

“Your van's here,” Mom said, after I had awakened from my day's slumber. The truck dealer had called while I slept.

It was Friday, of course. I can't do anything on the weekend so I'll have to wait until Monday. I like to think I'm a patient man, but, *f****, this is getting ridiculous. *Of course* the van would arrive on Friday so that I have to wait *two days* before I can do *anything* to get it.

Naturally, there's alcohol readily available for purchase and consumption. Thus the weekend disappeared into a fog of beer drinking and cigarette smoking on the sofa with and without my parents. I had to travel a lot that weekend. About fifty feet is what I figure...

I called the loan officer at the bank so he could get my check ready. He advised that the check would be ready before they closed and I could get the van that day. I told him that it would have to wait until Tuesday because I have to get the vehicle identification number from the dealer and have the insurance ready before I even drove out there to get it. I wouldn't be able to do that until the next day.

Fortunately another night's worth of anxiety and anticipation passed rapidly. I had the VIN from the dealer and I had arranged a meeting with an insurance agent recommended by Dad early that Tuesday morning. With checkbook in hand I walked into the agent's office, decided on the coverage, which would have to be comprehensive to protect the bank's interest, signed the papers, cut the check and walked out the door with an insurance policy on a vehicle I didn't even own. Should there be some act of God, such as a tornado rendering the van a total loss before I even started the engine once, I was covered. Lucky me.

I glanced around the interior of the van...There was nothing but room. I liked it. I turned the key to the left and the engine shut down immediately. “Let's do this,” I commanded.

I signed and dated form after form where he told me without really looking at any of them, just quick glances. After about fifteen minutes he announced, “That's it. Now just the small detail of money and you'll be on your way.”

“So, here's thirty-five hundred from the bank,” I staid, handing him the check.

He looked at the face and handed it back, flipping it over. “Just sign on the back and that'll finish that.”

I signed the back of the check. When I handed him the check now endorsed, I asked, “Now, I think that leaves twenty-one hundred and ninety-eight dollars and fifty cents, right?”

I watched his hand move to the calculator on the right side of his desk. He punched some of the keys and when finished, he stated, “Two thousand, one hundred, ninety-eight fifty. That's correct.”

I wrote out the biggest check by amount by far in my life...We shook hands and he grabbed the temporary license to attach to the windshield on the passenger side and we stood up and walked out to the parking lot toward the van. With the extra set of keys he walked around to the passenger side, hopped up and applied the license to the glass, flipped the keys to me, and said, “She's yours, now. Drive carefully and keep us in mind for any service or questions you may have.”

“Thanks,” I said, climbing into the big bucket seat. I fired up the engine as he stepped down...and drove my new van off their lot all the way home. - pages 287-290