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In the forward to his book, Bob includes the following disclaimer:

“These little stories—some look like dinky poems—are based on what I have seen and done in my life, but some have been fictionalized, names changed and events rearranged, to protect the privacy of people and family still with us.”

COMING TO BERKELEY, 1961

“**W**hat changes your life?” someone asked. I would say everything changes life; but for me, especially, coming back from the Army in 1960, and then coming to UC Berkeley in 1961. That changed my life.

I’d taken the train from home in Glendora, California, to Oakland. From there I had to take a cab to get to Berkeley. I’d never seen this place from the ground before. I had just caught a glimpse of it as we were flying back from our Army duty in Germany. That view of San Francisco Bay from the air, and of those surrounding green hills when the pilot banked the plane before landing, so captivated me that I decided right then to go to Cal.

When I told my dad of my plans, his response was, “Why do you want to go to that Communist university!?” I did not have a clue about what he meant. I had just come back from “fighting” communism for two years. So I went to Cal anyway.

As we drove up Telegraph Avenue, the cabbie was pointing out the sights to me. "That's the Campanile," he said, when we were getting close to the campus. Of course, I didn't know what a campanile was, but that didn't keep me from enjoying the sight of that magnificent tower sticking up above all the other buildings.

The cab driver dropped me at the apartment I had rented on Derby Street. One of the many changes that I had to make was getting used to the idea that I was too old to associate with other students. "You're too old to live in the dorms," I was told. Shocking? Yes, it was. I was only twenty-four years old. Was that old? I didn't think so, but I had to live somewhere, so I got an apartment for \$72.50 a month. A studio with a fireplace, not too far from campus. \$72.50 was a lot of money for me to spend out of my GI Bill money, which was about \$200.

After I'd spent several days and many hours waiting in line to get my classes, I took a walk to see what I could do to meet other students and maybe make some friends. I did feel lonely. I'd had to cope with that feeling before, but being away from home and away, probably forever, from the friends I had spent my time with in the Army, made that feeling a bit more desperate.

Eshleman Hall is where the student clubs were located I had been told, (a building that today is called Moses Hall), so I headed to Eshleman. Up the front steps and then down to the basement.

Just as I turned the corner by the stairs and was about to pass an open door, a hand reached out to grab mine, and a voice said, "Come in! Come in!"

I didn't know what I was being pulled into, but the voice turned out to be coming from Tom Aley, a guy in the Hiking Club. Now that is the bunch that really changed my life at Cal. Or, much more accurately, the people I met in the Hiking Club made life at Cal possible. And I got to share a house with four other Hiking Clubbers, my share of rent being \$30, way cheaper than the \$72.50 my apartment had cost.

Being a student was not a fully formed concept for me then. And, of course, being a student at UC Berkeley, was far different from being a student at Citrus Junior College. Or was it? Hard to say, truthfully, because I had some excellent teachers at Citrus. Professors I still remember—Mr. Martinez who taught history. Mr. Perrin who taught chemistry. What did become apparent quickly was the need I felt to study much more at Cal.

The Hiking Club is how a lot of us students dealt with that pressure of study and learning. On most weekends we'd take off for a hike anywhere—along the coast, or in one of the many parks that were all around the Bay. Some weekends it would be a backpack trip to the Sierra. And on one Friday night, it was a sewer trip. Actually, it was a storm drain, but parts of it did smell like a sewer.

Tim, one of my housemates, planned this special trip. We all brought along our caving hard-hats and flashlights or caving lamps, and met where Strawberry Creek enters the huge drain on campus, right above Oxford Street. On that night the creek was just a trickle as eight of us walked into that concrete tunnel.

It's more than six feet high, big enough for the tallest of us, but at the joints where the sections of concrete meet, the ceiling is lower, so our hard hats keep us from bumping our heads.

Along the way, parts of the drain come out into the open air. We hear dogs barking, probably at us, and voices wondering what is causing the disturbance, as we pass through the neighborhood.

Farther on, we hear traffic above us and we come to a partial ladder that goes up to a man-hole cover. "Let's take a look to see where we are," someone says. Somebody else makes his way up the ladder. I don't remember who that was, but I do remember the immediate response as he pushed the man-hole cover up. "It's heavy!" he says, pushing with both arms, and then, the cover slams down as a car drives over it!

