DRIVING WITH JON

by Adam Sifre

"There's no real freedom in this world. But a car and the open road is close enough for government work." Jon rolled down his window and chill November wind whistled in and took over the atmosphere. He didn't bother to raise his voice because he didn't care if his passenger heard him or not.

"An empty road, a dark night, and thee," Jon smiled. "Goddamned if I can't turn a phrase." He knew this stretch of road well. It went straight as an arrow for miles, flanked by birch and pine on both sides. He drove without headlights. Best to be invisible tonight. Still, he drove at a steady 80 mph because -

because a man has to take his pleasures where and when he can.

"If it makes you feel better, I promise I'll never do this again. You're my last one. Last one ever. No, I guess that doesn't make you feel better, but it's true. Yes ma'am. After tonight Jon Tanner is a new man. A family man. I can do it, too, don't you worry about that." The cold wind buffeted his face, making his eyes water. He could feel the crocodile tears make their way down his face.

Even with all the wind in his face, Jon could still make out the duct tape screams from the back. *I'm going to miss that. Miss this.* The night sped by and he felt fine.

"Fine as wine, my old man used to say. I know, I know. Corny. I'm a corny guy tonight. Feeling a bit nostalgic I guess." He turned his head and toward the woman lying in the back, not the least concerned about taking his eyes off the invisible road. It was dark inside the car, but not dark as night. He could see part of the woman's face. Most hidden in shadow though. And part, the part where the eyes should have been was darker than night.

"You were supposed to live, you know. In fact, I wasn't even planning on taking your eyes like I did. I'm truly sorry about that. Seems like torture now. But I really was planning on letting

Copyright © 2014 Adam Sifre. All rights reserved.

you go. Hell, I did let you go, didn't I?” Jon laughed. “I just came back, is all.”

He took his foot off the gas and slipped the gear into neutral. The car slowly made its way down to 75 miles per hour. “If I'd known how hard this was going to be, I would have done you right there in the kitchen. I'm not an animal.” The car dropped to 65.

“When I decided I needed one more; just one more, I thought, why put another poor woman through all this when I could just finish you. Understand? I mean, really, it's the right thing to do.” 50.

It looked like her mascara was running, but it was only blood. She'd reopened the wounds in the struggle. *I wonder if they feel like tears to her*.

“So now I'm a family man with a good woman and a puissant son. But you can't have everything in life. That's a lesson I'm taking to heart. That's why I'm stopping with you. If I don't stop, I get caught. Today, tomorrow, next year. But soon. And I don't want to get caught. 35.

He turned on the radio. Queen was belting out “Don't stop me now,” and Jon laughed. He laughed and laughed until the car finally rolled to a stop.