Rumble Note

Elaine sits gazing out the window of the apartment, steam from her coffee mug misting the view of the slowly fading sunset. She doesn't want to be here, she wants time with Phillip. But that's now impossible. Her heart breaks all over again thinking of her husband and a goodbye that was never shared. Decades of marriage and not a single night spent apart, make Elaine's solitude now so incredibly distressing. Thoughts of the comforting rhythm of a lost life edge over the horizon after the fleeing sun.

Besides Elaine, Phillip's consuming passion was a 1936 Ford coupe purchased for a song, but needing vast remodeling. He named it Annie, dusted her off and promised to retrieve the lady's youthful presence when he retired. In the meantime, Phillip spent several months building a suitable garage to protect Annie from the elements and to show off her fender skirts with appropriate lighting. He also invested in many automotive tools to assist in the restoration process. Phillip had crossed days off his planning calendar leading to retirement like a little boy with a Big Chief tablet and fat pencil marking the days until Christmas. When retirement finally came, Elaine and Phillip celebrated the evening with champagne in Annie's rumble seat. Two days later Phillip suffered a massive coronary. He didn't come in for dinner, so Elaine went to the garage and found him leaning over Annie's fender, a wrench still gripped in his lifeless fingers.

Elaine's mind now wandered back to that terrible moment as it had so many times since. Boxes scattered around the garage, equipment still inside that Phillip had yet to unpack. Annie in her special place waiting for the makeover that would never come, and Phillip draped over her body in his last act on earth. She left the garage that day and did not go back for five years, not until she unlocked the door for the real estate agent who assisted in the sale of their home, garage and everything in it.

Elaine's reverie was broken by chimes. Answering the doorbell, she frowned at the seemingly nervous man who had purchased Phillip's car, "Is anything wrong?"

He smiled, "No Ma'am, as he handed her an envelope. "Found this in the car and figured you'd want it."

Elaine thanked him, closed the door and opened the envelope.

Honey, I had this crazy dream where I died and never had the chance to say goodbye. It was so real and heart wrenching (pardon the pun) that I came up with the silly idea of planting this note in Annie's rumble seat. I figured you would make sure Annie went to a good home after I was gone and her new owner would surely find it while he was finishing the restoration I started. Guess my awful dream came true and this is my way of saying goodbye. But, please know baby, that I love you more than life itself and I'm sleeping with you every night...just like always.