"Whoa!" he yells. "Almost lost my fingers!" Everybody laughs. Now we know where we are. Right under University Avenue.

We proceed farther down toward San Francisco Bay, and notice the water, which had been swishing around our sox, getting deeper. "Tide's coming in," someone suggests. Yeah, I think, or we're going to come out under water! Apparently, no one else thinks it's a problem. We continue on our way.

The water quickly becomes knee deep, waist deep, and then, for me, mouth deep. "I've got to hold on to somebody!" I yell, "to keep my head above the water." So, I grab onto the shoulders of the tall guy ahead of me, Pete, and get a ride the rest of the way.

It is getting a little creepy. There's now only about a foot of space between the top of the water and the top of the tunnel. I'm a little bit—no, a lot—worried. I can swim, but how far will it be under water?

Just then, someone in front yells, "I can see daylight!" In about twenty more feet, I can see it too. The gray sky illuminating the top curve of the tunnel, and then the water of San Francisco Bay.

Pete clambers up on to shore. I let go of him and feel my wet shoes sliding on rough rocks. No complaint! Glad to be back in the fresh air. Moving up the slope, we find we are at the foot of University Avenue, right where the bus stops. "Good planning, Tim!" someone yells. We all agree.

We're soaking wet, dripping, cold, but we don't care much about that. All we want to do is get on that bus and go home. The driver opens the door, then quickly shuts it before we can get on.

We look at him. He looks at us, no doubt wondering what we've been up to, and who we are. Finally he points us toward the back door. We run over there before he changes his mind, and scramble aboard. He looks at us again, and notices some of his other passengers holding their nose. Do we smell? Don't know. Do we care? Heck no! Well, maybe. But we need this ride. Otherwise

it's a two mile walk. And nobody feels like doing that. It's almost midnight.

The driver starts his turn out of the parking lot, doesn't even ask us to pay. I guess he doesn't want us to get too close to the rest of the riders.

Seems like a long ride that night until we finally get to our stop and get off and half run to our house on Grant Street. Inside, take off all of those wet clothes and take turns in the hot shower.

Someone has brought some lab alcohol to warm and cheer us up. 190 proof grain alcohol, 95%. I didn't really understand what that meant. Great for making drinks I'm told, so I pour a glass about $\frac{3}{4}$ full of orange juice, and fill the rest with alcohol. Take a swallow. "Really smooth," I say. Do I know what smooth means? No. So I continue to chug-a-lug that good drink. Something quickly starts to happen to me.

In about a minute, I find myself sitting on the wooden floor of my bedroom, right outside the bathroom door, where someone is taking a shower. Then I'm lying on the floor. Soon, I find I have to move my arms and legs. Don't know why, but they just start moving, and I help them along.

"I think Bob's drunk," John says. I can just hear him, but don't protest, because I don't know what I am. I kind of like the feeling, the warm air from the bathroom flowing over my naked body. But, then, without warning, I feel awful. Sick. Need to puke! I crawl over to the toilet, hang my head, and let it come out. Smells like alcohol!

When that's over, I lie back down, fall asleep, and wake up the next day in bed. Don't know how I got there, but I must have had some help. What day is it?

I didn't know I was talking aloud, but someone says, "It's Saturday, and we've got a field trip scheduled to San Quentin Prison with our Criminology class."

Just the sobering up experience I need!

GRAND CANYON ADVENTURE 1962

We've been traversing the Supai for hours, looking for a way down the Redwall, when Dottie slips.

First her feet go out from under and she's sliding on her behind, the weight of her backpack pushing her down the slope. Where we're walking, the Supai slopes about thirty degrees down and to the right. Below the Supai, the Redwall drops straight down for four hundred feet.

I'm walking behind so I see her as she yells, "Bill!"

Bill's been leading. He turns, sees his wife sliding toward the rim and runs back, as we all race toward Dottie, our backpacks bumping, water battles sloshing back and forth.

Bill reaches her, just as her right leg lands at the base of a yucca. He puts an arm around her waist, and says, "Wow! Too close!" and then he tells us, "Dottie's pregnant with our first kid."

We're all four next to her now, just three feet from the drop-off. "Gutsy girl!" I say, in awe and admiration.

We four are Bill, Bob, Phyllis and me, the other Bob, called Bobby on this trip. Together, we form a chain of hands to help Dottie back to her feet and up to a safer place.

