

IT'S THE TRUMPOCALYPSE!

GET OUT WHILE YOU CAN

YOUR GUIDE TO ESCAPING INTO THE WORLD



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PART I: HOW TO BE A BACKPACKER

HIT THE ROAD JACK

So the USA has elected a monster. A vindictive bully, a thin-skinned narcissist, a stinkingly corrupt demagogue. He has nothing but contempt for you and your family and will be an unmitigated disaster not just for America, but for the entire world.

He has total control of the biggest nuclear arsenal and surveillance apparatus the world has ever seen. No oversight, no committee briefings, no powwow with the generals required. He can drop nuclear bombs anywhere at any time. There is, legally speaking, **ABSOLUTELY NOBODY TO STOP HIM**. Oh, and he also doesn't believe in climate change.

IN SHORT: WE'RE FUCKED. Humans, animals, trees, *everything*.

My publisher tells me not to alienate people who voted for Trump, but they're not the ones who this book is for. But if you did vote for Trump, well, your children may one day forgive you for what you're done. But I won't. You've helped destroy the world as we know it. You absolute dicks.

Right, that eliminated the people who would never go backpacking anyway.

So then, what can you do about this unbelievably fucked-up situation? Well you can fight. Protest, strike, disrupt, get active in grassroots organizations etc. But the sad reality is that Trump has control over Congress and the Supreme Court. Politically, you're not going to get very far, at least not for another couple of years. You'll also be putting yourself in the firing line against one of the most powerful lunatic in

human history. The guy with the world's biggest military and the most militarized police force at his disposal.

My advice? *Get the hell out of there.* At least for two years. Maybe (if it comes to it) eight. At least you'll get to spend a sizeable portion of the last decade of humanity having fun.

There's nothing but fear and loathing back home. You want to learn how to be capable and resourceful when helping to clear up the aftermath of the Trumpocalypse? Then hit the road and don't look back until that Tiny-Handed Titian Hitler is out of office.

But where will I go? What will I do?

All right Scarlett O'Hara, keep your drawers on. That's why I'm here.

This guide will give you everything you really need to know about spending the next few years on the road. I know this stuff because I've done it. I'm speaking from vast experience. Experience still matters to some of us, right?

THE GOLDEN TICKET

If you were born in the US you can get yourself a Golden Ticket to Willy Wonka's goddamn Chocolate Factory: An America Passport. You have an **access all areas** pass to *almost every nation* on Earth. The vast, vast majority of the people on the planet do not have anything like that.

Most people will never leave the country in which they were born. When they say they can't see the world for themselves they truly *can't see the world for themselves*. If they do venture elsewhere, it will most likely be because of war or famine. It will be because they will literally die if they stay where they are. Their movements are restricted. The countries they travel to do not want them there. They face hatred and persecution at every turn.

For you it's the opposite. You'll be welcomed everywhere you go (so long as you don't act like a dick). You're free to visit places, do what you want (within reason), leave when you want and even bitch about the place on your blog (but be sure to do this *after* you leave, not before).

This is your birthright!

WHAT'S HOLDING YOU BACK?

I've found that it generally boils down to three main concerns.

1. "The World Seems Super Dangerous"
2. "I Don't Have The Money"
3. "I Don't Know Anybody Who Wants To Go"

Allow me to allay those fears. Are you sitting comfortably?

Then I'll begin.

1. “The World Seems Super Dangerous”

We’ve all been raised on a ludicrously unhealthy diet of sensationalist TV news and Hollywood movies. You can be forgiven for thinking the world is this big old horrible place where only bad things happen.

But that’s the thing: the news only reports – and Hollywood only tells stories about – the bad stuff.

“NOTHING PARTICULARLY AWFUL HAPPENED IN BURKINA FASO TODAY!” is not a breaking news story you’ll ever see splashed all over CNN. You *only* hear about when something went horribly wrong. “Hey shall we make a movie about Rwanda’s rebuilding efforts over the last 20 years?” is not something that would ever be said by a Hollywood exec, at least not with a straight face. Far better to make another movie about that one time they all went nuts and killed each other with machetes.

