

Once Upon a Time On My 53' Reefer Trailer

I Have Achieved Some 1.3 Million Miles Of Accident-Free Driving.
Thus If I Turn You Into **Vehicular Roadkill** Out Here, It **Won't** Be
An Accident. **Please Drive Like You've Got Good Sense Even If You
Don't. Thank You Sooo Muuuch!!!**

Random Bipolar Thought Which Just Landed...

If You Have a ... "Man Cave," You Need Therapy. Yar You Do!

I Am B-O-R-E-D. C'mon, Woman, Show For Me.

Well, Yes, **NOW!!!** If Not Now, Then *When?* *What-the-Pfuck* Planet
Are We On Here? And, Please, *Please, No Droopy Asymmetricals* As
I Can See Those Puppies *At Home*. Thanks A Lot, Sweetheart!

[Ed. Note: To Female Motorists — In A Big O-T-R Tractor w/ A Full-Size Sleeper, Please
Know That Our Eye Level In The Driver's Seat Is Some 10-12 Feet Off The Ground (I Used To
Know The Height Exactly.) From That Vantage Point, You Might Be *Surprised* i.e., Shocked And
Horried, By What We Can *See*. Be Assured From Spring Through Labor Day (At Least) We're
Absolutely Peepin' Your Bare Shoulders, Bare Thighs, And, Of Course, Your Cleavage.

Not Surprisingly, We Pfuckin' **H-A-T-E** *Tinted* Windows. They Should Be OUTLAWED. But That's Just The Beginning, Honey. We'll Then Key Up The Mike On Our Trusty CB Radio And Tell All Our Truckin' Homies About Ya. Yar We Do, Girl — Almost Every Dang Time. To Wit, "Breaker 1-9, Check Out The *Baby Doll* In The Blue Chevy Equinox Rollin' Eastbound At The 122 Yardstick, C'mon."

Now, If You're Inclined To The Notion '*Men Are Dogs*,' I'm Here To Confirm That We Long Haulers Are Pretty Much The Mutts Of The Species. But We Are *Essential* Mutts, Especially During Seminal Events Such As COVID. A Final Obnoxious Observation... Beyond The Matter Of Safety Which We, Of Course, Take Quite Seriously, We *Appreciate* Women Who Wear Seat Belts - Nice 'n Snug Is Best As They Do An Admirable Job Of Delineating Whatcha Got Up Top. Is That Not Disgusting?]

PMS For People Who've Had The Misfortune To Know Me O-T-Y, Re The Above They'd Surely Tell You "That Boy Talkin' Shit." True Enough. I Blew Up My Corporate Career [Spectacularly] In May 1995, Specifically The Afternoon Of The 18th Which Was A Beautiful Spring Day. As I Duly Contemplated My Navel Regarding What Would Come Next, The Notion Of Long Haul Trucking Popped Into My Bipolar Brain. My Thinking At That Time Is That I Wanted To Put A Highly Portable Always In Demand Skill Into My Employment Quiver — To Wit: Accountant, Secretary, Nurse, Rocket Scientist, And The Like.

So, In December 1995 Off I Go To A Two-Week Driver Training Program On The South Side Of Indy Off I-465 & Shadeland In A Facility Which In A Previous Life Had Been A Cummins Engine Plant. (Schneider Had A Facility Nearby Which I Thought Was Just A Drop Yard. Having Just Taken A Look On Googly Maps, It Looks Much More Substantial.) And I Struggled To Get Through The Training. At 40, I Hadn't Even Backed Any Kind Of Civilian Trailer. More Than A Few Of The Trainers Were Grizzled Hard Asses With Commensurate Attitudes. At That Time There Was A Legit Driver Shortage. Upon Graduation, I Had The Great Good Fortune To Be Picked Up By Werner Enterprises. At That Time, Werner Had An Excellent Training Program Under Which A Trainee Did Two Six Week Stints With Two Separate Trainers. The First Fellow To Whom I Was Assigned Was A Nice Guy But Not All That Great As A Trainer.

