

ANATOMY OF A ROAD TRIP

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- 22 I hate everything that Las Vegas embodies, but I stop by frequently on roadtrips because the people watching is unreal and I like to keep enemies close.
- 23 Short tenure in Southern Utah this time, but good weather helped us make the most of our time.
- 24 Finished strong on an epic bike ride with a friend I met back in Washington that included a cattle stampede and broken bike in the middle of a torrential downpour.
- 25 A Last Hurrah in Chicago to see Amanda's old housemate and go to a jazz club.
- 1 ★ Home ★ New Brunswick, NJ Home of great Mexican food and an even better underground music scene.
- 2 Picked up my buddy Tyler in PA, and blew out a tire due to dry-rot before we even left the state.
- 3 The non-stop drive from NJ to Denver takes about 26 hrs. Factor in 2 timezones and you've got yourself a nice 24hrs.
- 4 Off to a great start with nothing but great new friends, campfires and challenging whitewater in the peak snowmelt season of Central Colorado.



- ## THE SNACK WORLD TOUR
- 17 Explored some more hidden Idaho gems; Bruncean canyon and Sand Dunes as per the recommendation of local guru, John Webster, who I met in Banks earlier. Couldn't stay too long because RAMON WAS GETTING MARRIED in Seattle next week.
 - 18 Picked up the new crew of homies (Cody, Kyle and Amanda) who flew out from New Brunswick to make the drive back east with me. We camped at the best site I've ever been to on the beach in Olympic National Park with Ramon + Jovelle's wedding crew and a ton of bioluminescent plankton.
 - 19 Got Snackmasters patches embroidered by our friends Julien and Amy in Portland and spent the night on the town.
 - 20 Our friend Kat got a job as a ranger at Oregon Caves National Monument and showed us all the local goods and skinny dips.
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 - 1 Spent a few weeks living behind the bouldering gym, riding bikes, climbing, learning to surf from my van neighbors, and trying to go on tinder dates. (but mostly just eating Bahn mi sandwiches)
 - 2 Spent a few weeks at the "Center of the Universe" with the homeless, hungry and happy lost boys of whitewater Neverland; Banks, Idaho. If there's magic in this world, it exists somewhere between the savage water of the North Fork at high-noon and the midnight trickle of hot springs.
 - 3 Drove to Missoula to see a girl. That was dumb.
 - 4 Spent a week at the "Center of the Universe" with the homeless, hungry and happy lost boys of whitewater Neverland; Banks, Idaho. If there's magic in this world, it exists somewhere between the savage water of the North Fork at high-noon and the midnight trickle of hot springs.
 - 5 Tyler and I went for a car-to-car summit push on the Grand Teton and ended up turning back just shy of the summit due to a combination of brutal winds, dropped gear, inexperience and soft nerves. This one still kills me.
 - 6 Spent a few days hanging with a big Mormon family during their 30 person family reunion and set a new van occupancy record at 32. They came to cheer us on as we paddled our kayaks off of Lower Mesa Falls!
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 - 9 Its crazy that I'd never heard of the Sawtooth Range before. Truly one of America's best kept secrets. Bagged a fun alpine climb and waterfall
 - 10 You don't know a god damn thing about "freedom" until you've seen Crunch, ID on the Fourth of July. Imagine "The Purge" with fireworks instead of murder. Probably the most dangerous part of the whole trip
 - 11 Got punneled by the Columbia River Gorge. R.I.P. EGO
 - 12 Met up with Tyler's dad, Dave, and friend, Bob to tackle Mt. Adams and Mt. Rainier. Another bust summit on Rainier due to altitude sadness in the group. Said bye to Tyler when he flew home with his dad.
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 - 14 Spent a few weekends up in the North Cascades with my friend Andy who has an infectious affinity for the region. Our ropeless climb of Black Peak's NE ridge was my favorite climb of the trip! Turned out Sachin, the drummer of my old band, would be in the area with his housemates the weekend of my birthday which saved me from what was shaping up to be a lonely 24th

NOTES ON THE GREAT AMERICAN ROAD TRIP

by adam nawrot



FORWARD



Shower installed

Like most grand gestures, my decision to move into a van was motivated by a broken heart. After 5 years in a steady relationship that found me on the precipice of engagement and feeling old at the age of 23, I needed out. She needed out. And when those 5 years unraveled in spectacular fashion during a traumatic two week trip self supported river trip through the heart of the Grand Canyon, I spent money that I had once allocated for a down payment on a house and purchased an old NYPD Detective Van. The van would be my renaissance, the tool by which I would feel young again, or rather, feel my age again.

At that point I was no stranger to the road trip. I had already driven across the country 7 times, and pulled off more smaller scale bouts of rubber tramping than I had any hope of recounting. It wasn't until I found the van, however, that I finally felt like I did things right. This zine, spelling mistakes and all, is a collection of thoughts & feels from the best summer of my life.

CHECK YOURSELF OR

WRECK

YOUR-

SELF

Husum Falls is a relatively unassuming roadside waterfall that marks the take out point on the lower section of Washington's White Salmon river. The spot is a popular one for onlookers to watch raft guides and kayakers portage or huck the 8 foot drop below the bridge walkway of Rt. 141. It was our first day of paddling in the Pacific Northwest and we were psyched to splash around in the glacial blue water we'd seen in product catalogs but couldn't quite believe was actually real.

