

Beatlick Joe Speer

TREK 33

In 1969 the film "If It's Tuesday, This Must Be Belgium" presents a fast-paced comedy about Americans on vacation in Europe.

Devils Tower in Wyoming is one of the sacred rocks of North America. Why is this rock that rises abruptly from its base and looms 1,267 feet above the Belle Fourche River called Devils Tower? It could be God's Penis or Thor's Thumb.

The Indians have their legends as to how the rock was formed. A hunting party took refuge on top of a knoll as a grizzly bear clawed the surrounding area in a futile attempt to devour the warriors. When the bear relinquished its carnivorous quest, the Indians were left atop the rocky tower to starve.

The prairie dogs have their own version of how the tower was created. According to them, an ancient race of stalwart Neo-phytes dug a huge hole in the ground to bury their plates of ore. They collected their excrement and packed it over the plates until it hardened like a sedimentary rock.

After centuries of shit piling higher, the monolith was visible from miles around.

The arrival of the first prairie dogs into the area brought extensive digging. They dug until they found the plates and scratched them horrendously. When the plates were later discovered by a sun-baked wanderer and deciphered, the rodents cuneiform was put into a book and a religious sect established.

I camped out for two days near the sacrosanct stone, walking clockwise around its base and visiting with a few of the ninety plus bird species that have been sighted at this national monument.

The solemn stone collected heat during the day and slowly released it at night. Laying hands on the rock at night, I received images from the Paleozoic era.

I became an absorber of rock vibrations, picking up instantaneous geomorphic communications from Half Dome in Yosemite, Ship Rock in New Mexico, Arches in Utah, Ayers Rock in Australia and the brooding sentinels of stone on Easter Island.

I was at the rock bottom of Devils Tower, using it as an antenna. The coyotes howled their nocturnal pronouncements. The prairie dogs scraped under the earth. All seemed serene and yet all was in flux around the great stone.

I felt the tower tremble. It blasted off the earth like a rocket ship, leaving me on the rim of a vast crater. I fell asleep and awoke at dawn near Meteor Crater in Arizona.