We sit, yack a while. "I'm pushing for the way down," Bill says, "because we need water. Supposed to be a spring here on the Supai, but haven't seen it yet."

I look at my water bottle, one quart when full, now down to about one cup. Lack of water has never been a problem on any of the dozens of trips we've taken in the mountains, but here, on the first day of our trip into the Grand Canyon, it's already been a concern.

Strange to remember how only a few hours ago we were driving through snowy patches on our way from the North Rim to Swamp Point.

We five had left Berkeley, on Friday afternoon. Wanting to make the most of our spring vacation, we planned to drive the 850 miles to the North Rim of the Grand Canyon on the weekend, spend five days going down, in and out, and then drive home the following weekend.

Bill borrowed a car from a friend, since none of us students owned one. It was a big, old 1957 Pontiac. Lots of room, but also

used a lot of gas. The price of gas, 25 cents a gallon, was not the problem. It's just that Bill had forgotten to fill up when we were in Bakersfield.

He's driving, it's gotten dark and the rest of us are asleep. Somewhere, he stops and says, "Need gas." He gets out. I see a sign that says Caliente. I doze off.

I wake again to grumbling. "We're closed, you know," some guy with Bill says.

"Hey, man, I appreciate it," Bill says.

Lights come on as the guy flips a switch. He's a gas station guy. "Okay," he says, "how about a little something for my trouble."

I'm listening now and look at Bill, who has a look of wonder on his face. "What trouble?" Bill asks.

"Are you kidding?" the gas station guy says. "For getting me out of bed! For having to put on my pants."

"How much?" Bill asks.

"Five bucks," the guy says.

Bill looks at me. I give him the high sign. Five bucks is a lot of money, but split five ways, not too bad, under the circumstances.

Bill pulls out a five. The guy starts to pump gas. I fall back to sleep.

Next time I wake, we're bumping along a dirt road. It's pitch black out.

"Where're we going, Bill?" Phyllis asks.

"Got to find a place to camp," he says. "I'm beat."

I look at my watch. Almost one a.m.

Bill parks off the road. We're out of the car fast, sleeping bags down on ponchos. I crawl into mine and am asleep without thinking about it.

Warmth wakes me. I stick my head out. Dottie and Bill already up, talking quietly, probably making our breakfast. I slowly sit up, sun now on my face, and feel the way I always feel on these trips with friends. Glad to be out, going to new places. Fun is what it is, but surely way more than that.

Bill scrambles around, getting his stove to light. Coffee time? Nope, probably hot chocolate, the favorite morning waker-upper on most trips.

After my morning bath—a splash of water on my face, and a rub together of the hands to make myself presentable, I join the rest around the stove.

"How far today?" Phyllis asks.

"We've still got about 500 miles to go," Bill says. "Probably can't make it all because it's kind of late. We'll just have to see how far we get."

We share cinnamon rolls, oranges, really a pretty good breakfast on the road. Then pick up our stuff, pack our sleeping bags which have been airing and drying in the sun, and head out. Dottie and Bill in the front seat, Phyllis and two Bobs in the back.

The desert rolls out before us. Mercury, a secret, closed town north of the road. Borax mines to the south. A bunch of old houses, then a closed up motel. Old automobiles and buses crowded into a huge lot, waiting for what? Maybe just all died right there.

Bill drives. We stop for bathroom, gas, drive some more and then Las Vegas pops into view. We get sidetracked there for a while. Play penny machines and mechanical craps games. I win! Surprise, surprise!

When we get to the Arizona strip, that hunk of a state that's kind of in limbo because of the rivers and mountains, we stop to camp for the night. We're up the next morning early so we can get to Jacob Lake, where the ranger station is. When we get there, the sign on the window says, "closed."

"Yeah, it's Sunday," I say, realizing that for the first time. "Why don't we camp here tonight and get up early enough to be first in line tomorrow." We do that and again get up early.

Bill goes into the ranger station, comes out with a ranger. "Get out all of your equipment," Bill says. "Boots, packs, sleeping bags, water, everything. He wants to know that we're equipped for the trip."

The ranger is an older guy. Asks questions as he looks at our gear. "What kind of trips have you each been on before," he asks.

"We're backpackers. Mountaineers," Bill says, which is true.