Our schedule called for a day or two of warming up to the area on the easier Middle and Lower sections of the White Salmon (and the Wind River) before heading upstream to challenge ourselves against the titans we really came to slay, the mighty stouts of a section known as The Green Truss. After a month of tackling the country's premiere whitewater gems between here and New Jersey, where our road trip started, we had grown a little cocky and were feeling pretty good about our paddling. Neither Tyler, my travel buddy at the time, nor I even thought twice about sending Husum, a drop which seemed to pale in comparison to those now in our repertoire. Ethan, a local paddler who was showing us the lines, seemed to have some misgivings about the feature but sent the falls in style with a smooth boof stroke and Tyler followed suit as I snapped photos from the bridge. My lap, on the other hand, was less than pretty. I rolled at the bottom of the falls and decided I needed to hike back upstream to redeem myself with another go. The second lap went worse.

TYLER (PICTURED) AND I
CHARGE MESA FALLS



AT LEAST 80% OF KAYAKING
IS DRIVING, THE OTHER 20%
IS HIKING



OUR NEW FRIENDS AUSTIN
(PICTURED ON BIG WOOD FALLS)
AND MATTIE SHOW US THE LINES
AROUND CRESTED BUTTE

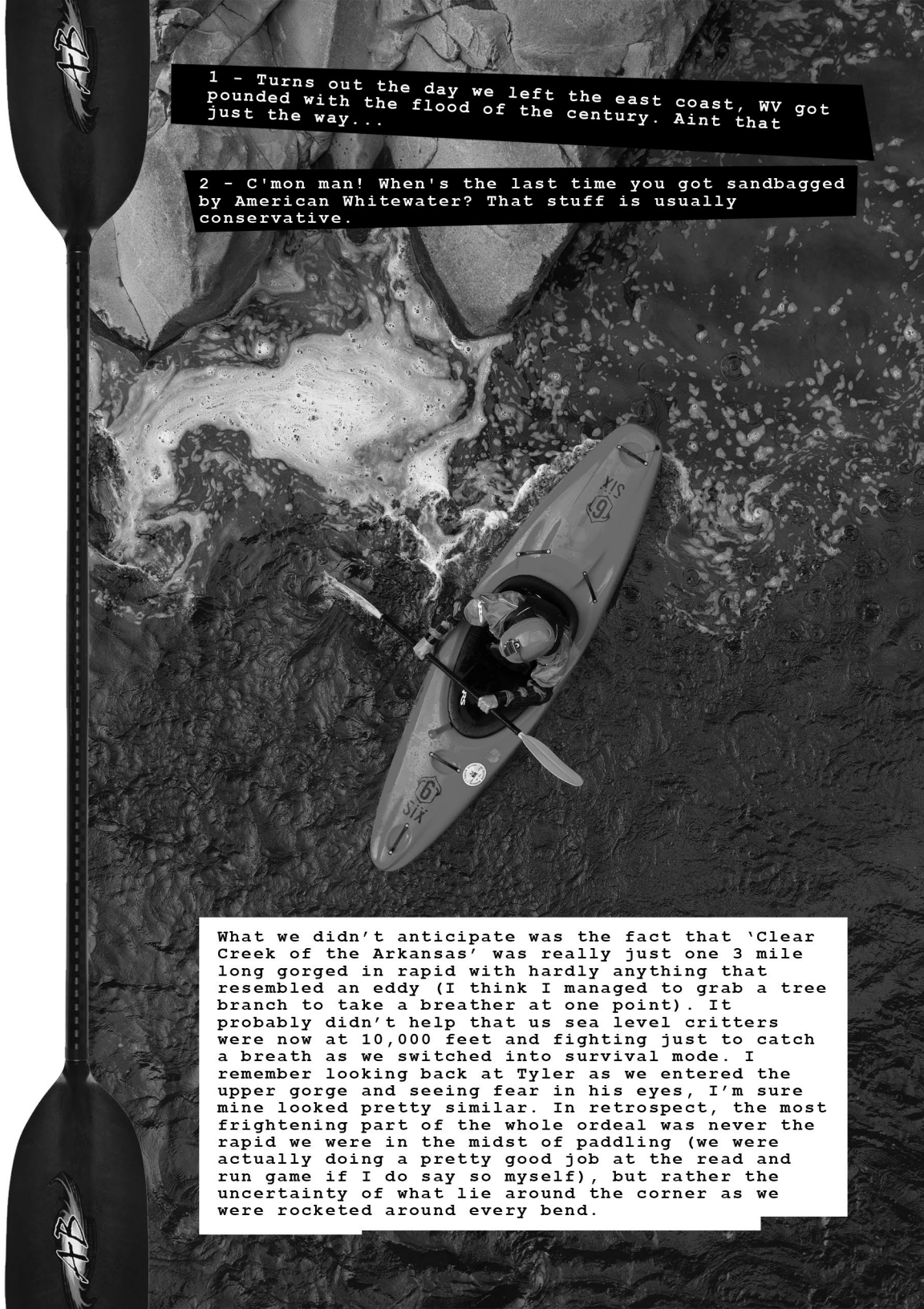
The day before hand, I had taken a pretty nasty spill on my mountain bike and neglected to properly clean and disinfect the wounds that now covered the entire left side of my body. Stoke was high as I blasted blind down a sweet cut of dusty downhill track and I hopped right back in the saddle after I took a high speed dirt-nap when my front tire washed out on a loose and off camber landing. I don't think I realized just how bad the crash was until later that night when the adrenaline wore off and I had to peel off the clothes that were now stuck to my skinned shoulder, elbow, and thigh.

