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It was fun

Before the new school year started a little over two years ago, my mom and aunt wanted to go hiking near a waterfall. That Friday morning, my parents, brother, sister and I got up much earlier than we were accustomed to so we could get packed and dressed to go. As I looked at my hiking gear and boots, I told myself there would be no need for it since a set trail already existed. Plus, I knew I wasn't going to do anything stupid because the rest of my family was going to be there, and I didn't want to get them hurt or in trouble. Boy, was I wrong.

On the car ride to the trail, I fell asleep and had no recollection of where I was. When we finally arrived at the site, we each grabbed our belongings from the car. All I brought was a small backpack. As I closed the trunk, I noticed a rope but decided I didn't need it. We made our way to the path, and I ended up having to carry my little cousin in his baby carrier. We began the journey down long trail. After only a few minutes of walking, I realized that it was a terrible idea not to have worn my hiking boots because it just rained, making the ground not only muddy, but slippery. The trail down the hill was incredibly narrow. A single slip and you wouldn't be able to stop until you hit a tree or the rock base. Slowly, we made our way along the trail and saw that at the bottom, we would have to cross a river. The river wasn't deep; the highest point was about three and a half to four feet. But because it had rained non-stop for the past week, the stream was powerful. There wasn't much solid ground, either. Our only hope for crossing the river safely

was a medium sized rocks that could barely be seen due to the muddy water. Observing what lie ahead, I braced onto my baby cousin with one hand and used the other for balance.

I cautiously made my way across the river and discovered a waterfall smaller than the one we were planning to go to. Being the responsible kids we are, my cousin and I decided to climb it. He made his way up the left side which happened to be dangerously steep with an abundance of branches and rocks. Although this waterfall may have been smaller than the one we intended to go to, its force was intense. I handed my baby cousin to my aunt and began to travel up the right side. It was easy to climb, but there was a vertical cliff at the top. The path towards the top was obstructed by a large jagged rock, was covered with muddy ground, and had a dying tree next to the cliff. I climbed the hill with no problem, using the tree to pull myself up. My cousin and I walked to the edge of the waterfall to take some pictures. We pushed our way further up until deciding we couldn't climb any higher without equipment. We stopped to take a break. Sitting where I was, I refilled my bottle with the water from the waterfall and let it pass through the filter.

Before climbing downwards to the base, I threw my backpack and hat to the bottom so they wouldn't bother me on the return. Halfway down the second part of the climb, I noticed a bit of consistently steady ground that led to the bottom and decided it would be a good idea to use it to slide down the last 6 to 7 meters. I threw myself onto the surface. What I didn't realize, though, was that it was far too steep to slide down on. Not only this, but the ground was saturated with rain. It was too late now. The decision had already been made. I started sliding fast – too fast. Luckily, I was able to slow myself down by digging my feet and hands into the mud. I landed hard and got all scratched up because of the branches and rocks. My cousin followed, but he wasn't hurt by the drop. We collected our belongings and headed down the right side.

As we walked alongside the cliff to continue our path downwards, I slipped and landed on my stomach with my feet hanging off the cliff. I made my best efforts to stand but only slid further down. My only hope was to grasp onto a root and pull myself up, but the root snapped. My arm twisted and I fell off the cliff. In midair, I flipped onto my back, hit the side of the cliff, and continued to fall towards the bottom. Trying to stop, I pushed myself onto my side, barely missing an enormous rock, and planted my feet in a small dip in the ground coming to an instant stop.

I stood up and attempted to walk it off while calling out to my cousin to be careful and go slow. I sat on a rock to calm down and catch my breath. My mom yelled asking if I was okay and how anyone could possibly be so stupid. After a short break, I stood up, put the baby carrier back on and yelled “lets get her done”. Then, we all walked to the main waterfall. This one we didn’t climb, because we would surely die if we tried. Instead, we played in the water, had a picnic, and hiked back, making sure to stay on the trail.