"I think I've walked more than a thousand miles in the Sierra," I say.

"And we went to the Glen Canyon last year," Dottie says.

The ranger looks at her. "I'm impressed," he says. "Rugged country. Not many people have ever been there. And where you're headed this week is even more rugged, but I think you know that. I can see you have ropes and climbing gear." He gives us our permit.

The drive from Jacob Lake is nothing short of splendid. First pine forests, then De Motte Park, a valley that goes on for twenty or thirty miles, with grass on the flat and aspens on the slopes, both sides.

"God, this place is beautiful!" The words just pop out of my mouth. But it is beautiful.

"Keep your eyes open," Bill says. "We're looking for the road to Swamp Point. Should take off to the right pretty soon."

"There," Dottie says, and Bill turns onto the dirt road. Through forest, patches of snow, past dinky snowmelt lakes. A gentle down hill ride to the edge of the abyss. Bill finds a place to park off the road in the trees. Ours is the only car out here.

"This is it," he says.

We get out, stretch, look in awe at what is before us. Not just a canyon, but weeks of canyon walking that go through billions of years to the bottom. My feet start to pull on my legs.

"Pretty nice, isn't it," Bob says in a grand understatement of complete sincerity.

"Here's the plan," Bill says, spreading out his map.

"We've got about seven miles to go. That's not as hard as it could be because we will be going down. We have to get to water, which should be here." He points to a place on the Supai where there is a seep.

I don't pay much attention. I've been on so many trips since coming to UC Berkeley last year, I've learned to trust all the people I've met who've planned our trips.

And I knew I could trust my body. The time spent in the Army, and fighting fires for the U.S. Forest Service have hardened me. Backpack trips, snow trips, cave crawling and river running trips every weekend and break have taught me new things about myself.

This day, also, will show me something new.

Packed, car locked, we start down the Sam Bass Trail. I have my map out, something I've been doing ever since I learned where to buy the topo sheets for every place we want to go.

Not quite ten o'clock, I calculate how long I think it will take to cover these seven miles. Maybe four or five hours? "How many hours do you think, Phyllis?"

"If we can keep on the trail, I think we can do two miles an hour pretty easily," she says.

"Let's just take it steady for a while," Bill says. "See how it goes."

Time goes by gently as we make our way down. The absolute splendor of what we are seeing, and the complete entrancement in what we are doing pushes all distractions out of mind.

About as close to being in our own world as it is possible to be. We feel separate from the world, but so much a part of this particular place on the earth. Delight becomes the mind-set.

We've come down a couple of thousand feet. This is the Supai, a rich red and orange bench that slopes to the right ending at the top of the Redwall, the limestone layer that drops straight down four hundred feet in most places.

"Have to look for the way down," Bill says. "Let's rest a little."

Glad for that, I wander over to a place where there's some shade. Pinyon and juniper. I pull off my pack and set it down so I can lean against it. When I sit down, it happens. My left leg cramps.

I shift my weight to my right side. My right leg cramps. The pain is almost not bearable. I put weight on my arms to take it off of my legs, and both arms cramp. "Oooooow!" I cry. I can't help it. Tears well up in my eyes. I feel my whole body becoming paralyzed.

Bill looks at me. "Drink some water, Bobby," he says.

"I can't reach the bottle," I say, panic starting to grip me.

Bill comes over, gets a closer look at me, pulls out my water and puts it to my lips. "You need salt," he says, reaching into one of his shirt pockets. "Here," he says, "put out the palm of your hand."

I do as told, and watch Bill pour salt into my hand. "Lick it, Bob. Then take a swallow of water." Again, I do as he says, frantic

pain pushing me to do anything that will end this unexpected and embarrassing episode.

Gradually, my cramps subside. My breathing, which had been pretty quick, starts to return to normal. I lean back for real this time, relax, and enjoy what has always been my normal way of feeling.

"Hey," I finally am able to speak. "Did you save my life or something?"

Bill looks at me. "Maybe," he says.

We'd been resting for a while, so I get up, not really knowing what to expect of my body. I feel good. I put my pack back on, and look at my friends. "Hey. I'm all okay," I say.

We continue our traverse of the Supai, now all looking for that elusive seep, where we can get water.

Then Dottie slips.