The fact that I probably had a fever dawned on me as I was being recirculated by the strong horseshoe shaped hydraulic at the bottom of Husum Falls. My new injuries must have offered the perfect distraction to my immune system and allowed sickness to set in.

Between gasps of air, I began to appreciate just how beat down I was after a month of non-stop paddling. On the first day of our trip, we b-lined to Colorado. Rainy conditions¹ in West Virginia took climbing at Seneca Rocks off of our tick list and we pulled a 30 hour shift straight to Breckenridge where a kind stranger invited us to crash in his yard. The next day we ran something called 'Clear Creek of the Arkansas' because the description on American Whitewater read something like "fun, short, low consequence class V" and we thought that sounded really pleasant².

1 - Turns out the day we left the east coast, WV got pounded with the flood of the century. Aint that just the way...

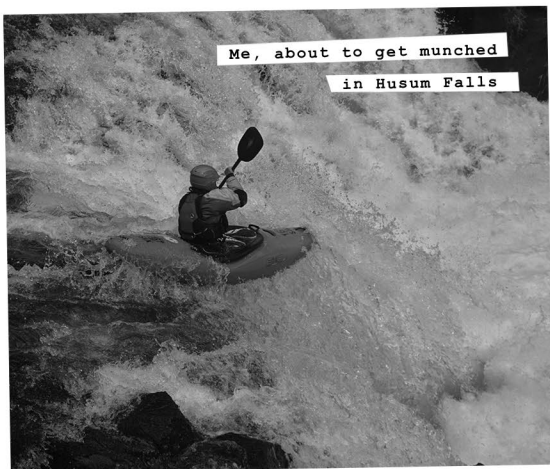
2 - C'mon man! When's the last time you got sandbagged by American Whitewater? That stuff is usually conservative.



What we didn't anticipate was the fact that 'Clear Creek of the Arkansas' was really just one 3 mile long gorged in rapid with hardly anything that resembled an eddy (I think I managed to grab a tree branch to take a breather at one point). It probably didn't help that us sea level critters were now at 10,000 feet and fighting just to catch a breath as we switched into survival mode. I remember looking back at Tyler as we entered the upper gorge and seeing fear in his eyes, I'm sure mine looked pretty similar. In retrospect, the most frightening part of the whole ordeal was never the rapid we were in the midst of paddling (we were actually doing a pretty good job at the read and run game if I do say so myself), but rather the uncertainty of what lie around the corner as we were rocketed around every bend.

When we finally emerged from the gauntlet to the comfort of flat water and gathered enough air in our lungs to speak, we both agreed that that was the scariest thing we'd ever done in a kayak. The next day we ran Daisy Creek in Crested Butte blind and revised that statement.

Getting surfed in a munchy hole feels a lot like whitewater purgatory. You get a lot of time to think about what you've done and if you're good you'll get let out, but sometimes, when you've done something really bad, you've got to sink to the bottom of the river before its ready to give you up. After reluctantly sidesurfing the hole in Husum Falls and reconciling the fact that, at this rate, I'd be in there forever, I pulled the freedom cord and ejected. I was ready to repent.



Me, about to get munched

in Husum Falls

My ears popped. I was going deep. Before dropping in, we had surveyed the surface of the river beneath Husum Falls and I remembered remarking on how far out in the maelstrom the undertow was making its way to the surface. The river's pull was violent and disorienting but it felt as though I was making my way out of the storm. All I could do was hold my breath and wait.

It really seemed as if everyday of the trip redefined my perspective on hard paddling. Just when I thought I'd run something at the bleeding edge of my level, we'd fire up something harder the next day. All of that considered, aside from a full-on me vs. rock beatdown on Colorado Classic "Oh! Be Joyful," my lines were actually looking pretty good and we were bagging come seriously cool runs. On our personal first descent of the Payette's stout North Fork, I felt stronger and more dialed than I ever had in a boat, but even our proudest sends left me feeling like I was getting away with something. As I scraped across the bottom of the White Salmon, balled up and patiently waiting to be returned to the surface, I began to get nervous. I wasn't scared about drowning in Husum. I was still deep, but the river seemed to be pushing me downstream where it was only a matter of time until I'd be released from the its grip. I was scared that someday I'd underestimate simple boof like Husum or let my overconfidence get me into a situation that I wasn't ready for. I was scared that someday my luck would simply run out.

