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Travel Writing
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Before the Road

Whenever I find myself hitting the snooze button of my life for the fourth time in a row; whenever my dreams of a future paradise are burning in the flames of my mind's doubt; yes, whenever I find my soul idling, with the air conditioning on and the fuel nearly empty—then, I pull my suitcase of memories out from underneath my bed and unpack the hopes and dreams that need a washing. In times of inspirational drought, it often seems that the best place to look forward is to look back into the rearview and then decide which hidden avenues have yet to be explored. And trust me, even Marco Polo did not see the whole world, despite what some people might say. A great explorer is one who never loses his lust for adventure—a veritable Don Juan whose gaze is fixed on exotic locales and their cultures, not just their women.

And so it was that I, like many others, roused myself from a gripping slumber and pondered the fate of the wind playing gently on the yellowing aspen leaves outside my window. This, as I step out into the brisk morning, is beautiful. Beautiful, but not inspiring. Comfortable, but not comforting. Not meaningless, but, right now, not meaningful. I must take to the road as Melville takes to the sea—as a sailor and not a passenger. I must immerse myself in the loveliness and horror, aware that life is beautiful in all of its inherent contradictions. Alas, it is both my curse and my blessing to be burdened with such an insatiable appetite towards new places and new people.

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