

# 2022 VETERANS MOTORCYCLE MANUAL

## 1. The Driver's Seat -

You feel in complete control when you throw your leg over and feel the leather slide against your jeans. There aren't any passenger seat options yet, so your increasingly distant wife has no place to sit. She won't approve your impulse purchase and you feel the space between you and her grow.

## 2. The Fuel Tank -

You close your eyes and get lost in reverie as you finger the signature badge like you could read Braille. Only small men ride small bikes, says the salesman. His words sucker punch your masculinity, but you concede that your wife's jabs are much clever. This makes you smile and respond that you'll take it anyway.

## 3. Mirror -

You spend hours adjusting the mirrors to see the cars lying in wait, like you did on convoys in Iraq, without compromising the ability to see how cool you look.

## 4. Headlight -

You leave the high beam on once you find out it is legal to use it on the interstate, but you conveniently forget to turn it down on local roads. You want to be seen.



## 5. Rear Brake Pedal -

It's easy to manipulate the rear brake pedal, unlike your now even more distant wife. You use the rear brake to adjust your speed through the middle of a corner like the ones on Ortega Highway. You visit an old Marine friend in Temecula who guides you through the switchbacks, but you're carrying too much speed through a sweeping turn. You hold the throttle steady and apply just enough pressure on the rear brake pedal to scrub some speed and tighten the line. A few months later he'll move to another state without you telling him how much you valued the friendship.

## 6. Mufflers -

You have burn marks on your right pant leg from leaving your leg on the muffler too long when you want to thaw out on a six-hour ride to Mammoth. You do this over and over again on long rides, and you wonder why you can't plan right for the one thing you love.

## 7. Taillight -

You look back at the dark roads and realize the taillight isn't bright enough to see what you are leaving behind - relationships, responsibilities, and commitments. The light illuminates the lonely (1) Driver's Seat and this makes you shiver.

## 8. Ignition Switch -

There's too much traffic on Interstate 5 and you cut through Camp Pendleton only to run out of gas. You walk for miles to the nearest gas station on base and forget to turn the ignition switch off.

## 9. Battery -

Your battery is dead. Why? (See 8). You laugh at this and find comfort in the fact that your wife will remind you to turn the ignition switch off and always fill up on gas from that moment on.

## 10. Sidestand -

After the Palomar Mountain Loop, when the Montezuma Valley Road ends and you graduate to the Highway 74 switchbacks, and fly across Angeles Crest Highway, and ride all 655 miles of the Pacific Coast Highway, you return to Sunset Cliffs. You kick the sidestand and lean your small bike and throw your leg back over the seat, then walk to the edge of the unstable cliffs and plant your muddy boots at the intersection of earth and wind. You think about your father-in-law and your Marine comrade, their love of motorcycles, their independence. Their isolation. Their suicides. The salt mists your eyes as you glare at the sun, so you walk back to your bike. You look at the (1) Driver's Seat and resolve to get the passenger seat upgrade.

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