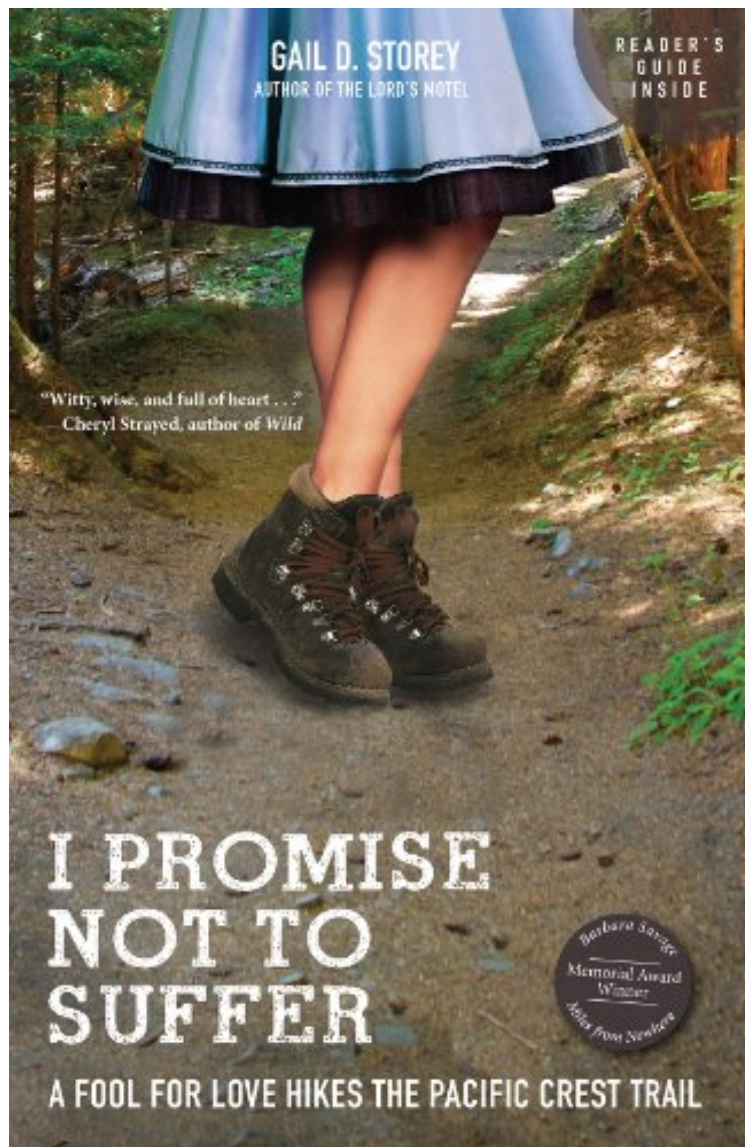


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I Promise Not To Suffer: A Fool for Love Hikes the Pacific Crest Trail

Gail Storey

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#583157 in BooksColor: Paperback Mountaineers Books 2013-03-14 2013-03-14Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.75 x 5.50 x .501, .62 #File Name: 1594857458224 pagesTrue StoryFilled with humor mixed with trail agonyCan a novice hiker conquer the PCT and stay in love with her hubby? Yes and no.Gear Listings at the endWonderful book for the prospective thruhiker | File size: 73.Mb

