I suspect I had a better night's sleep than either of my travelling companions.

Up at 05:00, let the dogs out, almost like being at home, a quick cereal breakfast, check SMS and Whatsapp for any updates and then on the road.

Overnight Charlotte had kicked in her backup team, they don’t come better than Trooper and Gasman. Between them it’s been arranged that Gasman will route in via Gaborone, hunt down two new BGF tyres and push on to Salajwe.

The whole incident played out on SMS

- Charlotte to me 15:02 Will be at Khutse gate tonight or camp depending on time
- Me to Charlotte Nice! Just made Mafikeng, what’s the sand road like to the gate?
- Charlotte to me. So far very corrugated
- Me to Charlotte. Okie Dokie will be with you Thursday don’t scare any Brownies away. Did you drop tyre pressure?
- Charlotte to me. Just had a blow out
- Charlotte to me. Tyre ripped! Spare on C U
- Me to Charlotte. What is it with you and tyres? Just had my laptop and gopro stolen in Mahikeng
- Charlotte to me. Nooooo
- Charlotte to me. Another tyre ripped! Will try to change this tyre but think I will bush camp here and c u in the morning.

It’s safe to say that Charlotte is not given to panic easily, after the second blow out quite calmly accepting the situation and preparing to bush camp, making plans to get on the road again; all in a day's work.

Luckily for Charlotte though Africa and its famed Ubuntu came to the fore.

Whilst attempting to change the second tyre a policewoman happened along, shortly thereafter a couple of locals arrived, they probably heard the double blow outs and before you know it the Grey Nomad with Charlotte on board is being guided into Salajwe where she sets up camp behind the police compound.

If you see her ask her about the offer of a bush bath 😊

Gasman was well on the way to Gabs, he left JHB at 02:00. My own route was via Kanye, Molepololoe and up to Letlhakeng.

Letlhakeng has a well-stocked Choppies with plenty of everything that you might need in the way of provisions although I didn’t check out meat as I had frozen stuff on board. Nobody asked any questions when I crossed the border.

Fuel is available at both Molepololoe and last before Khutse, Letlhakeng. Cards or cash in both towns.

+/- 250 kms later I arrive at Salajwe to be greeted by the full extent of the damage to the tyres. Fairly safe to say that no amount of snot plugs are going to make them usable again!
After greetings and relief that Charlotte is indeed safe and sound it's time for tea and touch sides with Gasman. The news is good he has sourced two tyres and is on his way, eta around 13:00. OK so we have three hours to kill.
Without any prompting a young man arrived and introduces himself as the man who knows how to remove and replace tyres. He’s soon joined by other helpers and after a brief discussion a plan is hatched.

Ok so let’s get going. Nope, first we have to find the other man with the tyre irons, ok got that next remove the old carcasses, nope now we need to go and look for the man with the 4-pound hammer, ok got that now we can start work.

Lady luck also decided that Charlotte has had her share of bad luck and smiled on us.

I had placed the wheel nuts from the spare carrier in my tea cup for safe keeping and then placed that onto Jaeger Defenders front bumper. In all the to-ing and fro-ing through the village along sandy tracks she kept the cup firmly in place.

Still don’t do justice to what happened next, there is a YouTube link in the thread to a couple of iPhone video’s, all I can say is that the young man knows how to wield that 4-pound hammer.
Gasman, true to his word arrived at 13:00 in air-conditioned luxury, the D4 heavily loaded with two extra tyres as well as all the paraphernalia one packs for camping.

With both rims now devoid of carcasses stage two commences.

Have you ever tried to fit a tyre onto a rim?

Looks easy at Tiger Wheel and Tyre with those fancy pneumatic machines, I can say without fear of conviction in a sand blow village in the middle of nowhere with nothing other than willing hands it’s a darn sight more difficult. Never the less with copious amounts of muscle power and Q20 the rims are shod.
Right, let’s do the petrol trick, this should be the fun part…
Oops we’re all driving diesel powered cars.

Never mind our ever resourceful tyre repair man knows of somebody in the village who has some petrol so once again Jaeger Defender, without the tea-cup of wheel nuts, is pressed into service and off we go hunting down the man with the petrol. We are out of luck but it was an interesting trip though the village.
Donkeys not cars are the work horses in Salajwe, I treat two very thirsty looking guys to buckets of water whilst Gasman and the team we struggle with the rims.

And so finally with the Grey Nomad reshod we are ready to roll onto Khutse.

We bid a fond farewell to a great bunch of guys who went out of their way to provided help and assistance over and above what you might ordinarily expect in today’s “me first” world (unless you are a community forum member in distress 😊)
The sand road between Letlhakeng and Khutse is not so bad, yes corrugated in places with the odd patch of sand that keeps you honest until that is the last 4 kms. Then the sand is deeper and you need to be concentrating and keeping momentum up.

Check in at Khutse is effortless, the staff were friendly, professional and helpful. We check out recent sightings, it looks promising, get a quick update on road conditions and are on our way.

With time running against us we push onto Molose 2, our home for the next 4 nights arriving at 17:45. Even with deflated tyres the corrugations are still felt, except of course in the air sprung D4 😊

Arriving around 17:45 with a brief stop at the waterhole where a Tawny Eagle offers a picture perfect photo opportunity much to my dismay as all the camera kit is still buried deep in the bowls of Jaeger Defender. Never mind there will be other opportunities I’m sure.

Another traveler sitting at the water hole tells us of a lioness that had been seen by the solar panel earlier on, we check it out on the way to Molose 2 but she’s long gone.

Molose 1 is about 500 meters from the water hole, Molose 2 just over 3 kms but sits on a slight rise giving panoramic views across the open veld. My choice if I return, Molose 2.

After an eventful day all that remains is to set up camp, light a fire, gooi some meat on the coals, open a cold one (at least for those not taking bloody antibiotics) and relax.

Jaeger Defender parked close by the entrance, I’m trying to be nice and not wake the others when I sneak out early in the morning to sit by the waterhole. Sneak anywhere quietly in a TD5? Oh well it’s the thought that counts
“What pressure are your tyres running at?” asks Gasman

“Around 1.8, why?”

“Well that back one looks mighty flat to me”.

Yip you guessed it The Grey Nomad had the final say, a third puncture. Thankfully this time not a total blow out but in any event it will wait until the morning.

With a resigned shrugged Charlotte jacks the car and calls it a day as far as tyres are concerned.
When you watch the sun set over the African bush though the days’ challenges swiftly melt away with it.

With clouds covering much of the evening sky there is only the briefest of glimpse of the harvest moon, maybe tomorrow we will get lucky.