper spray.

Sheryl nods.

ALLY (CONT'D)
(reaches into pocket)
And I don't want you to leave
without any pepper spray.

Ally hands Sheryl a container of pepper spray when IRWIN
SHEPPARD (40s) strolls inside to approach the two women.

IRWIN
There you are!

Sheryl and Ally bolt from their seats.

IRWIN (CONT'D)
Welcome to I&M Trucking, Inc. I'm
Irwin Sheppard, the company
president...which one of you's
Sheryl Haskins?

SHERYL
That's me.

Irwin and Sheryl shake hands.

ALLY
I'm Allyson Delmege...but my
friends call me Ally.

Ally and Irwin pump the flesh.

IRWIN
I heard that your grandmothers were
OTR drivers.

SHERYL
That's right, Irwin.

ALLY
They got started in 1979.

Irwin nods.

ALLY (CONT'D)
Together.

SHERYL
And they drove together until my
grandma died in 2017.

ALLY
And we learned quite a truckload
from our grandmas.

IRWIN
That's what your instructor at the
driving academy said.

Sheryl's is a slow nod.

IRWIN (CONT'D)
With that in mind...Caleb from the
driving school and our dispatchers
came up with a great idea.

Ally and Sheryl perk up.

IRWIN (CONT'D)
We're gonna split you two up.

Sheryl gazes at the floor...Ally flashes that deer-in-the-headlights look.

IRWIN (CONT'D)
We just wanna see what you're really made of.

Ally stares daggers at Irwin...Sheryl rushes to hug her.

SHERYL
Ally, it's all good.

ALLY
Huh?

SHERYL
Just remember: We're both a phone call away from each other.

Sheryl catches Ally's slight nod.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
And we're both a phone call away from your Grandma Valentina...and my granddad, too.

A grin crosses Ally's face...

IRWIN
You two can also call us.

...that morphs into a smile as the two women break the hug.

SHERYL
Now...just in case...

Sheryl digs into her overalls and digs out...a flash drive.

ALLY
Didn't your granddad give you that flash drive?

SHERYL
This is the copy of the one my granddad gave me.

Sheryl hands the USB copy to Ally, who accepts it.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
I made that copy while you were
asleep one night.

ALLY
Well...fry my bacon!

The former feels the pocket that houses the original flash
drive...and looks satisfied.

SHERYL
Irwin, where are we going?

ALLY
In our separate ways?

EXT. I&M TRUCKING LOADING DOCK - DAY

Ally and Sheryl (with their suitcases) stroll to their
respective trucks.

ALLY
So you're driving to San Diego.

SHERYL
And you've gotta meet a driver down
in Memphis.

ALLY
I've gotta meet him there with his
truck, attach mine to it...and he
and I drive together to San Antonio
to get a broken-down truck.

SHERYL
All I know is: If I had to drive to
Tennessee and then down to Texas, I
would've made sure to buy a year's
supply of pepper spray before even
leaving the Midwest.

The two BFFs study each other.

ALLY
Sheryl...I see your point.

Sheryl reaches a 2023 Kenworth T680 sleeper truck tractor-
trailer...Ally goes to a 2022 Volvo VNL 860 sleeper truck
(without a trailer).

The twosome wave at each other before they climb into their
respective rigs.

EXT. INTERSTATE 70, STAN MUSIAL BRIDGE - DAY

Sheryl's big rig crosses the Illinois-Missouri border...only to find another eighteen-wheeler right behind it.

INT. KENWORTH T680 - DAY

Sheryl takes deep breaths while behind the wheel.

EXT. INTERSTATE 55 - DAY

Ally's sleeper truck moves just as slowly as the rest of the southbound traffic on this crowded road.

INT. VOLVO VNL 860 - DAY

While she waits on the traffic to pick up the pace, Ally bounces in the driver's seat...thanks to THE MUSIC from her copy of Bernadine's old flash drive.

ALLY
Take that, Mom!

EXT. INTERSTATE 70, NEAR COLUMBIA, MO - DAY

That same eighteen-wheeler continues to follow Sheryl's rig.

INT. KENWORTH T680 - DAY

Sheryl checks her rear-view mirror...her left-side mirror...her right-side mirror...and through her front windshield.

EXT. INTERSTATE 70, NEAR COLUMBIA, MO - DAY

She finds an opening in the other westbound lane...and slides her Kenworth into the other lane.

It takes a while...but the other big rig slides into the other lane, too.

INT. KENWORTH T680 - DAY

About to go through Columbia, Sheryl reaches for her CB mike.

SHERYL
(into CB mike)
"K-Whopper Kid" to base.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Ten-four...what's your twenty, "K-Whopper Kid?"

SHERYL
 I'm here on I-70 reaching
 Columbia...and somebody at my back
 door's trying to cast me in a
 remake of "Duel."

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 Dual what?

Sheryl looks amused.

EXT. INTERSTATE 70, COLUMBIA, MO - DAY

The trailing truck inches closer to Sheryl's Kenworth.

EXT. INTERSTATE 55 - DAY

At last, southbound traffic picks up the pace.

INT. VOLVO VNL 860 - DAY

Music from that flash drive CONTINUES to fill Ally's tractor.
 She now nods to the music.

EXT. INTERSTATE 70, KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY

Sheryl encounters heavier traffic than in Columbia.

Result: An opportunity to lose that pursuing truck.

INT. KENWORTH T680 - DAY

Sheryl's all smiles.

EXT. INTERSTATE 55, CAPE GIRARDEAU, MO - DAY

Ally's Volvo VNL 860 tractor holds its own among the other
 southbound vehicles.

INT. VOLVO VNL 860 - DAY

Ally finds a break in the music...and:

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 "Volvo Kid," pick up!

ALLY
 Uh oh...

She grabs her CB mike, then turns the sound down on the
 tractor's stereo.

ALLY (CONT'D)
 (into her mike)
 Ten-four..."Volvo Kid" to base.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 "Kid," what's your twenty?

ALLY
 Limbaugh City.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 Just now? What's Limbaugh City?

ALLY
 We had a convention here on I-55
 back in Redd Foxx City.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 Can you speak English?

ALLY
 You mean to tell me you didn't know
 Redd Foxx was born in St. Louis?

Ally hears the dispatcher grunt.

ALLY (CONT'D)
 Or that Rush Limbaugh came outa
 Cape Girardeau?

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 Somebody shoot me!

EXT. INTERSTATE 70, KANSAS CITY, KS - DAY

Three or four cars cruise between Sheryl's big rig and that
 pursuing eighteen-wheeler.

INT. KENWORTH T680 - DAY

Sheryl's smile grows.

