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Long Way Back



Synopsis

On February 16 2016, motorcycle adventurer Charley Boorman suffered a major road traffic accident in Portugal. Having spent the better part of his life on some form of motorbike, his world came crashing down after he was knocked off a Triumph Tiger Explorer, smashing his right ankle and causing severe damage to his left fibia and tibia. It was unclear if he would ever walk properly again, let alone ride a motorbike. Moving between past and present, Long Way Back recounts Charley's journey back of recovery, the ambulance ride, the numerous operations in a Portuguese hospital, the medivac aircraft flight back to London. In alternating chapters, as his inability to walk for several months provokes introspection, Boorman recounts his childhood, where his passion for motorbikes began, and the formative influences in his life - from his father, a touring film director, to his long-time friend Ewan McGregor, and Sean Connery's son Jason, who first introduced him to bikes. As Charley struggles to cope with this potentially life-changing situation, it is these touchstones who will give him strength on the long way back to health.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Loved this book. Charley had a tough and scary year coming back from his accident. He tells his story in great style. Cringed, laughed, enjoyed the read. Olly, his wife, is an amazing woman.

I laughed and giggled and felt so bad for Charley to be in such a way. His wife Olly amazing lady. Great read

If you're a Charley Boorman fan you will find this book very interesting and informative, from his childhood to his recovery after his worst crash

Loved this book. It's so personal. Charley has really opened up to the reader and gives a great description of his ordeal, and eventual return to the motorcycle seat. I recommend it.

Great comeback story. Something every rider dreads.

Fellow reader, If you:
- Wish to learn about overcoming a significant setback to continue a great passion
- Care about a man living a life less ordinary
- Enjoy hearing about Charley's adventures, solo and with various pals, literally one end of the world to another
- Have ever so much as hoisted a leg over a big BMW, KTM, or other Adventure-type bike with purpose
- then this book is for you!!
I rode with Charley and his friend and manager, Billy Ward, for three weeks in Africa late 2015. Together with about ten other "clients," we trekked largely off-road (but some on-) via BMW GS for 2,700 miles, Cape Town to Victoria Falls, thus in part simulating some of his and Ewan's route in "Long Way Down." I called Charley and Billy "the Cowboys," keeping us clients from too much trouble via policing us loosely from time to time throughout the trek. Great guys, who always had an important tip or two for the next day or even stretch of road just ahead. There are very few people with a discernible force of will; Charley is one-such. I saw him do nothing half-measure, from setting an aggressive pace for those in the group who wanted it, yet not pressuring others to "keep up," to the courtesy he extended each person wanting photos, autographs, etc. en route. SO: I read Long Way Back with a certain creeping horror, after the graphic description of his deadly serious injuries in the first few chapters. He and I are about the same age, and reading further I realized dumb luck plays a big part in our success or grave misfortune on motorcycles. Charley's luck ran out one winter day in Portugal. How he reflected on this major mishap, and so much more, is the true thrust of this stirring autobiography. I spent just enough time around Charley to start to know him, just a

little. Reading his reflections in the book, I see how with sufficient time in months of casts, pain, uncertainty, and humiliating circumstances, how self-doubt and melancholy must start to creep in. But guess what: the man's spirit won out, end of the day. That, folks is a portrait in courage. Charley's interludes discussing his family, upbringing in Ireland, struggles in school and acting, hopes and dreams, lucky and unlucky breaks were always interesting and sometimes funny, making this book a real page-turner. I empathize very much with the fear he described at Dakar and indeed in any road race, learning to cope with that myself in amateur road racing years ago. And our ambulance was mere feet away, not tens or hundreds of miles. But the bulk of the book is of course about Charley's recovery, the struggles and self-reflection. Anyone who has faced great life-trauma can empathize, doubly so if you are a fellow rider and wonder, "would I have the same fierce determination Charley does, in similar circumstances?" I smiled widely at his successes, chuckled at his goofs, and frowned at his setbacks. The writing and editing are excellent. Charlie was upfront about his dyslexia with me as well, a near stranger, during one evening during our brief group trip together in 2015. I had suggested, ironically, he consider an autobiography given all his strange and wonderful adventures! Fortunately, seems he found a way to capture his thoughts into such a wonderful narrative. Well done, Boorman! Keep up the good fight and keep that recovery rolling, and I will keep needling your friend Billy Ward (through FB and "across the pond" in America) about your next big ride with clients. I'm in. We are all in: fellow riders standing with you in your recovery and zeal to do this thing that only you do so well. Keep living that life less ordinary!

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