

## DEATH LATTÉ

(UNPUBLISHED)

Gustavo sat in the passenger seat, nursing a blended Chai-Petroleum Death Latté. The width of the highway stretched just beyond the horizon. He estimated that the Dueling Vehicle his mother drove was somewhere between lanes 106 and 112 on the northbound Highway #9034 (or "ninny three-fer" as the locals pronounced it).

"How long Mom?" he asked.

"Soon," she said again.

The division between every 5th lane was spliced by an urb-island, most of them Condo Complexes rendered in the new Polluter Chic ("Real Incinerators! Authentic Landfills! Radon so Fierce it Will Part Your Hair!"), some of them Terror Protec watch-stations, and even fewer of them serving some obscure manufacturing or infrastructural function.

"Is it now, Mother?" asked Gustavo.

This time she ignored him, toggling the volume switch on her steering wheel, cranking up the Encouragement Tape her Cubano husband had recorded for her the previous summer while on a Fact-Finding Mission / Pleasure Cruise back home to the Islands.

*Life is an ass you must slap, take hold hold of in both hands, jiggle like a lesbian buttocks fetishist, and penetrate with the strap-on dildo of thy mind.*

"Strap-on dildo of my mind," she repeated, nodding her head, "check."

*You must then reach around to locate the hidden most-special of life-buttons, the clitoris of deepest meaning and purpose, which, once located, will bring your life fully around to the arousal for unto which you need it be from which.*

"Fully around to the arousal," she repeated, again nodding her head, "check."

Gustavo was looking forward to his upcoming playdate. Sally Struthers, age 19 of Podhertz, Montana, was ten years his senior, but had the same taste in clothes, music, rockstars, dirt mounds, hamster piles, Lake Pool Pudding, and a thousand other Perfect Partner variables that Gustavo's head was too Lust-Clogged to Process. He worried that her breasts might sag, but other than that, she would be worth the thousands of credit hours his mother was sacrificing to make the trip up from Tuscaloosa to insure her darling Single Son would finally have his chance to get "laid in the shade", as was the fetish-phrase this month in Podertz and in the online Eco-Village Soap Operas.

"What will you and Sally's mom do while we are fucking?" asked Gustavo.

His mother looked at him through the rear view.

"Probably the same," she said, "I have some new positions I need to try out before your father comes home with the Robo-Mistress."

Gustavo shifted uncomfortably. The Robo-Mistress had been his introduction into the ways of manhood two previous summers ago, and he didn't like the idea of sharing in her juices with his parents. But he was graduating to real flesh-n-blood, and his parents were no longer embracing their Productive Capacity (although they were still imbibing Hormone Six-Packs every Monday night before going out to the TrackDog races) and needed something/one to take the edge off and to dump their Overflowing Juices into. The RM it would be.

Just then is when the semi ahead of them became unhinged, and an unruly flatbed covered in loosely-strapped canisters came careening across 6 empty lanes towards them. Gustavo's mother pulled the steering wheel sharply to the left, and their tiny van's wheels came off the pavement for a split second, before returning with a reassuring bounce. Gustavo looked back to see the trailer tumbling into a row of less-fortunate vehicles, one of which managed to zap the tires into an sticky black glue with a laser before it to was crushed under the trailer's 20-ton girth.

"Fuck," said Gustavo.

A driver of one of the crushed vehicles had been thrown into the middle of the road, and was straddling lanes 112 and 113 with the skin from his forearms melting off into little pools of burned skin at either side of him. A police chopper was now overhead, spraying the whole scene down with forensic foam in order to freeze any evidence.

Just then the Dueling Vehicle's onboard was receiving a 911 query call requesting an eyewitness account, but Gustavo's mother banged on the device with her palm until it shut off and she was driving in pure manual.

"We have to get to Podhertz," she said, giving he son a knowing glance.

He winked back at her.