

# U-Turn

*Coming and Going*  
By Rowan Elizabeth

**A** CAMARO, one Super-B, two serious drunks, and a couple of decent fucks later, I'm not as homicidal as I was the day I watched Brigid turn left onto the highway and drive away. Of course, just about anything could push the wrong damn button and send me over the edge.

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I WORK THROUGH the boxes of parts for the 1969 Charger R/T and find what gauges I can use and what's garbage. They're mostly crap, but I can use the tach and the odometer. I get up and walk around the car. I bang on the rusted front quarter panel with my wrench and then poke a hole through a home Bondo repair. Jesus. Everyone's a bodyman.

"Yeah, we'll take her," I tell its owner. "Give me a week to get to know her and write up an estimate for what you want. Then you can decide if she's worth it."

The guy is thrilled to have this team for his baby. And he should be. During the two years I've been back, we've come to be known as *the* shop to take a car to in the Midwest. Hell, we've even had enough business to hire a secretary. Brigid set up some decent target marketing and—

*Brigid. Fuck.*

I kick the Charger with my steel-toed boot and the bumper rattles loose. "That'll be extra. Go see Ms. Kouns and she'll get your

information for this heap.” Fucking miracle workers, that’s what we are.

Culley hollers my name and I know he’s just getting me away from the customer. Dad heads over to smooth out my lack of finesse. Doesn’t matter to me.

Ms. Kouns. Amanda. Mandy when we fuck. She’s got a guy. He works at the boat docks and puts in some serious hours during the summer, leaving Miss Mandy a bit lonely of an evening. Aw, poor baby.

Mandy’s just enough different than the other girls her age that she fits in pretty good with our crew. She’s pale with long, black, straight hair. She has a soft fleshiness about her that makes me want to dig my fingers into her skin.

I think I’ll see what she’s doing tonight. Until then, I’ll learn what I can about this piece-of-shit Charger. Thank God this guy doesn’t want some General Lee look-alike. That’d freaking kill me.

I’m wiping the grease off my hands and forearms as I strut over to Miss Mandy. Her eyes are fixed on the computer screen.

“Hey, girl. Doug working late tonight?”

I can see her blush before she looks up and she sucks her bottom lip between her teeth. “Yeah. But I really need to get back to the apartment and do some cleaning.” She looks up and I can tell it won’t take much to change her mind. Where’s the fun in that?

“Well, don’t work too hard,” and I walk back to where my Dad is working. “Move over, old man. I’ll give you a hand.”

“Since when do you think I need help with an engine, little girl?” Dad gives me a prize-winning, shit-eating grin. “You can hand me the socket that rolled under my tool box though.”

We work together in silence for a while, until Dad says, “Maybe you should take some time and head out to the drags this weekend. The Nationals are at Raceway Park.”

“I know what’s running, Dad. But you need me here.”

“Like hell I do. Culley’s finishing up. Amanda has the desk covered. And I’d be better off with you out of what’s left of my hair.” He grins. “Besides, we don’t have any mechanic interviews and that new ad agent of ours dropped off some tickets. Someone’s got to use them.”

I have to admit, the idea is appealing. And I haven’t taken a day for myself since ... well, for a while.

And that changes my mind right there. About a couple of things.

I kiss Dad on the cheek and punch him lightly on the arm. I catch Miss Mandy looking our way when I turn hers. I don’t even bother strutting this time. I know I don’t have to.

“I think that housecleaning can wait. Don’t you?”

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I’D GET HER OVER the hood of my Chevelle, but fuck if I’m gonna scratch the paint. Instead I have her britches off, and have her bent over the reception desk.

“Oh, Shelly!”

I work two fingers into her pussy while I reach around and jerk her off. Ol’ boy doesn’t get her going like this. Or maybe he does. I don’t really give a fuck.

I lean over her and press my breasts into her back. “I think we need a good strap-on for next time.” I slip in another finger.

“Ungh!”

“Yeah, I’d get behind you and push that big old cock into you. I’d fuck your cunt like you’ve never felt.”

“God—”

She’s slick, and it’s easy to push in all four fingers. “Or maybe I’ll just fist that pussy of yours.”

That does it. She’s screeching so hard that Ursa starts barking. I keep rubbing her as I ease my fingers out. “That’s it, Mandy, baby. That’s it.”

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I’LL TELL YOU—Clermont, Indiana, is the place to be Labor Day weekend.

I drive the Chevelle into the compound to cat-calls from four guys with wheeled coolers. *Keep wishing, boys.* Parking her, I can hear the roar of the cars over the rumble of her exhaust. Qualifications at work.

As I walk up to the ticket gate, I make eye contact with several other folks. No one holds my gaze. Today I’m wearing my cowboy boots with my tightest jeans and a black tank. I haven’t cut my blonde hair in over a year, and it lies heavy between my shoulder blades. I’m at that point in life when guys my dad’s age are starting to flirt with me. They’re so far off it ain’t funny.