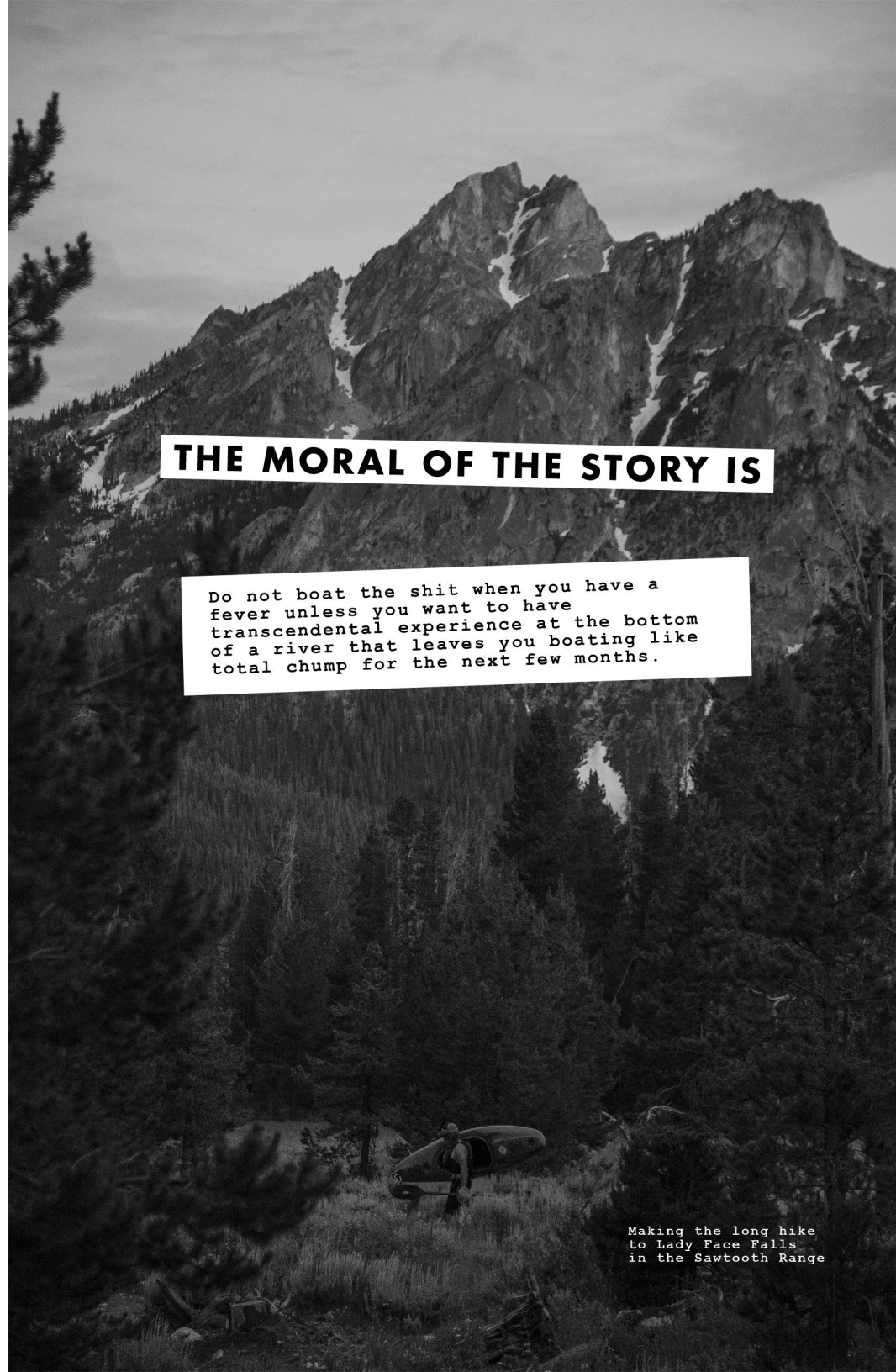
I'm sure the Korean family watching the whole ordeal from the Rt. 141 bridge let out a big sigh of relief when the kayaker they thought was drowning emerged alive downstream of his empty still-recirculating kayak. But while the ordeal lasted far less than a minute for them, it felt like a lifetime for me.

The next day, Tyler and I rallied with our crew to the put in of the Green Truss to face the classic rapids that we came for. I put on to the river despite a fever that was full blown at this point and subsequently ran most all the intro rapids upside down. For the first time in my life, I called it quits on the river. Today was not my day. Above the first substantial waterfall, Big Brother, I walked my boat out of the gorge and hitchhiked back to the van.

Husum wasn't my first swim, nor was it my worst swim, but it was my most humbling swim. Up until that point, I'd made up for what I lacked in refined technical skill with bounds of enthusiasm and a good helping of luck and balls. But as I floated through my tenure in whitewater purgatory, I realized that many of my sends over the years felt more like dice rolls than expertly executed maneuvers. It was time for a change.

THE MORAL OF THE STORY IS

Do not boat the shit when you have a fever unless you want to have transcendental experience at the bottom of a river that leaves you boating like total chump for the next few months.



Making the long hike to Lady Face Falls in the Sawtooth Range

Diet is a sensitive topic for a lot of folks and by no means are the following suggestions appropriate for life. **Reader be warned.**

NOTES ON SNACKING

- Nothing beats a free meal and poaching a hotel breakfast feels squarely on the justifiable end of the moral spectrum. Note that Homewood Suites, Residence Inn and Stay Bridge Suites offer complimentary dinners too (usually Mon-Thurs).

- Costco's \$1.50 hot and fountain drink combo is the best deal in food. You don't even need a Costco membership to eat there. Just walk confidently through the exit.

