

I'd never driven a bus before but I figured it's no different than the truck I used to drive except my panel truck didn't have all those extra gears and things and the steering wheel wasn't flat down like a bus's, and anyway it was standing empty with the motor running in the bus yard and it just seemed to call out to me.

I wasn't completely rational when I pushed that door open and climbed into the driver's seat. Inebriated is the official word they used.

The bus swung sort of wide and loose as I took it around a corner on the way to the highway and heard this *whump-crunch-clangity* sound and by the time I saw what made it I was past it and anyway that damn Buick was parked too far from the curb. I was trying to learn the shift pattern but was distracted by a headache that was only made worse by the sirens back there.

How I got into the condition that made driving a bus seem like a natural and righteous thing to do, I got to thinking about Alma, down in Texas at her sister's. I do most of my thinking at Jimmy's these days. It's a quiet place in the late morning, and the dark is easy on the eyes when your head hurts from too much thinking the night before.