

Gypsy Shipping

[\[The Day After Ragnarok\]](#)

Gypsy Shipping is a small company based out of California which does low-weight, high-value courier jobs between California, Texas, and Utah. The American successor states might talk a good game about tolls and borders and whatnot, but nobody has the manpower in the post-Serpentfall world to check *all* the traffic. Comes right down to it, nobody really wants to. Every Highway Patrolman or Ranger looking for contraband is a soldier that's not killing mutated gila monsters or whatnot. So, if you don't want anybody to know about a particular shipment, Gypsy Shipping will be happy to make sure it gets to where it needs to go without too much official interest. For a reasonable amount of money.

For a *lot* of money, Gypsy Shipping will go into the Poisoned Lands and bring somebody *back*. It's usually somebody: there's damned little in the Midwest or East Coast that's worth sending somebody to fetch. But a *lot* of people got separated in the Evacuation of '46, and some of the people who made it to California are now rich enough to be able to afford sending somebody to collect their children, parents, or spouses.

To contract with Gypsy Shipping for this service, three things need to be understood:

1. *Payment is in cash, and in advance.* Including enough money to pay for the fuel to get there and back. And put up extra money anyway, because there's going to be extra expenses and the courier is going to expect to be paid back for that.
2. *The client needs to provide good intelligence.* Ideally, the package should be comfortably waiting at the destination, ready to go as soon as the courier hands over the 'finders fee' or 'ransom' or whatever else the local term is to the local warlord. ...It's never that easy, sure, but there has to be *something* that will let the courier track the package down. And if the situation is 'he's a slave in the local iron mines and the warlord's a skull-and-spikes sort of person?' Well, 'hiring a band of mercenary raiders' is going to be an expense. Fortunately, mercenary raiding bands go for pretty cheap in the Poisoned Lands.
3. *No guarantees.* Rarely, a courier comes back empty-handed. They're slightly more likely to not come back at all. This isn't an easy job.

Darlene Dorgan (born 1910), CEO of Gypsy Shipping

Technically Darlene *Bjorkman*, but she uses her maiden name for the business. Darlene spent her prewar years

[driving all over the United States](#) in a secondhand Model T Ford with a variety of companions, which proved to be remarkably good training for later events. Her first 'run' was to Bradford at the very height of the Evacuation (Dorgan was one of the few to drive east during the chaos), in order to rescue her parents and sisters. The success of that venture led to a few more high-paying jobs, and the success of those allowed Darlene to set up Gypsy Shipping as a courier company.

These days, Darlene and her first set of special couriers only rarely go on missions themselves, and only when the client is willing to pay *ludicrous* sums of money for the privilege. But there's no shortage of people willing to risk their lives for the kind of money Gypsy Shipping can offer. Darlene is picky in who gets hired for special courier duty: she looks for a particular combination of skill, bravery, and stubbornness. They're expected to know the geography of the Poisoned Lands at a level far beyond simply having an old gas station map; have the ability to repair or replace their vehicles as needed; and, naturally, be completely contemptuous of even the concept of giving up.

Orphans preferred.

- Moe Lane

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