

SHIP FROM		Bill of Lading Number:	
[Name] [Street Address] [City, ST ZIP Code] SID No.:		BAR CODE SPACE	
SHIP TO		Carrier Name:	
[Name] [Street Address] [City, ST ZIP Code] CID No.:		Trailer number: Serial number(s):	
THIRD PARTY FREIGHT CHARGES BILL TO		SPAC:	
[Name] [Street Address] [City, ST ZIP Code]		Pro Number:	
Special Instructions:		Freight Charge Terms (Freight charges are prepaid unless marked otherwise):	
		Prepaid <input type="checkbox"/> Collect <input type="checkbox"/> 3rd Party <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Master bill of lading with attached underlying bills of lading.	

CUSTOMER ORDER INFORMATION

Customer Order No.	# of Packages	Weight	Pallet/Slip (circle one)		Additional Shipper Information
			Y	N	
			Y	N	
			Y	N	
			Y	N	
Grand Total					

CARRIER INFORMATION

Handling Unit		Package		Weight	HM (X)	Commodity Description <small>Commodities requiring special or additional care or attention in handling or stowing must be so marked and packaged as to ensure safe transportation with ordinary care. See Section 2(e) of NMFC item 360</small>	LTL Only	
Qty	Type	Qty	Type				NMFC No.	Class

Where the rate is dependent on value, shippers are required to state specifically in writing the agreed or declared value of the property as follows: "The agreed or declared value of the property is specifically stated by the shipper to be not exceeding _____ per _____."

COD Amount: \$ _____

Fee terms: Collect Prepaid Customer check acceptable

Note: Liability limitation for loss or damage in this shipment may be applicable. See 49 USC § 14706(c)(1)(A) and (B).

Received, subject to individually determined rates or contracts that have been agreed upon in writing between the carrier and shipper, if applicable, otherwise to the rates, classifications, and rules that have been established by the carrier and are available to the shipper, on request, and to all applicable state and federal regulations.		The carrier shall not make delivery of this shipment without payment of charges and all other lawful fees.	
Shipper Signature/Date		Shipper Signature _____	
Trailer Loaded: <input type="checkbox"/> By shipper <input type="checkbox"/> By driver	Freight Counted: <input type="checkbox"/> By shipper <input type="checkbox"/> By driver/pallets said to contain <input type="checkbox"/> By driver/pieces	Carrier Signature/Pickup Date	
This is to certify that the above named materials are properly classified, packaged, marked, and labeled, and are in proper condition for transportation according to the applicable regulations of the DOT.		Carrier acknowledges receipt of packages and required placards. Carrier certifies emergency response information was made available and/or carrier has the DOT emergency response guidebook or equivalent documentation in the vehicle. Property described above is received in good order, except as noted.	



The Loading Dock Manifesto

By John Hyduk

This is my life: I work the graveyard shift for a beverage distributor outside Cleveland, Ohio. Thirty hours a week I'm making the world safe for carbonated refreshment. Or at least three counties of it.

Job, life — same difference. Basically, I'm a yard monkey, climbing around inside semitrailers in the dark with a flashlight, checking pallet tickets against the product loaded, matching invoices. When I'm satisfied everything's jake, I toss in a dock plate, set the load lock, and seal 'em up. Then I log everything — truck, load, and seal numbers — for the dispatcher and hop up into the next trailer. And the next. And the next.

No job's perfect, this one especially. I'm fifty-nine. The first two hours of my shift are spent outside. You work outdoors in a Great Lakes winter and you know cold — mind-fogging, finger-stiffening cold. In the summer you head

off to work just as the sidewalk cafés and patio bars are filling up, driving past laughing guys and girls with bare shoulders studying the appetizer menu. I don't know which season is worse.

That may sound fairly grim, careerwise: the last splash of a clumsy diver. I have done other things. For better money. In the sunshine. But long before those jobs withered — and they did, as all things planted in the Rust Belt inevitably do — I had a hunch I'd end up on the dark side. Actually, I *knew*.

