Road Trippin'

by

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INT. THE CAR - DAY

BOB(40) and KRIS(35) ride side by side--on a road trip. Bob is behind the wheel, glancing over with irritation as Kris rides shotgun. She's fast asleep. The car clock reads "6:30 am", as classical music plays on the radio.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. SIDE OF ROAD - PAYPHONE - NIGHT

Bob has the phone to his ear, listening intently. Kris stands next to him, trying to read the expression on his face.

BOB
Un-huh . . . un-huh--

KRIS
What'd he say? It's a left at Albuquerque like I said, isn't it?

BOB
Shh . . . un-huh. Okay. We'll see you in--

Bob looks at his wristwatch.

KRIS
Don't forget about the time zones.

BOB
--about twelve hours. Don't worry, we'll be on time.

Bob hangs up the phone, and steps away from the booth.

KRIS
So . . .

BOB
We need to get a move on. They're gonna set sail at noon. With or without us.

KRIS
Let me get my sleep, then I can help with the driving.

END FLASHBACK

INT. THE CAR - DAY

Bob's irritation comes to a boil. He switches the radio station from Classical to 90s Hip-Hop.

The Blondie-sampled hook from KRS-1's "Step Into a World" invades the front seat. The steady boom-bap stirs, disturbs Kris, until it finally wakes her out of her sleep.

Kris sits up at attention.

KRIS
What are you doing?

BOB
About 65, 70. There's speed traps all through Texas--

KRIS
No. You're forgetting the Road Trip Rule! I talked about this in my letters.

Kris points to the radio.

BOB
Yes. I'm proposing an exception to the Road Trip Rules, an amendment if you will. If the existing driver is debilitated by the nauseating output of said radio, i.e. Chopin's Funeral March, it is existing driver's prerogative to choose any alternative output to prevent him, or her, from driving said vehicle off a cliff.

Bob turns up the KRS-1.

Kris switches the station back to classical music, turns it back down.

KRIS
No, my friend. Article 235.5, subsection D of the Passenger's Intrinsic Rights Agreement states the passenger's sleep takes precedence, if said passenger is expected to assume driving duties. I'm taking over in one hour and your alternative output, I mean noise, is keeping me awake.

Bob switches the station back to KRS-1.

BOB
Look, when you get behind the wheel, then you can choose the station. That’s the rule.

Kris looks away, out the window.

KRIS
Okay, fine! You care more about your rap crap than you do about me. All I wanted . . . was just to--

Bob peeks over at Kris. She seems to be breaking down.

KRIS (CONT'D)
This is the same way we lost Aunt Eunice. She was on a 12 hour road trip just like this one. My uncle wouldn’t let her sleep first, and she--, she--

BOB
Okay. I’ll drive the rest of the way then.

Kris perks up.

KRIS
No. You’re the reason we’re behind schedule now. You drove us two hours out of the way, and then drove like you’re leading a funeral procession!

Kris changes the radio back to classical, and tries to force herself back to sleep.

KRIS (CONT'D)
Now, just give me my hour of sleep. Please. Then I’ll take over.

Bob silently mimics Kris.

KRIS (CONT'D)
I heard that.

EXT. OPEN HIGHWAY - HOUR LATER

The car speeds down the highway. It slows to take an exit for gas.

INT. THE CAR - DAY

Bob drives up to a pump at a gas station, listening to Jeru the Damaja's "Come Clean." The clock reads 9:00 a.m. Bob wakes Kris, and hands her a dark pair of sunglasses. She puts them on, as well as a trucker's cap.

INT. THE GAS STATION - DAY

Kris stands in line at the check out counter. She steps up to the CLERK, with snacks and sodas.

KRIS
Thirty on number one.

CLERK
Thirty on number one!

The Clerk rings her up, as something at the counter catches her eye.

INT. THE CAR - DAY

Kris is now in the driver's seat, and they're listening to "White Christmas" on the car stereo. Bob looks over at Kris with disdain. She happily bobs her head.

The wrapper and case for "All-Time Greatest Christmas Tunes" CD is on the dashboard.

BOB
Why are they even selling this?
It's August!

KRIS
Give it a chance.

BOB
Bing Crosby upsets my ulcers.
Remember my letter?

KRIS
It's called compromise. Besides,
this is a great day. We should be
celebrating.

Bob ejects the CD. Souls of Mischief "93 til Infinity" comes on. Bob raises both arms like he just scored a goal.

BOB
C'mon! How lucky is that?!

KRIS
Oh! That’s how you wanna play it.

Kris switches the station back to classical

KRIS (CONT'D)
I get to choose, Bob! I’m the driver! Follow your own rule!

Bob switches the station back to “93 til Infinity”.

BOB
No, you follow yours! While I was driving I let you listen to your classical crap!

Kris switches back to classical music.

KRIS
You don’t think I noticed you switched it back by the time we stopped for gas!

They eyeball each other for a moment, before they start slapping each other’s hands away from the dial. As soon as one touches it, the other grabs their arm.

