

The Waterfall

It was the middle of July when we drove way up into the mountains and backpacked up a creek. The banks were lined with poison oak, so we waded through the cold water - hip deep for my parents, chest deep for us - our backpacks balanced on our heads.	12 22 33 44 48
We set up camp on a sandy flat beside a pool in a ring of boulders. What a swimming hole! My brother and I swam, diving and tumbling in the diamond-clear water.	63 73 81
We hiked farther upstream, against little rapids, picking our way among slippery boulders. Suddenly we heard a roaring sound, and as we came around a bend, we saw what was causing it.	88 97 110 113
A huge waterfall! It rose high above us, higher than the tallest pines. Only a few wet ferns clung to the steep rock slope. A rainbow glowed in the roaring mist.	123 135 144
"Wow!" I said. "Let's climb it!"	150
"No way," said Dad. "End of the road."	158
We turned back, and that night we had a cookout, and watched the sparks climb to the stars. I couldn't stop thinking about the waterfall - and how much I'd like to climb it.	169 179 190 191
Later, snuggled in my bag, I heard a growl, and a rustle in the brush... then finally fell asleep, a little scared.	203 213
In the morning, we found tracks.	219
"A mountain lion," said Dad. "It must have come down for water."	229 231