EXT. INTERSTATE 70 (KANSAS TURNPIKE) - DAY

Sheryl and OTHER WESTBOUND DRIVERS now line up at the first
 toll booth they encounter just outside Greater Kansas City.

EXT. KANSAS TURNPIKE TOLL BOOTH - DAY

A TOLL BOOTH ATTENDANT watches Sheryl dig into her own
 pockets for change.

She deposits all the change she's got...but it won't get her past the booth.

So Sheryl pulls out a debit card or credit card. She shows the card to the attendant.

SHERYL
Will this work?

The attendant nods...Sheryl completes the transaction.

EXT. INTERSTATE 70 (KANSAS TURNPIKE), NEAR TOPEKA, KS - DAY

Sheryl heads for the Sunflower State's capital city...but now, that other big rig comes up right behind Sheryl's truck.

INT. KENWORTH T680 - DAY

Its driver goes for her CB mike.

SHERYL
(into mike)
"K-Whopper Kid" to base.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Ten-four, "K-Whopper Kid." What's your twenty?

SHERYL
I'm just outside Fred Phelps City.
Gonna pick up some motion lotion.
And hope to lose that casting director who's following me.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Huh?

SHERYL
That back door who's trying to remake "Duel."

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Dual what?

SHERYL
It was an "ABC Movie of the Week" back in 1971. Dennis Weaver was driving his car on some interstate, and this big rig was on his tail. It was my grandma's favorite movie.

EXT. INTERSTATE 70-US 75 INTERCHANGE, TOPEKA, KS - DAY

Sheryl's Kenworth pulls onto US 75.

So does the other big truck.

EXT. US 75, TOPEKA, KS - DAY

One big rig follows the other...too close for comfort.

EXT. NORTHWEST LOWER SILVER LAKE ROAD, TOPEKA, KS - DAY

Sheryl pulls off US 75 and heads eastbound onto this street on the way to:

EXT. TRUCK STOP, TOPEKA, KS - DAY

Her Kenworth pulls in and heads for a pump.

No trailing truck in sight.

Sheryl jumps out of the truck to fill its fuel tank(s).

CRASH!

She and OTHER CUSTOMERS look around.

EXT. NORTHWEST LOWER SILVER LAKE ROAD, TOPEKA, KS - DAY

That pursuing eighteen-wheeler sits jackknifed on the side of the street...not far from the truck stop.

EXT. MID-SOUTH TRUCKING, MEMPHIS, TN - DAY

Ally parks her Volvo truck near a row of empty trailers in this sprawling space east of Interstate 55.

She climbs out of her truck in search of another unattached tractor...and succeeds when she finds an arm waving from a 2016 Freightliner Cascadia sleeper.

RON BATCHELOR (30, slow...let's face it, a stoner) almost falls out of the Cascadia.

Ally approaches him.

RON
Hey, uh...you're the driver?

ALLY
Yes, I am!

Ron sizes her up.

She tries not to cringe despite the smell around her.

RON
Are you really the driver?

ALLY
Well, I sure don't look like Flo
from those insurance commercials.

Ally oh-so-slowly extends her hand to Ron.

ALLY (CONT'D)
I'm Ally. I'm from I&M Trucking out
of St. Louis...and it's my first
day on the job.

RON
Uh...I'm with I&M, too. I'm Ron.

The two truckers try to high-five it.

They get it right on the second try.

ALLY
Anyway...I'm supposed to hook my
tractor up to yours...and we're
supposed to drive together to San
Antonio to pick up a broken-down
truck down there.

RON
Uh...huh...

ALLY
And when we get to San
Antone...I'll take my truck, hook
it up to the trailer of the broken
truck, get the load, and bring it
right on back.

Ron looks lost.

ALLY (CONT'D)
And then, Ron...you'll hook up to
the disabled truck and tow it back
here to Memphis.

RON
Uh...okay...

Ally wags her finger at him.

ALLY

Stay right there...I've gotta go
back to my truck and get my
stuff...before I forget.

She sprints back to her Volvo tractor...and emerges with her
suitcase.

Ron's nod is slow, slow, slow.

EXT. INTERSTATE 55, MEMPHIS, TN - DAY

Ron's Freightliner Cascadia pulls Ally's Volvo VNL 860
southbound...and barely exceeds the lowest speed allowed.

Other vehicles whizz by.

INT. FREIGHTLINER CASCADIA - DAY

Ron drives...Ally rides shotgun (and cringes).

His is The Tractor That Care Forgot...due to its foul smell
and litter-filled floor.

Ron steadies the steering wheel with his left hand...and
pulls a joint from his shirt pocket with his right hand.

RON

Wanna hit?

Ally studies the joint in Ron's right hand.

She stares out the front windshield.

Now she catches his hopeful sideways look.

ALLY

No!

Ron moves the J toward his mouth when:

ALLY (CONT'D)

And that's the last thing you
oughta be doing, too!

RON

Aw, come on.

ALLY

No, Ron! If they pull us over and
catch you with drugs, we'll be out
of a job faster than you can say
"Bob Marley!"

A deflated Ron stuffs the joint back in his shirt pocket.

ALLY (CONT'D)
And besides...I told my doctor I
was gonna start driving clean.

RON
I thought you wanted to have fun.

ALLY
Last time I checked, jail was the
last place you'd call fun.

RON
Whatcha know 'bout jail?

ALLY
Wanna hear about the night my late
granddad spent in jail?

It's Ron's turn to cringe!

EXT. TRAVEL CENTER, COMMERCE CITY, CO - NIGHT

Sheryl pulls her Kenworth into the parking lot of a huge
truck stop near Interstate 270 in this Denver suburb.

INT. KENWORTH T680 - NIGHT

Sheryl looks here and there for a well-lighted spot...

EXT. TRAVEL CENTER, COMMERCE CITY, CO - NIGHT

...and finds one.

Two or three other eighteen-wheelers rest in this area.

That T680 settles into a space next to the other big rigs.

INT. KENWORTH T680 - NIGHT

Pajama-clad Sheryl stretches her arms on the way to bed when
she hears A KNOCK on the driver's-side door.

She opens it...and finds disheveled-looking GLADYS FARMER
(60) on the other side.

SHERYL
Hi, uh...what can I do for you?

GLADYS
Well...uh...I think we can help one
another.

SHERYL
 It's almost midnight.
 (slaps her own forehead)
 My bad. This is the Rockies. It's
 almost eleven.

Gladys nods.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
 I just drove in from St. Louis.
 (slaps her forehead again)
 Actually...I'm based in a suburb.
 Madison, Illinois.