I lost a loading job in the winter of 2008. The contemporary job-search experience can best be summed up by the phrase "part-time man." I saw that scrawled on an index card thumbtacked to a job board: "Seeking Part-time Man."

First thing, you take a number and get in line with the rest of the unemployed. Then you look at the number in your hand — 14,000,000. To move up the line, you have to reinvent yourself. Kind of like a pitcher who's losing his fastball.

You find a new pitch. Mine was this: No job's too hard. And you move up the line a little. Decide that the only answer to every question is "Yes, sir" and you move up a little more.

Working nights was a practical decision; jobs are easier to come by if you'll take a shift most people wouldn't touch. Still, it took five months to find this gig.

You sleep the daylight away, but there are perks. Being productive, making your own way in a little world, being heard in the larger one — there's enough slack talk around about the rewards of sweat labor to fill a sociology textbook. A lot of it is charming nonsense; a nugget or two may even be true. Here's what I know: Every man needs an arena, and this is mine.

I pull into the lot at sundown. The guys are stripping trailers. From the street they look like a pirate crew sacking a merchant fleet.

There's Mr. Tommy, the motor driver, eighteen years under this Big Top, who's forgotten more about the soda-pop business than the board of directors will ever know. Jerry has a saltwater aquarium at home and is raising a shark. Joe owns maybe one piece of apparel that doesn't sport a Chief Wahoo. He has the same sense of humor as me — dry and twisted — which helps if you're a Tribe fan.

Big Rick favors a biker's bandanna and looks like Monsieur Zig-Zag on growth hormones. He's the king of sports trivia; ask him what number Archie Griffin wore and he'll say, "Ohio State or the pros?" Then there's Rob, my buddy Rob. Rob trails dreadlocks, speaks fluent Bob Marley, and always surprises. He's a cabbage wizard, and if there's a rarer bird than a Rastafarian who cooks Bavarian, I haven't found one. Dario and Danny are the newbies. I don't know much about them. I don't have to.

Derek the night manager is a Steelers fan and has a little shrine to Franco Harris in his office. Here in Browns Town it's the subject of scorn and the object of the occasional black ops.

Derek doesn't say much. He's the boss. He doesn't have to.

This is my stage: Cinder-block walls and a concrete floor under a corrugated roof maybe forty feet overhead. Wooden pallets of product are stacked nearly to the ceiling — six-packs, twelve-packs, twenty-four-packs, thirty-twos. Two-liter bottles rest in trays of eight, twenty-ounce bottles wait in plastic shells. There is juice squeezed from every fruit you can imagine and a few I think someone's made up. A sea of soda.

The builders chug down the aisles, dragging pallet jacks, studying the pull tickets in their free hands. A dozen diet-cola twelve-packs — check. Root beer. Teas — diet, lemon, sweetened, and not. They stack and move on. The job is no different from a supermarket run — to get a sense, try pulling a couple of two-liter bottles off a store shelf and tossing them into your shopping cart. Repeat that two thousand times in an eight-hour shift and you've got an idea of the work.

Tommy rolls past. He's been outside loading. The cab of his forklift is covered by a plastic tarp. Thunder booms. He shouts a greeting that marks him as a lifelong Clevelander: "At least it's not snowing." I pull up the hood of my sweatshirt and splash out into the yard. Rain is falling in sheets. Christ.

On the shop radio Supertramp is advising I take the long way home.

The bull waits, pawing the ground. The matador strides to the center of the ring. The bull lifts its head and says, "So tell me a little about yourself."

I hated job interviews: clammy handshakes followed by the moment of truth. Well, I'd say, there's little to tell. I was born to sweat.

I grew up in a blue-collar Cleveland neighborhood, a little bit of Old Europe transplanted onto a bend of the Cuyahoga River. The men — Poles, Slovaks, Czechs, Ukies, Hungarians — were scrappers and needed to be. Their wives stayed home, had gardens and

babies, and could see the future in the bottoms of teacups.