- 7-Eleven's free Chili and Cheese machines are a great way to spruce up a bag of Doritos. Add hot dog condiments and you've got yourself a 'Walking Taco.'

- If you're in a part of the country that features a Vietnamese District, find a deli and get a Bahn Mi sandwich. If you've spent more than \$3.50, you've overpaid.

- When in Chicago, find Ghareeb Nawaz. This place is a hell hole, but the Chicken Biryani is MASSIVE and delicious for only \$3.99. Seriously, it's like two portions at least. That's like... \$1.98/meal!

- Philly's real gem is the Cheesesteak Eggroll from any Chinese place with bullet proof glass.

One time, we boated with the most hated kayaker in the country and he made us an amazing salmon dinner at camp that night. He also whipped out his penis without warning 10 minutes into first meeting him.



- Tilamook County, Oregon is home to some of the nation's finest snacking opportunities. Swing through the Tilamook Cheese Factory and Tilamook Country Smoker to screw yourself up on \$1 2-foot jerky sticks and all the dairy you can dream of.

- Navajo Tacos when you're in Southern Utah.

- Idaho is home to 'fry sauce,' a delicious mix of mayo and ketchup. You know you're in a really good spot if they mix in some relish and bbq sauce too.

- Look out for Taco Tuesdays in Coastal California. Tacos should always cost a dollar.

- On that topic, it's hard to argue with dollar pizza in New York City.

- When in the Pacific Northwest and shopping for trail food, look no further than the **Dave's Killer Bread Sin Dawg**.

- Ramen blocks can be eaten dry. Careful not to inhale the powder though as it'll guarantee a coughing fit. Hard to beat 400 calories for 25 cents.

- The best breakfast buffet in the country is at The Spotted Dog right outside Zion National Park. The place looks fancy but the price is right.

- Instant oatmeal packets are wax lined on the inside so you can pour water straight into them and eat from the bag. It doesn't even have to be hot water!

- Peanut butter is pretty much super food. No refrigeration and a great source of protein.

- WinCo is by far the best supermarket chain in the country. Done.



One time, a lady in Las Vegas actively ingored us while handing out samples of hand cream to everyone else walking past. So Kyle went up to her, asked for a packet of lotion, and ate it like a food sample to her absolute horror.



I'm sad to report that I can no longer eat Pringles without feeling like a piece of garbage. RIP my favorite snack

Photo by John Webster



GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK

We ended up turning back just shy of the summit on the Grand Teton due to a mixture of dropped gear, 60mph wind gusts, inexperience, bad-beta, and, ultimately, soft nerves. After a 2am alpine start, we'd made it high up on the Owen Spalding route past the short section of class V climbing only to have furious winds scare us off the icy summit slabs. Tyler and I had never been in an environment like that before, and we were definitely feeling in over our heads. Every time we'd lift our bodies from the slabs, the winds promised to blow us like kites from the mountain.

Tyler ultimately made the call to turn back. I think he thought that putting his foot down and not giving me the choice of continuing would allow me to absolve myself of the blame, but I can't shake the feeling that we could have made the summit; that I gave in to his demand because it was convenient and I was scared; that I can could have demonstrated the confidence needed to get us both to the top.



BANKS, IDAHO

We stumbled into Banks per the recommendation of some friends we made back in Colorado who spoke romantically of a small boater town in the foothills of the Rockies. We didn't quite realize until we got there however that "town" was a bit of a generous description, and that Banks was little more than a general store at the intersection of Rt. 55 and 17. In fact, I just looked it up, and wikipedia calls it "an unincorporated census-designated place."

Turns out that Banks, Idaho (or 'The Center of the Universe' as the locals call it) is more of a fairytale than a town. Located at the confluence of the Payette River's North and South Forks, Banks' population is comprised of **'homeless, hungry, and happy'** tent dwellers that spend their days guiding rafts down the rapids of the Payettes and their evenings soaking in hot springs under Idaho's lightpollution-less skies. A lack of cell service means that all arrangements in Banks are carried out by word, an unfathomably prehistoric system that miraculously seems to work despite the fact that 'time' is regarded as an inconsequential construct by the 'Lost Boys' of 'Whitewater Neverland.' **THE DREAM IS ALIVE IN BANKS, IDAHO.**



CROUCH, IDAHO

On the Fourth of July, it all goes down a bit like "The Purge." Main Street is closed down and fenced off by the local Sheriff's Department where, just for the night, there are quite literally no rules. Fueled by a collective drunken spirit, fireworks are discharged at will with blatant disregard for human safety. Those with something to prove gallantly dodge explosives in the time honored tradition of "running the gauntlet" whilst hoisting high the stars and stripes. Its the kind of place that would constitute the wet dream of a Manhattanite legal team with liability suits as far as the eye can see. In Idaho however, no one even batted an eye when a mortar misfired in a teenager's hand inches in front of me and left it a bloody mess of gashed meat.

When our new friends in Banks unanimously insisted that I spend the extra few days in town to catch the Fourth of July celebrations, I'm glad I listened because **you don't know a god damned thing about freedom unless you've been in Crouch, Idaho on the Fourth of July.**

a van is a means to an end
not an end itself

AVOIDING VANSTRIFE AND THE KEYS TO RUBBER TRAMPING

Things I've learned from a year of living in a car

CLEANLINESS IS PARAMOUNT WHEN GODLINESS ISN'T

Just because you're living out of a car doesn't mean you have to smell and look like you're live out of a car. Here are some quick tips for keeping you and your vehicle fresh on the road.

