

## Backstory for the Castle Rock Mountain...

There is a lot of activity on the mountain, both human and animal. At the beginning of the trail, on the switchbacks are two older gentlemen hiking. The one is calling up to the other one saying "you told me this was an easy hike, this is not easy my friend! On the little bridge crossing the stream is a man checking his map and compass, while a mountain lioness on the cliff above is watching and wondering if he would make a good meal for her cubs! On the rock ahead of him is his friend, enjoying the view while waiting patiently for him to catch up. The woman at the curve in the trail just before the steeper section of trail is yelling up to her friends, thanking them for waiting for her. That couple is enjoying the hike, hoping to get to the top of Castle Rock. Up ahead where the trail takes a turn away from the creek is an amorous couple enjoying a few kisses.

On the cliff face of the part of the mountain wherefore it gets its name are three climbing buddies, two are climbing and the third is belaying them with a climbing rope. On top of Castle Rock we see a family of four enjoying the panoramic view. Near them, on the other side of the American and Colorado flags are some visitors from relatively flat Kansas, thrilled to be able to be up so high and able to see so far! Below the climbers are a small herd of bighorn sheep, moving along to find some green grass to feed on.

Above the cabin is a mama black bear trying to keep her two rambunctious cubs from hurting themselves as they play on the rocks. Down at the cabin the rest of the bear family smells food! Papa bear is trying to force his way through the locked door while a cub is enjoying the new sensation of a rocking chair. Below the road to the cabin are some Elk enjoying the beautiful day, unaware that a male mountain lion perched on the cliff above is wondering which young calf would make for a delightful meal. The stark skeletons of trees are the remains of a small forest fire started many years ago by hot embers from a Santa Fe steam locomotive. A thunderstorm's heavy rain drenched the fire and put it out before it could reach the cabin. Down below, just above the one tunnel portal and a rare sight to see, Bigfoot is on the prowl, Maybe some passengers in one of the trains will see him and be excited to tell their friends back home!

Coming out of the tunnel on the Santa Fe mainline is a Doodlebug. You can lookup the history of that on the internet. On the Rio Grande mainline on the other side of the tunnel is a Galloping Goose about to disappear into the tunnel, for which again information can be found on the internet.