

Life at Seventy—Take 1

Awareness creeps in slowly of a barely perceptible change in the room's light. One eye seeks confirmation at the edges of the covered window, then strains to find the bedside clock. The weak LED light confirms what is suspected...morning.

Head covered again, a slow stretch confirms that kinks from the previous day are mostly gone. Not bad for a body in use for seven decades, especially considering the distance covered the day before.

First one up, quietly slip on yesterday's jeans, t-shirt, sandals, just these three items, plus phone, then quietly out the door. Elevator comes quickly to the second floor, exits next to the breakfast room, only one thought in mind. Coffee. A few early birds take in the scruffy newcomer, but mostly everyone moves in their own quiet orbit.

A quick sip confirms the coffee is satisfying enough, and then with a few steps the move is through the lobby doors to the covered entrance. Nothing disturbed, good to see but expected from previous experience. Next item—get out from under the roof and actually see the day—confirm what “Weather bug” has already reported—another good-looking summer day, satisfyingly cool at this point but promising heat to come.

Time to report in. A sweet voice answers, weather news on both ends is shared and some other things discussed, plans made to connect later. This is a good time to examine the day and the air more thoughtfully, and finally to begin some preparations for the day ahead. Good time as any to take care of yesterday's accumulation of bugs.

Shower, skip the shave, same jeans or not, ok, new jeans tomorrow, fresh shirt and socks, well-worn boots laced up tight, collect the gear, looks like two trips to handle everything, finally assemble it all at our overnight parking spot just outside the sliding doors. Familiar routine, but important to get everything settled in just the right way, no loose cords. Same process for RG.

Familiar routine in the breakfast room too, a couple bites on the biscuit w/sausage gravy (nope, ugly as usual), same for the sausage itself, take the cereal, small box, sample the meager fruit offering, more coffee, quick look at USA Today, some small talk about routing with RG, time to go.

All geared up, GPS plugged in, set for first waypoint, comes up good, compare with RG's GPS, conflicts in details resolved, master switch on, confirm neutral light, hit the start button, twin cylinder immediately bangs and settles into the familiar Harley rumble, wait a moment, oil pressure stabilizes, kickstand up, and the new day has begun.

Clear the parking lot, two quick turns and the Harleys are rapidly accelerating to highway speed plus maybe five, westerly heading, flat terrain, acceptable traffic, settle into a comfortable rhythm, decide whether to activate the loaded George Thorogood CD. Not now, just enjoy the exhaust notes, beginning to notice a slight warming as the morning sun finds the black leather jacket. This feels good. Just thinking, who gets to do this on a weekday morning?