-Baby Wipes are your best friend. A quick "Dirtbag Shower" every night will help keep the funk under control. My vote goes toward unscented products.

-Keep the car smelling good. Neutralize odors before they have a chance to set in. Consider an exterior storage solution to keep stinky sneakers and wet swimsuits outside of your living space when you don't have enough time to dry/air them out.

-Go swimming!¹ There's almost nothing better than plopping into a crisp watering hole during the summer months, and hotel pools are prime for poaching in the winter.

-The first thing you should think about in any living space is waste disposal. Make sure you have an elegant solution for trash and a place to store dirty clothes between laundry cycles.

Kyle collects call girl "trading cards" in Vegas for his little brother to have something to read back home.

1 - Always try to rinse off in moving water after enjoying a hotspring and never miss an opportunity to skinny dip.

NOW THAT CLEANLINESS IS OUT OF THE WAY, HERE'S EVERYTHING ELSE

- Finding a spot to crash for the night is much easier than it seems. Don't psych yourself out and drive around for hours wasting gas to find 'the perfect spot.' That first little pull off you saw was probably fine.

- **Living in your car is about living out of your car.** One of the most exciting parts about living in a car is that it encourages you to always be out there doing something. Join a club, make new friends... you know, anything to be around bathrooms longer.

- Travel can get expensive, especially if you're driving an old clunker around. Always bring some friends aboard to share in the adventure as well as gas bill.

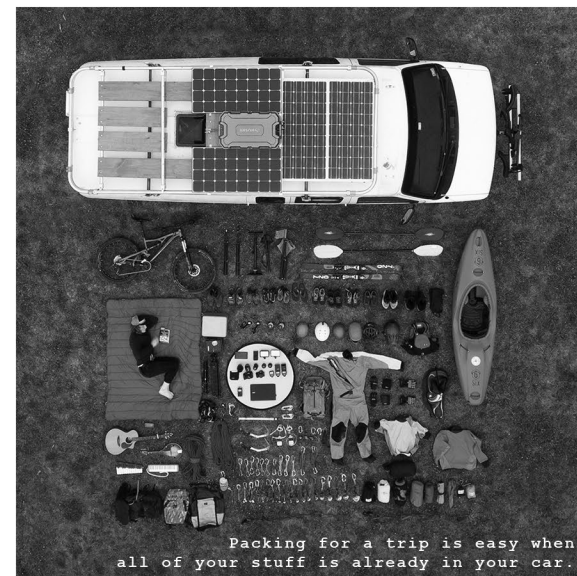
- Come Winter, heating solutions can be expensive and complicated while layers of blankets will go a long way in keeping you warm all night. Getting out of bed in the morning, now that's a different story...

- Take shifts and drive through the night, if you're traveling on a tight schedule and with a partner. You can sleep when you're dead.

- A gym membership will grant you access to a shower, bathroom and wifi. If you're not on the road, take advantage of your workplace/univeristy resources.

- Dating and living in a car can be... interesting. Definitely don't suprise your date by bringing them back to your place without explaining what 'your place' means; sprinkle in that information early on. If they're not down, you're wasting your time anyway.

- Sometimes you just gotta throw in the towel. Being sick in a car is terrible, especially if 'being sick' means having the shits. Stay with a friend or get a motel room.



Packing for a trip is easy when all of your stuff is already in your car.



Three pitches turned into five on Yosemite's sunnyside bench when I dragged my reluctant girlfriend at the time up a route that she wanted no part of. I promised, against her protests, that it would be an easy send and that we'd definitely be back on the ground before night fall;

famous last words. A jammed tricam and a late start time saw us topping out on the route just as dusk began to set in. The guide book vaguely mentioned something about a climbers trail found in the patch of trees some 200 feet above us and a decent time around 30 minutes which would bring us back to the ground a little bit past dark but still debatably within what I would consider the bounds of my promise. That is of course if nothing else slowed us down.

TEAM PLAYER

With visibility quickly disappearing, my girlfriend insisted that we pitch out the commonly soloed fourth class scramble up the granite slabs to the trees. 2 rope lengths later, it was dark and she was pissed. We made our way around the chossy tree line looking for something that resembled a "climbers trail." After perusing a few false leads that ever too invitingly beckoned us to follow them off the cliff face, we began to entertain the idea of bivying out and waiting for daylight to find the trail down. Well, I at least entertained that thought. Sleeping on the mountain didn't even register with my girlfriend. She was furious and insisted with a statement that floated ambiguously between hyperbole and truth, "I am getting down tonight, or I am dying up here." So we carried on, me zipping around the boulder field looking for the least precarious line for us to follow while she hobbled behind on her bad knee.

Around 10pm, the fact that we hadn't had anything to drink for the last few hours began to catch up to us. Although we both neglected to pack any water, she was at least smart enough to have packed headlamps for us both. Secretly, our mini-epic had me very excited! Our crappy little climb was turning into a really adventure! Unfortunately, I think I relished in that feeling alone. There's only so many times that 'just a few more minutes' and 'I think we're getting close' have any staying power. At 10:30, my girlfriend had had enough, and insisted that I call the park service.