GLADYS
 I still think we can help each
 other...c'mon. Let me help.

SHERYL
 Okay. As long as you come back in
 the morning.

Sheryl watches a shrugging Gladys step away from the truck.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
 See you tomorrow!

Sheryl closes the door, locks it, and heads off to bed.

EXT. INTERSTATE 10, JENNINGS, LA - NIGHT

The Freightliner tractor (Volvo tractor still attached to it)
 moves down the road at a faster clip than before.

INT. FREIGHTLINER CASCADIA - NIGHT

Ally's the new driver...Ron sleeps in the shotgun seat.

TROUBLING SOUNDS emerge. They make Ally grit her teeth.

EXT. INTERSTATE 10, WEST OF JENNINGS, LA - NIGHT

The Cascadia's air dam and spoilers look as if they're about
 to come loose.

Ally pulls the whole thing off to the right westbound
 shoulder. The flasher comes on.

INT. FREIGHTLINER CASCADIA - NIGHT

Ron wakes up. He eyeballs Ally.

RON
Uh...can't handle it, huh?

ALLY
Your truck can't handle it.

His mouth flies open.

ALLY (CONT'D)
I can hear your truck getting ready
to lose some parts.

SAME SCENE - A BIT LATER

Ron stays in the shotgun seat...Ally still occupies the
driver's seat.

RON
You're kidding.

ALLY
No, I'm not...we both need to turn
in for the night.

RON
You're tired.

ALLY
We're both tired...and this truck
is even more tired. So you go ahead
and go back there to your own bed.

RON
Ain't you gonna come along with me?

ALLY
No. I'll be fine up here.

RON
Suit yourself...Callie.

Ron troops off to his bed.

ALLY
No funny stuff!

Ally pulls out her pepper spray and shows it to Ron.

ALLY (CONT'D)
And my name's Ally!

INT. KENWORTH T680 - DAY

Crack of day...in a new pair of overalls, Sheryl strolls toward the driver's seat when ANOTHER KNOCK takes place.

She opens the driver's-side door.

It's Gladys...who holds a piece of brick and wears a hockey goalie's helmet.

SHERYL

Sorry! I gave at the toll booth!

EXT. TRAVEL CENTER, COMMERCE CITY, CO - KENWORTH T680 - DAY

Gladys raises the brick to strike Sheryl...but Sheryl pushes Gladys away.

Sheryl quickly closes the door and fastens her seat belt.

Gladys throws her brick at the door while the tractor-trailer pulls out.

The would-be robber catches her breath...then sprints to the back of the Kenworth.

Somehow, Gladys grabs the trailer's door.

She hangs on to the still-moving semi...A FEW CUSTOMERS catch it all with their cell phones.

EXT. INTERSTATE 10, LAKE CHARLES, LA - DAY

The Cascadia now lacks its spoilers.

Ally pulls the tractor and her Volvo off at the first westbound intersection she finds in town...

EXT. TRAVEL PLAZA, LAKE CHARLES, LA - DAY

...and lands the whole thing at the parking lot of a sprawling truck stop.

Ron and Ally climb out of the Freightliner.

On the way to the truck stop:

RON

You shoulda stopped at that other town...uh...Iowa...

ALLY
The dispatcher told me they didn't
have all the tools we need.

Ron looks lost.

ALLY (CONT'D)
You were asleep.

RON
Why would they name a Southern town
after a Northern state?

SAME SCENE - MINUTES LATER

Ron watches Ally use a newly-bought ratchet set in her effort
to remove the Freightliner's faulty air dams.

ALLY
That's it.

Ally throws the bad air dams into the trash.

She opens a box of large trash bags, removes a bag, puts on a
pair of gloves, opens the Cascadia's passenger-side door, and
stuffs the litter from the tractor's shotgun-side floor into
that trash bag.

Ron looks horrified.

RON
Just like a woman.

Ally bristles.

ALLY
Look, Ron: A clean truck lasts
longer than a dirty one. That was
one of my granny's favorite rules.

Ron's horror increases while Ally opens the Cascadia's
driver's-side door...and puts the litter on that side of the
floor into the trash bag.

ALLY (CONT'D)
She was an over-the-road trucker
for forty-two years.

RON
No...way...

ALLY
Yes way!

Now Ally pulls out a can of air freshener...

ALLY (CONT'D)
And I'm following in her
footsteps...after three years as a
food server.

...and sprays the driver's side, top to bottom.

ALLY (CONT'D)
I oughta know a thing or two about
cleaning up people's messes.

Ally sprays the passenger side down, bottom to top.

She throws the now-full trash bag away.

A still-horrified Ron points to his truck.

ALLY (CONT'D)
Now...when were you gonna clean
this truck up yourself?

RON
Man...what's a food server?

EXT. INTERSTATE 70, IDAHO SPRINGS, CO - DAY

Sheryl continues westbound in her K-Whopper...Gladys
continues to hang on to the back of its trailer.

If possible, Gladys bangs on the trailer.

THE DRIVER in back of Sheryl's big rig honks his/her HORN.

INT. KENWORTH T680 - DAY

Sheryl grooves to THE MUSIC on her inherited flash
drive...oblivious to THE O.S. HONKS behind her (as well as
any of Gladys' banging).

Still...Sheryl's is a smile of freedom.

EXT. INTERSTATE 70, IDAHO SPRINGS, CO - DAY

HORNS from a few cars in the opposite westbound lane from
Sheryl's join the horn from the driver in back of Sheryl in a
continuing effort to get her attention.

But first...Sheryl and Co. must cross Clear Creek.

EXT. INTERSTATE 10, ORANGE, TX - DAY

Ron's Cascadia sleeper-cum-tow truck tools westbound past the Texas-Louisiana border...

INT. FREIGHTLINER CASCADIA - DAY

...with Ally still behind the wheel and Ron as the passenger.

ALLY

Anyway...that's what happened the first day my Grandma Valentina and her buddy Bernadine Henry drove together.

RON

Still think you're pullin' my leg.

ALLY

No, Ron, it happened! My granny and her partner had to unload cases of pop at a supermarket in Des Moines.

Ron shakes his head "yes."

ALLY (CONT'D)

And when some customer looked up and saw that two women were in that pop truck, he chased them all the way to Marshalltown.

RON

How old was he?

ALLY

I don't know.

Ron snaps his fingers.

ALLY (CONT'D)

But I do know this: I'm just about out of hours...so I need you to finish the drive to San Antonio.

RON

You're pullin' my leg.

ALLY

No, I'm not! I've gotta pick up a load there around noon.

EXT. INTERSTATE 10, ORANGE, TX - DAY

Ally pulls off to the side, turns the Freightliner's flasher on, and trades places with Ron.

