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To: vaca.dieck.2000@swbell.net
Subject: Postcard

This is a story about Nevrmor our Jeep Grand Cherokee.



His name is a contraction of *Nevermore*, a name we chose because *Raven* was already on someone else's license plate and we had to squeeze it down to seven letters. He is Trail Rated, has bad-ass tires and sometimes we take him nasty places. Today we took him on Notom Road. Notom is a mostly dirt back road from Ticaboo to Capitol Reef. It would be gorgeous desert scenery and a fun drive.

To get there we had to first take UT-95 through Fry Canyon (beautiful in its own right) and across the Colorado River to UT-276.





When we stopped to take pictures a lonesome raven posed for us.



We told him we were going to drive Notom Road. He laughed.

A last stop at Ticaboo to check road conditions. All clear. This little chipmunk posed for us as we drove out of the parking lot.



We told him we were going to drive Notom Road. He laughed.

Laugh if you will, we made it to Notom Road.



And it's truly a beautiful ride.





But then we heard the first weird sound. This noise can't be written accurately but we'll call it gronk. We started to hear gronks. And more gronks. And extended gronks.

We were just about here.



And we realized how dang far we were from anything.

Gronk. Gronk. Gronk-gronk. Gronnnnnnk. This car is self-destructing.

Look under the car – nothing. Look all through the engine compartment with a teeny flashlight – nothing.

Shrug shoulders. Bite lip. Drive to pavement. Made it.

On the pavement things were remarkably better. We delusionally believed for a moment that Nevrmor had healed himself. Until we hit a bump. Gronk.

Our hotel directed us to the closest mechanic, two towns over, M&D Automotive. We met with the mechanic. He and I rode together over some bumpy road and listened to the awful sound. Then he put our

poor car up on his lift and had a look. "When did this start?" he queried. "Coming up Notom Road", I replied. He laughed.

After a while he conferred with Mechanic #2. Mechanic #2 and I rode together over some bumpy road and listened to the awful sound. Then he put our poor car back up on the lift and had a look. "When did this start?" he queried. "Coming up Notom Road", I replied. He laughed.

Time slowed to a crawl. The two of them poked and prodded and pushed and yanked for an hour. And lowered the car. "Go run over some bumps" said #2. I did. There was blessed silence. I came back and asked him what he did. He said "A nut holding up the sway bar was loose about a sixteenth or eighth of an inch. I tightened it."

"That'll be \$15."

We laughed.

D&S