

Speed Freak

By Rowan Elizabeth

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“HOLD ON, BABY. Daddy’s gonna drag this guy.”

My father owned a 1968 Chevelle Super Sport muscle-car. Chevy buttercup yellow with bold, black rally stripes. It was screaming fast. Dad drove that car the way the big-block engine demanded—all power-shifting and squealing tires.

It was the early seventies, and no one had even thought of car seats for children. I stood up on the hump in the floorboard for the best view of the world flying by. Dad raced anyone crazy enough to try him. On blacktop country roads or deserted interstates, we took on Barracudas, Mustangs and Camaros.

“Did we win, Daddy?”

“Blew his doors off, baby!”

Dad would pull me out at the finish, lift me to his shoulders, and we’d compare cars with our competitor. Engines, blowers, trannies and rear-ends.

I loved that car and driving around with Dad. It smelled of heated vinyl and Dad’s Skin Bracer. I was sucked back into my bucket seat as the Chevelle roared with acceleration.

We kept it for years. Dad would rebuild the engine, tearing everything out onto the garage floor. I sat inside the raised hood on the fender well and handed him spark plugs and tools.

We were our own race team—the Chevelle, Daddy and his baby girl.

The low rumble of a forceful engine, the power of a killer exhaust still turns my bones to jelly. I’ll roll down my window in the dead of winter to get a better listen.

I’m saving my money for a 1968 Chevelle SS. I’m damn close. I need enough to buy her and start the restoration. Until then, I drive my serviceable Chevy 4×4 pick-up and covet the occasional muscle-car that still graces the road.

Don't get me wrong. I like my truck. Single cab, short-bed. I can drive her over or through just about anything. I can even squeal my tires at a stop. But there's no point in the empty gesture. The best I can do is to pull a sports car out of a ditch when it misses the bend in the road.

And the truck will serve a sacrificial purpose. Once the Chevelle is at least roadworthy, I'll sell the truck for the money I need to do the real modifications.

It's the current look-alike cars that leave me dry. There are no angles, no dramatic colors, and no great names. Everything is a number, a letter or looks like a roller skate.

I've developed an appreciation for the horsepower of the new modified imports. But it's just not the same. They're fast but they're not intimidating. My grandfather used to say about the old cars, "There's a lot of steel in that one." These little bumblebees are all fiberglass.

I will stop what I'm doing for a hot car.

I don't stop much anymore.



I'M CUTTING THROUGH Louisville and plan to hit the all-nude strip clubs on a drive that saw the beginning of I-65 in Mobile, Alabama, and will take me home to Southern Indiana. There has been nothing exciting on the road. Only imports, SUVs and minivans. I'm desperate for something hot. I'll even go for a pony car at this point.

The billboard for The Classy Chassis has a girl spread-eagle on the hood of a Vette. It will have to do. At least it's GM.

The Classy Chassis is a little hole-in-the-wall in a downtown Louisville block. Parking is behind and down the alley. I swing my truck into a spot and head for the back door. And there she is, tucked behind the aging buildings; a blown 1967 Camaro, all jet black and chrome.

I slide up in front of her and run my hand along the sharp edge of her grill.

"Hello, baby."

The hood pins holding her shut and the raised scoop tell me that there could be something fucking fantastic under there. Her windows are littered with stickers promoting her after-market parts. Edelbrock, Flowmaster, and Holley.

“I bet your proud papa’s inside.”

The Camaro dominates the parking lot. There isn’t much else—a couple of trucks, a BMW, and the inexpensive imports I’m sure the strippers drive. I lean my hips into her and press my crotch against her fender. I have to pull myself away to go inside.

I search through the crowd for the man who must own the machine. The club is small and the women dance on a tiny stage in the middle of a horseshoe bar. When they’re really into it, they dance along the long, flat bar tops. Sitting on my barstool, I look through the calves of a dancer at my fellow titty connoisseurs.

“Who owns the hot rod?” I ask the dancer as she dips down for a tip. She smiles her “I know, but it will cost you more than a buck to find out” smile. Before I invest my money, I’m going to scan the crowd.

In the far corner sits a man who is fully focused on the stripper in front of him. She’s a tall Latina with shoulder-length, chocolate-brown hair, and she dances on the edge of the bar. He grabs his Budweiser and leans forward on his stool, leather jacket falling to the filthy carpet. He’s rough with at least three days growth of stubble. I can’t guess the last time he showered. I’m sure that even when he does shower, he’s the kind of man who washes his long hair and assumes the falling suds clean his body.