The Cascadia crawls back onto I-10.

INT. FREIGHTLINER CASCADIA - DAY

The sleeper picks up speed with Ron at the wheel...and the flasher still on.

ALLY
You forgot something.

RON
Me?

ALLY
The flasher's still on.

Ron flicks the flasher off.

EXT. INTERSTATE 10, BEAUMONT, TX - DAY

The Cascadia (still with its tow in back) moves along into the southwest part of town.

INT. FREIGHTLINER CASCADIA - DAY

Ron continues to drive...but now looks sick.

From the passenger seat, Ally uses her laptop to conduct company business.

The truck slows down...Ally eyeballs Ron.

ALLY
Ron...you okay?

Ron shows Ally his sick look.

She uses Google to pull up a Beaumont map on her laptop.

ALLY (CONT'D)
Pull over on that access road
straight ahead.

Ron's nod is oh-so-slow.

EXT. INTERSTATE 10 ACCESS ROAD, BEAUMONT, TX - DAY

Ron pulls off I-10 and lands the vehicle in...midlane, where it comes to a complete stop.

INT. FREIGHTLINER CASCADIA - DAY

Ally finds Ron slumped over the steering wheel.

EXT. INTERSTATE 70, NEAR GRAND JUNCTION, CO - DAY

Gladys continues to hang onto the back of Sheryl's eighteen-wheeler...and vehicles alongside and in back of the big rig CONTINUE THEIR HONKING.

One of the vehicles alongside the Kenworth: A 2020 Jeep Cherokee.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE - DAY

A PRETEEN GIRL points at Gladys from the back seat while the Cherokee passes the tractor-trailer.

HER MOTHER (40s) drives...and honks while the preteen's FATHER (40s) rides shotgun, having caught Gladys' stunt on his cell phone.

PRETEEN GIRL

Look! There's Evel Knievel!

FATHER

Whaddya know 'bout Evel Knievel?

MOTHER

Didn't he die?

PRETEEN GIRL

One of the cable networks showed a documentary on the Seventies. That's how I know about him.

FATHER

I thought he rode a motorcycle...

MOTHER

I thought he died...

INT. KENWORTH T680 - DAY

Sheryl waves at the Jeep Cherokee's driver.

She and...

EXT. INTERSTATE 70-US 50 INTERCHANGE, GRAND JUNCTION, CO - DAY

...other motorists hear A SIREN.

Sheryl pulls off I-70...as does a Colorado State Patrol car (its siren CONTINUES TO SOUND and its lights flash).

EXT. US 50, GRAND JUNCTION, CO - DAY

Sheryl's eighteen-wheeler and the CSP car stop on the side of the highway...across the road from a huge truck stop.

TWO CSP OFFICERS (a man in his 30s and a woman in her 40s) jump out of their car.

The car's lights continue to flash.

Gladys climbs down from the back of the Kenworth's trailer.

She goes after Sheryl, who comes out of the T680's tractor.

The officers apprehend Gladys while Sheryl watches.

SHERYL

Well, I'll be a...

MALE CSP OFFICER

Ma'am, did you know that this man was riding the back of your trailer?

GLADYS

Man, hell!

Sheryl nods...the CSP officers look shocked.

FEMALE CSP OFFICER

Prove you're a woman. Take that helmet off.

GLADYS

Let me go first!

Both officers unhand Gladys, who takes her helmet off and throws it to the ground.

Then Gladys takes a swing at Sheryl.

Sheryl ducks...the officers grab Gladys again.

SHERYL
(pointing to Gladys)
Calm down!

"K-Whopper Kid" springs back up before she eyes the officers.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
She tried to rob me back in
Commerce City.

Gladys looks confused.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
She tried to hit me with a brick,
but she left the brick back there
in Commerce City.

FEMALE CSP OFFICER
(to Gladys)
Is this true?

Six eyes stare at a still-befuddled Gladys.

FEMALE CSP OFFICER (CONT'D)
Yes or no?

GLADYS
Uh...yes.

The male CSP officer escorts Gladys to the squad car.

MALE CSP OFFICER
Hands on the hood, please.

Gladys places her hands on the CSP car's hood...the female
CSP officer frisks Gladys while Sheryl watches.

FEMALE CSP OFFICER
Let me see your driver's license.

The frisking ends...Gladys yanks her wallet from her pants
pocket. She hands her license to the female officer.

FEMALE CSP OFFICER (CONT'D)
(checking Gladys' license)
Gladys Kaye Farmer...your name
sounds familiar.

The female officer hands the license back to Gladys.

Sheryl and the male officer perk up.

FEMALE CSP OFFICER (CONT'D)
You were a makeup artist for a
bunch of TV shows back in the day.

GLADYS
And a stuntperson.

SHERYL
Wait'll my roommate back home in
St. Louis hears about this.

The male officer stares daggers at Gladys.

MALE CSP OFFICER
Why aren't you in Hollywood
anymore? Why have you decided to
turn to crime?

Gladys sighs.

GLADYS
Well...I got tired of imposing on
my son and daughter-in-law. They
live in Denver.

Some heads nod.

GLADYS (CONT'D)
I was riding high...then the
writers went on strike in 2023.

The male officer whips out a notepad...

GLADYS (CONT'D)
Then the actors went on strike a
few months later.

...to scribble things down.

GLADYS (CONT'D)
And I didn't even mention
artificial intelligence taking over
in Hollywood.

Both officers nod.

GLADYS (CONT'D)
I was named after Gladys
Knight...so I figured: "I've got to
use my imagination."

The two CSP officers eyeball each other.

GLADYS (CONT'D)
Well, it was this or rob the
midnight train to Georgia.

Sheryl tries to stifle her own laugh.

EXT. INTERSTATE 10 ACCESS ROAD, BEAUMONT, TX - DAY

The Freightliner still rests in midlane...its flasher blinks.

The tractor's passenger door opens...Ally drags Ron out of
the truck.

He collapses...he throws up.

EXT. TRAVEL CENTER, BEAUMONT, TX - DAY

Ally guides Ron into a generic-looking truck stop.

INT. TRAVEL CENTER DINER, BEAUMONT, TX - DAY

Ron, Ally, and FOUR OTHER CUSTOMERS eat in a bright,
inviting, window-laden space.

The two truckers' fare: Chunky soup and a large salad each.

ALLY
Hope that takes that yogurt away.
That yogurt we had for breakfast.

RON
You got that right...
(takes a bite)
Sally.

Ally cringes.

ALLY
I just thought we could start
eating healthy together.