I never needed a fortune-teller to see mine. It came shuffling past our porch every evening at 5:25, toting a lunch pail. At eighteen you were swallowed by the python and made your way through the beast like a lump. At the other end was a mill pension, casino trips on a bus charter twice a year, and church bingo every Wednesday.

At sixteen I lucked into a summer job on the railroad, which was like being plucked from homeroom to ride with the Dalton Gang. My coworkers gnawed fist-sized plugs of Red Man, worked like demons, and cussed like Baptists, apologetically but expertly. I hauled the cutting torch and handed out tools. Fire, iron, cussing — I was hooked.

Men worked. Real men worked *hard*. I ached to be one of them. I would grow up fast and never look back and wonder, What if?

That fall I pushed carts of wool between the pattern cutters and the sewing line in a knitting mill, talking foolish to Puerto Rican girls with long names and short tempers. In the summer I painted houses.

When other kids were boning up for the SATs, I was dipping steel after school on the paint line of a scaffolding factory. Word got around that I read books and that I might want to go to college. My shop nickname went from "the Kid" to "Shakespeare." One foreman used to bring people down into the goop pit to look at the college boy.

I called in sick the night of my senior prom. The next day I fished my class ring out of my jeans and showed it around. It had been sized the previous fall, before my hands were callused, swollen. I couldn't slide the ring on my finger.

I don't recall the details, but I remember the phone call. A beverage distributor. Warehouse work. At night. Yes, I said, I can do that. When I shook Derek's hand, there were calluses. I knew I could be happy here.

Mine is an exact science. Military strategy can be revised mid-conflict; stock portfolios might exceed expectations or underperform; even the best sawbones will advise you to get a second opinion. Economics, medicine, war — with soda you've got to be precise.

I'm here to verify the accuracy of the pick. Then I check the load sequence. We load backward to the delivery route, so that the first pallet in the nose of the trailer corresponds with the driver's last stop, and the last build is waiting on the tail when he throws open the door at his first.

Fail to correct a mispick and you get written up. Let a misload slide by and you get written up. Forget to record an out-of-stock and, well, I'll let you guess. Get written up enough and bad things will happen. I labor under a hanging sword. The first night, Derek met me at the gate, showed me around, walked me through the drill.

I plunged in. It had been months since I'd lifted anything heavier than objection. Longer since I'd pounded over a concrete floor. My knees felt like someone had driven steel spikes through them. My back ached. My feet. And this was only a four-hour getting-to-know-you shift.

How did it go? Derek asked as I punched out.

It went well, I said.

It did not go well. I'd made a lot of mistakes. To my novice eye a twenty-pack of diet cola looked a lot like a twenty-four-pack. Orange and strawberry and mixed-fruit punches all displayed the same reddish glow by flashlight. Every screwup was faithfully recorded and relayed to me the next night in Derek's office, with a long face and a short talk that began, "You messed up again."

Another night I caught Derek watching me work. He had the disappointed look of a man whose new puppy has just chewed up his divan.

I can put a pretty face on every job I ever lost. Carol, through those high school gigs, a college-bound blond whose only flaw was that she didn't realize she was too good for me. Then Tricia —

the closest I've ever come to finding a soul mate, who'd be waiting when the mill whistle blew. Darla, with high Slavic cheekbones, who sold perfume in a department store while I worked the receiving dock. Terry, who sang in a jazz band. Another Carol in there somewhere. Maybe it was a Carla.

Strivers all. They'd make their money waitressing or tending bar while taking classes at the junior college. Tricia used her personal-assistant position at a bank to learn her boss's job. Terry could tear up the Ella Fitzgerald songbook at night and study for her real estate license all day.

I don't know what they saw in me. I'm no looker — I have photo ID to back that up. Maybe they considered me a project — a sad kitchen that had makeover potential, an old sofa that could be reupholstered, one threadbare patch at a time.

We'd last six months or a year, depending on how long it took the wonder of me to wear off and be replaced with talk of plans, and goals, and *us*. And it would end, always the same way.