I can’t see him being the owner of such a pristine car. His must be the late model Dodge truck. Serviceable, solid, all-American. If he only knew where all of the parts come from.

At the end of the bar is a thirty-something, white-collar man. I have a feeling that he is new to management and just a bit uncomfortable with it. He tries to dress the part, but is still living his blue-collar days. He’s spent countless hours in strip clubs. At this club, the petite blonde knows she can get his money. Twenty bucks says he drives the Beemer. Typical.

Please tell me that one of these men owns that fucking car. It can’t be the boozier in the back. He’s spent all of his money here, or places just like it.

Other than him, the place is deserted. Besides me and the three naked women dancing. Maybe there's another club close by.

I order a Bud Light and lean back on my stool at the bar. It's so blessed dark in here, and close. Thank God, I'm not claustrophobic.

Being the only woman patron at the bar, I'm a magnet for the strippers. The petite blonde bears no resemblance to the billboard. Too tiny and fragile. But she dances on the bar in front of me, hoping for a tip. I poke a buck in her garter and look away.

It's the Latina woman who gets my attention. She's not very tall, but on the bar, she seems Amazonian. Full, creamy hips. Small, high breasts. She lays her naked, brown body in front of me on the bar. I slug my beer and stare. "*¿Tu quieres?*" You love? You want? She is spectacular. She lets me tuck my fiver deep into the G-string that covers her pussy. I can feel the wetness within.

I wait, hoping to find the owner of my fetish machine. If I find him, maybe he'll let me touch her, in earnest. Maybe he'll give me a ride in the deep bucket seat. The tight muscles of his thighs will force the clutch as he rams through the gears.

As they each leave, I follow the bearded man, the white-collar, the drunk to their rides and return disappointed.

At three in the morning, I know that I've out waited even my best option. I go out to sleep off my buzz in my truck, until I can drive again in the morning.

It's the fierce rumble of the Camaro's exhaust that wakes me. I sit up in my uncomfortable seat to see its lights come on.

Fuck!

I fumble with my keys as the Camaro eases out of her spot. I jerk my truck into reverse, and then go after the Camaro. I follow her as she slinks through the downtown Louisville streets. She is smooth and takes even the slow turns as if she's on rails. The street lights glare off the pristine paint job.

There is something wrong with me, I'm sure. I'm following the Camaro like she knows the way to the Holy Grail. Of course, maybe she is the Holy Grail.

She takes a sudden sharp turn into an empty lot. The Camaro skids to a stop in the loose rock and her door flies open.

Out steps the Latina dancer from the club. She's pissed off and ready to tell me exactly where to go.

"Stop fucking following me!"

I stop at the entry of the lot and turn off my lights. Stepping out of my truck, I hold up my hands in surrender.

I can't think of a thing to say.

"What do you want?"

It's too much. The car, the woman. Hell, I even remember the heat of her pussy climbing over my fingers.

"What the fuck do you want?"

My mind flew through decent answers. *I thought I recognized your car. I thought you were someone else.*

I want to fuck you where you stand.

"I love muscle cars. Grew up on them. Especially Chevies."

Her venom seems to drain. I must sound insane, because she starts to laugh right at me. "Jesus. You scared the shit out of me," she says. "You might as well get over here and give her a look-over."

It's my turn to laugh. "Back in the lot, I fondled her."

Walking towards her, I hold out my hand. "I'm Shelly."

"Lenore."

"So, what does she have under the hood?" I ask.

"A blown 427 big block."

Damn. The stock Chevelle is only a 396. I'd need the 454 to kick her ass.

"The blower gives her an additional three hundred horse. I want to put her against a Hemi and see what she's got." Her eyes become maniacal with excitement.

"I have a fascination for rear ends," I tell her. "My Dad taught me what a Positrac was before I hit first grade."

“She definitely has a locking differential. Damn, do I ever go through the tires. Good fucking thing I have an arrangement with the tire rep.” Lenore winks. “During the day, I work at Sal’s Garage downtown. He rents me the crap apartment above it. Works for me though—I can work on her whenever I want.”

She continues, “Baby girl here was a basket case. So I tore everything off and started from the frame up. Sal lets me use his connections. What she didn’t come with, I could negotiate.”

The car is show quality and drag-strip ready. That’s a lot of negotiating and a hell of a lot of work.

“So, what’ll she do?” I ask.

“Let me show you.”

Lenore walks around to the passenger door, opens it and motions for me to climb in. The deep bucket seat grabs my ass and pulls me in. I strap on the five-point harness and tighten it against my breasts.

