

CAR TROUBLE III

An original short

by

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EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- AFTERNOON

The cloudy sky looks heavy with snow, ready to dust the earth with millions of frozen droplets. The ground already has a generous amount of snow hiding the bright colors of Summer.

A car appears on the horizon, barreling along and pluming a cloud of ice and snow behind it. The red sedan stands out in stark contrast against the white blanket of snow covering the terrain and the grey cloudy sky.

CUT TO:

INT. AMY'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Two women, sisters, occupy the front seat of the car. AMY, 26 is at the wheel. Her younger sister ERICA rides shotgun.

Amy strains to see through the frosty windshield at the road.

On the radio, a news channel reports the local news.

DJ 2 (V.O.)

In the SouthEast corner of the state, a bizarre set of unexplained deaths have lead some locals to draw a bizarre set of conclusions. KNAP's Scott Dwyer has the story.

DJ (V.O.)

In the late fall of 2002, the population of Gaston, Alaska began to slowly, but steadily decrease. On the morning of October 12, two men were found dead along a 4 mile stretch of country road just outside of town. 30 year old Todd Robinson was found by state troopers about 50 yards off of the road. Two miles South, troopers discovered a second body with identical wounds. Officials have still had no luck identifying this unfortunate motorist who was driving a car registered to Christian Dolan of Portland, Oregon. News of the deaths shocked locals, but what came next horrified them. Over the next 3 years, 74 more residents either vanished or were found dead. That is an average of 2 people per month. Mayor Antonio Bevaqua told reporters yesterday that-

Amy turns the radio off.

AMY

This road connects back up with 26?

Erica ignores the question.

ERICA

I'm not even sure why I agreed to come with you.

Amy tries to change the subject.

AMY

I told Mom we would be there around eight.

ERICA

You know what they got me for my birthday last year?

AMY

So I hope this shortcut of yours really does cut an hour off of our drive like you said it would.

ERICA

A card. That's it. My 19th birthday and all I get's a crappy card.

AMY

You got a trip to Hawaii last year.

Erica gives her a look.

AMY (CONT'D)

What direction are we going? East.

ERICA

So they don't have to get me anything this year? Come to think of it, you didn't get me nothing either.

AMY

I've never received anything from you for my birthday...ever. Have you ever given anyone in this family a present?

ERICA

SouthEast. Over the mountains and back to 26.

AMY

It looks pretty socked-in up there.

ERICA

It's well maintained.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- AFTERNOON

The car ascends the mountain. It begins to snow, lightly at first, then more and more heavily.

CUT TO:

INT. AMY'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

ERICA

Cripes! It's really coming down up here.

AMY

It's a good thing Jim isn't here. He hates driving in the snow.

ERICA

I hope the road isn't closed. Hate to have to back-track.

AMY

He is the most cautious driver. He hates driving if the road is even a little wet. He'd have kittens in the snow.

ERICA

Your car doesn't have studs, does it?

AMY

He makes me nuts. What really pisses me off is when he tells me how to drive. I can just imagine what he would say if he were here right now.

The car speeds to a particularly sharp curve. Amy doesn't seem to notice. She is too wrapped up in her anti-husband rant.

ERICA

Watch the corner...You're taking it too fast.

AMY

Exactly. Or something equally annoying.

ERICA

No, YOU'RE GOING TOO FAST!

The car loses its traction on the curve and slides toward the edge. Amy realizes too late and over-corrects. Erica braces herself for impact.

The car spins as it skids off the road and slides 30 yards down the steep embankment, plowing through the fresh powder. It comes to a stop halfway down the embankment.

CUT TO:

INT. AMY'S CAR -- AFTERNOON

The contents of the back seat of the car are now in the front seat with the two sisters. Candy wrappers, pens, and loose change litter the dashboard. The windows of the car are opaque with the snow kicked up from the accident.

The sisters look a little shaken up but otherwise unharmed.

ERICA

Excellent driving. But would you like to try it again. You didn't quite kill us that time.

Amy rubs her head where she has hit it on the steering wheel.

AMY

Ehh...What kind of a road do you have us driving on? Some shortcut.