The sounds of the cars bounce off everything. Off the T-shirt stands, the Polish sausage and pretzel huts, and around every trailer and RV.

I walk past all the vendors and cross over the bridge behind the staging area to get to my reserved seat. Before I hit the bleachers I see the Sox & Martin cars. Now those’re cars. Hot Plymouths from

the good old days. Of course, anything running at the track today is hot.

I have to say the bleachers are the way to go. They vibrate when those cars pull up and squall their tires. The anticipation begins. There's a buzz running through me. The cars hump at the line, waiting for the lights to turn. Then, *Ahhhh...*

I watch them take off, front wheels off the ground and then I shut my eyes and listen. They scream and fly and take me with them. Over and over again they run. Fiberglass wrapped over muscle and bone, praying to God they don't flip end-over-end into the wall.

It's time to get a beer and look at the insides of some of these machines. Besides, evening will be here soon and I'll be able to see the flames off the beasts.

John Force has a sweet set-up, as does Kenny Bernstein. But it's the little guys that I like. Folks working out of their home trailers with a home team. The fiberglass bodies are set aside to expose the guts, the real speed. I suck up the fire these folks have in their bellies.

I'm looking at Torque Racing's rig when I hear Ministry's *Jesus Built My Hotrod* blaring from the next crew.

Three guys and a girl. She's digging into the dragster with a wrench in her hand, red hair flying. Al Jorgensen screams *I wanna love ya* and she cranks her neck around to twist out the kinks and sings, "Jesus built my car. It's a love affair. Mainly, Jesus and my hotrod." She throws back her head and laughs. The guys laugh with her. Another song, just as loud and rough starts up.

I watch her work, perfect and precise. She's not the lead mechanic, but she sure as hell has the bull by the horns. She's a sexy little shit in her overalls, too. Watching her work is like porn. Not some long, hot model-on-a-car shit. Real-life porn in action.

She stands up and can't be more than five-two. She slams her tools into her box and helps lower the fiberglass body over the machine.

I think I just found my mechanic.

I wait for them to get through staging and run. They top out in the high numbers, and qualify. I see my little gal jump up and down and hug her crew. And then kiss one of the guys full on the mouth. *Shit.* Oh, well, she'll still be a good mechanic to add to the shop's team.

Walking back over to her trailer, I start concocting an offer she can't refuse. It's time to whip out the finesse Dad always accuses me of not having.

"Excuse me, miss?" I stand straight and am damn sure of myself. "I have a business proposition for you."

She whips around with a flourish like she knows she's been watched. She twists up one corner of a smile and makes sharp eye contact. "Oh, really? What kind of proposition would that be?"

"Maybe we should take a walk and discuss it."

"Oh, you can talk about anything in front of the guys."

I'm not going to play any games. "Fine, then. What will it take for me to steal you away from them?"

"For now, or forever?"

*Little shit.* "Forever."

"Maybe we should take a walk," she says.

I laugh out loud. I'm a good six inches—seven in my boots—taller than this little girl, but she sure as hell holds her own. "We're Price Motorsports, based out of Taswell, and I'm—"

“You’re Shelly Price. I’ve seen you in *Hot Rod* and *NHRA*. I know all about you guys.”

“Then you should have seen our advertisement for a new mechanic. We’ve got applicants coming from—”

“Yeah, I saw the ad.”

“Why didn’t you—”

“—give it a try?”

Damn, she has an annoying habit of cutting me off. A deep breath. “Yes. Watching you work, I think you’d be ideal.”

“I don’t know. I’d have to settle down and give up the fast life and the guys.”

“Look, uh—”

“Darby.”

“Darby. You can pull in enough work to have the money to go anywhere. We’ll set you up in this great little cabin, give you your own shop bay and help you get your tools built up.”

“Tools, I got. I’ve been all over with a winning team. Don’t you think Matco and Snap-on are after me?”

She’s got me there. “But I can give you a percentage of the rods you bring in. They’ll come to you, and you get a salary plus commission.” Hell, it’ll work for everyone. She can get some hot cars in and earn a buck, and we can add ’em to our resume.

Darby looks back the way of the team and then smiles at me. “Let me come by and look you over. I’ll be around after the Nationals are done.” She spins around, and is gone before I can get another plug for the shop.

She's gonna be interesting.

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IT'S JUST DAD, me, and my dog, Ursa, in the shop. It's been a busy-as-hell day, and we're enjoying a couple of cheap beers. The lake tourists have left from the holiday weekend, and Amanda's off with that boy of hers. After the drags, I've been dying to get at that girl, but the guy comes first with her. That's okay. I'll head back up to the cabin and get myself off. The cabin I shared with Brigid.

