



Text Version of Audio Story: Whitey

If you would have mentioned their names to any old lady in McAlisterville, you would have seen the gray hair stand on end.

Back then, in the 1970s, they were considered to be the baddest of the bad — the Frontz brothers.

They loved their cars. Their cars defined who they were. Young Whitey Frontz had a number of muscle cars. Cars so special, that they had their own names. *Sweet Emotion* was a 1967 Chevelle. *Soft Touch* was a '68 Chevelle.

But the most legendary muscle car was Whitey's 1968 Silver Nova — *Shakedown*.

The Frontz boys would start at one end of town and scream their cars to the other end, shaking every window and chandelier in their wake. Whitey's older brother, Freddie, piloted a 1968 Mustang, dubbed the *US Male*.

On his way out of town one day, with only one payment of \$78.41 left on his Mustang, the *US Male* spectacularly crashed into a concrete block factory. The car was unrecognizable.

Freddie was rushed to the hospital, where he was pronounced dead on arrival. It was a terrible accident, but it would hardly put a damper on younger brother Whitey's love of muscle cars. The legend of the notorious Whitey Frontz and *Shakedown* would grow.

The mere sight of the silver Nova was enough to strike terror into the hearts of the inhabitants of the town.

One old lady though, Winnie ... Winnie Knauss ... had seen a different side of Whitey. When it would snow, the notorious Whitey Frontz would stop and shovel her walk off. She thought that perhaps, maybe, he had a good heart after all.

Whitey would show up unannounced and shovel many walks for old people there in McAlisterville. And I can only imagine senior citizens locking their doors as the pilot of *Shakedown* was on their property.

When Winnie saw him coming, she made him hot chocolate. It's hard to imagine the legendary Whitey Frontz sipping hot chocolate with an old lady.

Whitey was a daily topic of conversation there in McAlisterville — and with every quiet whisper of his name, the legend grew larger.

In his travels through Juniata County, in that silver Nova, a young girl had caught Whitey's eye. Karen was pretty. *Oh, she was so pretty.* Her parents had such high hopes for her, and now she was taking up with the likes of Whitey Frontz.

I don't know this for sure, but I can only imagine the incredible dismay that her parents must have felt. Surely, the parents of any other young girl in Juniata County would have been mortified by the idea of their daughter in the company of such a scoundrel.

I recently interviewed Whitey Frontz for this story. He still lives in Juniata County.

Believe it or not, an easy place to find him these days would be in church on Sundays, sitting there beside his wife, Karen. He told me they try not to miss.

They have been married for 22 years now and have two children. It's ironic, all this time later...I don't think I know a better man, or a man who loves his wife and family more, than Whitey Frontz does. Today, he is a pillar of McAlisterville.

I also recently interviewed his older brother, Freddie. You remember, the one who was pronounced dead back in 1971? He is alive and well today. Folks laugh when they think back on that doctor who mistakenly pronounced young Freddie DOA.

The citizens of McAlisterville know that the legend of the Frontz boys could never die.

I'm the American Storyteller.