

# **THE BEST DAY AND THE WORST DAY OF MY LIFE**

## **THE WALK by Anona Fitzgerald**

I have been lucky in my life to have had many best days and few worst days; this was one of the best and one of the worst.

Being a fair-weather walker, conditions have to be perfect, it must be dry, not too hot, not too cold and most importantly flat or downhill. My sister on the other hand is a mountain goat in disguise and will walk anywhere, anytime whatever the weather. Many years ago, one day she persuaded me to walk with her, taking into consideration my requirements, we left one car at the top of a hill and the other at the bottom. Perfect.

The intended walk was about 10 miles along Sarn Helen, the old Roman road, the weather was gorgeous with blue skies and a light cooling breeze, the views were magnificent, you can't beat Y Bannau Brycheiniog in the spring or any time of year really, the wildlife was abundant with friendly wild horses, sheep with their new lambs, skylarks and Red Kites. We stopped for our picnic lunch by a waterfall which would not have been out of place in the Chelsea Flower Show. Perfect.

As we were walking along the path we see some activity in the distance, when we get closer, we realise it was a film set in one of the small valleys. Too good to miss so we detoured, they were filming Lorna Doone, apparently Exmoor was too crowded so they opted for this wild and remote area. We admired the very realistic houses, chatted with the crew and some extras for a while before resuming our walk, happy with this diversion we wonder perhaps a new career in acting might be the way to go if you have the chance to work in such beautiful surroundings as this! As we get closer to my car an awful feeling washes over me, I look for my keys frantically, no keys, I had left them in my sister's car. Not so perfect.

I am not happy, my sister certainly is not happy, our lunch is eaten, we are left with very little water, a few dry biscuits and the prospect of walking 10 miles back up the hill to the car. It is hot, we sit in the shade of a tree to

decide what to do next. During the latter half of our walk, after we had left the film set, an occasional lorry or car would pass carrying crew with various supplies, maybe we could get a lift back to the film set which would half our return walk. We flagged down the next vehicle in which was Eric, our very own Knight in a shiny Landrover who thought the whole story was hilarious, he very kindly said he would take us back to our car at the top of the hill. We thanked him and explained that the track beyond the film set was too rough to navigate, well, this must have unleashed the stunt driver in him, off we went at breakneck speed, past the film set and on to the rocky track. What did the Romans do for us? Well, they certainly didn't build this Roman Road with a Land Rover in mind!! On we went, progress was slow but Eric was determined. On several occasions there were only three wheels on the ground, at one point only two, we are very near to overturning, Eric shouts for us to shuffle to the other side of the seat to bring the vehicle back to earth, we land with a thud. At this point Eric concedes defeat and says we would have to walk the rest of the way. We were very grateful to him and just a little relieved to get out in one piece and walk the rest of the way to the car. The next few miles were long and hard and seemed endless but we were rewarded with a lukewarm drink of water and half a bag of crisps, delicious. What a day.

One of the best days of my life? Definitely. The joy of walking in beautiful hills on a sunny day with my sister, my friend, enjoying the simple things in life.

One of the worst days of my life? At the time I would have said yes, how could I have been so silly but on reflection perhaps not, it could have been a lot worse.

My sister and I are still good friends.