Now, after the two reminders of how aware we must be on this trip, we're walking again. Then, another surprise.

"Listen, Dottie says."

We stop, get completely silent, and we hear something.

"There're animals down there," Dottie says. "Sounds like donkeys."

"Probably mules," Bill says. "Or burros. On the map, that side canyon is called Burro canyon. "

We move up to where the next drainage is and look down. "Water's reflecting," Phyllis says.

"Hey, it is burros. Look," Dottie says, and points down to a clearing.

"We've found the water," Bill says. "Now, let's find the way down. That drainage looks promising. On the map, it's gradual, except for one place where those lines are close together. Each line means fifty feet. We've got 240 feet of rope, so I think we can do this."

Bill walks over and starts down the streambed. "Stay single file," he says, "and watch out to not loosen rocks that'll slide down on top of me." Of course. We've all been in many places where loose rocks can roll.

Slowly we all go one step at a time down the chute. It's really not bad. Then a steep place stops Bill. He pulls out ropes.

"I think I should stay on top and belay each of you as you go down," he says. "Then, when I come down, I'll use a fixed rope, leave it in place for our return trip. Any other ideas?" he asks.

"Naw, that sounds good," Bob says. "We can do this."

"Okay," Bill says, "Dottie, I think you should go first."

Bill gets out a harness which goes around Dottie's waist. "Leave your pack here, Dottie," he says. "We'll lower all the packs at once, once you four are down. Safer that way."

We all agree. Dottie starts down. First steep, then gradual, then steep again, which takes her about 150 feet down the Red-wall. After that she yells, "Belay off. Looks easy from here."

I go next, now knowing how doable this is. Then Phyllis and the other Bob. We wait while Bill retrieves the rope, ties it off on top, and then rappels down.

"Hey, that was all right, wasn't it," he says. "Everybody okay?" We look around. Yep.

"Take a drink. You too, Bobby!" I take the hint and drink.

The rest of the way down, now that we're clear of the Redwall, is gradual. We're still following the drainage, because that's the natural way that water gets down, and the foraging animals get up and down these slopes. We can see their footprints. We're not as sure footed as most of the wild animals, but that's why we wear our vibram soled boots.

It's getting cooler, even a bit of a breeze, as we get to a flat place. You can almost smell the water. Then we hear galloping. It gets closer and louder and we move upslope, not knowing how many mules or burros or donkeys may be running down here.

They come around the corner, just like in some wild-west movie, in full gallop. What a sight! "They've been down here for maybe a hundred years," Bill says. "They were left behind, or ran away from the prospectors or miners, or whoever brought them here."

"What a great place for them to live," Phyllis says. "And they've shown us where to get water. I'll bet that's where they're heading."

We all follow the galloping herd, which is now long gone from our view, but, sure enough, there's the stream, more than a trickle because it's still early summer.

Along the stream are wider flat places to camp. We look and each find our place.

"Well, we did good today," Bill says. "It's almost dinner time. Sun is behind the canyon wall, so it will get cool pretty soon. Let's get supper made while there's still light. Bob and Bob, why don't you go and find some squaw wood for a fire. You know, the little stuff, dry, that's easy to light. Dottie and Phyllis and I'll get out the food. Don't go too far. Should be a lot of small sticks on the sides of the slopes, dry where the sun has been the longest."

Bob and I wander off, easily find handfuls of dry sticks and twigs. We know the drill. Up to one half inch thick will be perfect for a small, quick fire.

Back at our camp, Dottie has brought out canned tuna and dried rice for the main course. Bill has gone up to a clean place to get water to heat for the rice. Then he shows us how to make a fire.

"This is the way to do it," he says, "the way the Indians would. A small fire, just big enough, and not so big that it drives you way back."

The fire is going in about one minute. Dry twigs are good tinder. A stone on each side, about six inches apart, to support the

pot of water, and soon we see the bubbles start to rise. We're at about 4000 foot elevation, so water boiling boils quicker than down where we live near the Bay, and not as hot, but that's okay. Dottie pours the rice into the water, lets it simmer for a minute, then covers it and pulls it off the flame.

"We'll just give it an extra minute or two," she says. "You can get your plates out pretty soon. I'll add the tuna as soon as the rice is soft, and then we can eat!"

