



In the Downtime: Defence Boys' Toys

A quick look at what some do, when they get time at home By Darren Gallagher

There are several defining moments in life. The Wedding day, birth of a child or even that father to son shaving lesson that is so special that it would make a great Gillette commercial. But they all fall short in comparison to Sunday morning when you open your garage door, slip off the dust cover, and see your dream machine.

Opening the door, the scent sends your mind running wild. It's that intoxicating, you almost feel like you are having an affair (with a much older woman in my case). A quick check in the mirror to make sure that you look respectable enough to be seen with your car. It's the least she deserves, because lets face it, she looks better on your arm than some of your previous girlfriends.

Then... RRRRMMM! The sleeping giant wakes up, growling as if to say - Let's go papa-bear!

Before you know it, you are out on the road, forearm out the window, radio on and feeling fine.

You catch the looks of many a passer by. That look that says, 'I wish I had bought all my toys before I got married!'

Stopped at the lights and some misguided soul pulls up next to you, giving his engine a foot full in order to rev you up for the Green Light Go-Go. But, this doesn't rattle you because you once heard Carroll Shelby say, 'It's better to cruise around slowly in a fast car, than to

drive around like a maniac in a slow one.'

You pull in at your local for a quick drink (The whole time, looking at your car with that sense of pride that you have earned through the painstaking hours of making this car look great). One drink becomes two, a conversation or two about it keeps you busy for an hour or more.



Pressing on, you jump in the car and SCREAM as the red hot vinyl burns straight into your skin. The second injury comes as you try and buckle up that super hot metal seat-belt buckle. And the third side of the story comes as you grab that steering wheel and your hands melt on to it.

You don't hate her for it though. Because you consciously parked away from any trees to ensure that no sap/birds violated her during that time.

The time goes so fast that before you know it, you are giving her a quick wash down before bed as the final curtain falls on another unique moment.

Editor's Note: Hanging your elbow out the window, or indeed any part of your body, unless you're the driver making a hand signal, is a violation of the Australian Road rules.

For more down time goodness see Darren's interview with Jason McKeown about photography on page 24. If you have pics of a down time activity you'd like to share with readers then send them to defencefamilymatters.gov.au (High resolution images are preferred)

