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.....Because I Love My Family

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A smooth ride through life

All my life, I've been surrounded by showrooms, Southeast Asian restaurants, and countless buildings, old and new, that tower upwards to make their denizens feel a little more powerful in their temporary homes. It was a comfortable setting growing up, full of a social understanding that transcended all borders and differences. The world was always one. It was tremendous; countless times larger than my own tiny soul.

In my place, a motorhead would probably have had the perfect childhood. I know I did. I spent years living near massive workshops, where tools made music on the heart and lungs of the cars, and my dad grew tomatoes near the workshops, for some reason. We forever played around on those infinite grounds, jumping on top of parked pickup trucks to dance and play. It was a dangerous place, full of toxic, goeey motor-mess and too many sharp, steely spare parts. But it was our playground for adventures. It was our land for as long as we believed so.

The only breaks were to catch our breaths on the hoods of cars, and to plan excitedly about what to do

with someone's lost penny found on the dirt that we trampled upon. While shiny pennies remained the highlights of our adventures, comparing cars was also a regular activity, which makes no sense now because we were 7-8 year olds and only knew that cars were the shiny boxes on wheels that took you to places. Of course, that description was enough to make them wonderful to a child. Vehicles with TVs were extra glorious and undefeatable, even more so than powerful-looking Toyota Land Cruisers. And too much time was wasted lying and bluffing about how our next family cars were going to have TVs. Of course, we never did, because we've had the same olive-green Nissan Sunny for the past 10 years now, and not even its light-purple seat-covers have changed.

But then again, the Nissan Sunny didn't need to be changed, really. Everything from within it was always perfect. While our lives moved miles after miles, hours after hours in it, conquering highways standing between vast deserts, everything within it remained untouched and preserved. Siblings

remained annoying as always, dad always found a way to tease mum, and mum was always the gracious presence that compensated for this collective of wayward beings. Streetlights flashed past us in blurs as we sped through, and the moon seemed to follow us every time I fixed my eyes on it through the windows. The world kept changing, from concrete to bricks to green to blue, and we were in motion and alive when something as massive as the earth itself seemed motionless and dead. Luxury and sports cars caught our attention from within as much as the camels that walked by the highways did. I remember craning my neck as much as possible to catch glints of the tips of large towers through the windows. Days turned into nights, and nights turned into days on road trips, and many times, we parked the car and slept in it till we could go back to a real bed. And through it all- the trips, the celebrations, the accidents- the car retained its integrity in the end, despite the scratches, dents, paintjobs and breakdowns. It had hiccups and fell down a few times, of course, but it came back every

time, and every time, it came back with even more. With age, it never lost those chances for us to follow our dad to the stations to pump air into its tires, or for my brother to fall in love with it repeatedly and address it as 'her'. We pulled it, and pushed it, and drove it through rides big and small, high and low. We made it dirty, we hurt it, we kicked it, we even cursed it. But no number of washes and fixes could strip it off the emotions that it witnessed throughout its time this family. It's now older, heavier with anecdotes that were shared in it and the ones that are now shared revolving around it. And it's still there.

As children, there were very few things that didn't strike as wondrous to us, I'm sure. But no matter how imaginative I might have been, I don't think I ever beheld cars with the kind of adoration that the usual readers of this paper hold. And I still don't. I don't think cars are otherworldly luxuries that I would drool over. They aren't commodities I would pursue for grandeur. I do hold cars dear, but as a part of life and growing up, not as trivialities that offer fleeting moments of pleasure. They aren't the toys, the cassette players, or the abandoned and broken tricycles from childhood that could be replaced by a better water gun, an iPod, and a

new bicycle. They are the ever-present and unchanging belongings that carry and shield us as our tastes and preferences evolve, just like home and its seemingly-perpetual company. They are the growing, ageing metal-boxes wrapped in nostalgia of childlike excitement. They are not fantasies or lost wishes that rarely ever come true. They are the irreplaceable, real goodness of simple lives, the wheels on which life is carried on smoothly. They are just a humble presence, a home outside a house- for memories that were, and the memories that will be.

