

Martha and Belinda's Excellent Adventure: Part 1

Belinda Darcey

A 10 day odyssey across America, as chronicled by 2 dykes in a 2-door for 2 long...

Day 1. September 13, 1992. ETD 9 am. Delayed 'til 10:10 am due to Martha's insisting on bringing three times as much clothing as necessary (to avoid doing laundry en route - and she thinks I'm a princess!) After a valiant attempt to strap a bulging dufflebag to the roof, she took a helpful neighbor's advice and repacked the entire contents in a completely random manner wherever they would fit. We now have socks in the foodbox, t-shirts squeezed in beside the speakers and underwear under the seats. So much for a well-organized, hassle-free trunk. Lovely. But even this cannot dampen our spirits. Leaving West Hollywood this morning, Martha could not contain herself. Spotting two fags arguing in a black Jeep in the next lane, she waved and yelled, "Hey! We're moving!" The driver yelled back, "Yeah? Good for you honey! I wish to hell we were." Dennis Miller would have been flattered if he'd heard how many times we screamed, "We...are...OUTTA HERE!" today.

Around noon, Martha spotted our first "sisters". Two rural dykes entering a road-side coffeeshop, as we were leaving it. I was mortified, because I was sure they heard her mumble her not-so-subtle 'gaydar' signal - "Hel-lo sister," to me. (Imagine Kramer from "Seinfeld" in one of his suave moments.) Personally, I prefer to use the muffled siren-out-of-the-corner-mouth routine.

Oh, the sights we have seen today, boys and girls! Someone lost a mattress off the back of a truck on the Hollywood Freeway. Two hundred yards later, the owners could be seen running back along the emergency lane, intent on retrieving it. Just how they would accomplish this feat was beyond us. We've also spotted no less than three station wagons with bags strapped to the roof, tarps a-billowing and luggage on the verge of taking flight. Then there was an accident thirty minutes from the California border at Needles. Martha was cursing because she was driving, and so couldn't get a good look at the debris and possible victims. I, of course didn't look, preferring not to dwell on life's tragedies, and instead attempted to make some sandwiches from the contents of the cooler wedged behind the driver's seat. A word of advice: don't EVER try to make a meal while flying along a freeway at seventy miles an hour.

It does not save time. In fact, we spent more time fighting, apologizing, and consoling each other, than we would have if we'd stopped the damn car for five minutes and pulled everything out onto a nice spacious picnic table. Not to mention the added stress to the driver when the only view she has is of a big ol' butt.

We finally pulled into a rest area and hauled the cooler and hamper out onto a hot concrete picnic table. Even in the shade, it felt like 120 degrees. I endured a long lecture regarding my Attitude On the Road while Martha downed half the Pepperidge Farm cookies - resulting in a speech that would be incomprehensible to the average Joe. Unfortunately, after three years with her, I could, like many a skilled dental technician, decipher precisely what she was saying.

Nothing but sandy, barren hills and the endless road before us. But at least the air conditioner works and there's no more smog. No if only we could agree on a tape...I'm sick of hearing her Springsteen, and she's not ready for my Australian folk songs. Three more hours to Flagstaff, then half an hour to Sedona, and since I booked it, I'm prayin' the hotel's not a dive. ▼

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