she was several people in front of me; putting her items on the checkout counter:

a plant; four green bananas; a bottle of salad dressing and two well squeezed grapefruits that i assumed had passed the test.

there are many things that i do not understand.

this is just one of them.

LARRY

there for a while i was working for a fifty-year-old alcoholic; selling books and records at a place called the mad hatter.

larry had this old volvo and when he'd get a bit drunk he'd want to go driving around town.

he was always saying:

this is a REAL CAR! this isn't no piece of SHIT! this car can stop on a DIME!

and he'd whip it up to fifty or so and slam on the brakes

SEE? this car has BRAKES! it stops like a car OUGHT TO!

well, one day he whipped it on up and when he slammed on the brake nothing happened.

when we finally stopped i said; ok, that's it, let me out, i'm walking.

larry looked at me and said, john, don't worry, i know what's wrong and i can fix it.

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several days later larry had this part and we were parked in front of the store with the hood propped up, drinking beer and doing car things

after four or five beers larry said it was fixed and that it was time for a test run.

we drove (slow) down back streets to the high school and he whipped it on up and slammed on the brakes.

SEE! SEE! I told you i could fix it!

and this is just to say, larry, wherever you are, i hope that time has been kind to you and that your old volvo still stops on a dime.

OUR CAT

sits in the window; fat gut pressed up against the screen; talking shit to any cats that come up on his porch

he thinks he's a tough guy

the other morning my wife saw a little white cat chase our tough guy through the house;

back into the study, tail big, feet sliding on the hard wood

he still sits on the window sill; talking his same line of shit but i don't think so many of the other cats are buying it now.

- tom caufield

Conway AR