

The Rambler

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Edition IV

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I refuse to give in.

As I get older, I refuse to give into the fine lines and wrinkles that just scream “sun damage” (Turpan’s steady supply of Ole Henriksen’s skin care line helps me avoid giving into such a travesty). I refuse to give into horrid, ill-conceived and mass produced greeting cards for personal correspondence (Sugar Paper deftly aids me in overcoming such an adversity). And as a driver in Los Angeles, I refuse to give into the ridiculous per-gallon cost of gas when at all possible. Luckily, I’ve devised a method to avoid shelling out clams for gasoline by making The Brentwood Country Mart my one stop shopping Mecca. By doing this, not only is the vein-constricting stress of driving in nauseating LA traffic obliterated, but gallons of gas are saved by running all my errands locally on 26th Street.

Co-hosting a get-together in Brentwood this past week, I had the opportunity to practice this cost (and time) effective plan. A dear friend of mine was throwing a dinner party to showcase her newly restored digs and asked me over to assist in the preparation. Her definition of assisting was merely being within a stone’s throw in case there was a catastrophe with the caterers or cleaners that I might correct. Lucky for me, The Country Mart is a stone’s throw from her home. So, while she whirled about like a dervish tending to the intricacies of planning a perfect party, I slipped on my moccasins and traipsed a few blocks in the southern California sun

to The Mart. After all, celebrating a newly restored home called for a newly restored me so I was eager for some much needed pampering from head to hem.

The attire for the evening’s affair was casual, so after a quick coffee in the courtyard I popped over to James Perse whose designs epitomize the most elegant precipice of casual one can wear before entering into the foyer of formal. With summer ending and the evening breezes steadily gaining chill, I opted for a two tone cashmere cardigan that would pair smartly with a plain white v-neck tee I had waiting for me back at the homestead. With the top half covered, I covered the bottom with a sleek pair of white slim fit chinos. They fit so well I knew immediately I’d not only wear them that night but – don’t tell mama – also well past Labor Day. With my outfit compiled in one quick stop and not an ounce of gas used, mind you, I gathered my new acquisitions and parted Perse’s.

As I giddily rifled through my shopping bag to re-examine my cardigan, a quick glimpse at my hands revealed that a manicure was long overdue. As a writer, occasional painter and perpetual outdoor hiker, the inks, acrylics and elements wreak havoc on my digits and their corresponding nails so I scheduled a manicure at Salon Fabergé. Lucky for me, they could fit me in in half an hour. Immediately knowing exactly how to kill those thirty minutes, my pampering led me to the Barber Shop (no appointment necessary) for a touch up on my haircut. The Barber Shop is such a treat to experience with all of the

charm it undoubtedly had almost half a century ago when it first opened to service not only men, but also women and children. After a few moments in the chair, my coif was back to looking fresh and soon my nails were, too, after the crew at Fabergé worked their magic. Again, with new clothes, new hair, and renewed hands, I delighted in the fact that, on foot, not a drop of gas had been used in my errand running thus far.

As I wandered the open-air halls of The Mart contemplating my next step in luxuriating, my phone rang. It was the hostess of the evening’s fete telling me there was a floral emergency and she needed a replacement bouquet tout-de-suite. Not flinching, I answered her request by darkening the doorway of Shoko’s Flowers. Not knowing anything about creating a floral arrangement, I described the evening’s event, the color scheme of the dining room and the lovely clerk said she knew just what to do. Better yet, it could be delivered later that afternoon.

With my clothes in hand, hair newly shorn, and nails shining brilliantly I walked the few blocks back to my friend’s abode. Sure, it was delightful to pamper myself with some shopping and necessary health and beauty maintenance, but more delightful was that not once did I turn my key in the ignition to burn one solitary drop of gas. Now if I could get my accountant, my personal trainer and my therapist all to take offices in The Brentwood Country Mart, I really would never have to drive anywhere again. I can dream, can’t I?