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UNDER THE SPOTLIGHTS | A preview to the largest auto show in the world – Geneva



Ferrari California T
Often described as the least masculine Ferrari by people who cannot afford them, the Ferrari California is finally on it's way out. Except it's not, because it's replacement is the same Ferrari California with a T attached to it. The "new" old California now has an all-new 3.8-liter turbocharged V8 engine pushing north of 550 horses and it happens to be the first turbocharged Ferrari since the F40 from 1992. The Italian automaker promised a smooth power curve without turbo lag and an exhilarating soundtrack, despite being turbocharged. Ferrari's new magnetic active dampers are said to be 50% faster reacting for a better ride. The front end is updated to a more aggressive styling with 458 inspired headlights, while the interior is tweaked to a sporty layout with a new infotainment system along with a touch screen turbo boost gauge on the dash.

Every year during this time, the Swiss city of Geneva prepares for the auto industry's most anticipated event of the year. The Geneva Motor Show features the latest and greatest creations from automakers all over the world, starting from new hypercars and supercars, to production cars for the next few years and concept vehicles for the future. The show starts on the 6th of March, and stays open for the following ten days.

Mercedes S Class Coupe
Having shut down their Maybach brand of uber-luxury cars last year, Daimler AG has started to fill its shoes with Mercedes' latest S-Class line of luxury super saloons. Soon after launching the all new 2013 S Class Sedan, the Germans have now set out to compete with Bentley's Continental Coupe and the Rolls Royce Wraith with their new luxury coupe. The S Coupe is based on the sedan, but with two fewer doors and a streamlined body cued from the CLA's flowing lines. The interior is a 2+2 layout with luxury and entertainment that is unparalleled in any car of it's kind, including a digital speedometer slash infotainment system that stretches along the



entire length of the dashboard and upholstery covered in the leather of a hundred million unicorns. Under the hood is a 4.7 liter turbo V8 with about 450 horses, while V12 models are expected to come shortly afterwards under the AMG badge. The gadgetry in this car is more than we can manage to fit in here. Even the headlights are constructed with 47 Swarovski Crystals in them for you to tell everyone how filthy rich you are.

Lamborghini Huracan LP610-4

Geneva is never complete without a new raging bull, and this year we finally see the Gallardo model going out after ten years of production. The replacement, originally codenamed "Cabrera" is to be called the Huracan, named traditionally after a Spanish fighting bull. The Huracan retains the 5.2 liter V10 from the Gallardo now rated at 610 PS, and is connected (finally!) to a new 7 speed dual



clutch transmission through to a complex electronic all wheel drive system. It has magnetically controlled adaptive suspension for comfort or stiffness whenever needed. The new baby Lambo weighs about 1400 kilos and does 0-100 in 3.2 seconds up to a top speed of 325 km/h.

Honda Civic Type R

Although Honda has been quite vague on the details of the next Civic Type R, we already have a general idea of how it may look from YouTube videos and test mule photos. Why is this so important? Because Honda's Type R's are usually the best cars in their class, a refresh is long overdue and the upcoming model is set to have the first factory turbocharged V-Tec pushing out over 280 horsepower.



McLaren 650S

McLaren's long awaited answer to the Ferrari 458 Speciale is finally here. It's called the 650S and is made to fill the gap between the between the 12C and the recently released P1 hypercar. The core idea of this car is very similar to the Speciale treatment, it is based on the 12C chassis and retains most of the overall shape too, but with

25% more downforce courtesy of a 12C GT3 inspired front bumper design and rear diffuser. It's headlights are borrowed from the P1 for a more distinctive appearance and despite the 12C already being faster than Ferrari's 458 Speciale, the 3.8 liter V8

engine is pumped up to a whopping 641 bhp (650 ps). The suspension has been recalibrated to allow further driver adjustment, and the steering sharpened for the spirit the 12C seemed to have lacked. Inside is a full alcantara treatment with the option of fixed carbon fibre seats. With such improvements on an already mad fast car, don't be surprised if the 650S puts Aventadors to shame when it goes on sale this summer.