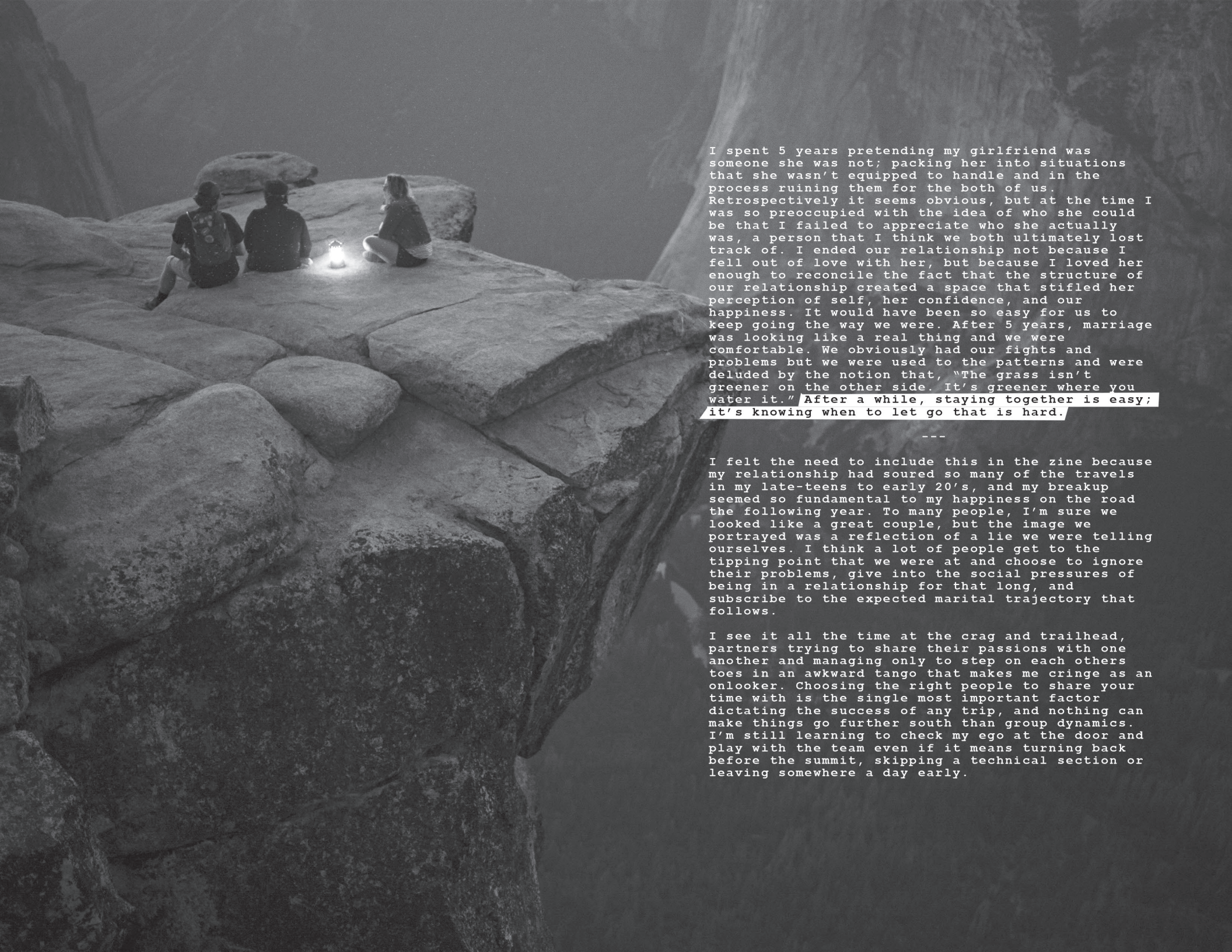
FUCK.

"The guide book is misleading"

"It happens all the time."

It was dark, we were dehydrated, her knees were giving out, and I was responsible. I pressured someone way out of their comfort zone because I wanted to believe that they were someone they were not, and that felt terrible. So I gave in. I swallowed my pride and put myself equally as far out of my comfort zone. I wasn't really sure what my girlfriend expected them to do, but I called the rangers.

