

Grand Canyon North Rim

camped atop The Transept ledge
gaping gorges wrap around
Kaibab limestone ancient seas
sacred Kachina Peaks

creature comforts aplenty on this lofty perch
pancakes eggs sausage coffee
a hot deli sandwich
soft ice cream cones pay phones
bundled campfire wood
hot showers too

a warming fire highlights Todd and Stormy
young Oregonians through and through
slipped between college and the rest of their lives
road biking America
honoring people's kindness
sharing their adventurous spirit

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a lone Kaibab squirrel
white fluffy tail
tufted pointy ears
prancing along the forest floor
a good omen

life is good in this wood
solo hiking on this plateau plane
no hellos no howdys no how-ya-doin's not here
sixty beats a minute
frosted meadows aglow in morning light
ample shade along the trail
spruces and firs breathe in breathe out
bracken fern and grasses lush and green
sunlit quivering aspen leaves waving to passerby
grouse thunder-flush roost on tree limbs unafraid

mid-morning a dark chocolate rush
warm autumn sun bathes a montane forest
casting blue shadow upon De Motte Park
camp is set
food bag hung
slumber soon then homeward bound

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George Washington didn't sleep here
Edward Abbey did
two chairs
one table
one wood stove
one bed
one dead headless porcupine

like Beat poets Snyder and Kerouac
Abbey stood a North Rim fire tower watch
tree top high
readin' thunder clouds
watchin' for smokes
flyin' like a turkey vulture
tappin' out prose and poetry on a Royal typewriter
ever the prickly defender of pristine deserts
slickrock grand chasms wild rivers
landscapes without voices

Cactus Ed imagined another life
gliding on clouds
riding thermals on buzzard wings
but a headless porcupine
whoops

The Arizona Trail: Passages in Poetry

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