



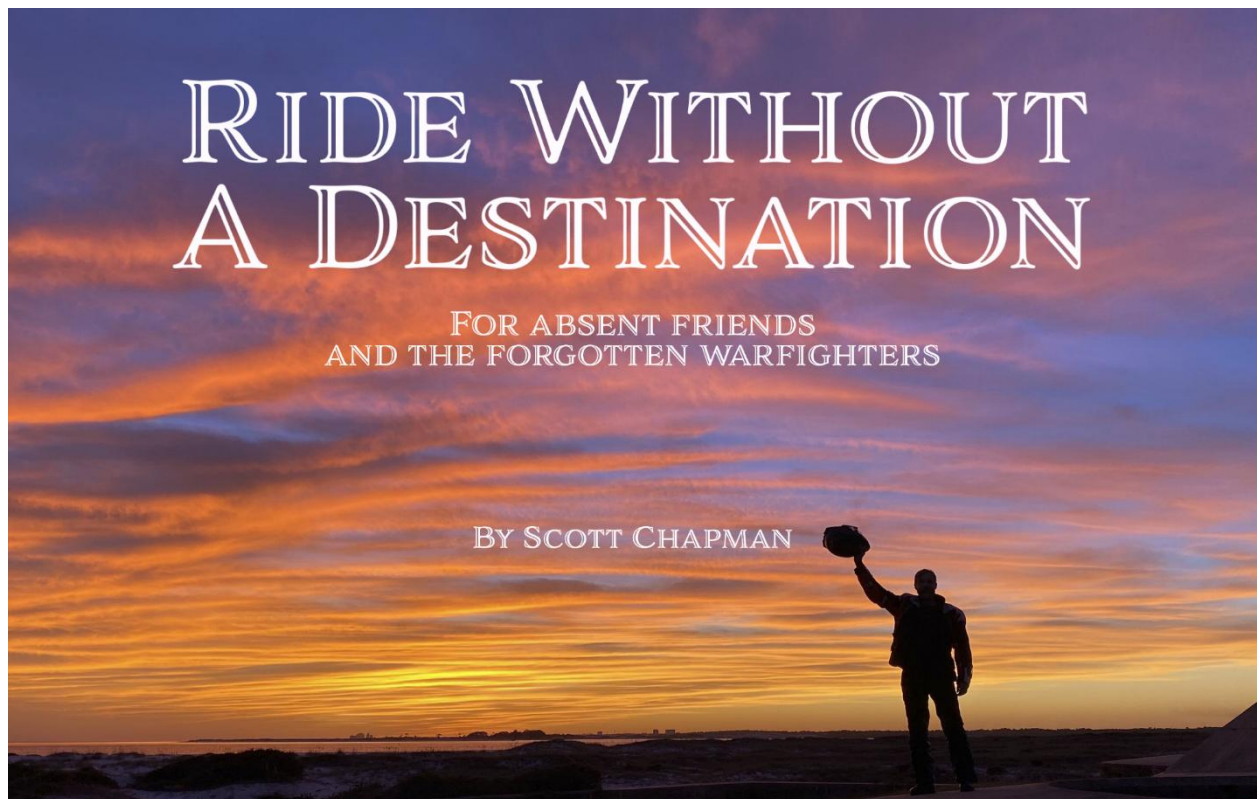
# “Ride Without A Destination”

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CHAPTER 2 of ∞





## For my Mom

*I view words & individual characters as music notes. Quanta packets of frequency. I rearrange these music notes to find the 'in-tune symphony.' Walking 3D edits through wavy waters during a dynamic writing project. Life is a living document. Together, let's find the frequency of a blue-sky sonnet on this paradise planet.*



--- 20 days later ---

**September 27, 2019**

Thanks for all the messages and encouragement. I'm not at rock bottom, but I can see it from where I'm standing. I never imagined I'd stand so close to the notional cliff edge. There's a grim invitation to take a step forward and feel the free wind on my face for those final fleeting seconds. Only then will the noise finally fall silent. An unwelcomed gale presses on my back. The view forward and downward makes me feel uneasy and dizzy; but it sure looks peaceful down there. Life took a sharp hard-left turn and the only option I see to bring my life back to center is a long sit in the saddle.

Over the next 2-3 years I'll write about the high-stakes chess game I'm forced to navigate. I'll tell tales that should not be forgotten. And I'll also paint pictures with creative wordplay to shed light on the beauty along this motorcycle escape. However, since this is a real-time journal, I'm far too busy for any sort of introspection.

Here's a quick departure update:

I am scrambling! I have a mountain of tasks to complete. I have a short time to button it all up before I'm homeless in 19 days. Any hiccup in the sale of my house means the bank will seize my home. My trip begins in just over 2 weeks; whether I'm ready or not. Let's light this fuse!

I'd prefer to prep my bike for this journey myself, but an abundance of time is a luxury I do not have. There's a certain satisfaction gained from turning a wrench, changing fluids, and preparing a bike for a long ride. The 'mission prep' feeling is reminiscent of my warfighting days.



Setting up my warfighting kit and cleaning my gear before a mission gave me confidence while on-target; the same way tooling on my bike gives me confidence on dirt. Not preparing is preparing to fail. Your gear will keep you alive while skirting the outskirts; and therefore, must be taken care of with meticulous dedication. It's a life-preserving checklist. Preparing my bike reminds me of simpler slivers of time on the battlefield. Confirming the zero on my rifle is comparable to replacing all engine fluids. Reviewing target intel is reminiscent of route planning. Weapons maintenance is interwoven with waterproofing my tent. Preparation increases the likelihood of mission success and rider safety; I see it as statistics.