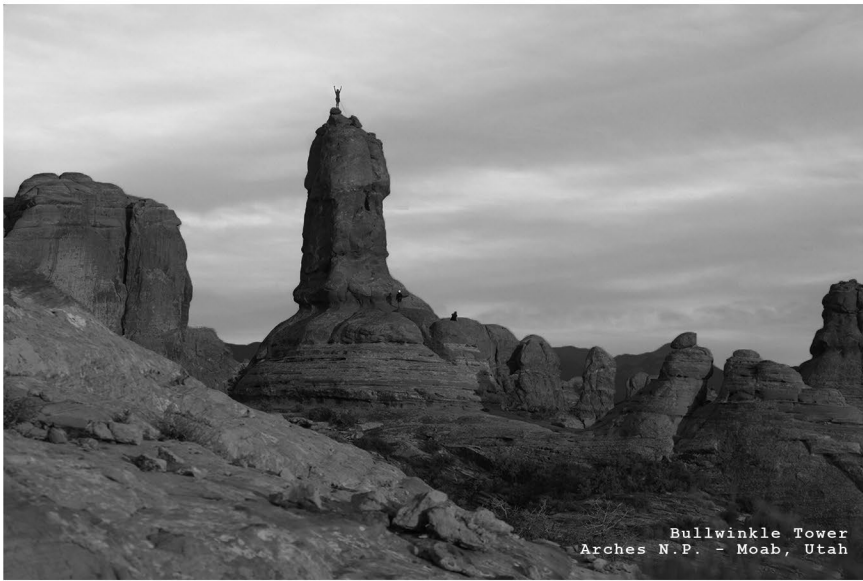
On the other end of the line, the ranger station was able to get a visual of our headlamps on the the wall and assured us that we merely needed to keep going in the direction we were heading and we'd eventually find the exit drainage. "The guidebook is a bit misleading," the ranger said. "It happens all the time."



I spent 5 years pretending my girlfriend was someone she was not; packing her into situations that she wasn't equipped to handle and in the process ruining them for the both of us. Retrospectively it seems obvious, but at the time I was so preoccupied with the idea of who she could be that I failed to appreciate who she actually was, a person that I think we both ultimately lost track of. I ended our relationship not because I fell out of love with her, but because I loved her enough to reconcile the fact that the structure of our relationship created a space that stifled her perception of self, her confidence, and our happiness. It would have been so easy for us to keep going the way we were. After 5 years, marriage was looking like a real thing and we were comfortable. We obviously had our fights and problems but we were used to the patterns and were deluded by the notion that, "The grass isn't greener on the other side. It's greener where you water it." After a while, staying together is easy; it's knowing when to let go that is hard.

I felt the need to include this in the zine because my relationship had soured so many of the travels in my late-teens to early 20's, and my breakup seemed so fundamental to my happiness on the road the following year. To many people, I'm sure we looked like a great couple, but the image we portrayed was a reflection of a lie we were telling ourselves. I think a lot of people get to the tipping point that we were at and choose to ignore their problems, give into the social pressures of being in a relationship for that long, and subscribe to the expected marital trajectory that follows.

I see it all the time at the crag and trailhead, partners trying to share their passions with one another and managing only to step on each others toes in an awkward tango that makes me cringe as an onlooker. Choosing the right people to share your time with is the single most important factor dictating the success of any trip, and nothing can make things go further south than group dynamics. I'm still learning to check my ego at the door and play with the team even if it means turning back before the summit, skipping a technical section or leaving somewhere a day early.



Bullwinkle Tower
Arches N.P. - Moab, Utah

MOAB, UTAH

I fell in love with the desert when my mom took me on a road trip through the Southwest in my early teens. I was a total brat the entire time and made my mom's life hell by insisting we listen to nothing but metal while driving. In my defense, I think the music served as a fitting back drop to the landscape. When we got to Moab, a town which neither of us could figure out how to pronounce, she signed me up for a guided mountain bike trip to get rid of me for a little bit, and I proceeded to ride (unbeknownst to me) some of the world's most legendary trails.



La Push
Washington



Black Peak
North Cascades N.P.

The years that followed saw my life become consumed by the bicycle. I rode every day throughout high school, raced on the weekends, and turned wrenches at the local shop after class. I'd often think about how wasted my experience in Moab was as I'd daydream of going back; this time equipped with the skills to do the place justice, with the knowledge and context to appreciate just how special the it really is.



"Nobody likes you when you're 23" is a phrase that reverberated straight from the annals of pop-punk and struck a serious chord with me in the summer of 2015. I had just ticked off another year on the calendar, and my stomach was caught in a perpetual ache as my body went through the endorphin withdrawal of a break up. [REDACTED]

I enjoyed only a few seconds of each day - the brief moment every morning between waking and confronting the new-to-me reality that everyone is fundamentally alone.

The next 2 months saw my friend group of 16 congeal in spectacular fashion; the incestuously unsustainable kind that is bound to explode when the train of relentless stick-and-poke tattoos, drugs, and punk-rock inevitably drives itself off the tracks. After 2 fun high-octane months of no-sleep, embarrassing romantic pursuit, and communal sickness, I finally broke out of the spiral. I pulled the trigger on the van.

I spent every single day of the next month working on it, determined to have the van finished before the cold of winter crept in. I woke every morning with purpose and direction. I knew exactly what I wanted to do, and I did it. The tangibility of the build process stood in stark contrast with the digital nature of the work that usually consumes my life. It was holistically fulfilling in a way that breathed new life into my practice. It felt right.

I moved in at the beginning of December, and spent the next year yo-yoing back and forth from New Jersey, where contract work kept gas in my tank and afforded me the freedom to travel whenever I wanted.

I'll be hardpressed to top a year like the last.

Thank you Princeton Tec, Casper Kayaks, Renogy Solar, Astral, Shred Ready, Aquabound, WoolX, Rumpl, Trek Light Gear, Chapul, Coalatree, Thermacell, Sawyer, Lifeproof, Green Guru, Barebones, Woodzee, and Hudecheck Industries for helping to keep the dream alive!

STAY RAD.



Apparently Tyler can backflip on command...