"You're thinking about her, aren't you?" Dad asks.

"What makes you say that, old man?"

"You have that look on your face."

"She's gone, Dad. I'm better off for it."

"Oh, really?" he says. "Is that why you look up like she's pulling in every time you hear an exhaust rumble?"

"I'm just looking for the next rod, that's all."

"My ass, little girl." He turns back to his beer, but not before saying, "You should go up there and find her, you know."

"Sure. I could just show up and say, 'I don't give a shit you fucked someone else.' Whatever, Dad."

Actually, I could go up there and do exactly that. She's got a little townhouse right outside of downtown Indy. In the three times I've driven past, only her 'Cuda has been in the drive. I haven't seen her slut's Jeep.

Yeah, I know the keeper has a Jeep. I followed her out of the zoo one day.

But enough of that. We've got a new ride showing up.

It's the hottest 1970 442 convertible I've ever seen. She's the color of the deep red wine Brigid used to drink, and is absolutely pristine. I have no idea what we can do for this guy, but it's gonna be a blast having this car in the shop. Dad's practically licking his lips too.

The car door opens and bare feet step out, topped by beautifully muscular legs. The driver throws out some flip-flops and slips her pretty little feet into them.

Darby.

*Shit.*

She looks great in a pair of short cargo pants and a cut-up Allman Brothers T. Her crazy red hair is pulled up in a ponytail and she's smiling that shit-eating grin.

"Hey. Said I'd come by. Let's see what you got."

I regain my senses and introduce her. Unfortunately, like an idiot, to everyone. "Darby, this is my pop, Jerry Price, and my dog, Ursa."

Dad laughs. "Let us show you around the shop." When she turns back to the 442, he pokes me in the ribs. "You're rotten, you know."

We spend the next two hours showing Darby everything, explaining our work ethics and talking over every detail with a couple more beers.

"Yeah, I've been running the drags for six years now. I've seen it all. Plus, I've gotten to ride the rapids, hike the Rockies, see New York and survive Mardi Gras. I've done it all. Maybe settling down a little would be good."

“Well, Taswell may be slow, but you’ll have enough money and time to go just about anywhere,” Dad tells her.

“You know, it’s a deal, guys! Besides, I’ve been promising Lenore that I’d settle here eventually.”

*Lenore. I knew a Lenore. Shit.*

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DARBY MOVES INTO my old cabin. She only has enough stuff to fill the trunk and backseat of the 442. And a cat. *What the fuck?*

She slips into work with us like a dream and has already lined up three cars from drag contacts. All within a week.

Those pretty legs bend and stoop around the car all day long and drive me crazy. All night long I wriggle in my bed with my hand between my legs.

I haven’t even fucked Miss Mandy since Darby showed up. Not that she hasn’t asked for it. Just today, “Doug is down in Madison at the boat show. You wanna come over?”

“Nah.” I think she’s getting pissed.

But I’m waiting for the other shoe to drop. Lenore. Darby says she’s a muscle-car girl from Louisville. I don’t even want to know what she drives. But she’ll be here soon.

“Lenore’s coming up for the weekend. We’d like to have you in for dinner on Saturday. Kinda thanks for getting me here.”

*Shit.*

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IN THE SHOWER, I scrub off the day's grime and grit. I've got to do this. Go and face it all in one place. Hell, it'd only been more fucked up if it were Brigid. I should've fucked Mandy again, just to relieve the tension.

Instead, I lie out on the bed and start to get myself off. I'm still slick from the shower and my hands slip over my breasts easily. I pull at my nipples and consider getting them pierced. That would be something different.

I trip my hand down my belly and into the slight patch of fur I've kept for the hell of it. Everything else is newly shaved or, fuck the pain, waxed.

I slide my middle finger between my lips and hit my clit hard. I think about the time in the shop in Louisville with Lenore. That thought is quickly replaced by the idea of Lenore with hot little Darby. Surely, they've fucked. How could they not?

An image of barefoot Darby kneeling in front of Lenore, eating her pussy, fills my head. I can see Lenore's head thrown back and her hand buried in Darby's flaming hair.

I rub myself harder at the thought. My muscles begin to tighten and my wetness is spreading with my fingers. The imagined sounds of the two lovers send me over the edge and I come with a cry of my own.

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I SHOW UP at the cabin with a twelve of beer and—completely unlike me, but a good idea from Dad—a bouquet of flowers for the girls.

Only Darby's 442 is here. Maybe Lenore will crap out and be a no-show.

I'm about to knock on the door when I hear the sound of a familiar exhaust pull up behind me. *Fuck. Here we go.*

I turn around to quite a sight. Darby's wine 442, my silver Chevelle and Lenore's jet black and chrome Camaro. No denying it now.

