

## **Gobiwagen (2093) vs Airstream (1977)**

Lev's grandfather's land yacht is around the size of a camping vehicle (1) (Mourning Jet, Gibson 50). "The ceiling was pale wood" (2) and the floors are the same pale wood texture (3), a human sized black marble sized table having maps which also serve as a bed (4). It has a bulging flank which opens up but reseals leaving no trace of a door or entryway (5). "A vast French stove" is slung on the sides of the vehicle the size of all terrain vehicles making outdoor cooking practical (6) (Polt, Gibson 75). Occasionally a thylacine (7), an extinct tiger like animal prowls the cabins tapping on the pale wood floors (Anathema, Gibson 90). Later when Flynn's peripheral is purchased and Connor's peripheral, Anton, (9) they occupies and rear cabin (10). Due to its massive size there is a gangway (11) connecting component parts that are accompanied by a gym equipped with a treadmill in which a "white, headless, simian figure" serves as a full body resistance band "a resistance-training exoskeleton" (12) (Hermès, Gibson 124). The land yacht is also equipped with two closets filled with 21<sup>st</sup> century wear of shorts and tops for Flynn's Peripheral (13) (In Spite of Everything, Gibson 152). Then deep within the vehicle are corridors "barely shoulder-wide, away from the smallest of the Gobiwagen's cabins" (14). Later there are decorations and luggage are removed from vehicle increasing its space (15). When having future meetings with Flynn, Wilf Netherton occupies the same black gold marble desk. We also find out that the land-yacht is in Lev Zubov's garage and it has windows in which Flynn looks out of (16) (Body Language, Gibson 178). We find out that the gangway is around fifteen feet and it is joined by several other vehicles in the garage (The Sounds He Made, Gibson 208). Later the bar is inaccessible to Netherton so he begins sleeping in a Jacuzzi like tub, a "glass-walled crow's nested fitted with gray leather upholstery" (17) accompanied by a Medici, or medical robot to monitor his vitals (Not Expected, Gibson 255). Much later on, Wilf says farewell to Rainey in the shower of the Gobiwagen's master bedroom as he prepares to go to Daedra's party (18) (Metric of Caution, Gibson 367). There is also a dome or cupola of the Gobiwagen which Wilf uses to pilot the makeshift 21<sup>st</sup> century wheelie-boy to communicate with Flynn (19) (Buttholeville, Gibson 432). We realize how large the Gobiwagen is in the final chapters when Flynn takes a bus with Netherton to Daedra's party and the lounge is said to be even larger (20) (To Farrington, Gibson 446).

We get a very detailed description of Burton's AirStream starting with it being built in 1977 (1), covered with a shell of white expansion foam (2), with light carving tunnels that pierce into exterior windows (3). The RV was initially owned by "an alcoholic uncle", assumed to be Leon's father (4). It is also smelly and initially parked near a creek (5) and was abandoned for a period of time being occupied by a wasp's nest (6). It is also said to be valuable (7) having the appearance of a "blunt rifle slug" (8) Inside it is a Chinese chair which adapts to the users body (9) and the lighting of the RV is dark being described as "a seventeen-year-old-boy's bedroom" (10) (The Haptics, Gibson 1). Inside the RV is a gaming phone (11) where she witnesses Aelita's murder will piloting the drone and Burton's Tomahawk (12) (Pushing Bugs, Gibson 8). Near the RV is a composting toilet (13) and outside there are several drones monitoring it (14) (Dragonflies, Gibson 13). Later Flynn uses

the neural cutout peripheral controlling device fabricated by Macon putting her in an induced coma where she lies in the Airstream's bed (15) and also when Flynn travels to the other world we see that the Airstream's room is wider (16) in comparison to the Gobiwagen while the ceiling is lower (17) (Zero, Gibson 172). Right before the Flynn, Burton and Tommy's meeting with Corbell Pickett, we see that the waterproof cover (18) of the RV along with its polymer LEDs (19) (Complicated, Gibson 231). During their meeting with Corbell, we see that there is a grayish "evil hydrophobic nanopaint" which surrounds the vehicle (20) (Good China, Gibson 241).

The contrast between great wealth and poverty can be obviously seen when comparing the Gobiwagen and the Airstream, the two vehicles described in *The Peripheral*. Lev's grandfather's land yacht, and Burton's Airstream, serve to provide contrasting insights into the characters, timelines, and sociopolitical dimensions of the novel. Lev's grandfather's land yacht is an extravagant and luxurious vehicle, commanding massive size, gangways, gym equipment, and a French stove. It is also equipped with modern amenities like 21st-century clothing and a medical robot, fully showcasing Lev's wealth and status in society. In contrast, Burton's Airstream is a worn-out RV that has been abandoned near a shoddy creek. It's smelly, dark, and a dismal reflection of Burton's marginalization in society. The differences in the vehicles' technological features also hint at the novel's sociopolitical dimensions. Lev's land yacht is equipped with advanced technology like a resistance-training exoskeleton, showing the unequal distribution of resources in society. On the other hand, Burton's Airstream is equipped with drones, suggesting a lack of safety and control. Lastly, the two vehicles provide insights into the novel's timelines. Lev's land yacht is set in the future, with its advanced technology while Burton's Airstream is set in the past, built in 1977 and covered in some weird foam. However, both vehicles are used to traverse different worlds, highlighting the idea of multiple timelines and realities in the novel.

### **Works Cited**

Gibson, William. *The Peripheral*: Now a Major New TV Series With Amazon Prime. Penguin UK, 2014.