

Loose threads..part three

My hands were full of baggage. No room for a gun, yet.

Our destination was a drop off location without a depot. The high spot on the track marked the spot. A van or two picked us up, luggage and all, and carted us the two blocks to our hotel, the railroad themed paradise. We stayed three nights.

Our 11 hour bus tour the next day covered miles of hills, valleys and eons of flora and fauna. Our guide, Jeremiah, was a member of the Blackfeet Indian Nation. He informed us of the uses for the wildflowers and told to us Indian folklore and stories he had learned from childhood about the hills in the area.

After the tour bus broke down at one of the three lodges we were serenaded by a worker washing the floor while our railroad host played show tunes on the baby grand piano in the lobby. I felt as if I was in a Shirley Temple movie. It wasn't long before our van was fixed, at least, so that we could make it to the reservation for another van. In the new van Jeremiah lighted a wreath of twisted sweet grass while chanting and Indian purification. He swirled the smoking sweet grass around each of us explaining afterward that "this will call on the good to surround us and send out the evil". We should then have an engine that would no longer cough and sputter. We then were given an unplanned tour of his homeland. He told stories of the early Indian meeting with the early white man. He sang to us Indian Chants and explained the meaning of the words. It was the highlight of the trip...until the train ride back home when the man on level one went berserk.

At the lodge we were cautioned to stay near the lodge. A couple of bears were spotted nearby earlier that day. We could, however, sit on the deck and watch the cool, blue water wiggle its way down river. Ice cream shakes all around refreshed us and of course a tour of the gift shop took care of many holiday gifts for the year. We made it back to paradise for a hot dinner and early lights out.

On Saturday we packed our belongings and put them in the van. Many of us decided to walk to where train track meets high spot in the road. There we waited for the train to pick us up and take us to the East Glacier depot near a lodge. There, we combed the village of cute shops passing the eight hours before the main train arrived to choo-choo us back home.

We walked up and down Main Street peering into stores but not finding fabric fat quarters to touch and to own. We walked through alleyways and saw a lady sunbathing in her back yard. She said, "watch out for bears. I saw two playing in my back yard a few hours ago."

We dashed back to Main Street and went into an art gallery. "You can take the painting home," said the art dealer to a tourist wanting to purchase an item, "and send a check to me in the mail." How trusting these villagers are, I had thought, until I used the restroom in the lodge and found a gun resting on the back of a toilet.

To be continued...Lana Russ