It’s okay, I get it, everyday life is kinda boring. But that’s how 99.9999% of humans spend their days – at peace. Not fucking everybody’s shit up. The media, intentionally or not, distorts your perspective of the world and makes you believe that you’re much safer staying at home, doing a job you hate and buying crap you don’t need.

Here’s where I slap you out of your reverie with some cold hard facts.

Let me tell you about Haiti.

Haiti is a long sad story, from its founding as a slave colony to its war of independence with France, through dictatorship after dictatorship, tyranny after tyranny. Haiti ranks exceptionally low on the Human Development Index and is officially the poorest country in entire Western Hemisphere. Haiti has a GDP per capita seven times less than

neighboring Dominican Republic¹. A GDP per capital FIFTY TIMES less than the British Virgin Islands². It also suffers from a severe deforestation problem, overpopulation and a lack of basic sanitation.

Add the devastating earthquake that hit in January 2010 and Hurricane Matthew ripping through in October 2016 and you have what those of us who take an interest in geo-politics call a “total and utter clusterfuck”.

Okay now listen up: **Haiti has a lower murder rate than Louisiana³**.

Oh now you’re getting all defensive aren’t you? You don’t come from Louisiana, that’s not fair! Well suck it up Uncle Sam. I’m just getting started. Are you aware of the murder rate in Washington DC?! It’s TWICE that of Louisiana!!⁴ The unmade sequel to *Mr Smith Goes To Washington* should have been called *Mr Smith Comes Home in a Body Bag*.

Now let me tell you about Yemen.

Yemen is a long sad story. It was split in two for a while and the two sides never really got along. After decades of war and instability it became one country in 1990. It spent 20 years trucking along as developing countries do, but still languishing near the bottom for things like transparency, democracy, education... you know, all that stuff we take for granted. For many years it has been the poorest country in the Middle East, with a GDP per capita⁵ over 60 times less than nearby Qatar⁶.

¹ Haiti: 819.90 USD (2013), Dom Rep: 5,879.00 USD (2013)

² 42,300 USD (2010 est.)

³ Haiti: 10.2 per 100,000 (2012) Louisiana: 10.3 per 100,000 (2014)

⁴ 21.8 per 100,000 (2010)

⁵ 1,473.10 USD (2013)

⁶ 93,714.06 USD (2013)

In the last few years it's been locked in civil war, and has had the shit bombed out of it by Saudi Arabia, occasionally assisted by the US (the Yemeni people send their thanks!).

And you know what? **Yemen has a lower murder rate than the USA⁷.**

Yes, statistically speaking, your child is more likely to be killed by a nutter with a gun in your country they would be in Yemen.

And... speaking of guns...!

Why is America such a dangerous place?

I have my suspicions. Consider this: according to the CDC, **33,636** people were killed in the US with a firearm in 2013. In the UK that number was **144**. That's homicides, suicides and accidents. Here's the thing: if you subtract the number of gun-related killings from the total number of murders, the US magically lowers its murder rate... to around that of Belgium. *Belgium!*

So quit thinking that the world is a dangerous place. **You live in a dangerous place.** More dangerous than Haiti. More dangerous than Yemen. And if you're black, Asian, Latino, LGBTQ or just happen to be born with a vagina, *it's about to get a whole lot more dangerous.*

Also, it doesn't matter where you're from, there's a horrible fact that none of us like to consider: you are much more likely to be beaten, sexually assaulted or murdered by somebody that knows you. Paradoxically, you're better off surrounding yourself with strangers.