They'd come home with flushed cheeks, all aglow about so-and-so's boyfriend who was making a killing in the mortgage business. Or a bank. Or fiber optic/broadband/soft serve. Or whatever sure thing was about to come up on the roulette wheel.

But babe, I'd say, I *have* a job. And in the silence that followed I could hear the rumble of the U-Haul backing up. Another spring-popped sofa was headed to the tree lawn. We have to talk, they'd say. Later, I'd answer, pulling on my coat: I have to go to work.

My father lived by a different code: If at first you don't succeed, screw it. My old man was always starting a new job or leaving one. I can recall him laying floor tile, driving a delivery van, installing car windshields, and stamping out wax milk cartons at a dairy — and those were just my grammar-school years. It didn't take much — a slight from his boss, real or imagined, or the prospect of a better gig, another pretty bubble floating past over a quitting-time beer.

Whatever: He'd be off, ready to sell our cow for magic beans. I think his work ID must have shown the back of his head, going out a door.

I can't explain his motivation. If I was the forgiving type, I'd say he was just looking for himself. But I don't forgive.

One of my earliest memories is him sitting at our kitchen table, explaining how he'd just put in his two-weeks notice somewhere. I can still see the hollow look in my mother's eyes as she listened, with my kid brother in diapers, playing at her feet. I know how much hurt a man can inflict on a woman when his latest scheme crashes and the paychecks stop for months.

Me, I took a different path. I guess I stayed too long at a half dozen parties. Guys who have half as many horses shot out from under them usually get a statue in the park.

Looking back, I think I figured I could outlast anything. No excuses. Besides, "looking back" — what does that get you? Places I worked, you could walk into something.

I work and I sleep. Home is three rented rooms above a plumbing company. I lucked out — for a month's security deposit and a workingman's wages I gather my mail on the cusp of suburbia.

I kick off the sheets about 10:00 A.M. and sit with a cup of coffee, watching the paramedics' ambulances roll below my kitchen window. Down the block there's a fire station. Across the street there's a church and, next to that, a funeral home. I didn't plan it, but I figure I've got the bases covered when the time comes.

At noon I run errands. I've taken a beginner's stab at cooking: I can assemble a scratch Bolognese sauce, whip up a serviceable cacciatore, do spaghetti alla anybody. Some days I'll walk up to the library and check out Giada De Laurentiis — but only for the recipes. On a warm day, I push on to the supermarket, to sniff onions and gather carrots for a ragout.

That's the real joy of cooking: You can eat your mistakes. I flip on the radio and prepare dinner

for two, just me and Lucinda Williams. "You're hiding out." I hear that a lot.

That's how it must look to day-trippers: that night shifts are manned by Lost Boys who simply can't deal. I'll admit that perpetual dark requires a special breed. The world does shrink to a more manageable size in the wee hours — traffic thins on the drive home, and you can park right by the door of the twenty-four-hour Walmart. But life never goes away entirely.

You tote a lot more to work in a lunch pail than Ring Dings. You pack alimony and autism diagnoses and car notes and the rest of the workingman's grind. Baby needs a new pair of shoes. Also braces, a better school, and a down payment on that spring field trip. And you chew whatever has been dumped on your plate in silence. You don't go into therapy. You go to work.

I get good at this job. Good enough at least. One night I look over a pallet and the case count just doesn't feel right. And it's not. I can distinguish between punches — the berry *mist* glows a deep ocean blue by flashlight while the *mixed* berry appears almost cerulean. I can distinguish diet from classic by the color of the bottle caps at forty paces. I'm too sensible to claim expertise; let's just say I pull my weight. And I can't help but feel proud.

I would have never made it this far if not for the kindness of strangers. When my screwups were a nightly lock and the day drivers were asking, Who was checking these loads, Stevie Wonder? Rick took me aside and said, "Forget them guys. You work with us." Tommy pauses the forklift before loading, letting me get a better look. I learn later that Derek took some bullets from his bosses that were intended for me.

When I'm gone and the next guy hoists the clipboard, they'll be just as kind to him. It's not about me; not everything is.