Ron watches Ally take a bite of her salad.

ALLY (CONT'D)
My granny and her trucking buddy
Bernadine made the switch to
healthier food.

He forks out a large amount of salad...

ALLY (CONT'D)
 And that's why they were able to
 stay in the game for a long, long,
 long time.

...and stuffs it all in his mouth.

RON
 (through bites)
 Eatin' rabbit food.

ALLY
 You should see how fast rabbits
 run.
 (taking a swig)
 And my name is Ally.

Ron stares at his salad.

EXT. INTERSTATE 70, COLORADO-UTAH BORDER - DAY

Sheryl's westbound truck barrels into the Beehive State.

INT. KENWORTH T680 - DAY

She admires the cliffs as they unfurl to her right.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 "K-Whopper Kid," pick up.

Sheryl grabs her CB mike.

SHERYL
 (into CB mike)
 Ten-four. "K-Whopper Kid" to base.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 "Kid," what's your twenty?

SHERYL
 I just crossed into the Beehive
 State.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 Huh?

SHERYL
 Utah. You know...where the Osmonds
 came from. And Merlin Olsen, too.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 Whaddya know about the Rams?

SHERYL
Oh, you'd be surprised.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
How come you're just now in Utah?

SHERYL
Somebody jumped on my trailer at
Commerce City and finally got off
at Grand Junction.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Why didn't you throw him off
sooner? Like in Commerce City?

SHERYL
Well, I was waiting to find a spot
that didn't involve bridges,
creeks, or the Rocky Mountains.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
This dude jumped on your trailer?
Like a stuntman?

SHERYL
It was a she. And she actually was
a stuntperson.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
That's it. When I get home, I'm
gonna buy me a twenty-four pack and
drink it all in one sitting.

Sheryl chuckles.

EXT. INTERSTATE 10, HOUSTON, TX - DAY

The Freightliner-Volvo hookup winces along with the rest of
the heavy traffic as the city's skyline stands tall in the
background.

INT. FREIGHTLINER CASCADIA - DAY

Ally drives...Ron rides shotgun.

He pulls out that same joint...but her dirty sideways look
nixes everything.

EXT. INTERSTATE 10, SAN ANTONIO, TX - DAY

With San Antone's own skyline visible, the Cascadia rolls
along with some more heavy traffic.

INT. FREIGHTLINER CASCADIA - DAY

Ally's still behind the wheel; Ron blows his nose...and throws his used tissue(s) to the floor.

This despite a small wastebasket now between the seats and just behind the gearshift.

She looks up from the traffic for a brief moment, sees the tissue(s), and cringes.

EXT. LONE STAR FREIGHT LINES, SAN ANTONIO, TX - DAY

The Cascadia and its tow move into the sprawling yard of a trucking firm north of Interstate 10 in the south central part of town.

Ron saunters between the two tractors...Ally (with her ratchet set and perhaps other tools) follows him.

She goes to his tractor to remove her luggage...he reaches for one of her tools to unhitch the two tractors.

ALLY

No. I've got this.

Ron sets that tool down.

Ally places her luggage on the ground, then goes back to Ron's tractor to grab the can of air freshener.

RON

Just like a woman.

His eyes go wide while she sprays what's left of the air freshener on her baggage.

ALLY

Ron, don't start that again.

She hauls the can of air freshener and her baggage into her Volvo tractor, then moves between the two tractors.

RON

You really a trucker?

ALLY

Can Taylor Swift sing?

Ron looks lost.

Ally picks up the prone tool and goes to unhitch both cabs.

RON
Aw, c'mon...let me help.

ALLY
No. I've got this.

RON
You know what?

ALLY
What?

RON
You ain't no fun.

Ally continues to work...Ron moves closer to her.

RON (CONT'D)
I'm a Cheech...and I was lookin'
for a Chong.

ALLY
Well...that's not my thing.

RON
I was lookin' for a real truck
driver...not my mom.

ALLY
I'm a real truck driver...just like
my granny. Remember?

Ron looks skeptical.

ALLY (CONT'D)
And I'm trying to do this
clean...no drugs of any kind.

RON
You threw my stuff out!

ALLY
A bunch of old tissues and other
litter. Your truck was smelling!

RON
Well, it's my truck!

ALLY
Well, you oughta take pride in it!
If I can take pride in my own rig,
you oughta be able to take pride in
your own rig, too!

He seethes...he charges after her.

She bearhugs him.

RON
Get your hands offa me!

ALLY
Calm down...calm down...

A FEW EMPLOYEES watch Ally continue to bearhug Ron, who strains to get out of her grip.

One worker breaks out a cell phone.

EXT. INTERSTATE 15, EXIT 67, NEAR ENOCH, UT - DAY

Things look peaceful...not much traffic.

In fact, three eighteen-wheelers tool southwestbound along this stretch of I-15.

Sheryl's is one...it follows another big rig a couple of blocks away.

That third tractor-trailer zooms past Sheryl's truck...and pursues the semi straight ahead of Sheryl's.

INT. KENWORTH T680 - DAY

Sheryl looks shocked.

EXT. INTERSTATE 15, ENOCH, UT - DAY

The two trucks ahead of Sheryl's Kenworth run neck and neck. When one speeds up, the other follows suit.

Both dueling rigs bump each other while a couple of cars line up alongside Sheryl's eighteen-wheeler.

Now the trailing traffic slows down behind the two trucks up front.

Both feuding trucks land in the median.

Sheryl pulls off the road.

INT. KENWORTH T680 - DAY

While she shakes her head "no," Sheryl grabs her CB mike.

SHERYL
 (into CB mike)
 "K-Whopper Kid" to base.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 Ten-four, "K-Whopper Kid." What's
 your twenty?

SHERYL
 I'm on I-15 in Enoch, Utah. Few
 miles from Cedar City. Should be in
 Sin City by seven thirty tonight.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 Wow! That's smokin'!

SHERYL
 Actually...that's seven thirty
 tonight Pacific time. Nine thirty
 Central time.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 What's up this time?

SHERYL
 There's some fighting at the front
 door. Two truckers pushing each
 other off the road.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 I can sure use some popcorn.

SHERYL
 Along with that case of beer?

EXT. INTERSTATE 15, ENOCH, UT - DAY

THE TWO FEUDING TRUCKERS climb out of their big rigs...only
 to come to fisticuffs.

At least other vehicles can now move along.

Sheryl pulls her K-Whopper back onto the interstate.

INT. KENWORTH T680 - DAY

No longer on the CB, Sheryl tools down the road...the rear-
 view mirror shows the two fighting truckers still at it.

A RINGTONE comes from a pocket in Sheryl's overalls.

