



High Beams

URBAN LEGEND

Julie left the college library late one evening after many hours of studying. She crossed the parking lot to her car, unlocked it, and put her stack of books on the passenger seat. Counting the books, she realized she left one inside the library on the check-out desk, so she closed the car door and ran back into the building.

A minute later, she came back out with the missing book in her hand. She got into the driver's seat of the car and tossed the book onto the pile with the others. Then she started the car and pulled out onto the road. She had a long drive ahead of her.

A while later, she stopped at a red light. A pickup truck stopped beside her, but she hardly noticed it. Tapping her fingers on the steering wheel, she waited for the light to change. Suddenly, the pickup truck driver honked. Julie jumped in her seat, startled. She looked around, but they were the only two cars at the intersection, so she realized he must be honking at her, for some reason. She tried to catch a glimpse of the truck's driver, but his windows were much higher than hers and she couldn't see into the truck at all.

"Why did he honk at me? I didn't do anything," Julie mumbled, annoyed at how startled she'd been.

H I G H B E A M S

The light turned green and Julie continued on her way. She turned onto the highway. She had almost forgotten about the pickup truck, but without warning, her car was flooded with light from behind.

Squinting into the rearview mirror, Julie could just barely make out the same pickup truck that had honked at her in the intersection. It was right behind her with the high beams on, making it painful for her to keep looking into the mirror. Then they went off, and the truck continued driving behind her with its normal headlights on.

"Thank goodness! He just about blinded me with those high beams!" Julie said to herself. But now she was beginning to get a little nervous about this strange driver behind her. They were the only ones on the highway at this late hour.

The high beams went on again. Then off.

"Forget this, I'm losing this guy," Julie decided. She stepped on the gas. But when she checked the rearview mirror again, she could see that the pickup truck was keeping pace with her. Pressing her lips together, she focused on the road ahead and floored it.

Again, another wash of white light from the pickup truck. Again, it went off.

By now, Julie was definitely scared. A glance in the mirror made it clear the pickup truck was following her, and closely. But she knew she was finally nearing home. Her only hope was to outrun him.

She pulled off the highway onto her street. She could see her house at the end of the block. Another flash of light told her that the truck was still on her tail, but she didn't look back.

Screeching her tires, Julie pulled into her driveway. She leapt out of the car and ran for the front door, almost before the car had

completely stopped. She could hear the pickup squeal to a stop at the curb. Terrified now, she stumbled up onto the porch and pounded on the door in a blind panic.

“Mom! Dad! Help!” she screamed.

As the lights went on in the house, she turned to face who she **was** certain would be her attacker. Sure enough, the driver of the **pickup** truck had sprung out of his vehicle. But as Julie was about to scream again, the driver ran to the rear door of her car, yanked it open, and reached for something in the back seat. To Julie’s astonishment, he pulled a man out of her car.

The front door opened, and Julie’s frightened parents joined her on the porch to witness the truck driver grappling with the strange man who had been in Julie’s back seat. After a long struggle, the driver managed to punch the other man unconscious.

As the pickup truck driver told the police later, he had seen the man with the ten-inch hunting knife hiding in Julie’s back seat when they were both stopped at the intersection. He had tried to get her attention by honking at her, but she hadn’t understood. So he had decided to follow her, hoping for an opportunity to help. And whenever the would-be killer had risen from his crouching position, knife raised to attack, the driver had frightened him into hiding again by turning on his high beams.