Gail Storey : I Promise Not To Suffer: A Fool for Love Hikes the Pacific Crest Trail before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised I Promise Not To Suffer: A Fool for Love Hikes the Pacific Crest Trail:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. A literary gem that succeeds on multiple levels. By Frank Troy As a retired college English professor who appreciates good writing, I was very pleased to discover Gail Storey's *I Promise Not to Suffer*. It's a literary gem that succeeds on multiple levels. At the physical level it gives the reader a vicarious experience of hiking 900 miles on the Pacific Crest Trail. It describes in rich, precise prose the beauty of changing landscapes and the effort required to hike, with a heavy pack, through extremes of climate and terrain. At the psychological and spiritual level, it details the narrator's progress in mindfulness as she learns to surrender to the moment and accept the natural world as it is. Her opening line tells us she has not always been comfortable with things as they are: I never much cared for Nature, or rather, thought it okay as long as it stayed outside. At the beginning of her hike, she finds much to complain about because the natural world is not as she wants it to be. By the end of her hike she accepts the natural world as it is. In the chapter *What's the Meaning of your Pilgrimage*, at a moment of exhaustion and clarity on the trail, she describes the before and after states this way: I was still alive, but oddly more so than before. Mist rose from the lake and I saw through it as if through myself, through light, air, flowers, trees. Beetles and ants scurried in the dirt and joined us in our silence. It seemed so long ago I believed they were out to get me, that dirt would kill me, that heat, cold, water, and ice were problems to overcome. I'd come so far, these nearly nine hundred miles (168). In this moment of acceptance and transcendence, she feels at one with Nature. Though she had to drop out of the hike shortly after this epiphany (her husband continued on), she returned to her Houston apartment as a person changed by the spirit of acceptance. She discovers she has opened up to a new level of selfless love: At a loss with myself, I felt soft with others. Everyday kindnesses came easily helping a neighbor carry groceries from her car to her apartment, righting an overturned plant in the hallway, kneeling down to speak with a child. Like sun warming cold mountain air, fierce tenderness pervaded the air we breathed (175). When she learned that her mother had taken a turn for the worse with lung cancer, the author finds she has finally shed the emotions that formerly made her relationship with her mother difficult: I loved her as she was. I saw her quietude as softness now, instead of distance. She was as much a mystery to me as she had always been. But initiated into mystery by my strange peace at not completing the trail, by the unfathomable love within and around us, I loved the mystery itself. It drew me close to Mother Earth, my mother, Nature, my own nature (178). This is as good a way as any to describe the mystery of achieving stillness and harmony with the universe at it is, the goal of mindfulness. After reading this book I found a clear statement of this theme in Suzuki Roshi's book, *A Beginner's Guide to Meditation*: The purpose of studying Buddhism is to study ourselves and to forget ourselves. When we forget ourselves, we actually are the true activity of the big existence, or reality itself. When we realize this fact, there is no problem whatsoever in this world, and we can enjoy our life without feeling any difficulties. The purpose of our practice is to be aware of this fact. In this book, Gail Storey makes hiking the PCT a literary symbol for overcoming obstacles and coming to terms with one's self and one's place in the universe, a very high-order literary challenge. She develops and employs this symbol with consummate skill. *I Promise* is a deep and powerful narrative, beautifully thought out and beautifully crafted. Highly recommended for anyone interested in the PCT or in mindfulness.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. But I was not disappointed. There are a plethora of through-hiking books that ... By Customer An addict of the "Through-hiking" genre, I did not know what to expect of this book... But I was not disappointed. There are a plethora of through-hiking books that are narrative in nature... at times clearly written by an individual with far more experience hiking than in writing. On the flipside, "*I Promise Not To Suffer*" reaches far beyond that. She intertwines her struggles on the trail with struggles she has gone through in life off of the trail. This is how our minds work... we hike and our minds wander to what might be happening at home, what might be happening with our parents, what might be happening in the future. As a physician (Gail's husband is also a physician), I can understand the disillusionment he felt in his career. That understanding likely draws me in more than I might be otherwise. But marital issues, parental issues, self-doubt issues are felt by many. And Gail Storey voices these in this book. I told my husband this book might be more about relationships than the PCT itself... But then I think through-hikes tend to be a lot about relationships... family relationships, relationships with hikers met on the trail, relationships with the trail angels that support hikers on their way. If you are looking to read about a woman who pulls herself up by her hiking bootstraps and triumphantly walks 2650 miles end to end, look elsewhere. If you want to see the personal struggle of an individual on a journey, this might just be the book for you.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Not just about hiking, but loving and living. By Susan A. Lieberman I am a Four Seasons kind of gal. I wouldn't plan a hike up a mountain, let alone several thousand miles, and yet I loved reading Gail Storey's book. The crazy drive and determination, the dangers and mishaps and glories that Gail and her husband encountered on the Pacific Coast Trail were interesting to me in a highly voyeuristic way. But what I really liked was the interior work that was revealed, the look inside a marriage that on the surface might seem unlikely and yet zings with passion, the shadows of childhood shaping two capable adults, the tensions that get unleashed and then resolved in such mature ways. This book is funny and serious, eloquent and down and dirty, fast and meditative all in one. It's a lovely read. I think, by the way, that it's a great gift for anyone taking off anywhere on a plane and needing a good read, man, woman, college student or senior citizen.