ERICA

I didn't even want to go in the first place. I hate reunions.

AMY

Well we're certainly not going to make it there by 8 o'clock now.

ERICA

If Dad had bought you a 4 wheel drive, this would have never happened.

AMY

Jim is going to have a field day with this.

Erica unbuckles her safety belt and opens the passenger-side door.

ERICA

I'm going to see how badly we're stuck.

AMY

I don't think I even want to see how much damage there is.

Erica stands up and cracks her back. She is wearing a short-sleeve shirt that doesn't cover her midriff, but she doesn't bother to grab her coat.

ERICA

I can't see the road from here. I'm going to hike up to it and see if I can flag someone down.

Amy, still holding her head, closes her eyes.

AMY

I'm just going to sit here and rest for a minute.

Erica disappears up the embankment. Amy rests her head back against the seat.

FADE:

INT. AMY'S CAR -- EVENING

Amy is sleeping, head lolling. Erica is nowhere in sight. Amy slowly comes to. She looks around for Erica. No sign of her. She gets out of the car.

CUT TO:

EXT. CRASH SITE -- CONTINUOUS

It has been snowing heavily and the car already has about 3 inches of snow on it. Erica's foot prints have also been covered up by the freshly fallen snow.

AMY

Erica?

She looks up the hill. She strains her ears, trying to hear any sound of Erica. The wind whistles and the snow keeps falling.

AMY (CONT'D)

Erica?

She looks around nervously.

She shivers, and clutches at herself.

AMY (CONT'D)

(to herself)

The dress might not have been the best choice.

She leans into the car to get her coat, leaving her back exposed to the blowing snow. Unaware, Amy fishes around for her gloves while a figure appears behind her. The figure's shadow falls across her back.

The shadow figure raises its hand above its head.

Amy drops one of her gloves on the floor and leans in further to get it.

Amy screams in pain and surprise. She has just been hit in the ass by a snowball.

The dark figure, Erica laughs.

Amy Stands up with a furious look on her face.

AMY (CONT'D)

Damn-it Erica, you scared the hell out of me!

Amy begins to put on her coat. This makes Erica realize she too is a bit chilly.

ERICA

Good idea. Give me mine will you?

Amy stops putting on her coat and bends in to get Erica's coat. Erica hits her in the but with another snowball.

Amy yells out in surprise and anger; mostly anger.

AMY

Get your own damn coat.

Amy finishes putting on her coat and gloves and gets back in the car and slams the door.

CUT TO:

INT. AMY'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Amy sits in the driver's seat, arms crossed. Her anger melts a little when she remembers she has a cell phone. She reaches into the glove box and pulls it out. As she dials a number, Erica opens the passenger side door and gets in.

The cell phone makes the no signal sound. Amy drops it in her lap and puts both her hands on the wheel.

AMY

(sarcastic)
Happiness.

Erica puts on her coat.

ERICA

'Haven't seen a car in about an hour.
We could be here for awhile.

AMY

I tried the phone: no signal.

ERICA

A tow truck would be nice.

AMY

It's the 21st century, why can't we have cell phone reception 50 miles out of the city?

The two of them sit in silence for a couple minutes.

AMY (CONT'D)

The sun's going to go down in an hour. Then it's going to start to get cold.

ERICA

One of us should probably stay up at the road. In case a car comes by.

Amy doesn't respond to this. Instead she turns the keys in the ignition. The car turns over and sputters to life.

ERICA (CONT'D)

I guess I'll go.

She opens the car door and begins to get out.

AMY

Erica.

Amy hands Erica her gloves.

AMY (CONT'D)

Don't stay up there too long.

Erica takes the gloves, shuts the door and heads back up the hill.

Amy turns the radio on and listens to the news.

DJ (V.O.)

...many theories to explain those deaths: some believe that a bear has acquired a taste for blood, while others believe the town is plagued with its own serial killer.

Amy looks concerned. She turns around to look up the embankment after her sister, but the heavy snow blocks her view.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- EVENING

Erica stands by the side of the deserted road. She looks bored and cold.

The bushes begin to rustle. She jumps and lets out a little squeak. The rustling moves closer to the bushes next to her. A few underlaid noises come from within the bushes; animal noises.

