

Date: 4/25/2014 9:54:01 PM

Subject: Postcard

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We've invented a new sport – Adversarial Hiking. It's us against everyone and everything. Our adversaries are, in no particular order: old bodies, elevation change, temperature, misinformation, precipitation, Internet problems, sun, wind, rude people and government. Today's major adversary was this gate.



We've hiked a lot of trails in the area and we thought we were pretty savvy. We picked Soldiers Pass Trail for our hike today and naively thought we would just do it. So we were out of bed at 6, at the trailhead at 6:50. Whaaaaa???? A gated trailhead in a national forest? An electric gate? Opens at 8? Our reaction? Well, dumfounded sort of describes it.

We looked around. To the left of us were expensive houses. To the right of us were expensive houses. No Parking signs as far as we could see in either direction. Aha. We got it. Sheila and I were incensed. Rich S's of B's! Occupy Sedona! Park illegally! Vault the fence! Vici alone seemed unperturbed by government supported snobbery. (We're starting to figure Vici out. Think of Stephanie Vanderkellen on *Newhart*.) (Alright, so look up *Newhart*).

We were obstructed but not beaten. We went to an un-gated trailhead (must be in the poor part of town) and took the Cibola Pass Trail to the Jordan Trail to the Soldiers Pass Trail. Added some mileage but... We won!

And were suitably rewarded.







Not just with beautiful scenery but interesting tidbits.



Along Soldiers Pass Trail is something called, on the map. "Devil's Kitchen". American explorers liked to name stuff after the devil. And apparently they liked to name stuff regardless of what it looked like. Probably the Indians have already named this feature "Place Where Big Rock Fell".

Much better.



This little still life comprises prickly pear, desert daisies and agave.

Science question: Agave + Worm = ?



A poor, ambivalent pathfinder was torn between blazing the tree and building a cairn.

No picture:

We passed a guy going the other way who said good morning. Sheila wondered why I was looking at his lower half. He had a revolver in a holster. Hope Arizona is an open carry state. Glad he wasn't an adversary.

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Lunch at Euro Deli – veggie quesadilla.

Dinner at Picasso's Pizza – veggie pizza.

Don't get the wrong idea. Truth in reporting requires us to add...

Snack in between – vanilla ice cream on a brownie, ladled with hot fudge, sprinkled with peanuts, smothered in whipped cream, topped with a cherry. Two of 'em.

D&S