

This evening was supposed to be when I got a lot of stuff done, like assemble signs (done!) and update some blog posts (um...). Instead I saw Wall Drug (more in another post, one word summary: lazy), researched cloud backup (ugh) and then gave up, tossed on my gear and headed out to see the star swept sky over the Badlands.

The journey out was lovely, half a dozen miles of empty hills waving gently up and down. Turning on the high beam on this scooter is a viscerally different experience than in the car. The light is very bright, it does a great job, but for motorbikes it's a single beam lancing out. The focus is fairly tight, it really lights up the road ahead yet feels very contained. Knifing through a wide darkness that wraps closely around as I glide along.

Moments after starting I was in the countryside and could see the stars even from the bike. Scattered lights held still above as the small roadside reflectors drifted up, will-o-wisps at a distance that suddenly flared into phosphorescence, burning brightly as I left them behind.

The Badlands were quiet. I left the main road and wandered down a gravel road, parked and slowly walked a couple of dozen feet off. I wanted away from the road but I had no desire to test my ability to see the drop-offs before me. Laying back I found myself grinning up to the pale milky way, to the piles and piles of stars, old friends who hadn't come together like this in ages. Hiking in the Badlands during the day has been compared to being on the moon, now the moon too was hidden and only the sea of stars remained; hushed and countless.

They're always up there.

Quietly blazing away.

Starry, Starry Night

Eventually I rose and rode silently home. Me, my scooter, and a thousand old friends.