SHERYL
 Sorry...gotta get moving.

EXT. LONE STAR FREIGHT LINES, SAN ANTONIO, TX - DAY

Ally watches Ron pull away in his Freightliner Cascadia...which now pulls a disabled 2010 Peterbilt 389 sleeper out of the yard.

She breathes relief, then climbs into her Volvo sleeper.

INT. VOLVO VNL 860 - DAY

Ally fastens her seat belt, starts the tractor, and reaches for her CB mike.

ALLY
(into her CB mike)
"Volvo Kid" to base.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Ten-four, "Volvo Kid." What's your
twenty?

ALLY
I'm here at the Lone Star yard here
in the Alamo City. Just saw Ron
pull out with the bad truck in tow
and go back to Presleytown.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Presleytown?

ALLY
Would it make you feel better to
know that Shannen Doherty was born
there?

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
She was?

ALLY
She was! I really loved her on
"Charmed." And Mom loved her on
"Beverly Hills, 90210."

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Okay, "Volvo Kid," here's your new
twenty.

ALLY
Good.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 Go up to Ball Street Merchant
 Shippers. They're near the
 northeast suburbs.

Ally flicks on her truck's GPS.

DISPATCHER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Pick up the trailer there.

ALLY
 Ball Street Merchant
 Shippers...I've got it.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 Good.

ALLY
 Come to think of it...my truck-
 driver granny did a happy dance
 when she found out she and Shannen
 Doherty had something in common.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 Your granny can move objects at
 will.

ALLY
 Nope...both my truck-driver granny
 and Shannen Doherty love to sit
 down and smoke a fine cigar.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 That's it! I want a new drug!

EXT. LOWER FLAT TOP TRAVEL CENTER, MESQUITE, NV - DAY

Sun's about to go down...Sheryl's eighteen-wheeler moves into
 a space alongside several other parked semis.

INT. KENWORTH T680 - DAY

Sheryl pulls out her cell phone. She checks for
 messages...and takes a deep breath when she finds a message
 from Darryl.

She punches her father's cell phone number, and puts her
 device to her ear.

EXT. BRUNELLA'S AND DARRYL'S HOUSE, DES MOINES, IA - DAY

Darryl and Brunella sit in the back yard of their older,
 modest-looking house near Drake University.

DARRYL
 (into his cell phone)
 Hello?

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

SHERYL
 Hi, Dad. It's your daughter.

DARRYL
 'Bout time.

Brunella's mouth flies open.

DARRYL (CONT'D)
 I tried to call you earlier today.
 You in the hospital or something?

SHERYL
 No. I'm on the road. It's my first
 official trip as an over-the-road
 truck driver.

Sheryl's mother grits her teeth.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
 I'm loving it.

BRUNELLA
 Darryl, where is she?

DARRYL
 Where you at, Sheryl?

SHERYL
 I'm at a truck stop in Mesquite,
 Nevada. I'll be in Las Vegas
 tonight. Gonna rest there and pick
 up a load in San Diego tomorrow.

DARRYL
 You're not gonna play the slots
 while you're in Vegas, are you?

Brunella and Sheryl laugh.

SHERYL
 No! I'm not into gambling!

BRUNELLA
 (pointing to Darryl)
 She took a gamble by going into
 trucking in the first place.

DARRYL
Here, Sheryl. I'm gonna give the
phone to your mom.

Darryl hands his phone to his wife.

BRUNELLA
(into phone)
Sheryl?

SHERYL
Hi, Mom.

BRUNELLA
You're not hurt or anything like
that, are you?

SHERYL
No. It's all good. I'm fine...even
with another trucker almost running
me off the road and a former
stuntperson trying to rob me.

BRUNELLA
I knew it.

Brunella eyeballs her husband...who nods in understanding.

SHERYL
Stuff like that happened to Grandma
Bernadine. But she made it through.

BRUNELLA
(with a slow nod)
Yes...that she did.

SHERYL
And I'm gonna make it through, too.
Just like Grandma Bernadine.

BRUNELLA
Make sure of that.

SHERYL
I got some of my toughness from
her. And, of course, some of my
toughness from you and Dad. And my
smarts from all three of you...as
well as Granddad Virgil.

BRUNELLA
Nice of you to say that.

Smiles break out on Sheryl and Darryl.

SHERYL

Grandma Bernadine was strong...strong enough to help Granddad Virgil put food on the table and keep a house. It wasn't trucking that killed her.

BRUNELLA

You're right.

SHERYL

Grandma Bernadine had a heart attack when she watched the news and found out Ivanka Trump took that unpaid job in the White House.

An openmouthed Darryl nods.

EXT. BALL STREET MERCHANT SHIPPERS, SAN ANTONIO, TX - DAY

Ally hooks a trailer to her Volvo truck in this expansive, busy space.

She takes great pains to inspect the trailer when her cell phone RINGS.

Ally picks up the phone and checks for messages...only to grit her teeth.

INT. VOLVO VNL 860 - DAY

A satisfied-looking Ally fastens up, starts her big rig, and grabs her CB mike.

ALLY

(into CB mike)

"Volvo Kid" to base.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Ten-four. What's your twenty?

ALLY

I'm still at Ball Street Merchant Shippers here in the Alamo City. Just need to know where the load I'm picking up is.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

It's three hours away.

ALLY
Which direction?

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
It's in Del Rio.

ALLY
Texas?

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
That's right. It's on the Rio Grande. Go any further and you're gonna need a passport.

ALLY
Got it...but it's four o'clock...Central time.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Grrrr...the shipper closes at five.

ALLY
Got no choice but to stay here tonight and then pull out for Del Rio in the morning.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Yep.

ALLY
At least I get to find out if the house Carol Burnett was born in is still up.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
I thought she was born in a hospital!

And Ally pulls out of the space...while she grits her teeth.

EXT. TRAVEL CENTER, NORTH LAS VEGAS, NV - NIGHT

Sheryl drives her K-Whopper into a space alongside several other eighteen-wheelers at this truck stop near the Las Vegas Motor Speedway.

INT. KENWORTH T680 - NIGHT

She checks her cell phone...and finds the clock reads 7:30 PM Pacific time.

Sheryl punches Ally's phone number.

EXT. FOSTER ROAD TRAVEL CENTER, SAN ANTONIO, TX - NIGHT

A generic-looking, recently-built truck stop.

Ally (plastic bag of grocery items in tow) strolls out of the building when her cell phone RINGS.

She hurries to her Volvo eighteen-wheeler as the phone CONTINUES TO RING.

ALLY
As long as it isn't Mom...