CUT TO:

INT. AMY'S CAR -- EVENING

DJ (V.O.)

But the presence of large tracks around some of the discovered bodies, and unidentifiable fur around others are leading many locals to believe that they are cursed. They believe that the town is being visited by a violent sasquatch.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- EVENING

As whatever is in the bushes gets closer, Erica takes steps backward to get away from it. She loses her footing and falls backward down the embankment. She rolls down the hill.

CUT TO:

INT. AMY'S CAR -- EVENING

DJ (V.O.)

For most of us, the notion of big foot seems ridiculous, but for the townsfolk of Gaston, Alaska it is a scary possibility. For KNAP news, I'm Scott Dwyer.

DJ 2 (V.O.)

In market news Dow Jones lost 3 points today while the S.N.P.-

Amy turns off the radio, and sits in silence. She contemplates getting out of the car to go get Erica, but changes her mind. She sits there, staring forward, worried look on her face.

Amy starts and snaps her head around at a banging on the side of the car.

Erica opens the door, covered in snow, wild eyes, and jumps inside.

ERICA

(breathless)

There's something out there.

AMY

The-the radio said...

ERICA

It was in the bushes.

AMY

Two people have been killed.

ERICA

Some sort of animal, big.

AMY

They think it was a wolf.

ERICA

Lock the doors.

FADE:

INT. AMY'S CAR -- NIGHT

Erica is lightly sleeping. Amy sits next to her, wide awake.

AMY

We can't just stay here. Eventually we're going to run out of gas. Then we're going to freeze. We will probably dehydrate before that though. Or starve. We can't just wait it out in the car.

No response from Erica. Her head nods, and she lifts it back up.

AMY (CONT'D)

Erica.

Erica slowly turns her head and opens her eyes to look at Amy.

ERICA

Was I sleeping?

AMY

I have to go to the bathroom.

Erica notices the car is still running.

ERICA

Am', you should turn the car off to save gas.

AMY

I don't want to go out there in the dark.

ERICA

I have to pee too.

Amy turns the headlights on and the two sisters open their doors and get out cautiously.

CUT TO:

EXT. CRASH SITE -- CONTINUOUS

The two girls squat on opposite sides of the car. A soft scraping sound comes from around back of the car (like something scraping on the metal bumper).

Amy hears it first. She stands up and listens for a moment.

AMY

I'm getting back into the car.

Erica zips up and stands. She slowly starts to walk toward the back of the car.

The sound continues.

She takes a couple steps closer. She cranes her neck to look over the trunk of the car.

There's nothing there to be seen.

She leans a little bit closer.

HONK. Amy honks the horn. Erica loses her nerve and quickly retreats to the safety of the front seat.

CUT TO:

INT. AMY'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

AMY

I don't think I'll be going out there again tonight.

FADE:

INT. AMY'S CAR -- LATER

Amy and Erica sit in the front seat. The windows of the car are completely covered with snow, making it impossible to see outside. Eric lightly dozes with her head rested against the passenger-side window. Amy leans forward against the steering wheel but her eyes are wide open.

The car engine sputters. Amy looks up alarmed. The engine dies. The ringing of the ignition wakes Erica up. She looks at Amy.

AMY

Out of gas.

ERICA

Damn-it Am'. I told you to turn the car off.

AMY

It was cold outside.

ERICA

Well it's gonna get cold inside now. You never listen to me.

AMY

Maybe that's because everything you say concerns only you! How badly mom and dad are treating you; how you deserve a better grade in chemistry; there are other things in the world besides the injustices against you.

Erica's face darkens.

ERICA

You can't open your mouth unless something negative is coming out of it. My boss is an idiot, Jim doesn't know how to drive - which, by the way, I think it's clear exactly who can't drive, seeing as we are lying here in a fucking ditch!

AMY

Maybe if we had stuck to the freeway instead of this shortcut that we just had to take...

ERICA

See you're doing it again. This couldn't possibly be your fault. Even though there you are, sitting behind the wheel.

AMY

You should be happy. Now you have one more thing to gripe about. My sister tried to kill me, life is out to get me.

