

# Big Trucks

*by* jake fuchs

"Why do you always get behind big trucks?"

"It makes me feel safe."

Hope she thinks I'm kidding. Don't know what she's thinking, and why do I care? The truth I'd rather not admit is that driving on freeways scares me now. My regular-sized Japanese car seems so small. I like—I prefer—going slow behind big trucks, as long as there's a good space between us and no other behemoth behind me. That's the worst, when that happens.

They scare me, and this one, that I have to take to get to the Oakland airport to fetch Becky home, is the worst in the whole Bay Area. The lanes are too narrow, and it's very old and bloodsoaked, and I hate it.

"Pull around," Rachel says. "Pull around him, dammit."

We're late. I was at Live Oak Park playing basketball and didn't get home when I said I would because it just wasn't possible to walk off the court in the middle of a game. Our daughter called from the airport, throwing Rachel into a senseless tizzy. Does it matter that Becky sits for a while? I pay for her to go to the U of Oregon so she can take classes, for which I presume she has books. Hopefully she brought a few of them home. If we're late, she can study. But I can't say that to Rachel.

Instead, I pull around, as ordered. I do just what she says, and a sports car too little to see feels threatened and honks its mousefart horn at us. It wasn't close at all, but Rachel sucks in her breath—which gives me an opening.

"When you do that," I say, "make that noise, that's why I don't like driving anymore."

"Sorry." She doesn't sound sorry.

Because she distracted me, I didn't pass the truck, and now I pull in behind it again, my preferred position. I'm not through with Rachel.

"I don't do that"—sucking sound here—"when you're driving."

"I don't have these problems."

"How could I see it? It was too low. Don't pretend you—Jesus!"

Big truck just swung in behind us. I'm trapped. The Integra becomes a roller skate hemmed in between these two monsters.

"Easy, easy."

As if it was nothing. Here's a real situation, and she *doesn't* suck in her breath. I'm holding the wheel as tightly as I can. Then the behind truck switches lanes and passes me, and I slump a little.

"Get ready," Rachel says. "You take the next exit."

"I knew that."

"Bullshit."

"Oh, real nice."

Becky's out on the pavement, in front of Allegiant Air with her bags. She doesn't have a book in her hand. Rachel and I jump out of the car, fast, to get away from each other. We come at her from either side.

"Hi, Honey."

"Hi, Honey."

Why does she seem so nervous?

"Hi, Mom. Hi, Dad."