Between January 2009 and January 2013, I travelled to every country in the world without flying. I did it alone, on a shoestring budget and without professional support. I travelled through Iraq, Afghanistan,

⁷ Yemen: 4.8 per 100,000 (2010) USA: 5.0 per 100,000 (2014)

Democratic Republic of Congo, Syria, Sierra Leone, Papua New Guinea... all the places your mother warned you about. I got drunk (soooo drunk!), I turned up places in the dark, I threw myself upon the kindness of strangers. 100,000 miles through 201 nations over 1,500 days.

I wasn't mugged.

I didn't get beaten up.

I wasn't involved in a traffic accident.

I didn't even get ill.

Now either I'm the goddamn Ginger Luck Bunny and I shit gold and fart rainbows, or maybe, just maybe, *the rest of the world is not as dangerous as you've been lead to believe.*

2. "I Don't Have The Money"

While on my journey to every country in the world my travel budget was around £150 (\$200) a week. I spent around \$10,000 per year — \$40,000 overall.

And that included going to ludicrously expensive places like Japan, Norway and Angola. It included places which cost a fortune to get a visa for such as Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and Russia. It included places I had never heard of such as St. Kitts & Nevis, São Tomé and Comoros. Look at this way: *I went there so you never have to.*

The thing is that you can easily live in South East Asia for \$5,000 a year. You can live in India for even less. A beer in Vietnam will set you back 50 cents, if that. Three dollars will get you a night in a hostel in Sri Lanka. You can eat like a king in Egypt and get change from a ten-dollar bill.

CouchSurfing.org will get you free accommodation. Thumb a ride if you need to be somewhere. Street food is cheap and plentiful. Supermarkets all over the world have bargain bins.

But what if you don't have a few thousand dollars to get started?

Whisper it softly: *it doesn't matter.*

You can work as you go. You speak English. *It's the only qualification you really need.*

This is the secret of backpacking. This is why backpacking is so different from "going on vacation." This is *why* backpackers can afford to disappear for months or years at a time.

You can either work online (everywhere has Internet access these days), but if not there are always bars that need staff, fruit to be picked, English to be taught. Can't find work? Move on, ask around, don't be a dick, you'll get something.

Are you in debt? Fuck it. Declare yourself bankrupt. It worked for the President of the United States (on several occasions). Understand this: the government can take everything from you if they so wish. Your house, your car, your 58" flat-screen TV. At any moment they could all be gone. But there's one thing the government, no matter how evil, how corrupt, how morally bankrupt, can never take: your stories.

Go make some.

3. "I Don't Know Anybody Who Wants To Go"

This is something I hear a lot from friends all over the world, but I hear it most from Americans. Look, I get it, American's don't backpack. When I travel, the vast majority of Americans I meet are Peace Corps, military, coast guard or contractors. For every one American backpacker I'll meet

about 17 New Zealanders, which is weird as the population of the USA is 70 times that of New Zealand.

The concept of a “gap year” is still a foreign concept in America, and the backpacking scene has never really taken off.

There are some good reasons for this: America is a massive country. It has mountains, beaches, volcanoes, jungles, deserts, national parks and some gorgeous architecture. There’s plenty to see and do without needing a passport.

There are also bad reasons for this: the number one being the culture of debt. Coming out of university with a mountain of \$100,000 to pay off is no joking matter. But ask yourself: how much of that are you actually going to pay off in the next four years? Will it be worth the heartache and stress of living in a country in which *there are actual Nazis* in the White House?

So go. Go on your own if you have to. When you travel the world you’re never alone for long. I solo traveled for pretty much all of my big trips. I would argue it’s better. You’re free to go where you want, when you want, whenever you want. You’re free to fall in love and run off with a girl or a boy without feeling like you’ve abandoned your mates. When you fuck up (and believe me, you’ll fuck up at some point), you won’t have the added stress of somebody else pointing out that you fucked up. You don’t have to compromise, you don’t have to play nursemaid to anyone, you don’t have to do things that you’re really not that interested in. It’s great!

