

NUMBERS-MATCHING BY BOB COIRO

There's nothing like the satisfaction one gets from opening the hood of a numbers-matching car with magnifying glass & flashlight in hand, reading off the numbers on the engine, then reading the numbers stamped into the data-plate, and then crawling under the car and reading the numbers on the transmission—and getting that incomparable feeling you get when the numbers all match. It never gets old. Heck, I go out to my 2004 Saturn with a flashlight & magnifying glass at least once a month—twice, if the weather is nice—and read the numbers real slow. Sometimes, I have my wife read the numbers to me and I just listen with my eyes closed.

Y'know, it's funny; I have this buddy in the neighborhood with a '15 Model T Ford that's virtually the twin of mine and when we happen to be at the same car show or cruise-in, we like to park side-by-side. I feel sorry for him, though, for all the times a group of spectators will approach, each with notepad in hand, wanting to take down the numbers, and I beam like a proud daddy when I see the looks on their faces as they pull their heads out from under my hood and that magic moment happens when one says to the other, "Hey, Morty, did you see that? The numbers match!" And my poor buddy with the other '15 Ford whose numbers are a few digits apart just wants to hang his head and crawl up his exhaust pipe. It's really sad. But hey, it's his own silly fault for buying a non numbers-matching car. Sometimes I wonder how he enjoys the thing at all.

Well, today is looking like a good-weather day and me and the wife will probably pour a couple glasses of merlot and head out to the driveway with our flashlights and magnifying glasses and do the Saturn, Toyota, and Kia all in one session. Yeah, there's just no satisfaction like the satisfaction you feel when all the numbers match—especially if you're with someone you love.