The game we play on road trips is called Rob the Gas Station. Dad invented it, and it works pretty much the way it sounds. The whole family goes in at once, two kids make a big noise about something while the other one, The Robber, steals something in one quick snatch. It can be anything. It can be a pack of Hostess Sno Balls or sunflower seeds or a *Wish You Were Here* postcard.

When we’re back on the road, free as birds as Mom says, Dad decides how many points The Robber gets for his steal. The one other rule is if it’s food you have to share, but if it’s a thing, you get to keep it, or you can gift it to somebody.

Little Charlie still has the most points, since he snatched and then gifted a coffee mug that said *World’s Best Dad in Michigan* in fat, red letters. Dad gave Charlie a million points for that one, and we keep the mug on the dash. Mom thinks it’s funny because it means Dad is only the world’s best when we’re in Michigan, and we’ve only been there once.

I didn’t get many points for it, but my favorite steal is a keychain from New Hampshire. It’s a tiny license plate, with my name on it instead of random numbers and letters. My Dad said it was a selfish haul, especially since it was snack time and we could have all used a Cheez-It.

But sometimes when my brothers are fighting, I just look at the little vanity plate and pretend I have my own car, and that car is empty and quiet and clean, no burger wrappers on the floor, no wads of gum under the seats. There will be no greasy smudges left on the window from the times the windows fogged up. The glass will be Windexed clean in the spots where my brothers once used their fingers to draw their own names.

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