Lenore steps out of her ride in all her dark beauty. Her hair is longer than it was when we met, and she looks a bit thinner. But there's no denying this is the car I screamed across the Ohio River in, and this is the woman I fucked in her shop.

I'm waiting for the venom to strike when Lenore opens her arms and makes to hug me. She laughs that throaty laugh I remember so well. "Jesus, Shelly. It's been years."

I must just stand there with a fucked-up look on my face, 'cause she just laughs again. They both laugh. Darby's come to the door. "I thought you two might know each other. We muscle chicks have to stick together."

For a second, I'm irate. "You planned this?"

"Yep! Once I put together Lenore's story and you ... well, that's all it took. Get your ass in here with that beer, and we'll all have a little fun."

*Holy shit.*

Darby is barefoot in a long T and that's it. I look at Lenore and she just giggles. They planned this!

"No harm, no foul, dear. Besides, we've got some good ideas."

Fuck it. I'm up for it if they are.

Inside, Darby strips off her T in a flash. She's gorgeous. Red hair flowing around her shoulders, and muscular little body shining. Lenore moves over to her, cups one of her pert breasts and looks at

me. Her eyes shine with mischievousness. “Wouldn’t you like to watch?”

Lenore dips her head and licks Darby’s nipple. Darby’s head drops back and she grabs Lenore’s black hair. The two slip into each other. They’ve obviously done this before. And done it well. Lenore grins at me as Darby presses her breasts against her lover’s lips.

“Come upstairs with us.”

I look at the stairs to the loft. A million years ago, I went up those stairs with Brigid. Before—

Before I chased her to Key West. Before I raced her all the way back up to Indiana. And before—

I must look ridiculous to the girls, because they stop what they’re doing, and Darby is holding her shirt in front of herself.

I lived in this cabin with Brigid for the months it took for our house to be built. We loved each other here in the hours I wasn’t working.

“I can’t stay. I’ve ... I’ve got to go.” I look at my odd couple of friends. “You two have fun.” I’m almost out the door when Lenore grabs my arm.

“If you really love her, don’t let her go.”

I smile and leave.

What the fuck? I just turned down two incredibly hot women to come out to my car and think? I could be back in there, wrapped in soft flesh. Just like I had been with Brigid.

*Brigid.*

Is she in that townhouse of hers with that damn zookeeper? Even as I think it, I know she’s not. At least I hope she’s not.

And I decide I have to know.

I rip out of the stone drive, throwing gravel into my fender paint.

I cut the engine as soon as I pull up in front of Brigid's townhouse and the second floor lights are on. I just sit here in silence staring at the building. There's no red Jeep, just the green 'Cuda.

I see movement upstairs and my stomach lurches. Come to the window. Come on. Don't make this so hard.

Then it hits me. She isn't making this hard. I am. I did. If I want her back, and I do, I'd better march my ass up those front steps and—

And what? What the hell do I say to her? I've got to stop talking to myself and do something.

I get out of the car and slam the door. A dog barks next door. All right, one concrete step at a time. I can only go so slowly and I'm at the top of the stairs, facing a thick wood door. Here we go again. I knock and breathe. Barely.

The porch light pops on and Brigid's face shines through the sidelight. I can see her deciding if she should or shouldn't open the door. Thank God, she does.

She's wearing a sweatshirt and boxers and her curvy legs are tan. I look down to gather my wits and notice that her toenails are painted light blue.

"When did you start painting your toes?" It's all I can say.

"I always have." And then, "You never noticed?"

It hits me. "You know, I didn't notice a lot of things." I look her in the eyes. "And, if nothing else, I'm here to tell you I'm sorry. I'm sorry, and I want you to come home. Now."

“I’m sorry too. But things were bad, and we can’t just fall back into it. I appreciate that you’ve come, but I’ve really got to think about it.”

“Look, we both fucked up and now we have a chance to fix it. I can’t promise to have it all figured out, but you can help me and we’ll get it. I’m sure as hell not leaving here without you.”

“I’m sorry.” Brigid pulls away and shuts the door, leaving me standing in the porch-light.

I stare at the wooden barricade. I try to catch Brigid in the sidelights. I pound on the door so long and hard that my hand hurts.

But she doesn’t come back.

I walk back down the steps and get in my car. I pound on the steering wheel. *Fuck! Fuck! Fuck! What the hell do I do now?* I sit in the car until dark before I give up. I’ll come back. I’ll give her time, and I’ll come back.

I start the engine and give one last look to the house.

Brigid is standing at the window, her hand pressed to the glass.

I jump out of the Chevelle and climb the steps to where Brigid is waiting with the door open. I take her in my arms and hold the woman I never thought I would again. We kiss and I wipe the tears from her face as she smiles at me.

“You’re wasting gas,” she says between sobs.

End