But The Second Guy Was A Hilarious Cajun From Shreveport, Troy, Who Treated Me As A Valued Friend Who He Just Happened To Be Teaching How To Safely And Competently Drive A 70', 80,000 lb Guided Missile. I Struggled With Backing For Quite Some Time. Right At The Outset, Troy Said To Me "When I Get Done With You, You'll Be Backing Up With More Knowledge And Skill Than Some Drivers Who've Been At It For 20 Years. And Good To His Word He Was. Beyond All Of That, Troy Was Just A Helluva Lot Of Fun To Work And Hang With. One Afternoon I'm Behind The Wheel, Troy Suddenly Says With What I Knew By Then Was Some Mock Urgency, Pull Over On The Shoulder Just As Soon As You Safely Can. I Get Pulled Over And Give Him A Questioning Look. With His Trademark Devilish Shit-Eating Grin He Says, "I Gots To Squirt The Dirt." Finally, All Of That Training (Including The Two-Week School) Was Covered In Full By Werner. I Got Going At 22 cpm In A Cabover Which Came As Something Of A Shock. "You Mean I Don't Get A Double-Bunk Condo Like The One Troy Has?" No, Bonehead, You Don't. Those Have To Be Earned. But I Have A College Degree. Right. Be Thankful We Don't Hold That Against You. Pfuuuck! I Couldn't Stand Fully Erect In The First Two Trucks To Which I Was Assigned. And If I'm Being Honest, I'm Kinda Thankin' That That Seemed Like A Blow Job Without Suction. But In Fairly Short Order That Was All Behind Me.

As I Eased My Way Into The Job, And More Importantly The O-T-R Lifestyle, There Were More Than A Few Drivers Who Went Out Of Their Way To Be Kind And Helpful To Include Helping Me To Extricate Myself From A Couple Of Jams I Got Into Early On, One Of Which Could Have Had A Bad Outcome. It Quickly Became Clear That Newbies Like Me Standout Like A Sore Thumb. And Unless You're A Self-Absorbed A\$\$WHOLE, Those Moments Will Leave An Indelible Mark Of Gratitude. There Was A Wonderful Novel Which Was Published In 2010 — Pay It Forward — By A Woman Named Catherine Ryan Hyde. You're Cordially Invited To Check It Out On Mommazon. As I Gained Knowledge And Experience Over Time (Especially Mechanical Knowledge), I Was Alert To Opportunities To Pay It Forward To Other New Drivers. Drivers Supporting Other Drivers Was One Of The Things I Most Appreciated About My O-T-R Experience. And For All The Great Honest Hard Working Drivers That I Encountered, There Is Also A Disproportionate Subset Of Self-Absorbed Psychotic A\$\$WHOLES Who Draw Far Too Much Attention Than They Deserve. I Have A Number Of Stories About Those Whackjobs.

In Many Ways, The Adjustment From White Collar To Blue Collar Work Had Its Moments. Long Haul Was The Only Job I Ever Had Where I Was All To Often Presumed To Be A MORON Until I Could Prove Otherwise. Consequently, I Left A Trail Of Bite Marks In My Wake As A Company Driver, O/O, Lease Operator (An Absolute & Egregious BeJay w/out Suction) And Finally As An Independent Running Under My Own Federal Authority. Were I Just A Wee Bit Smarter, I Would've Become An Independent Much Sooner. Oh, Well, Live & Learn...

Just A Few More Random Thoughts Before I Take My Leave. For Numerous Reasons, Not All Of Which Are Related To The Legendary Abject Stupidity Of Four-Wheelers, Long Haul Is A Damned Dangerous Occupation. Driving In Bad Threatening Weather Will Quickly Separate The Best From The Rest. One Thing I Wasn't Prepared For Is The Incredible Extent To Which

