

The Idaho Bigfoot Incident

By Vivian Wagner

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The woman in line for tickets to the Ohio Bigfoot Conference at the Salt Fork State Park Lodge talked loudly to those around her—a flannel-wearing young couple, a sullen man in a camo ballcap, and me—about the time she saw a baby Bigfoot hit by a truck.

“I was driving my big rig on the interstate in Idaho,” she said. “Right in front of me, I seen the little furry fellow run out into the road. The truck in front of me hit him. Bam! I thought at first it was a kid in his mom’s fur coat, and that she would be really mad, first that he was wearing her fur coat, and then that he’d gotten himself killed.”

She spoke matter-of-factly, as if her story made all the sense in the world, her snake-print polyester shirt shimmering as she talked. I listened, trying not to let on that I was undercover, that I didn’t believe in Bigfoot, that I just wanted to get to know those who did. She looked at me shrewdly, like she was on to me. The more she looked at me, the more I tried to seem like a believer. I wasn’t sure I was pulling it off.

“The other trucker and I brought our flashlights out and looked, but all we seen was some bloody hair,” she said. “No boy in a fur coat. That’s when it dawned on me that the boy weren’t no boy, but a baby Bigfoot. And that a shadow I seen near the boy weren’t no shadow, but a mama Bigfoot. And she must’ve drug that baby off into the forest before we even got there.”

“Wow,” flannel girl said. “That’s incredible.” She looked at her boyfriend, and he squeezed her hand in agreement. They’d told us earlier they were staying in a tent at the campground and had gone squatching in the woods the night before. They’d heard a few suspicious knocks and howls, but hadn’t seen anything.

Snake-print woman nodded sagely.

“It was,” she said. “The damnedest thing I ever seen in my life. And it’s too bad, because I was headed to my first Bigfoot conference, and it would have been something to show up there and say ‘Hey, look at my dead baby Bigfoot!’”

Camo ballcap guy spoke up.

“How’d you know it wasn’t a bear?” he said, with the suspicious nature of a professional squatcher. You never believe any sighting until you’ve gotten all the facts, and preferably a footprint casting or two.

The woman laughed. “A bear?” she asked, incredulously. “Would a bear be walking up on two legs?”

He shrugged. “Yeah,” he said. “I guess that’s true enough.”

“By God, that’s true enough,” she said, her blouse ruffling in indignation. “I know a baby Bigfoot when I see one, and that, sir, was one.”

We were all silent for a minute, taking in the momentousness of her sighting, the tragedy that she hadn’t been able to produce the corpse, the irrefutable truth of the dead baby Bigfoot. She looked hard at me.

“What do you think?” she asked.

I paused, trying to find something true to say. Because I liked this woman. I liked flannel couple and ballcap guy. And part of me really wanted to believe. I felt like I used to feel as a kid

when I went to my friend's Mormon church in the California desert. I didn't know about all the Jesus stuff, and I always declined when asked for a testimony, but I sure liked the nice people, the cookies after the service, the calm coolness of the sanctuary on hot summer days.

“I think it's amazing,” I said, finally. “I wish I could have been there.”