

In the southwest of England in the county of Cornwall, there is a village called Four Lanes. The village sits on the top of a large hill. There is always a cold wind blowing in from the Atlantic Ocean. A television mast stands on the top of the hill, dominating the landscape for miles around. At night its red beacon winks in the inky darkness.

My grandmother used to live in a terraced house on the top of the hill, two fields away from the mast. Her driveway opened onto the busy main road, but this never worried Gran. She would reverse out into the road blocking both lanes of traffic. It was a miracle that she never caused an accident.

Gran drove an old blue Morris Minor. She would push my brother and me into the car, slamming the door behind us. Cyclists often had to jump into the hedge as Gran drove by. My mother told us to sit on the back seat when our grandmother took us out in her car.

Every morning Gran would read about the horse races in the newspaper. She would draw a circle around the names of the horses she thought would win. It was the one time of the day she liked to be left in peace. She had grown up with horses, and had lived most of her life on a farm. In her youth the only means of transport available to the villagers was the horse. Gran not only enjoyed riding horses, she also enjoyed painting them. Her children often said she loved horses more than anything else in the world.

When Gran became too old to ride, she watched horse racing on television. She knew a lot about horses but she never bet money on them. She watched horse racing because she loved horses. She usually guessed the winning horse correctly, but wasn't interested in making money. I often wanted to borrow her newspaper after she had looked at it, take it down to the betting shop and make a few bets. As a child, of course, I couldn't.

Now I am old enough to get into the betting shop, Gran is no longer with us. She was a wonderful person and she is much missed by her grandchildren.