BOB
Watch the road!

KRIS
You watch the road!

BOB
That’s it. Pull over! Pull over!

Kris slows down, and pulls over on the shoulder.

KRIS
What?

The car comes to a stop, as cars zoom by on the highway.

BOB
Let’s settle this once and for all!

Bob smiles, checks his wristwatch, and pulls out his cell phone. He dials confidently.

KRIS
Who are you calling?

BOB
The Breakfast Club. They'll settle this . . . Conundrum. They know everything.

KRIS
You know if you drove off a cliff--

BOB
Sh-shh! It's ringing--

DJ ENVY
(through phone)
You're on the air with the Breakfast Club! Tell us why you're mad!

BOB
(turning on speakerphone)
Hey Envy! My, friend and I are on a road trip. And we're having a debate. What are the official road trip rules regarding radio usage? Who's the DJ? The pilot? Or the co-pilot?

A short pause.

CHARLAMAGNE
That's the stupidest question I've ever heard sir. You are a donkey just for asking it. Of course it's the driver.

ENVY
I'm just gonna give my opinion based on my extensive road trip experience--

ANGELA YEE
So you have a driver's license? We're lucky you came in today.

ENVY
Of paramount concern for any drivers or passengers is safety, and a distant second is the music. Would you agree?

CHARLAMAGNE
Yes!!

KRIS
Yes.

ANGELA YEE
Yes.

BOB
Maybe.

ENVY
Bearing that in mind, there is a hierarchy of needs within the vehicle. While the front seat passenger holds a higher position than the back seat people--

CHARLAMAGNE
It's the driver! Don't be an idiot! The driver gets to choose what's on the radio!

ANGELA YEE
Let him finish his point! I wanna hear this.

BOB
See? Uncle Charla agrees with me.

ENVY
No, I think that all depends on the circumstances. Is the passenger female? There's a chivalry factor.

KRIS
Ewww! Burn!

Bob hangs up the phone, turns to Kris.

BOB
Never again, will I road trip with you.

KRIS
Hel-lo?! We'll be at sea. Now be quiet . . . the weather report.

Kris changes the station, and they both listen.

RADIO NEWSCASTER (O.S.)
This just in! U.S. Marshals are still on the look out for Bob "Night Slasher" Monroe, a convict who was sprung from a New Mexico chain gang, by a young female accomplice. He is believed to be armed and very dangerous. Do not attempt to apprehend.

Bob and Kris look at each other, and smile.

BOB
100 more miles to freedom in the open sea. Let’s go!

KRIS
Did you hear that? He called me young!

Kris turns the ignition.

KNOCK! KNOCK! A state trooper stands, tapping on the driver’s side window. The trooper motions to roll down the window, and Kris does.

KRIS (CONT'D)
Is there a problem officer?

TROOPER
Where you headed, ma’am?

KRIS
Everything’s alright officer. My, um husband, was just confused about the road trip rules, so I pulled over to--

BOB
I’m not confused! I am not confused! Ask the officer!

As Bob looks to the officer. Another squad car pulls up beside their car.

KRIS
Um, sir? The Road Trip Rules? And the radio?

The trooper exhales, and thinks about it.

TROOPER #1
Well . . . I’ve had some experience with a lot of road trips over the years. And I’d have to say the Road Trip Rules are meant to be followed strictly.

Two more squad cars pull up in front of their car, and park.

TROOPER #1 (CONT'D)
The number one rule is, to make sure to disable the GPS tracking device, as soon as you steal the car. Second rule, never, ever stop before you reach the border.

Trooper #2 steps up to the passenger side.

TROOPER #2
Do I need to Mirandize an escaped prisoner?

TROOPER #1
Probably not.

Trooper #1 opens the driver's side. #2 opens the passenger side. They pull Bob and Kris out of the car, and place handcuffs on them.

BOB
But officer, you still haven't answered our question. The radio, who gets to choose?

TROOPER #1
Oh! The driver.

BOB
In your face!

The troopers escort them to the back of a squad car.

TROOPER #2
I don't know, chief. It kinda all depends.

KRIS
Thank you!

They both are ducked into the back seat of the squad car.

INT. SQUAD CAR - BACKSEAT - DAY

Bob and Kris sit side by side, handcuffed.

KRIS
You're not really a slasher, are you?

BOB
No, I am. I shredded the evidence of my firm's tax fraud the night before we were raided. The nickname kinda took on a life of its own.

KRIS
Hm.

BOB
This isn't working is it?

KRIS
It's not you, it's me.

BOB
I think we made better pen pals.

KRIS
We'll always have Albuquerque.

They sit in silence.

BOB
You don't really have an Aunt Eunice, do you?

Kris slowly shakes her head. Silence.

BOB (CONT'D)
You know, you're gonna need a nickname in prison too. Do you wanna be Mrs. Night Slasher? It's worked wonders for me.

KRIS
Awww . . . I do.

FADE OUT.