

The sleeper compartment on the train ride was a yawner.

When we sat facing each other our knees touched. Any possible comfort swayed this way and that way as the train danced to the rhythm of a lullaby. The window was wide enough for viewing through, though. City parks were left behind as farmlands became center stage easing into small glimpses of water being swallowed up by trees hugging the river bank. The window was the only item in the sleeper coach true to size.

Our surprise must have shown as we opened the sliding glass door to our compartment on the mighty railroad ride, an adventure from Portland, OR. to Montana. Our jaws dropped, allowing an opening for any fly on the wall. “Where will we sit? Where will we sleep? Where will be changing our clothes? Where was all that “room” shown in the picture shows? Those old time movies do put us in a make-believe world. However, I believed there would be room to move around, just a bit.

The train compartment was adequate, really. It was just the notions splashing in my mind about how spacious the seating would be for us. My delight at going on an overnight train ride took a dive as we crossed the threshold, bumping hips, arms and heads. We sat down drinking our complementary water from a bottle wishing we had a different kind of bottle from which to toast each other on our ride to Glacier National Park. My husband and I were starting a week-long adventure, counting the clickety-clack of the wheels going over the railroad connectors there and back. We would then stay at a railroad theme lodge near the Park. We were riding the rails with 30 or so other railroad groupies. Some of us were feeling scrunched together, others reveling in the ambiance, the smell of the greasy wheel put to rail. Space was a word. Riding the Rails was an experience.

We like trains, my husband and I. We like the sound of the whistle at night when we turn over in bed at home and tug for more blanket covers. The lonesome middle of the night whistle puts us back to sleep.

Now, the sunset filled the left-over space in our compartment with orange, yellow and red colors bouncing from window to mirror to faces as the train rumbled through painted landscapes. Tension eased. Thoughts of confinement scattered as a mosaic masterpiece moseyed past our window.

We were drowsy with sleep. Our bunks were made up as our dilemma climbed. The top bunk was akin to a MRI canister. We would take turns: Me, on the way to the Park, then my husband on the way home. I was ready to go home when I discovered that I couldn't sit up while on the top. Getting into pj's would be an exercise in aerobics. Confinement wouldn't last, though.

To be continued...Lana Russ..part one