Somewhere between chaos and calamity, I scheduled an appointment at BMW Motorrad of Orlando, FL to give my bike a full-service makeover. I told the shop manager what I planned to do and how long I expected to be gone. After my plans became clear, the shop gave my bike an exhaustive maintenance check.

A rock-a-billy bike technician named O'Riley serviced my bike while I radiated stress in their showroom. He offered loads of ADV advice that bounced off my overstuffed eardrums. I heard the noise coming from his mouth and saw his lips move; but couldn't hold focus from the beginning of his sentence to the end. My mind throbbed with the surmounting tasks and blocked addition of new information. I pretended to listen out of respect for his kindness; a mask I wore all too often. We only spoke for a few minutes, but I felt he could see through my facade of confidence and slippage of micro-emotions. A stifling mask too exhausting to maintain at times; even more difficult to hide when I'm paper thin and transparent.

I'm too proud to let anyone see me crumble because men are often shunned for expressing 'hurt boo-boo' emotions. Despite my humble silence, I knew O'Riley saw my fractures begin to ooze radioactive material. He gave me his cell phone number and told me to



call him if I ever needed anything while on the road. The low tone of my voice told him everything he needed to know about the monsters hiding around the dark corners on this auspicious motorcycle escape. He, too, is a combat veteran and wished me well on my journey.

My bike is ready to ride but that's such a small piece of the puzzle. I'm riding a 2012 BMW F800GS with about 26K miles on it. For those of you who aren't hip to motorbikes. The F800GS is a dual sport motorcycle that's designed for both dirt and pavement. It rides like a dirt bike while comfortable enough for long pavement rides. The sturdy frame and stock shocks can carry enough gear for a round-the-world moto trip.

All my gear is laid out in a cold empty room, but my packing-list is far from complete. I still need to gather a few items before I say goodbye to the world. I sorted everything by category to help stay organized. I'll list and picture everything I'm taking with me to help anchor the tangible to the intangible of a written story. I'm also open to suggestions from ADVrider forum readers. I always appreciate input from more experienced folks. My goal is to ride as light as possible while also planning for routine repairs and regular maintenance along the way.

I decided to create an Instagram account just for this journey. The pictures posted will help solidify the story in your mind's eye. You can find me [@scottchapman.author](https://www.instagram.com/scottchapman.author). I just removed the privacy settings. Be mindful of scrolling ahead spoilers because I use Instagram as a rough draft storage yard for future writing projects. Stay tuned to see what's coming; or swipe ahead to see how the story ends. I'm an author who writes about his surreal life; in real-time.

I know late-September is too late in the year to begin a thru-ride of the [Trans-America-Trail \(TAT\)](#). Everything east of Colorado will be safe to ride before snow ends the motorcycle season. My loose plan is to traverse the Trans-America-Trail until it's too cold to tackle the



Rocky Mountains. Once too cold ride, I plan to slide down to Mexico and spend the winter exploring the Baja outback. When it warms up, I might jump back on the TAT or ride north to the Dalton Highway in Alaska.



To stand in the Arctic Circle and feel so small underneath the magic of the Northern Lights is a recurring dream of mine. Unless I find something more interesting to quench my quest, I'll explore Canada via the [Trans Canadian Adventure Trail \(TCAT\)](#). The theme is dirt, isolation, and more dirt. My goal is to stay on dirt and disconnect.

*Isolate, recalibrate, reflect, and write.*

The Trans-America-Trail is a good starting point for this auspicious escape because it's within my mediocre moto skill level. The route is all public-access roads. I don't want to hassle with the friction of permits or meeting too many fancy new people. The route is stitched together between farm roads, forestry tracks, fire roads, etc. It starts in the Smokey Mountains in Eastern Tennessee and ends at the ocean on the Oregon coast. Along the guided GPX route, there's plenty of suggested campsites and food stops. The frequency of fueling caches along the tailored



tracks are meant to accommodate the average ADV motorcycle's fuel tank. The route is engineered for a bike like just like mine. In fact, I bought my bike for the sole purpose of the TAT in mind.

I don't have a destination; just a list of things I want to see and experience while out on this escape. What about money? How can someone so young fund this kind of fun? Don't worry, you'll read all about it if you stay tuned. Throwing caution into the wind never felt so good.

Now, let me turn my attention back to my massive departure checklist of my *Ride Without a Destination*. Thanks for keeping up.

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### Selected Replies:

**ADV Rider X-wing fighter:** *"I'm 6-8 months away from heading out on my own long ride. I'm a retired combat vet a few years older than you (46). I also plan to write and pepper my combat experiences into the story. I write fiction, though. I'm not ready to share my private life with strangers. The thin veil of fiction gives me comfort in anonymity. I don't have a route or a destination either. South America, Australia, and Africa are on the wish list. Safe travels Brother! I know what you seek but know not where to find it."*

**My reply:** *"Nice to meet you brother. I've found writing provides a healthy outlet to furlough my fury, digest discomfort, and peer into the mirror. I haven't had the mental bandwidth to digest much over the past 20+ years; and there's a mountain of*



*monsters yet to process. I've sorted and stored it all away while waiting for a break in the storm. I put it in a box, then taped it up tight. I'm underwater and see a rare opening of light; maybe there's a safe harbor in the distance. I need to strike, or this door may never present itself again. I'm hyper-aware of the dangers when unchecked stress is left to marinate on a weathered frame. Stress is all I know; I'll be dead in a year if I miss this window."*



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