Last summer I saw my first shooting star, and I'm a grown man. You live in the city, you don't spend much time looking up, I guess. This past winter Jerry was pulling trailers around when he

came in and said, "Look what the moon is doing." We watched that lunar eclipse. A few of the guys ran and got their cell phones and took pictures before Derek chased us back inside. "You never seen a lunar eclipse before?" he said.

One morning we were standing in the parking lot, listening to Rick describe how good that first tall boy was going to taste when a whitetail buck sauntered up the street. Not a skittish Bambi — I see those most nights on the drive home — but a stud, a honking twelve-pointer. He wasn't lost. And he didn't hurry. He just posed under a streetlight, sniffed the breeze, and walked on. At least he knew where he was headed.

Stand inside the semitrailer as the temperature drops and the metal groans like the rigging of a sailing ship.

Once a month I update my résumé. Why, I don't know exactly. When I was looking, five months spent on orange plastic interview chairs, with my livelihood hanging on reliable transportation and a willingness to pee in a stranger's cup, that was the mantra. "Make sure you keep your résumé updated," some hiring clerk would tell me.

So I walk the hall of mirrors. There I am at the beginning — my hair is black and my back is straight, and I'm sliding into my first Ford, heading off to work. "Honky Tonk Women" is on the radio. Then I'm gone, pushing, pulling my way down a tunnel. A page later you look up and that gray-haired daddy o' mine is ... you. That's the working life.

No illusions: The only way I will ever see Paris is on the Travel Channel. I will never taste cassoulet unless they put it on the menu at Sheetz. I'm okay with that. One day you stare into the bathroom mirror and Willie Nelson is staring back at you. I'm okay with that, too.

No regrets. You make choices, and every one feels right at the time. Because they are.

There's work in poetry, and poetry in all work. I believe that. There is rhythm and meter in the slap of work boots on concrete. Your reward is

more than a paycheck. It is a connection to something larger, even if the something larger is a half dozen men in a barbed-wire yard.

It might not look like that to the untrained eye, just passing our open dock door — large men pulling and moving, pulling and moving, in artificial light. I understand. Sometimes it's hard to tell the picture from the frame.

You want something higher, a prickly Everyman speaking half-truths to power, go scare up Joe the Plumber. All I know is this: I am a schlub walking a high wire between paydays in steel-toed shoes. And my name is legion.

We're polar bears on an ice floe. Our habitat is disappearing.

This little world can end a thousand ways. Quickly, with a slipped disk or a herniated anything, and you'll spend your days on disability, giving depositions to lawyers who advertise on the *back* of the Yellow Pages. It could be snatched away by cold metal hands — right now somebody is thinking up a way to get robots to do this job. It would work, probably. But I don't think the soda would taste as sweet, you know?

But not tonight.

I pull into the lot at sundown. Beyond the chain-link the yard is lit by floodlights.

I wait as the printer spits out my load diagrams. Joe sidles over and tells a joke whose punchline is, "Hey, Father, it's me, Sister Bridget!" We agree after a brief consultation that Grady Sizemore would make a great porn name. I take a deep breath and head out.

"Hey, John, where you going with that clipboard in your hand?" Rob calls as I pass. "Johnny Boy, the pipes, the pipes are callin' ye ..." Jerry croons. Tommy drives up. "Man, I just don't know ..." he grins, and I know it's going to be a bumpy night. "Three in the yard, two in the dock," Derek says. I nod.

Outside, tow motors are streaking around like clown cars. Big Rick stops and leans down from the cab. "I got one for you. How many yards did Rex Kern throw for his senior year? I'll give you a minute." And then he roars off.

"Let us not talk falsely now," Jimi advises from the shop radio. "The hour's getting late."

Inside I can hear the guys ragging on one another, roaring like happy bears. Together we will tug, until night becomes day. We've got barbed wire and high fences to keep whatever evil is out there, walking, away. Men are working here.

<http://www.esquire.com/features/essay/john-hyduk-0511>