Gail Storey was definitely not a hiker, never mind a camper. But when her husband, Porter, leaves his job as a hospice

doctor to hike the 2,663-mile Pacific Crest Trail from Mexico to Canada, she refuses to let him go alone--even though the prospect of leaving their comfortable Houston home, hiking twenty miles a day while popping anti-depressants and hormones, and sleeping outside for six months terrifies her. Carrying Porter's handmade ultralight equipment, they sizzle in the Mojave Desert, nearly drown fording a swollen river, kick steps up icy mountains in the High Sierra, and stumble through the lava fields of Oregon. With every step and switchback, as the trials of the trail test and deepen their relationship, Gail and Porter each walk into the question Who am I? Gail, confronting dangerous weight loss and her mother's prolonged illness back home, feels herself irrevocably changed by life on the trail. She faces down a mountain lion and fierce alpine storms, alternately frightened by nature's power and inspired by its profound force--finding a wisdom that three master's degrees and a life in the city never taught her. This journey of harrowing hilarity and reluctant revelations will be loved by active hikers (appendices include details of their unique ultralight gear and other essential how-to information), fans of female adventure stories, and those just as happy at home kicking back with a glass of champagne.

Of the many books that I have read about hiking the Pacific Crest Trail, none have captured the trail experience from so many different perspectives. Single hikers, couples, and those who stay behind will all enjoy Gail Storey's account of the challenges, the beauty, and the PCT community found along the way."---Liz Bergeron, Executive Director and CEO, Pacific Crest Trail Association. At times wrenching memoir, at times hilarious, *I Promise Not to Suffer* pulls no punches and has a wicked sense of fun. Storey reminds me again of what is possible with a big imagination, a dose of scrappy courage, and a lot of love. ---Peter Heller, author of *The Dog Stars* and *Kook* Some have called Gail Storey the Nora Ephron of the wilderness. With her own unique wit, Storey shares Ephron's commitment to creating and tending a long, nourishing marriage. *I Promise Not to Suffer* is a portrait of a union that does not fray or break under pressure but is forged, toughened, and tenderized. - --Sara Davidson, author of *Leap!*, *Loose Change*, and *The December Project* Witty, wise, and full of heart, Gail Storey's winning memoir of her hike on the Pacific Crest Trail at the age of fifty-six is a book for every one who ever dreamed of taking the road less traveled. *I Promise Not to Suffer* is as inspiring as it is hilarious, as poignant as it is smart. It's one of those oh-please-don't-let-it-end books. I'd carry it in my backpack anywhere ---Cheryl Strayed, author of *Wild* About the Author Gail D. Storey is the author of *I Promise Not to Suffer: A Fool for Love Hikes the Pacific Crest Trail*, Winner of the Barbara Savage Award from The Mountaineers Books (2013). Her first novel, *The Lord's Motel* (Persea Books, NY), was praised by the New York Times Book as "a tale of unwise judgments and wise humor." Her second novel, *God's Country Club* (Persea Books, NY) was a Barnes Noble Discover Great New Writers Selection. She has won many awards, and her fiction, nonfiction, and poetry have been published in numerous magazines. Her literary papers are archived in the University of Houston Libraries Special Collections. Formerly administrative director of the University of Houston Creative Writing Program, she is now a hoopdancer and comic performance artist. She is married to Porter Storey, MD FACP FAAHPM, a national leader in hospice and palliative medicine. Together they bicycled on their tandem from Maine to San Diego, and now live in Boulder, Colorado.