No need to nudge us much. We all watch intently, and then, like a bunch of really hungry backpackers, we dig in, taking turns with the big spoon to get our share, until that pot is empty, and almost clean already.

Happy sounds. Smiles. Then, "What's for dessert?"

"Bill's favorite," Dottie says. "Mincemeat."

"Mincemeat?" I ask, puzzled. "In a pie?"

"Nope," Bill says, "just straight out of the package. Try it."

Dubious, I take the half inch slab he has cut for me. I bite into the mixture of apples and raisins. "Delicious!" I say.

"Ya like it, I guess," Bill says, smiling.

It's funny how some things which don't seem obvious, seem very much so once you've been shown how. Mincemeat becomes one of the staples of all of my trips from that day on.

After supper, it's talk and plans around our dinky little camp-fire, always a mesmerizing time on trips. Something about glowing

wood embers, sweet smoke rising, in an almost forbidden, almost sacred place, with people you have come to love through such arduous and shared adventures. Life made immediate, meaningful, precious. We all sleep well this night.

Next morning I awake to the sounds of animals rustling, snorting. I stick my head out of my sleeping bag. The burros have come back. Not afraid of us. Probably remembering somehow the people they used to belong to.

We're up, eat. "Today's for exploring," Bill says. "Which way? Take a look at the map."

We all look. White Creek, which we have been following from the top. Shinumo. Redwall Canyon, Burro Canyon.

"Why don't we head for Redwall Canyon?" I suggest. "Looks about a mile and a half to the entrance, and a gentle upgrade."

"That's what I was thinking too," Bill says. "And we can scout for another camping place. Look, there's a flatter spot," and he points to a place about a mile beyond Redwall.

"Good," the others agree. "Today, farther in, have a day to explore tomorrow, and then two days to go back up and out."

Packing our stuff is easy and the walk down the trail gives lots of views that you can't see when you're on top, outside of this grand canyon. Holy Grail Temple soars three thousand feet above us. Who gave it that name? But it seems to fit perfectly. There is something, some feeling, about being in this remote spot, so

beautiful, so beyond reality, that awakens almost holy thoughts. Perhaps it is that we are getting closer to the actual time of creation of these rocks the farther down we go. One billion years here, another billion plus years to go.

Two thousand feet below us, the Colorado River roars. The map says it's Shinumo Rapids. I cup my ears to hear the music better. My gaze wanders and I see holes in the rock walls. "Hey, look." I shout and point to a spot on the Redwall.

"Caves and mines," Bill says. "Lots of bats live in the caves, and what they call guano is what is mined. Really, just batshit, but it's used in making gunpowder."

"Still?" I ask.

"Don't know," Bill says. "But, probably. Not here anymore, but guano is a good source of the nitrates used in gunpowder."

Our goal then becomes finding a way up to a cave. But that proves way hard. What we do find are places where Indians lived.

"It must be a good water source," Dottie says. "Native peoples camped in the Grand Canyon when the weather on top was too cold—winter."

"Well, the map shows this is a year-round stream," Bob says.

We've been walking along the creek for an hour. The water has become faster and deeper. That's when the entrance to Redwall Canyon pops into view.

"Let's dump our packs here," Bill says. "Take water, lunch."

The exploring up Redwall is full of surprise flowers. Any place where there is a little cleft or shelf in the rock wall, flowers grow.

"Notice dinky flowers, if there's just a bit of dirt to catch the drops of water. Big flowers on the larger flats. Wish I had a flower book," Bob says.

"There's one we know," Phyllis says, pointing to the orange Globemallow.

"And I see Monkeyflowers," Dottie says. "They grow everywhere, well, not quite true, but we see them a lot in California."

"Flowers are like people," I say. "They grow where they are treated right."

Flowers, all colors of rock, abundant water, balmy weather, our own world. We exist here completely away from any benefits or difficulties of the world we've come from—the civilized world.

Somehow, that makes us more civilized I think. We are together. We need one another. We support each other.

After our rove of Redwall Canyon, we descend to our packs, and then move down stream to the place Bill had pointed out on the map in the morning. It proves to be another good camping place.

The stream has become more lively, jumping over rocks, making little pools here and there. In those pools, I see something moving.

"Do I need a fishing license?" I ask to no one in particular.

And I answer myself, "I don't even have a fishing pole."

My friends have heard me and come over to see what I am seeing.

