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# American Traveler Goes Missing in Mexico – Was He Kidnapped?

By NICOLE WEISENSEE EGAN  
02/19/2014 at 04:15 PM EST

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Harry Devert  
COURTESY ANEWYORKERTRAVELS.COM



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Harry Devert was living his dream.

Last December, the 32-year-old New Yorker quit his job, packed his bags and took off on an adventure by motorcycle, chronicling his exploits through the Americas on *A New Yorker Travels*, his blog.

"I don't think there's anyone who, on their deathbed, every lamented pursuing a passion, pursuing a dream," he wrote last month. "In fact, I imagine in fact it would be quite the opposite."

Then, just days after that post, on Jan. 25, he vanished without a trace after checking out of a bed and breakfast in Michoacán, Mexico.

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He went missing in a region where fighting has broken out between a powerful drug cartel and local vigilantes, and his final text messages referenced the danger. His mother, who originally feared he had gotten into an accident, has had a change of heart.

"We now believe he has been taken by someone and is being held captive and is waiting for someone to find him," his mother Devert, 66, of Pelham, N.Y., tells PEOPLE.



Harry Devert and mom Ann Devert  
COURTESY JACKIE BURRELL

Devert says she could not elaborate on how she got that information, but American officials are working with Mexican authorities to find her son. "The U.S. Embassy is aware of reports that Mr. Devert has disappeared and is concerned for his safety," spokesman Noel Clay tells PEOPLE.

Devert's friends and family have created a [Facebook page](#), the hash tag #helpfindHarry via his [Twitter page](#) and [an online petition](#) to help find him.

A seasoned traveler – "I've slept on a beach in Rio, a bench in Barcelona, a street in India, a cave in Vietnam, a hammock in Laos," he wrote on his blog – Devert got his wanderlust from his late father, says his mother, who last spoke to her son on Jan. 23.

"We had a very bad connection," she says. "He said he'd be going somewhere out of range and he'd be getting back to me in a few days.

When he didn't call her on Jan. 29, his father's birthday, she began to get concerned. "He always calls me," she says.

That weekend she contacted the American Embassy in Mexico City to report him missing.

Michoacán turned out to be much more dangerous than he expected, according to a text he sent to his girlfriend, Sarah Ashley Schiear, on Jan. 25.

"Just got an hour and a half long escort out of some area it was too dangerous for me to be," he wrote.

"Apparently there's another military escort waiting for me in some other town," he wrote. "I'm running way late because of the crazy military stuff ... hopefully get a chance to talk to you tonight when I (hopefully) finally arrive."

He was headed to a beach in Zihuatanejo, where the last scene of *The Shawshank Redemption*, one of his favorite movies, was filmed, his mother says.

While Devert believes her son is still alive, she also knows he believes that any danger he faced was well worth the adventure.

"He's always told me, 'It's not how long you live, it's how you live,'" she says. "And he's told me that the law of averages will not be on his side."

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Tee S. · 6 days ago

American middle-class problems and their ways of seeing the world are so boring, selfish and hysterical. He was not God, just a normal guy with more money to spend than a normal guy... He was just travelling and that doesn't make you good or bad. He did it for him, not for anyone else. And he didn't achieve anything important, stop idealising him. If you want to travel, do it. Some people who write about this (non)-event are really shallow and lost touch with the reality.

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



humanfan · 8 days ago

Funny how some just feel this is not their life and he was stupid, and others feel they wish this was their life. Somehow I think if he was able to post here he would say to those who drive every day to work doing the same thing every day after day after day.. that you are already dead and how stupid were you? I took 4 years off from my life and sailed and sailed and sailed all over the world. Yes there was danger, so is driving to work. I was caught in a storm with 40 foot seas, and had other adventures, and I would not pass them up for anything. The scariest experiene I ever had was a few weeks ago when a guy with road rage attacked my car with his. You see it can happen anywhere

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Carina · 10 days ago

I hope he is okay, but most likely he is death. American guy wondering where he wasn't supposed to be, not good.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Mal → Carina · 7 days ago

Assuming you meant "wandering" and, no, he wasn't "wandering" he was traveling to a destination. There are millions of illegals in the UW "wandering" around, should they all be killed or kidnapped too? You are an idiot of the highest regard. Go get a life and a 1st grade english class you dumb beaver.

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Lisa · 10 days ago

The article states that days after his Jan. 25th post, he vanished after checking out of the bed and breakfast. Well... ONE, if i'm reading this article correctly, he didn't vanish days after the 25th, he vanished on the 25th because he said in the text to his girlfriend, "...hopefully get a chance to talk to you tonight when I (hopefully) finally arrive." Article doesn't state that she got a text that night or the next morning. TWO, he didn't simply vanish after checking out of the B&B