

Virginia Creepers

By Nigel

I smiled an evil grin. My story had come together perfectly, and now my little brother looked like he would wet his pants. All I had to do was finish it.

“And so, to this very day, this trail still horrifies all who dare to travel it. Its so creepy, its called the Virginia Creeper Trail.”

A sign of sheer terror registered on Phillip’s face.

“That’s where we’re going this weekend!”

“I know.” I replied, and with a smirk, I left him in a state of utter fear.

At the time I had no clue what the Virginia Creeper Trail was, I only knew we were riding bikes on it, and that it’s name was enough to start stories that make Phil’s pants wet. Anything called Creeper has to be cool...Right?

We arrived in the parking lot at 6:15, and since we were 15 minutes late, naturally we were the first ones there. The entire troop went through the routine of getting patrol gear, picking a vehicle to ride in, and loading all the stuff. With that out of the way, we hit the open road. My car was driven by Bob, with Cory G. at shotgun, Tim and Adam in the middle section of the minivan, and Cory Spell and I crammed in the back like dirty clothes under the bed when your mom walks in. It’s OK to admit it, we all do it.

The ride up was pretty uneventful. We made 1 stop for breakfast and gas, and another at the entrance gate of the park, for 15 minuets each. We beat up Tim, listened to crazy political CD’s, and stared blankly at the countryside. ‘Nuff said.

We arrived at our campsite, unpacked, and attempted to put up our tents. Attempted. The tent I brought from home had a problem. One of the poles was snapped. Tim in Adam, who had to sleep in it, weren’t happy. 30 minutes and a roll of duct tape later, my patrol had a standing structure that looked “Like an Alien Space Craft.” to Joel. Further attempts to improve the tent were close to being finished, but duct tape is-Gasp- not enough to solve the problem completely. So, suffering only minor injuries to our pride, we still slept that night a slightly misshapen tent.

We loaded up about an hour later And drove to the bike rental place where we were fitted with bikes and helmets. From there we were shuttled to a location 17 miles up the trail. We hopped on our bikes and raced off, after the customary Troop Photo thanks to Joel. The trail was a wide gravel path, about as wide as a single driving lane on the Highway. The “front group” was me, Tim, Corey, Phillip, and Adam. Tim and Adam were ahead most of the time, jumping off bumps in the trail. Several fantastic crashes occurred.

The first was Adam, who, in classic redneck style said “Hey ya’ll watch this...!!” Directly after that, he slammed on the front brakes of his bike and

executed an almost perfect front flip. He still has the scars to prove it. Bob set the record for face plants, ironically ending up on Adam. The “fast group” had already finished and were waiting on the “stragglers”. Bob comes riding up, and without warning, hits the speed bump two feet in front of us, slams on the front breaks, and flips forward onto the curb. After a panicked few seconds, everyone laughs, including Bob. Apparently, he didn’t see the speed bump, and panicked when he went over it, causing him to lose control, and flip. Poor Corey, the son of the humiliated Bob, could only shake his head.

When we drove back to the campsite, the cold really began to set in. It was really cold. To combat these conditions, we made gallons of hot chocolate, and ate really hot spaghetti. We gathered around the fire until our toes could at least *feel* again, before we hit the hay. My patrol went to bed at around 8 at night, a first for the Sharks. And I’m glad to report that the Alien tent stayed up all night.

In the morning, I was struck with the realization that I was in a lose-lose situation. I could either stay in my warm sleeping bag, or I could get out into the freezing cold. The problem with staying in the warm sleeping bag was that it would turn into a wet sleeping bag. I stayed firmly in my warm cocoon, determined to defeat nature and my full bladder. I stayed warm for about five minuets. And by then the “call of the wild” was ringing off the hook. I found that eventually, will power is nothing compared to a full bladder.

The oatmeal was fantastic that morning, mainly because it was hot. The Lynx patrol had a wee bit of trouble with the chocolate pancakes, so we graciously offered to eat any ones they burnt. If it has chocolate in it, I’ll eat it. Period.

We packed and left, with glazed looks on our faces. Someone could have mistaken us for a bunch of Doughnuts. (Get it? GLAZED! Ha!) The stop at taco bell was much appreciated, even if the rest of the trip was with the windows down. Mexican food is filling, but makes for an “interesting” car ride full of the magical sounds we all know so well.

After the reenergizing Mexican food, we passed the time by waving to every living thing that want past our window. I mean every thing. People, dogs, truckers, cows, if you can name it, we waved at it. We got varied responses, from grins to frowns, from waves to honks, from nods to gang symbols. It felt good to spread joy to all those on the road.

We waved all the way into the church parking lot, where we unloaded and left. Yet another successful trip went off without a hitch. Yup Folks, it was a fun one.

Now if you will excuse me, I’ve got to go. The ‘ol bladder hasn’t been the same since Taco Bell.