

Chapter One: *Where the Wind Begins*

Squirrels run tightrope across the fence outside my parents' dining room window. I watch them with the kind of stillness you only learn when life makes you stop. After six years of living abroad - collecting stamps, stories, and scars - I'm back here. In Colorado. In the house I grew up in. Sleeping in a bed that once felt like a launchpad and now feels like a landing strip.

The sun is shining like it means it. Flowers blooming like they've got something to prove. The alpine trees are swaying in time with Bob Dylan, who's in the background reminding me that the answers are blowin' in the wind. And for the first time in a long time, I'm actually listening.

The world's shut down - quarantined, masked up, locked in - and so am I. Not in a prison kind of way. More like a cocoon. I'm back here with my thoughts, my questions, and a kitchen table full of scribbled notes that look like the brainstorm for a TED Talk nobody asked for. Vision. Systems. Time. Comfort zones. Let your intuition lead. It's a mess - but it's mine.

There's a glass of water next to me. Half full, half empty, depending on the soundtrack and the mood. Today, it's both.

Two words keep flashing in my brain like neon behind closed eyelids:

Know thyself.

Not a suggestion. A command.

And lemme tell you - it sounds a lot sexier than it feels. Because knowing yourself isn't all yoga and journaling and good vibes. Sometimes it's remembering things you wish you could forget. Sometimes it's realizing you don't remember anything at all. Whole chunks of my life feel like they were lived in grayscale. I try to rewind the tape, but the details are fuzzy. The smells, the sounds, the way the air felt on certain days - it's like I wasn't even there.

That realization messed me up.

So I slowed down. I stopped chasing the next thing. I started listening in the quiet. Mornings became meditations. Nights became pages in a journal. I began living like someone who wants to remember.

And it's wild how those tiny habits - the stuff nobody brags about on social - can start to change everything.

This book is a reckoning. A reflection. A record of one man trying to figure out who the hell he is underneath the hustle. I'm not here to give advice. I'm here to tell the truth, even when it's messy. Especially when it's messy.

Because what I've found, again and again, is that the most important questions don't come with clean answers. They come with tension. With time. With sweat.

Who are you?

What matters to you?

Why?

I'm not done asking. And I sure as hell don't have it all figured out.

But I'm learning that the journey doesn't start when you know where you're going.

It starts the moment you're brave enough to admit you're lost.

And that's where this story begins.

If this chapter spoke to something in you, the rest of the story goes deeper.

Break on Through is a memoir about identity, burnout, reinvention, play, purpose, and the long road back to a life that feels like yours.

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