"Those are trout," Bill says. "The Indians might use a spear to catch them. And my memory says that the native people who live here don't need a license to fish or hunt."

Feeling some urge, I say, "I'd just like to catch one, just to say I caught trout in the Grand Canyon. I have a plan."

I go to my pack to get a plastic bag. I poke a couple of holes in the bottom and then go to the stream and hold it under the water, downstream from where all those fish are swimming. Then, without any coaxing, a fish swims into the bag. "Got one!" I say.

I think Bill is impressed. "Hey, I can clean that and grill it tonight for supper. Maybe you can get one more."

"Gotcha!" I say as another swimmer finds the way into the bag. "I think the plastic is probably invisible to them," I add. "Catch and eat."

Fresh trout is a great addition to our supper of rice and sardines. And dessert? Vanilla pudding, self-setting. Easy to make with powdered milk and icy cold water. Easier to eat!

Sleep that night again comes fast. We're alive and content.

Exploring the next day, we find a place to almost swim. A pool where water from above cascades down. Maidenhair ferns growing along the rock walls. Cool shade, welcome as the day grows hotter the farther down into the canyon we go.

The pool is only a couple of feet deep, gravel on the bottom, but almost ten feet across. Plenty of room for five hot hikers to cool off.

Bob has his pants and shoes and sox off first. In goes one foot. And out! "Cold! Cold!" he shouts. But then he puts both feet in and the rest of him goes in slowly.

"Can't be that cold," I say, walking in next. "Chilly! Okay, cold, but just find a nice warm rock to sit on." I do. And then Bill and Dottie and Phyllis join us.

After our swim, refreshed, we explore farther along the Bass Trail, down on the Tonto.

"Hey, look at that," Bill says, bringing us all back into our little group. "A cairn. I wonder why? Let's take a look."

The cairn is about two feet high. Obviously man-made. We drop packs, wander over to where Bill is looking, then fishing with his hand inside the tower of rock.

"Uh, oh," Dottie says. "Be aware that your fingers might look pretty tempting to whatever may be living in that hole!"

"Yeah. I was thinking of that," Bill says, as he pulls out a baking powder can. He screws the lid off, reaches inside and pulls out a folded paper, rolled to fit perfectly inside that can.

"Look at this," he says. "Bass's claim to this place. Now we know why the trail has that name."

Bill puts the paper back into the can, and the can back into that crevice in the rock. Let someone else have the fun of discovering it on some other day.

Back at our camp that night, we eat, sit, talk, sing. Home on the Range. This Land is your Land. Songs we learned as kids, but songs that seem to make more sense on this night, in this place.

Next morning we talk about the plan for going out. We all look at the map.

"We have about eight miles to go," Bill says. "Maybe nine. And it looks like 3500 feet of elevation gain. We know that's what makes it harder than just a walk. And up takes more energy than down.

"I think we should aim for getting to that spot on the Supai where we rested on the first day coming down. That's a bit more than half way, and it'd be good to get that climb done. Just remember to fill your water bottles every time you see a seep. There were places I noticed coming down. I'll point them out."

I'm feeling some gratitude for Bill, the guy who planned this trip and has been willing to be our leader. Me, I'm just a guy who can follow pretty well. Without someone like Bill, I would not be in this place.

We get up, put packs on, and this time, I'm put in the front. A good idea, I realize. I am the smallest person, and have learned on other trips that I cannot go as fast as people with longer legs.

We've also learned some things about this Grand Canyon, and about ourselves and each other.

The trip up, now over familiar territory, is hot and sweaty sometimes, but, with the right pace, my pace I guess, it seems easier.

We camp on that spot on the Supai. We find the seep that we should have found before. Trees growing were the clue. Trees grow where there is water.

Next day we get to the top at Swamp Point. We gaze at where we've been. Reluctant to leave, we sit. "It's only four o'clock," Bill says. "We can drive back to De Motte Park and camp there. What'dya think?"

We look around, at each other. I'm thinking of what a hamburger might taste like. Funny how the mundane foods achieve some kind of importance when you've gone without for a few days.

Finally, we agree wordlessly, take off boots, smelly sox and sweaty clothes. Put on the cleaner ones we've left behind in the car.

Then we're back in the car, bumping along the road, Bill in the driver's seat. I doze. I dream.