Lenore slides in behind the wheel. She looks at me and starts up her baby. The Camaro roars to life, exhaust rumbling with each rev of the engine. Lenore eases it out of the gravel lot and onto the welcoming road.

“Hold on, baby.”

She lights it up. The squalling of the tires ricochets off the old stone facades. We tear through the deserted streets at ridiculous speeds.

The car is solid with a stiff suspension that responds to Lenore’s every command. Fishtailing around a corner, we come up on the entrance ramp for the interstate. Lenore downshifts to gain speed and launches up the ramp. We nail ninety-five before we hit the overpass.

We weave in and out of what little traffic there is. The faster we fly, the harder I breathe. Up and over the bridge, we cross the black Ohio River. The lights of the barges below become streaks.

For the briefest of moments, I shut my eyes and feel the power surrounding me. The sound of that killer engine, the vibrations of the exhaust, fill the car. A chilling sweat breaks over my body.

I open my eyes and look at Lenore. She is fixated on the road. Her hand rests on the gearshift like a gunfighter's on the butt of his gun, waiting for the exact moment to jerk. She grasps the handle and downshifts so that we don't plunge headlong into the slow semi ahead. The RPMs on the tach spike, and she lays into another lane to pass. The muscles of her legs flex in her tight jeans as she works the clutch and presses the accelerator.

On the other side of the river, we stop at the bottom of an exit ramp. The Camaro, leashed in for a moment, rumbles.

"Come to my place."

"Yes."

"We'll get your truck in the morning."

Hell, yes.

It's the ride back that proves what she's worth. The car sings at one hundred and fifty.

Lenore slips the Camaro in the garage. We climb out and stare at each other over the roof's perfect paint job. Lenore walks around and pulls the pins on the hood, releasing the main hinges. She puts a strap around the hood, hooks it to the chain above, and lifts the hood off the machine.

Exposed and open, the engine shows its promise. Potential energy contained.

The engine block is painted Chevy orange and everything is sharp and clean. Lenore leans against the car's front quarter-panel and motions for me to take a closer look.

I look over the blower and the belt that drives it. The heat of a car well run radiates from the dog house. I look to Lenore as my hand hovers over the engine block. She reaches for my outstretched hand and pulls me towards the side of the car.

Lenore and I waste no time. I take her face in my hands and kiss her. A slow lingering, wet kiss. It's the kind of kiss where I am only aware of lips and mouths, and where on my body her hands may lie.

I press Lenore's ass against the fender and kiss her again, leaning my body into hers, the secure presence of the Camaro supporting her frame. We kiss roughly.

I step out of their gravity long enough to regard Lenore. Her hair falls in a wave, covering her mouth still slick with our moisture. Bronze-brown skin. Potent, deep brown eyes. I'm pulled back into her without hesitation.

Lenore cups my breasts through my T-shirt, and rubs her thumbs over my nipples. She lingers over the cotton-covered swells. I have no such patience and force her shirt and black bra up to expose her breasts.

I bring my mouth to her nipple, taking it between my teeth before fully sucking. Wrapping my hands around her small, firm breasts, I relish the feeling of her nipple tightening in my mouth. I remove my hands only long enough to pull off my T-shirt and free my own breasts, mashing them against hers, coming up for another kiss.

Lenore pushes me back and begins a striptease beyond that which she performs for her daily patrons.

I sit in an old office chair and watch her grind against the car, against that fucking fantastic car. Her hands arouse her flesh with a pent-up passion that she doesn't share with her customers. She gives it all with pure abandon.

Lenore peels off her shirt and bra. Running her hands over her tits, she looks at me and pulls at her nipples. She turns her back on me and slips her pants over her hips. I see her hand slip into the same panties that had earlier held my tip.

She needs more friction and presses against the front fender of the hot rod as she massages her pussy. Her head drops back, exposing her throat and open mouth, forcing me to cease my watching and find a way to join her as she enjoys the fierce machine.

I slide up to the car and slip my leg along the fender in front of her, sitting my ass on the edge of the car. The powerful engine lies exposed, with very little to support a human body. I balance on the hood latch, barely missing the burning radiator. Metal digs into my palm as Lenore takes her hand from her pussy and rubs it into the crotch of my jeans.

We become a jumbled mess of heat and uncontrolled lust. I am high on the ecstasy of the moment, the woman, and the furious car.

There is a concoction of sounds. The creaking of the car under our bodies combines with the urgent call of our heavy breathing.