ERICA

Go to hell Amy.

Erica turns away from Amy and looks at the window.

AMY
Probably...just as soon as I freeze
to death.

ERICA
(under her breath)
At least it will be warm there.

This makes them both laugh a little despite their anger.

CUT TO:

INT. AMY'S CAR -- MORNING

The inside of the car looks very cold. Ice has formed on the inside of the windows and on the dash and steering wheel. A faint glow is shining through the foot of snow that has collected on the windows.

Amy and Erica are curled up together with a blanket wrapped around them. They are both awake, but neither of them look like they are far from sleep. They look half frozen.

AMY
(croaking)
Erica?

ERICA
(barely above a whisper)
Yeah.

AMY
I'm a shitty driver. I'm sorry I
got us stuck here. It's all my fault.

ERICA
I'm sorry I suggested the shortcut.
But I was glad you asked me to come.

AMY
Are you still glad?

They both laugh a little.

AMY (CONT'D)
It's getting light.

ERICA
They probably closed the road. We're
going to have to walk out of here.

AMY
What if the wolf is still out there?

ERICA

We're just going to have to chance it. There's two of us, maybe whatever it was will leave us alone in the daylight. We can't just sit here.

AMY

I'm scared.

ERICA

Are you more scared, or cold.

Amy pauses, considering.

AMY

Let's go.

They get ready to open the doors.

Before they get a chance to turn the handles, the entire car starts shaking. Amy and Erica scream. The car rocks back and forth. The women are terrified. They search for anything to hold onto, and look at each other for help that neither of them can give.

Finally, the car comes to a stop. Amy and Erica stop screaming.

There is a knocking at the window. Amy screams again. Erica tries to shrink into her seat. The snow falls away from the window, and a face looks in. Amy stops screaming.

Amy's door opens and TOW TRUCK DRIVER pokes his head in.

TOW TRUCK DRIVER

Oh my gosh! Are you girls alright?
I'm sorry, I thought the car was empty. Is everyone ok?

Behind Tow Truck Driver, the girls see the tow truck.

The sisters look at each other in relief.

TOW TRUCK DRIVER (CONT'D)

You two look froze solid. Let's get ya warmed up.

CUT TO:

INT. TOW TRUCK -- MORNING

Amy, Erica, and Tow Truck Driver sit in the cab of the tow truck, behind them, Amy's car in tow. Tow Truck Driver whistles a little as he drives.

Amy and Erica sit in silence next to each other and listen to the news on the radio.

DJ (V.O.)

Authorities are still searching for whatever is responsible for the death of Robbinson and the other 75 victims. And State Troopers are reminding Gaston locals that what killed Robbinson is still at large, and they are advising them to be careful when outdoors or on the highways surrounding the areas.

Tow Truck Driver looks over at the girls with a slightly less than sane look on his face.

TOW TRUCK DRIVER

I know what kilt' them two boys up there...

The sisters look at each other, fear creeping back into their faces.

A malicious smile seems to spread over the Tow Truck Driver's face.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- MORNING

The tow truck makes its way down the snowy road.

FADE OUT:

END CREDITS.

EXT. GAS STATION -- MORNING

TOW TRUCK DRIVER

Well, there y'are ladies. A little bit of gas in 'er and she's good as new.

He pats Amy's car.

TOW TRUCK DRIVER (CONT'D)

Now you two be careful on th' road. Slippery.

Amy and Erica are sitting in the front seat of Amy's car, looking out Amy's window at Tow Truck Driver. He has just finished gassing up the car.

Amy writes him a check and hands it to him.

AMY

Thank you again. Who knows how long we might have been out there if you hadn't come along.

ERICA

Yeah, thanks man.

Tow Truck Driver takes the check and puts it in his breast pocket.

TOW TRUCK DRIVER

Much obliged. Now you mind what I said 'bout that wolf up there in Gaston.

AMY

Yes Sir.

Amy starts the car and drives away. Tow Truck Driver looks after them.

CUT TO:

INT. AMY'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

ERICA

Cool guy.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY -- CONTINUOUS

The red sedan gets onto the highway and merges into traffic.

THE END.