INT. VOLVO VNL 860 - NIGHT

Ally hurries into her truck. She sets her purchases on the passenger seat, locks her tractor, and grabs her (yep) STILL-RINGING device.

ALLY
(into her phone)
Hell...o...

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

SHERYL
(into own phone)
Hi, Ally! It's me, Sheryl!

Ally screams with relief.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
You must've had that kind of trip.

ALLY
Now...where the hell can I start?

SHERYL
First, try to take a deep breath...

Sheryl's best buddy takes as deep a breath as possible.

Ally follows that up with another deep, deep breath.

ALLY
Okay...I'm ready.

SHERYL
Take your time. I'm here for you.

ALLY

I go down to Memphis to meet the other driver...and I find out he's a stoner.

Sheryl nods.

ALLY (CONT'D)

When I met Ron...the other driver...he smelled like he hadn't taken a shower since they kicked George Santos outa Congress.

SHERYL

Hoo boy...

ALLY

And that tractor I rode with him in...it was a rolling barn!

SHERYL

I don't envy you.

ALLY

And to top it all off...he wouldn't take my word for it that I'm a real truck driver.

SHERYL

Hey, I hear you, Ally. That sounds like so many people we've met since we decided to go into trucking.

ALLY

Our grannies went through the same crap when they applied for truck-driving jobs at Mid-Continent Bottlers back in Des Moines.

SHERYL

And some of that crap came from our great-grandparents.

ALLY

The same great-grannies who, a couple of nights before our grannies got the job, raved about a TV-movie about a couple of women truck drivers.

SHERYL

That movie Billy Carter was in?

ALLY

And a post-"True Grit" Kim Darby
and a pre-"Designing Women" Annie
Potts as the truckers.

Ally stretches her free arm.

ALLY (CONT'D)

At least Billy Carter wasn't a
stoner. This one I was stuck with
tried to punch me out after I told
him he oughta show some pride in
that rig he drives.

SHERYL

That's all messed up! Did you
report him?

ALLY

I did, Sheryl! On the way to this
truck stop.

SHERYL

Glad you did.

ALLY

Never mind that I took care of him
when he got sick and he ended up
slumped over the steering
wheel...and I ended up driving most
of the way.

SHERYL

That's so messed up.

ALLY

I even unhitched his truck and
mine...all to prove to him I'm a
real trucker.

Sheryl takes a deep breath.

ALLY (CONT'D)

Now...your turn.

SHERYL

You bet. Right off the bat, another
trucker chased me from the St.
Louis area to the Topeka area.

ALLY

WHAT?

SHERYL

He did...but he jackknifed across the street from the truck stop I filled up at.

ALLY

He asked for it.

SHERYL

You remember Cooper Larson from the driving school.

ALLY

How the hell can I forget?

SHERYL

Well, his older brother's a truck driver...and I read in the online version of "The Topeka Capital-Journal" that he was the one who tried to run me off the road.

ALLY

Karma in action.

SHERYL

Speaking of karma...it hit my mom and dad big time.

ALLY

Huh?

SHERYL

We had a good talk a few hours ago. Bottom line is that I told them I was gonna make it through. Just like Grandma Bernadine.

Ally watches other vehicles pull into the Texas truck stop.

SHERYL (CONT'D)

And like your Grandma Valentina.

A big smile crosses Ally's face.

SHERYL (CONT'D)

My mom and dad and I are at peace about my going into trucking.

ALLY

Way to rock, Sheryl!

SHERYL

I just about freaked out when Mom told me that, when she was five, she got a toy truck for Christmas from Grandma Bernadine.

ALLY

Well, I'll be a...

SHERYL

By the time she was seven, Mom found out trucks weren't her thing.

Sheryl gazes at vehicles that exit that Nevada truck stop.

SHERYL (CONT'D)

Speaking of thing...I've gotta tell you about the out-of-work stuntperson who tried to rob me, then jumped on the back of my truck in Commerce City, Colorado.

ALLY

Like in a movie?

SHERYL

More like reality TV.

EXT. INTERSTATE 15, NEAR BARSTOW, CA - DAY

Sheryl's big rig and several other vehicles glide through the Mojave Desert.

INT. KENWORTH T680 - DAY

An ecstatic Sheryl gabs on the CB.

SHERYL

I'm going through the Mojave Desert, rolling toward Barstow, and should be in Padres Town in a couple of hours.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Ten-four, "K-Whopper Kid."

SHERYL

Had a great phone conversation with my good buddy Ally.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Whose alley?

SHERYL
Her handle is "Volvo Kid."

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Yeah!

SHERYL
Ever since she and I talked on the phone, I've been wondering: "What if Ally and I could be over-the-road partners?"

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Don't you mean "Volvo Kid?"

EXT. SERVICE CENTER, DEL RIO, TX - DAY

Ally picks up her load at long last.

She and A WAREHOUSE EMPLOYEE inspect everything.

It all checks out.

ALLY
Thanks!

The warehouse employee and Ally wave; the latter jumps into her Volvo sleeper truck.

INT. VOLVO VNL 860 - DAY

Ally fastens her seat belt, starts that beast back up, and lunges for her CB mike.

ALLY
(into CB mike)
"Volvo Kid" to base.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Ten-four, "Volvo Kid." What's your twenty?

ALLY
I'm about to pull outa Del Rio.
Just need to know my next twenty.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
You're taking that load to Amarillo. Take it to the Northeast Third Avenue Warehouse.

ALLY
Ten-four to that...I'm curious
about one thing.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
What's that?

ALLY
Why couldn't they let me and Sheryl
work together...like we hoped?

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Who?

ALLY
Oops...I mean me and "K-Whopper
Kid" working together...

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Sorry. Can't touch that one.

ALLY
Thanks...M.C. Hammer.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Whatcha know about M.C. Hammer?

ALLY
Believe it not...he's on this flash
drive I've been listening to.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
"Kid," how old are you?

Ally chuckles.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE WAREHOUSE, SAN DIEGO, CA - DAY

Sheryl oh-so-carefully guides her K-Whopper into the loading
dock...where Cody and River wait to load it.

She shuts the truck's ignition off, jumps out of the tractor,
and triggers doubletakes from the two men.

Sheryl's mouth flies open, too.

CODY
Sheryl...

RIVER
Haskins?

CODY
Whatcha doing out here?

SHERYL
I was gonna ask you guys that!

River and Cody eyeball each other for a few seconds.

RIVER
Cody...you first.

CODY
Uh...all right, Riv.

SHERYL
You two must've gotten tired of the grind back there in St. Louis, too.

CODY
Yeah, Sheryl. We did.

