

Working at a Truck Stop Outside Charlotte

by Dianne McKnight-Warren

My name's Barbara and don't call me Barbie if you want to be my friend. At the restaurant where I work the Greek cooks call me Barbie all the time. I call them malakas which means somebody who masturbates until he goes crazy in Greek. They're nice guys but I don't mess with them outside work. Some do. In cars.

This restaurant "Caters to Truckers" the matchbooks say. "Caters to Fuckers" is more like it. Out here on the interstate all you see is trucks. Some of them have tires taller than me. I can't even get up in the cabs without a boost.

And me with no wheels, getting rides from Rayon, the guy in charge of the big window in the kitchen. He puts everything on trays for us. "Sauce em down, sauce em down," he yells over and over on nights we have rib.

Where I stay is right on Rayon's way and I pay him for gas. If I couldn't get rides off him I couldn't work here. And the money's good, fast turnover and that means you work hard. It's not like you get a deuce or a four top, not very often. Usually it's guys coming in alone. They keep me running.

I know guys look at me and wonder how come I do this. Sometimes they ask me what it is I really do. I tell them this is as real as it gets. But I'd rather be here than at the mill. People say girls get stuck here, get used to the quick money and all, but I know girls get stuck at the mill too. Just spinning their wheels if you ask me.

So I'm saving for a brand new Mustang fastback and in the meantime this is okay. At least out here people are going places. I can smell the road on the guys when they get close.