Lenore drives down my body, cracking her naked knees against the concrete floor. She pulls at my jeans and my ass nearly slips off the fender. I catch my hand on something sharp.

My engineer boots won't allow Lenore to take off my pants, so she tugs them into a constricting mess at my ankles.

The scents of motor oil, antifreeze, and lubricant fill the small garage. My body is wrenched against a hot engine and a beauty is burying her mouth in my cunt. I'm in fucking heaven.

Her mouth closes around my clit as she switches between sucks and flicks. Her fingers dig into my hips, gaining her balance, driving her forward into my pussy.

Abruptly, Lenore stops and leans toward her Craftsman tool chest. She opens an upper drawer and pulls out a large Phillips screwdriver. She wipes the handle on her thigh, inspects the tool, spits on it and crudely cleans it.

Lenore lays the long metal arm of the screwdriver high against my thigh, tracing my flesh with the point. I hold my breath as she prods my cunt lips with the tool, turning the handle against my opening.

My wetness invites the rough, plastic handle of the screwdriver. Lenore presses it into my body, twisting and turning to allow it entrance. As it finds its depth in my pussy, Lenore fixes her mouth to my clit.

Driving the tool and sucking furiously, Lenore pushes me towards a hard come. The Camaro rocks under my body. My flesh digs into the exposed metal. Lenore does not let up. My body tightens against the cold steel of the fender and collapses.

As I try to control my breathing, I hear, "My turn."

As I slip down Lenore's body, I can't help wondering how much hotter this could be with the Chevelle SS.



FOR A WEEK, I live Lenore's life. We spend our days at Sal's garage. He lets me hang out because I actually know the difference between a torque wrench and a

tomato sandwich. I can turn a wrench and he only has to pay me enough to keep me and my truck filled.

Every night we go to the Classy Chassis at ten and Lenore dances until three in the morning. Lenore sits her naked ass on the counter in front of me and takes a moment to kiss me and fondle my breasts. In the middle of the second night, she starts hitting the big tips. The regulars realize they're watching a woman who is not pretending. Dodge truck pays us forty bucks to sit on his lap and kiss each other. This is the beginning of the tip windfall.

After drinks with the Chassis manager, we head to Lenore's apartment. With a detour for horsepower. We slice a fine line along the interstate in the Camaro. Across the bridge into Indiana and back to Lenore's place in half the time.

Lenore. Dear God, can she drive. And fuck? That woman can fuck.

But there is someone waiting for me.

"Stay," she asks. "We can find your Chevelle and build her here. Sal can always use another decent grease monkey."

"There's somewhere I have to go," I say. "You'll see me again before you know it."

I drive off, hop onto I-65, and head home. It's time to see Daddy.

I cross the Ohio River from Kentucky to Indiana. My truck seems to crawl in comparison to my flights across the bridge in Lenore's Camaro.

Spring is popping in Southern Indiana. Dogwoods and wild crocus. And every young fucker out on his crotch-rocket, his girl propped on the back with her ass in the air. That's spring. Not red-breasted robins. Tight asses in the air.

I drive through the rolling hills. Although potentially the most beautiful part of the state, it offers little more than half-towns with no available work.

My Dad keeps a garage in Taswell, on the southern tip of the Hoosier National Forest. He's been there for over twenty years. The day-to-day work is primarily farm trucks, livestock trailers, and tourists from Patoka Lake with flats. But there is always a re-build on one of the lifts and a waiting list seeking Dad's healing hands.

I drive up to Dad's shop and see him supervising the reconstruction of the underside of a Chrysler. No one sees me, so I sneak in to surprise him.

“Hello, baby,” before I even get in the door.

“Dammit, Dad! How...?”

“I’d recognize those pitiful straight pipes of yours anywhere. When are you going to let me set you up with a decent dual exhaust?”

“Let’s save the exhaust for a more deserving car.” I laugh.

Dad turns to Max. “Pull that MOPAR’s trannie. We’ll see what the trouble is.”

I follow Dad into his office. The man is what you would call “anal retentive.” He can lay his hands on any piece of information in the files and even keeps his pin-calendar on the right month. Betty Page, fresh and sexy, every month.

“I have a line on a ’68 up in Bedford,” I say. “And I’ve got the money for her.”

“So, how long do I get to keep you this time?” he asks.

“If she pans out, we could finally work together for awhile. Want to take a drive with me?”

“Whatever you want, baby,” Dad answers.

With the trailer hitched to my truck, we head out. Dad chain-smokes one Salem after another and we talk cars. Life and cars.