Once upon a time, many moons ago I had just arrived in Christchurch, New Zealand. I had just left my girlfriend behind in Australia after the best seven weeks of my life. I was properly down in the dumps. But within 30 minutes of arriving at the backpacker’s hostel, I had been invited out with a gang of Irish lads to watch the football at an Irish pub

– Ireland vs. Italy in the World Cup finals. Now, Italy have won the World Cup four times, Ireland were lucky to qualify. In the event they drew. It was like Rocky holding his own against Apollo Creed. The place erupted. I had gone from despair to dancing on the bar in the space of two hours. That's backpacking.

Once you're on the road, if you want to do something or you want to go somewhere and you don't want to be alone, talk to people at the hostel, somebody will want to come with you.

Is it more difficult to travel solo if you're female? I think not. I know tons of kick-ass girls who do it (and they do it better than me), but you **do** need to have your wits about you more – I cover this in more detail in Chapter 4.

Okay, your mom won't like it. *But you know what, mom? I didn't like the fact you voted for Trump and now NASA has been gagged, granddad lost his health cover and the KKK are partying in the streets, so I'm leaving the goddamn country and anything that happens to me is all your fault.*

Maybe don't say that. But you can totally think it.

Finally, let me just say: traveling will make you a better person. I'm not talking about "finding yourself", I'm talking about opening your eyes to the world and the limitless possibilities it has to offer – other ways of doing things, other ways of living. It will make you more tolerant, more accepting and more forgiving. It will give you an education that is second-to-none: geography, history, politics, languages, anthropology. It'll sharpen your mind and quicken your blood. It will help you make sense of the complexities of the modern world, why it is the way it is and what you can do when you return home to make it better.

The world is out there, it's not a scary place and you have an open invitation. With Trump winning the presidency you've finally got the kick up the ass you needed to pack your stuff and hit the goddamn road.

YOUR SEVEN STEPS TO FREEDOM

There are three things you need to go backpacking.

- A backpack
- A passport
- A credit card

Everything else is optional.

Got them? Great. Here are your seven steps to freedom:

1. Read This Book.

It's got all the basic information you to get started. Anything else you can find out on Google, in a copy of *Lonely Planet* or by chatting to your fellow backpackers along the way.

2. Book Your Flight

Once you've booked your first flight, you'll have a deadline, a date, a moment to count down to. It'll sharpen your focus and help you get shit done. There's advice on the best way to grab a bargain in Chapter 3. Just put your first flight on a credit card.

3. Get Your Finances In Order

If you've got a decent credit rating, get as many credit cards as you can before you go. There's more advice on this in Chapter 4. If you're got savings, great. If not don't worry, you can work as you travel.

4. Sell All Your Shit

It's always good to have a bit of money to get started, so rather than lumber your parents or friends with your crap, just sell the damn stuff. The speed at which technology depreciates these days is rather quite bananas. Just get rid. If it's anything you can't bear to let go of, box it up and store it at your parent's or friend's place, you monster.

5. Unshackle Yourself

If you rent, great – hand in your notice.

If you've got a mortgage, that makes things a bit more tricky: either hire an agency to rent your property on your behalf, lend your home to a friend or family member who you trust will keep up the payments... or if you don't ever want to come back, just walk away and let the bank deal with it (that is nuclear option – not recommended).

6. Quit Your Job

Once your home is safe/abandoned, go to work, tell your boss to go fuck themselves, grab the stapler and the goldfish and scream "WHO'S WITH ME?!" You might even pick up a travel buddy on the way out.

7. Pack Your Bag

Take only things that you can afford to lose. What to take (and what not to take) is covered extensively in the next chapter.

That's it! Alrighty then, head to the airport... you're ready to **ESCAPE INTO THE WORLD**.

| Ok Folks that's the preview! You can order the rest of the book here:
<http://atbosh.com/authors/graham-hughes/get-out-while-you-can/>