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parks so people could say when they got home, "We were there!"

Sam and River saw the old barns with their backs broken, sagging from the weight of too many years. They saw houses with three different shades of shingles and with rooms that have been added on, sometimes almost like a crazy quilt. They saw the young Mennonite children climbing on a fence and waving and then heard them laughing when Sam honked River's air horns. They saw snow fences rolled up, hidden in the tall summer grass, waiting for the cold wind of winter. They listened to birds sing as they drove down county roads, watched the vultures circle overhead, saw the Red-Tailed Hawks sitting like sentries on fence posts, saw the Red-winged Blackbirds flash by as they flew down the road. They saw the old couples planting and then lovingly tending their gardens as the summer days grew long.

Sam always stopped for meals at small town cafes, chatting with the locals and always having the best home made pie. The locals would look at the car and ask "What kinda car is that?" They would talk about River and Sam would always give a ride to whoever asked for one. Sam never felt like a stranger in any town when on the road with River.



Sam felt a hand on her shoulder and someone calling her name.  
"Sam, Auntie Sam."

Sam opened her eyes to the harsh fluorescent lights of the hospital room and saw her niece standing there.

"Auntie Sam, I wanted to see you before I left town. And there's someone outside you should see." Samantha pointed out the window. Sitting at the curb in the sunshine was River. Sam smiled.

They talked all afternoon, Samantha telling Sam where she planned to go, the roads she wanted to drive and the things she wanted to see. She also said that she didn't have a set route. "I may just turn down any unmarked road if it looks interesting."

"Harry Chapin wrote a song and one line was 'It's not the getting there, it's the going that's good'," Sam said. "Whether you're on the plains or in the mountains, you'll see so much. The view from River is always great."

Samantha stood and placed a photo in Sam's hand. "I need to go now, but here's a copy of a photo I found. I have one with me and I'll look at it as I travel and think about you and how you and River traveled."

She looked into Sam's eyes and said "I love you, Auntie Sam, and I know you love me, but I think we both know that we love River more."

They laughed together as in their hearts they knew this was true.

"Take care of River and River will take care of you," Sam whispered.

Samantha kissed Sam on the cheek, said "I will. I love you," and she left.

Sam watched as River and Samantha drove away. How many times had her sister said "I should have never named that child after you. She turned out just like you." Sam had always laughed and replied "And the problem with that is....?"

She looked down at the photo, it had been taken on a trip when she and River had driven north to Maine. The sea pounding the cliffs behind them, and she was laughing, her hair was windblown, River wasn't very clean. Sam remembered some of the roads she and River had driven that day on their way to the ocean and remembered what a glorious day it had been.

In the background, Bonnie Raitt sang on the CD player, "You pulled me like the moon pulls on the tide, You know just where I keep my better side."

The nurse found Sam later, her heart quiet but with a small smile on her face and a photo clutched tightly in her hands.

What a glorious day.

*Debra R. Micas doesn't own a car, but loves riding in Miatas. Comments may be sent to her at [debrarmicas@gmail.com](mailto:debrarmicas@gmail.com).*



## Classifieds

*For Sale* - Four Yokohama Guardex 600 snow tires size 185/50R14 with 5/32" tread left on '97 OEM 14" steel wheels. \$150.00 Contact Jay Hofacker at [jay@hofacker.us](mailto:jay@hofacker.us) or 317-328-4880.

*For Sale* - Four wheels, OE, no dings or scratches, very good shape, make offer. Claude Councillor [ccouncillor@cpsprints.com](mailto:ccouncillor@cpsprints.com).

*For Sale* - White 2002 MX-5, 5 spd, 63K miles, tonneau cover, car cover, bra, wood grain center dash, stainless steel door sills. \$13,500 Call Mark or Cathy at 574-936-1355 and tell them the mail man told you all about it.