“Mobile didn’t work for you?” he asks.

“No, Dad. And neither did Biloxi or Gatlinburg. Guess I’ve just been working my way back home.”

“What about Louisville?”

I couldn’t look at him. “I found the ad for the Chevelle in Louisville. So, it’s not a wasted trip.”

“Is that all you found in Louisville?”

“Dad!”

“Look, baby, I know you. If it’s not a car, it’s a woman.”

“Let’s just say it was both,” I say.

We pull into the wretched farm lot whose newspaper ad promises a Chevelle. I climb out of my truck and am greeted by a bloodhound's nose in the twat.

A voice from behind the porch door startles me. "You Shelly?" Out steps a man so worn with work, I can't begin to guess his age.

"Yeah. I'm here about the car."

"Have a look for yourself. It's right over there." He points with an arthritic finger.

Livestock panels carve out a niche next to the barn. Inside sits an old tiller, a snow plow, and the curves of a car hidden under a tarp.

I pull back the cover to expose a '68 Chevelle in rust and primer gray. Her hood, off and tilted against her front quarter panel, exposes the skeleton of her 396 engine. There's a rat's nest where the manifold should be. Disintegrating boxes hold wiring and odd parts. It's evident that the same rat has scavenged from the bench seats.

I walk around her, running my hand along her sweeping curves. I kneel to invade the privacy of her boxes.

The important parts are all here. And her body is in great shape. A little surface rust and a rust hole in the floorboard. The bench seat would have to go. There's a lot of work here.

"If you want her, I'll take thirty-two," the old man calls.

I open her driver's door and it shuts with a clean thud. She's solid. Dad lies in the gravel to get a good look at her undercarriage. He gives me a thumbs-up.

"I'll give you three grand right now, load her up and take her away tonight."

The money dealt with, Dad and I pull the dead weight of the Chevelle onto the trailer with a chain and pulley. It's not until I strap the last box of parts on the trailer that I realize I've got her. The signed title is in my hand. I run my fingertips over her bald tires and dull gray body.

She's beautiful.

It's a pretty good deal. I turn wrenches for Dad and he gives me room and board. When the shop doors drop at eight, we turn to the Chevelle.

In his hyper-organization, Dad has filtered through all of the boxes and has a system for the pieces. He adds parts from his own collection and we start a needs list. We hit up all of his regular sales reps for as many freebies and discounts as we can get.

I get her naked. Down to her bones and begin from the frame up. Each meticulous step brings me closer to starting her up.

We call in every favor and I spend every last damn dime. All of the piles of parts have found their home in the Chevelle. She is no longer spotted with rust or the dull finish of primer. My last stash of cash is invested in the gunmetal grey, high-gloss paint job.

She is stock now, but modifications will begin as soon as I sell my truck to a local fisherman who wants to pull a boat. He's supposed to drop by with the money today.

I stand, staring at the incredible machine in front of me. She's mine. She's mine. Mine. I have to tell myself over and over to even begin to believe.

"Have at her, baby." Dad gives me a push in her direction. I wonder if this is how young men feel when they're getting the courage up to ask for a dance.

I step up to her and lay my hand on her fender. I've touched her everywhere, each part. But, now that she's whole, she deserves her dignity.

"Hello, baby girl. You ready to run?"

I slide in the driver's seat, my seat. I run my fingers over the Chevy bowtie on the steering wheel. Run them over the internal roll-cage, along the dash and down to the keys in the ignition. Boot on the clutch, I turn her over.

She roars to life.

Dad smiles as his dual exhaust addition rumbles.

I latch my harness and ease her onto the road. West out of Taswell is a narrow, two-lane highway, full of curves both sweeping and sharp. The Chevelle screams, making the most of any straightaway, and sits tight in the curves. At stock, she's gorgeous.

Her speed and her solid ownership of the road makes my body respond to her drive. Heaviness settles in my cunt. A throbbing, growing heaviness. I feel the

tender flesh surrounding my nipples tighten. I breathe so quickly that I become light-headed.

I realize it's time to find out how fast she'll go over the Ohio River.

With a shake of his head, Dad asks, "Louisville?"

"Yeah, Louisville."

"Don't be gone so long this time."

"I'll try. It's just that..."

"Just that you don't know what, or who, you'll run into. Isn't that it, baby?"

I hold the old mechanic close as he kisses me on my forehead.

"Just send me a postcard, so I know where you are."

