

I discovered in high school the trick of editing papers while riding in the back seat of our family car. Something about the forward motion and the forced concentration made it easier to detangle arguments and smooth paragraphs. Next came writing in airports and on trains and planes. Something about the way airports exist as worlds between worlds helped me to see things I might otherwise have missed. Even now, whenever I have a difficult story to finish I like to take it on the subway: the train's forward motion helps move the story forward too. So it doesn't really surprise me that many of my short stories involve car trips. "Your Lucky Day" is different because the car doesn't move things forward—it breaks down just when the main character thinks she has reached a resolution, and forces her to go deeper. The story helped me think about my novel, in which the protagonist tries to envision the town her family visits in the summer as home the way her mother does, and in the process comes to a deeper understanding of her mother's life. Driving plays a role in this story too: as a valued skill her mother was taught by her grandfather, and one of the first things about her mother the protagonist tries to emulate.

—Jonathan Sapers