Trucking Is Mentally And Physically Demanding/Taxing. The Motoring Public All To Often Has This Impression That Truckers Are Fat Dirty And Otherwise Nasty And Sitting On That Phat Ass Holding A Steering Wheel. How Hard Of A Job Can It Be? Answer: You Largely Have NO PFUCKING CLUE, Mr & Ms Four-Wheeler. On More Occasions Than I Care To Recall, I Found Myself Behind The Wheel Late At Night In Physical And Emotional AGONY — Sometimes Rocking Forward And Back In A Vain Search For Temporary Respite. And There Were More Than a Few Occasions When I Drove Over Hours — Sometimes Egregiously So. Why Do Drivers Violate The Hours Of Service Regs To Which They Are Subject? The Two Primary Usual Suspects Are Company Pressure And Personal Greed. On Rarer Occasion, It Can Be A Legit Family Emergency. A Good Carrier Will Often/Sometimes Arrange To Fly A Driver Home. [Ed. Note: Word That Your Wife Is Pfucking Your Neighbor Does NOT Constitute A Family Emergency. Why That's Just Called 'Shit Happens.' Furthermore, Any Real Trucker Worth His Salt Will Tell You It's An OCCUPATIONAL HAZARD. Long Haul Can Be Damned Hard On Families, Especially Kids.]

After Tempting Fate Too Many Times For My Comfort Level, I Had An Extended Contemplative Session With My Navel. It Said To Me, "What The Pfuck Do You Think You're Doing? You Well Know The Consequences If One Of Your Over Hours Excursions Should Turn To Shit, Right?" Yes, Mr Navel, I Surely Do. Well? And That Was It. For My Last Seven Years O-T-R, I Consistently Ran Within The Limits Of Applicable Statutory Law. If You Get Caught Running Over Hours And Have The Dire Misfortune To Be Involved In A Serious Accident, You Are Well & Truly Pfuckaroo'd. And Should Said Serious Accident Involve A Fatality, Your Very Next Logical Thought Should Be: How To Protect Thy Rectum From Unwanted And Unauthorized Visitors. To Deploy My Favorite 'White Trash' Expression — Just Say'n.

*Trucking Is Also Unique From The Vast Majority Of Other Types Of Employment. Few Employees (Or Small Business Folk) Have Their On-The-Clock Time Egregiously Wasted As A Matter Of **Routine** As Do Long Haulers — Be They Company Drivers, O/Os, Or Independents.*

Imagine This Scenario, Dear Office Worker: You Show At The Duly Appointed Time For Your Shift As An Hourly Cube Slave. But On This Morning, Mister VIA (Very Important A\$\$WHOLE) Announces To The Assembled That The Computer System Is Down. All Of Your Workflow Is Performed Online. So, You Amuse And Preoccupy Thyself As Best You Can. Upon Returning From An Extended Lunch — For Which You Will Be Subsequently Reprimanded — The System Is Still Down. It's Been A Tedious Boring Day Thus Far (Doing Nothing Can Be Surprisingly Stressful, Especially If You're Not Used To Doing Nothing At Work All Day. Thirty Minutes Before You're Set To Knock Off For The Day, Mister VIA Announces That, At Last, The System Is Back Online. At 1555 Hours As You're Preparing To Call It A Day, Mister VIA Gets In Your Face And Says Where Do You Think You're Going? Home, Of Course. Well, Yes, You Can Go As Long As You're OK With Not Being Paid For Today. And, Of Course, You Proceed To Vociferously Protest The Injustice With All Of That. But You Can, Of Course, CHOOSE To Work What Amounts To A Double Shift Thanks To Your Shit-Eating Computer System. And, Perhaps, There's NO Choice Involved.

In My Day, The Above Scenario Happened ALL THE TIME At Shippers And Receivers. It Was Not At All Uncommon To Be Kept Waiting FOUR, SIX, EIGHT Hours Or More For The Priviledge To Load Or Unload. We Get Paid By-The-Mile, Not The Hour. And Never Did I Have A Facility Offer Me A Complimentary Packet Of Lube. Not Once. And, Rarely, An APOLOGY. Why, That Was Just The Way It Was Back In Them Olden Days.

Finally, I Wish To Express My Appreciation To OOIDA. I Was Continually Struck By The Multitude Of Drivers Who Apparently Could Not See The Benefit Of Membership. Hugs, Wet Kisses, And Best Wishes To Princess Jami Jones 💕 Also, Regards To John Bendel, One Of My Favorite Columnists. I Fondly Recall THE ADVENTURES OF LUKE UNDERWOOD.

Cheers To All The Awesome Men And WOMEN Who Keep This Country's Freight Moving — Safely & Timely. You're The Best!

PPMS After Nearly 30 Years, I Very Recently Relinquished My Class-A CDL. That Was A Moment, Indeed.