

TRAVELOGUE

by Gaye Jackson

To ensure having an enjoyable experience in the Canyon plan your trip carefully. Good physical conditioning is important for all Canyon hiking. The terrain is rough, water scarce and the weather often extreme.

The bus stopped. The passengers leaned out the windows and threw food to the squirrels that were grey and very fat. She got off the bus.

The constant downhill walking which comes at the beginning of your trip when you have a full pack can cause severe blisters and knee problems.

The driver gave her water. He warned her about the heat and told her a story about marriage and death. She entered the Canyon. It was a mile deep. The passengers waved goodbye. Some called out. Tourists with video cameras documented the event.

Protection is needed from the sun. Minimize water needs. Hike during the coolest part of the day. Wear a wide-brimmed hat, a long-sleeved shirt, and comfortable, well-broken-in boots.

It was noon. It was 108 degrees. She wore a wide-brimmed hat with holes in it and had lost her sunscreen. Red dust covered her shoes. The rattlesnakes were pink and well-camouflaged.

In the desert water is life. It should be the heaviest item in your pack. Drink a quart an hour.

She sat in the shade of a rock, drank water and ate cake. The crumbs became invisible in the dust. A small yellow lizard was the life of the party.

Downhill is a long way.

The Canyon is home to a variety of plants and animals. Rattlesnakes and scorpions may create problems for the unaware hiker. Appreciate the danger and beauty of these Canyon dwellers and do not disturb them.

A man standing on the path asked for spare change to buy a coffee. She said there wasn't any time. Her watch had been stolen. He fell into a rock and disappeared.

If you become lost, retrace your steps to where you left the trail. If all attempts to find a point of reference fail, sit down and collect your thoughts. Stay in one

place, you will be found more quickly. Mark a large 'X' on the ground with your clothing and gear.

She looked back and lost her way. A girl guide pointed to a sign. It said you have to return. She did and continued.

Do not swim in the Canyon river. Strong currents and cold water have claimed the lives of numerous hikers.

She saw the river. It was far away. She poured water over her forehead. It ran into her mouth and down her throat. She tasted salt and wanted to sleep. The director told her to slow the pace. Naked she entered water at 6:00 p.m.

More than 2000 ruins of ancient dwellings are in the Canyon. They can never be replaced.

She watched a clown dance. Her face was indigo and deeply lined. She laughed at her weariness and said downhill was the longest clown show in the history of the circus. The clown stroked her forehead and talked about sex. She had an orgasm and slept.

She traced her dreams to a night in Vegas. A feather flew from her hand and buried itself in the sand. She wore white. Water fell from a small cloud above her head. The cliffs were on fire.

Desert plants and flowers can take hundreds of years to grow. The flower you pick may be the only one the plant has produced in years. Take a picture and leave the plant.

Bats played in the shadows of the cliff. A pale scorpion escaped through a door and slept on her belly. Earrings were left as a gift. The purple fruit of the cactus was photographed as evidence of her return. A child laughed and wrote 'I see' on the eyes of a doll. A tree entered the picture and stood in the corner of the frame.

The canyon is one of the earth's seven greatest wonders.

A blond woman sitting beside her spoke five languages and had new breasts. They cost \$2,000 each and were pointed and hard. There were no nipples to suck. She had them removed and carried a gun instead. She touched the woman's breasts. They were cold. Her body became dust.

The lighter you travel, the less each step you take impacts the earth. The closer you observe the land, the more you will see.

A man sitting under the bridge admired her feet which were cracked by the sand. He read her palm, said she would live a long life, and invited her to sit beside him. She knew he was a crack dealer and said I just want to be friends. He offered her a normal life. She didn't know what that meant and said everything is. Her car was a sewing machine. She liked it that way.

Each year approximately 200 evacuations of hikers occur due to heat exhaustion, heat stroke, hypothermia, foot, knee and ankle injuries. Be aware of this. Be prepared.

The ranger said she had heat exhaustion. If it was heat stroke she would have died. She was grateful for the information and told him to leave. Silence was required for the next act.

She awoke at 2:00 a.m. her body and her dreams in flames. She went to the river to cool her skin and startled a deer. She sang 'Heartbreak Hotel' so it would know she was a friend and when she sang she was easy to see in the dark. The deer watched as she lay in the water that flowed around her and over her.

The heat from the Canyon floor can be overwhelming.

The Canyon turned toward the sun. The cliffs turned copper. She wanted to leave but fell into her fear. It held her like a child in a cradle gently rocking. She drank from its mouth to quench her thirst.

When she awoke the sun was shining into her eyes. It was 108 degrees. Her sunglasses were broken. The clown had danced on them thinking they were a stage with black satin curtains and live music. She filled her water bottle and left.

It takes twice as long to get out of the Canyon as it takes to get in. Out is a long way up.

When you leave the Canyon there should be no trace that you have ever been there.