RIVER
Our grannies live here in San Diego...and they got us this job.

SHERYL
Well, I'll be a...

CODY
No noisy grinders to worry about...right, River?

RIVER
Right, Code.
(eyeballing Sheryl)
When'd you start driving a truck?

SHERYL
This past Monday.

Cody and River stare at each other once more.

Then they size up Sheryl.

CODY
Hey, Sheryl, you don't look like a truck driver.

SHERYL
Well, this truck didn't get here all by itself!

The two men nod at the lone woman before loading items into the truck's trailer.

RIVER
(to Cody)
It's just beginner's luck.

SHERYL
Look who's talking!

The threesome share a laugh.

EXT. NORTHEAST THIRD AVENUE WAREHOUSE, AMARILLO, TX - DAY

Ally watches EMPLOYEES unload the Volvo's trailer when her cell phone RINGS.

ALLY
(into phone)
Hello?

EXT. VALENTINA'S HOUSE, DES MOINES, IA - DAY

Valentina (with a cigar), Tim (with his laptop), and Natalie (with her cell phone) sit in lounge chairs in the back yard.

NATALIE
(into phone)
Allyson, why haven't you called?

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

Tim and Valentina look up at Natalie.

NATALIE (CONT'D)
We've been trying to reach you!
Have you and Sheryl fallen flat on
your faces? Have you both learned
your lesson yet?

ALLY
Mom, you're lucky they're unloading
my truck...my big rig!

Natalie jumps up from her lounge chair...

NATALIE
So where's Sheryl?

...and saunters toward the street.

ALLY

She's picking up a load in San Diego...in her own big rig.

NATALIE

I thought you two were gonna work together. You have a new partner?

ALLY

I did...for a while. I met him in Memphis and we drove to San Antonio. He drove back to Memphis. I'm now in Amarillo...waiting on this load. He was a stoner.

Ally's truck continues to unload.

NATALIE

Uh huh. I suppose you relapsed and passed the J--

ALLY

Mom, I don't do that anymore! I really don't have time to talk. I'm waiting on my truck--

NATALIE

I'm your mother, and you WILL talk--

Tim closes his laptop and sneaks up to Natalie.

ALLY

Here's the bottom line: I love trucking...and I'm gonna stick with it. And I promised Sheryl, myself, and our doctor that I was gonna do it clean.

NATALIE

I still think you're making a big mistake! Big mistake!

Valentina (cigar and all) rises from her chair...

ALLY

I'm grown, Mom! It's my life, and I'll do what I want with it!

...to sneak behind Tim.

ALLY (CONT'D)

As long as I enjoy the freedom of being a trucker, why should that bother you? ASK MY GRANNY!

NATALIE

Why you--

ALLY

End of discussion!

Ally hangs up while she turns to her eighteen-wheeler.

And Valentina and Tim stare at a steaming Natalie...

VALENTINA

Natalie...Ally's right.

...who pockets her own phone while Tim nods.

EXT. I&M TRUCKING, MADISON, IL - DAY

On this last Monday in July, Sheryl and Ally stroll toward the front entrance.

ALLY

I had to put my foot down and stand up to my mom. I had to defend this brand-new start in my...our lives.

SHERYL

Put 'er here.

Ally and Sheryl high-five it.

INT. I&M TRUCKING EMPLOYEE LOUNGE - DAY

Sheryl and Ally sit across a table from Irwin...as the only three people in the lounge at the moment.

IRWIN

You both had a very interesting first week.

SHERYL

You could say that.

Ally's is a slow nod.

IRWIN

Ally...I got a report from the warehouse in San Antonio.

Sheryl's best buddy perks up.

IRWIN (CONT'D)
I've heard you're not a good team
player.

ALLY
Wait a corn-pickin' minute, Irwin!

IRWIN
We split you and Sheryl up in order
to see what you were made up of as
individuals. But you got in a fight
with Ron Batchelor.

ALLY
Ron was gonna punch me out because
I wanted him to take pride in his
big rig...but he was more
interested in his next hit.

Irwin draws a blank stare.

ALLY (CONT'D)
His next hit off a joint.

SHERYL
That's what Ally told me.

ALLY
I've heard of HR people in the
trucking industry looking for
drivers with reefer
experience...but Ron takes the
cake!

Sheryl busts out in a huge laugh...only to receive Irwin's
withering look.

IRWIN
Sheryl, Sheryl, Sheryl...we got a
report from the Colorado State
Patrol that you let someone ride
the back of your trailer for about
a hundred and fifty miles.

Ally's best friend gives a slow, slow nod.

IRWIN (CONT'D)
Can you say "lawsuit?"

Sheryl mouths out "LAWSUIT," then:

SHERYL

It's a long story...but if I'd let Gladys Farmer off in the mountains or at a bridge and she died, they would've charged me with murder.

ALLY

Irwin...Sheryl's got a point.

IRWIN

(standing up)

I don't know what to do with you two. Whatcha think?

The two women stare daggers at the lone man.

ALLY

Me and Sheryl have been pals for years...went to grade school together...went to high school together...went to college together...we live together.

Sheryl wags a finger at Irwin while A FEW TRUCKERS enter the employee lounge.

ALLY (CONT'D)

Why can't we drive together?

SHERYL

Ally and I go together like Brittney Griner and Diana Taurasi.

An openmouthed Irwin sits back down. He eyeballs the two BFFs for a while.

Ally and Sheryl look longingly at Irwin for a few seconds.

IRWIN

I'm willing to try it.

The two buddies' eyes light up.

IRWIN (CONT'D)

From now on, you're a team...just like your grandmas.

Irwin looks on in smiles as the duo cheer themselves hoarse.

EXT. I&M TRUCKING LOADING DOCK - DAY

Sheryl and Ally (suitcases in tow) stroll toward their eighteen-wheelers.

Both women set their luggage down just short of Sheryl's rig.

ALLY
Thanks for standing in my corner.

SHERYL
And thank you for standing in my
corner, too.

Ally and Sheryl hug...only to turn the embrace into a high
five when ANOTHER TRUCKER eyeballs them.

ALLY
Your truck or mine?

The two Iowans-turned-Missourians scan the dock...then:

SHERYL
Tell you what:
(pointing skyward)
Let's see how Grandma Bernadine
would've handled it.

ALLY
And if that doesn't work...

Ally drags out her cell phone.

ALLY (CONT'D)
Grandma Valentina's a call away.

Sheryl shakes her head "yes."

ALLY (CONT'D)
On the other hand...we can take a
chance on...

Sheryl and Ally hug each other tight.

FREEZE FRAME when the two pals point skyward.

FADE OUT.

THE END