



The Great Adventure & The Power of Prayer

The Yakima Trial

Introduction

On April 30th, 2024, around 6:30 AM, I woke up sick and still awaiting my blood results, nervous about a reoccurrence of my cancer. Yet, I put this out of my mind and gathered all my belongings. I packed my dog carry pack full with my dog's GoPro camera helmet, my rosary, power cords, my external backup battery pack, a dog bowl, a fire kit, a knife kit, and wore on my person a big knife, my motorcycle belt, my water bottle, big boots, motorcycle armor, heavy-duty engineering overalls, a coat, and of course had Casper, my motorcycle, gloves, a helmet, two sun masks, my neck warmer, and my motorcycle helmet.

The Gas Station.



I said a quick prayer that I would find kindness and return safely. I wish I had specified that I return safely with all my possessions intact. With my motorcycle drained, I pushed it to the nearest gas station, which luckily was nearby, and began begging for gas money. To my delight, it only



took about 10 minutes to gain 23 dollars from two different people; enough money to make it to Yakima and back.

Yakima.



A lovely lady on the way to school with her daughter was mesmerized by Casper, as all people are, and I felt the grace of their kindness when the mother gifted me \$20 cash. Now begins what I thought was going to be the fun part of the trip but was sorely mistaken. Though I had traveled thousands of miles on my motorcycle, traveling once from Seattle to Phoenix, Arizona in only two days on a Honda Rebel 500 with relative ease... in comparison, the 1-hour trip to Yakima was a nightmare. I had not geared up enough and the early morning air combined with the 70mph wind left me chilled to the bone. Arriving in Yakima I felt as if I was freezing to death and had little strength. Carrying all my gear was a burden which dug into my shoulders on the ride. I found what looked like a grocery store, unpacked Casper at the farthest end of the parking lot, and squatted beneath a tree around 9 AM. To my dismay, I discovered that my father's sleeping bag I borrowed had a hole in it, burnt through from the tire or tailpipe, but it still was usable so I wrapped myself up tightly holding Casper close for warmth, begging to heat up quickly. Initially, the plan was to make it to Ellensburg... but this was no longer possible. I was literally freezing to death. Thanks to Casper, when the grocery store

workers came out two hours later to inform me the sprinklers would go off in 5 minutes, I was warm enough to get up and socialize. I suspect the workers' warning was a threat, assuming I was a vagrant which I



guess I really looked the part because right around that moment a lovely lady arrived in her van to offer me dog food. She was a kind-hearted Christian that apparently frequented the area to feed the homeless dogs and spotted Casper sleeping on my chest and detoured my way to say hello. After politely turning down her request and introducing her to the clearly well-fed Casper, a homeless lady came across the street to beg for food change. I had two dollars to give her, said a quick Hail Mary with her, and gathered my belongings to depart home in a rush for it looked like rain.



The Ride Home.

As if God truly wanted to test me, unforecasted rain began to fall, and I was too miserable and strained carrying Casper to process the kindness and good fortune I had experienced on my trial run. Yes, I too was disappointed that I didn't even make it to Ellensburg when I had traveled so far before on my bike effortlessly, yet my troubles were not over. Though I had thought I had re-arranged the sleeping bag in a much more secure and safe position, it looked like it was slipping in my mirror. So I pulled over, and discovered it had slid back onto my wheel and this time there was no saving it. The bag was burnt through entirely. No salvaging it. And I threw it away at some truck store 30 minutes away from home knowing my father would be upset. It was his favorite sleeping bag.



Home

When I pulled up to the garage, my father was packing his car for a trip and I told him immediately what had happened to his sleeping bag. He didn't say much but made it clear that I might as well have destroyed it on purpose in his eyes. I was disappointed in myself and felt sorry for the bag's destruction; my dad had had the bag since he was in college and used it frequently on hunting outings, which he was preparing for shortly - I knew he would take it personally; mom had given it to him. On the other hand, it was hard to convey the necessary sympathy, because I was under extreme physical distress. My whole body ached from carrying 65 lbs of gear in 70mph wind for 2 hours, I was wet, freezing, and on top of that I had a cold. I needed a hot shower and sleep immediately. I pushed my motorcycle into the garage, dropped my gear without a thought, and did just that. After getting warm and getting some rest, my father eventually came in to take the large knife I had borrowed and replace it with a much smaller one he cared less about. I was no longer worthy of the protection it would offer as a deterrent on my future journeys. He was pretty upset. And not only that, as I write this I realize that I cannot find my favorite rosary that I bought from the Vatican...

What I learned.

At first, I thought this trip would be impossible for me after that trial run. How could I make it up to Hyder Alaska, let alone around the 50 United States if I could barely make it an hour away from home to Yakima? But then I remembered how Jesus carried his cross with his broken body to the place he would die. This was a spiritual journey after all. And I had learned so much praying for good fortune for myself and the homeless and experienced so much kindness on my brutal journey. If Jesus could carry his cross after getting whipped to a near-death state, I can -- in my post-cancer form -- carry my dog 18,000 miles across the United States. But next time I will travel lighter, with warmer equipment, and livestream the important action to conserve energy and document key points.



The good news is I have my blood results! I'm cancer free still.

And I remain faithful that my rosary will show up.