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## Arthur

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Daniel S. Price is a senior communications major and a Van Morrison junkie.

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## Arthur Daniel S. Price

I traveled to Mexico. Hit the road jack with my friend Arthur. He's a blank faced kid that will talk if you know him. He's got the smile of a lizard on a sunny rock. Mellow, but funny, a benign guy. We smoked cigars all the way to the boarder, Irish delights, rum crooks. We packed our lunches and skipped breakfast, just stopping for coffee and gas and more cigars. It was warm and Arthur would sometimes stick his head out the window, like a dog, eyes squinted, tongue out.

When I first met Arthur, I was in sad shape. My girlfriend had left me and gone to Chicago, the suburbs. Days were spent working at a coffee shop and sleeping, taking a nap when I was home, reading a book, TV. Nothing very active. Arthur came into the shop everyday. He introduced himself to me, which was surprising, because he doesn't talk much if you don't know him. He seemed to know a lot about Eliot and Pound and all the early avant garde cats that changed everything for the rest of us. This intrigued me. He was planning a trip to Mexico and told me "Come on Granger, no regrets man, live life. We'll meet some girls, travel, maybe climb some mountains, write even, whatever we want." At the worst it would give me something to think about when I came back. All I thought about lately was my ex-girlfriend and whatever I was reading. I needed some change.

So I left my job at the coffee shop. I'd been

saving my tips for a vacation anyways and so here it was. Arthur assured me that we could live on practically nothing. I wasn't so sure; I had six hundred dollars and not a cent more. I sold my car, an old Toyota, for about two thousand, just in case. Arthur had a van, a big brown full sized. We worked on it for a couple of days. I checked it all over and made sure all the fluids and spark plugs and tires were ready to go, while Arthur built a make shift cargo space-bed combo in the back. We would just sleep in the van if we couldn't find someone to take us in.

We packed a lot of stuff in that van, my guitar, camp stove, tents, sleeping bags. The drive started on a Friday evening. Our goal was two days to the border, no stops. I drove the first eight hours and we sang along with Arthur's tapes, the James Gang, the Animals, Janis Joplin. I was a bit nervous when the tapes ended and Arthur didn't reload. He just sat there for a while, thumbing his cigar, looking a bit sad even. We were in Tennessee, hills all over the place. We stopped for gas and heard accents that were different, Southern rural. Arthur didn't even make a joke about the dingy attendant trying to hit on the pretty young lady getting gas. The attendant made a fool out of himself by using a corny line. He didn't seem to notice her eyes rolling. The kid told her that if she's ever in the area again, to stop by and maybe she'd have time to grab a burger or