Everything I own is flying down I-65. My few belongings are in the trunk, all of my money is wrapped up in the body and mechanics of the Chevelle, even the envelope of travelers checks from the sale of my truck sits in the glove box.

It's been almost three months since I crossed into Indiana on my own. Tonight the traffic is light and I remember slinking through traffic in Lenore's Camaro. The bridge over the river rises high and pulls me forward. I shift gears and slalom through the cars and semis.

For a moment I imagine Lenore strapped into my passenger seat. Then a better image invades. Lenore flying next to me, racing her Camaro.

I sweep down the exit ramp and turn for Sal's Garage.

Driving the Chevelle through the streets I had shared with Lenore, getting closer with each block, I realize that I must be crazy. It's been three months. All we had was seven days. I guess it'll be a surprise for both of us.

I pull my Chevelle into the garage's drive and my lights shine on the rear-end of Lenore's Camaro. Its hood is up, concealing the mechanic in her engine. I shut down my machine and make my way towards the other car.

"Can I help you?" Not Lenore's voice.

"I'm looking for Lenore."

“Oh, really?” From behind the hood steps the petite, blonde stripper from the Chassis. “Can I tell her who’s here?”

“Shelly. Just Shelly.”

“Oh!” She looks behind me. “Is that yours?”

“Yeah.”

We stand there in a silence that is only disrupted by the air compressor filling its tank and the clink of my Chevelle cooling.

“Is she here?”

She examines me and hides her head under the hood. “Up the stairs to the apartment. But I suppose you already know where that is.”

The door at the top of the stairs stands ajar. I push it open and call from the doorway, “Lenore?” I hear rustling in the bedroom that had once been our playground.

“Lenore?”

“Who the hell is it?”

I realize I’m holding my breath.

“It’s Shelly.”

The rustling in the bedroom stops dead. Lenore comes around the corner wearing tattered jeans and a tank top. Her dark nipples show through the light cotton material.

“What are you doing here?”

“I told you I’d be back.”

“No, you told me that I’d see you soon. It’s been three fucking months!”

I step towards her, arms up in surrender for a second time. “But wait ’til you see what I brought. See what I’ve done.”

“Three months, Shelly. And not one fucking phone call.”

Lenore smacks me so hard that I almost lose my balance. “You fucking disappeared!” A punch in the arm, tears starting in her pretty brown eyes.

“You...”

I grab her by the shoulders and pull her to me. I crush her lips with my own and hold her tight.

Lenore squirms to get away, and I let her go. She stares at me with hatred. Hatred and lust, as she clutches my arm, pulls me in to the apartment, and slams the door.

I'm close enough to see her chest rise and fall in labored breath, to smell the lotion she applies after a shower, close enough to see her fighting with herself over the next move.

I want to slam her against the wall and claw at her clothes. I want to taste the mocha of her nipples. I want her to pull me back to her bed and ignore the slight woman downstairs.

Then there's knocking at the door, followed closely by ferocious banging.

“Lenore! Open the damn door!”

Lenore flinches as I raise my hand to her face. I wipe away her tears, and ask, “Are you happy?”

“Lenore!”

“I am,” she says. “I was.”

I press into her for the slightest of kisses, step back and open the apartment door.

The little blonde is spewing all kind of filth and accusation at me. How dare I? Who the hell do I think I am? What do I have to say for myself?

I ignore this irate detour in my plans, touch Lenore's face and, turning, make my way down the steps. Blondie is cursing me as I walk away.

At the bottom of the stairs rests the Camaro. So quiet next to the shrieks of Lenore's girlfriend. As I walk past her, I run a hand over the dips and curves of her side. Pledging them to memory as I would the curves of Lenore's body.

My Chevelle waits patiently in the glow of the garage's florescent lights; welcoming me back with the driver's door left open. Climbing in, I look toward where Lenore stands stock-still.

The Chevelle roars to life with ignition. Rumbling, we wait for Lenore. I could go to her and tell her that she must get rid of that blonde harpy. That it's my fault, I thought she would wait. That I had thought of her with every part of the Chevelle. That ... that I was an idiot.

I slip the Chevelle into reverse and back into the road. I press my open palm to my window and see Lenore lift her hand in response. I could go back and fight for her, but she has to make her own decision.

I drive through the streets of Louisville. I know I won't go back to Dad in Taswell and it's too late to claim Lenore. There is nothing for me heading South on I-65. I find an interstate heading East.

A little over eight hours later, I drive into Myrtle Beach. The first billboard greeting me totes a strip club, The Body Shop. It will have to do.

Hold on, baby.

End