



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

Gail D. Storey

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

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

Gail D. Storey

I Promise Not to Suffer: A Fool for Love Hikes the Pacific Crest Trail Gail D. Storey

With comfortable urban lives in Houston, Texas, and career and life goals mostly accomplished, Gail D. Storey and her husband were in their fifties when they decided it was time to test themselves on a new path—a 2,663-mile path known as the Pacific Crest Trail, which stretches from Mexico to Canada.

I Promise Not to Suffer is Gail's light-hearted yet heart-felt memoir about her and her husband's adventures and misadventures, deepening marriage, and reflections on being irrevocably changed by life on the trail. She was a novice hiker, while he was an experienced outdoorsman. Removed from their usual routines and living outside in the wilderness for months exposed hidden intricacies in their relationship. Hiking 20 miles a day over mountains, thirsting in the high desert of California, forcing frozen feet into icy socks and boots each morning in the High Sierra, stumbling through lava fields in Oregon—Gail was required to meet the elements on their own tough-love terms. From an encounter with a mountain lion to her mother's battle with cancer at home, she confronts each challenge with wit and brave style. While a dangerous loss of weight forces Gail to leave the PCT after 900 miles, she regains strength and later rejoins her husband on sections until he triumphantly reaches the northern terminus in Canada.

Humorous yet honest, 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 armchair travelers alike.

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

Date : Published April 2013 by Mountaineers Books (first published January 1st 2013)

ISBN : 9781594857454

Author : Gail D. Storey

Format : Paperback 224 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Autobiography, Memoir, Travel, Adventure, Environment, Nature

 [Download I Promise Not to Suffer: A Fool for Love Hikes the Paci ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online I Promise Not to Suffer: A Fool for Love Hikes the Pa ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online I Promise Not to Suffer: A Fool for Love Hikes the Pacific Crest Trail Gail D. Storey

From Reader Review I Promise Not to Suffer: A Fool for Love Hikes the Pacific Crest Trail for online ebook

Suzanne says

Terrible. Who goes on a six month backpacking trip to get closer to their husband? It makes about as much sense as having a baby to save a marriage. Oh, and no rain gear? Seriously?! Don't even get me started on the fact that they ran out of water purifying tablets...TWICE!

In addition, Storey did not train or prepare for such an arduous hike. At 125#, she should be able to safely carry 30-35# of gear, and she could barely manage 15-18#. It is dangerous to go into any hike ill-prepared; not only for herself, but for other hikers as well.

This wasn't a book about hiking the PCT - it was about a woman trying to write some profound memoir (missed the mark severely) about her growth as a person (I don't care), her sex life with her husband (ditto), and her path to find some sort of meaning in her life (ditto)>

Oh yeah, poorly written as well - think 6th grade.

Carol says

The Hook - The thrill of the hike, The Pacific Crest Trail, without all the equipment, bugs, heat, cold or animals stealing my food. More importantly, I Promise Not To Suffer is a Barbara Savage Memorial Award Winner. Larry Savage established this award in memory of his wife Barbara who was killed in a biking accident. I had read Barbara Savage's Miles From Nowhere A Round-the-World Bicycle Adventure, an account of her 23,000 mile bike journey and am always looking for books that honor her memory.

The Line – *“This was really living, close calls with dying included.”*

The Sinker – I Promise Not To Suffer is truly fascinating. Gail D. Story has my deep respect and admiration for her attempt to hike the 2,561 relentless miles of the famous PCT. Gail Storey provides a good picture of what drives people to add this hike to their list. I could not put it down.

The opening line is telling *“I NEVER MUCH CARED FOR NATURE, or rather, thought it okay as long as it stayed outside.”* What compelled Gail to consider the hike? Clear and simple it is Gail's love for her husband Porter. More his dream than hers, this 56 year old woman is willing to take the leap or in this case, each step. I Promise Not To Suffer is as much about a marriage as it is the adventure of the hike.

As for that vicarious journey, this book more than delivered. I Promise Not To Suffer charts the planning and organization it takes to successfully hike for six months. It details the compiling of food, how to pack it, how to cook it, how to re-supply it; clothing, tarp or tent, each supply considered for its use and weight in the overall pack. Gail takes us along on her journey and all she requires is that we read and enjoy. We are privy to the things she sees, the people she meets, and her innermost thoughts about her life, from her husband to her relationship with her mother who is dying of cancer. Gail Storey makes her challenges interesting and writes with honesty, love and genuine wit.

I Promise Not To Suffer is a great addition to my love of adrenaline adventure and a testament to the spirit of a woman who describes herself as in the second third of her life and is not especially fit. I'm certain it will be compared to *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed which I have yet to read.

Last thought - What I would have given to be on the trail when she rounded the corner and saw...

Lorna Rose-hahn says

A memoir about a married couple hiking the PCT. She is not at all outdoorsy. Sounds promising, eh? Sounds right up my alley. I wanted to like this book. But I didn't like it. At all. The writing was uneven at best. The author comes across as a whiny princess. She would share intimate details of herself and her marriage, particularly her sex life, and instead of relating and feeling closer to her, I felt like a voyeur. And I wanted to read more about her transformation into an outdoorswoman, but I found little introspection regarding this. At least at the end of the book there is a packing list and ideas for going ultra light (which she and her husband did; he made all their gear). Overall, a big disappointment. And it won an award. Really??

Kelsey says

I almost didn't read Cheryl Strayed's "Wild," worrying it was another "woman finds herself on the trail and overcomes adversity and takes in beautiful scenery" books. I'm so glad I read it, because it was so much more than that, it did however lull me into reading "I promise not to suffer," which is everything I worried Strayed's book would be, but even worse.

First, I didn't understand why the author hiked the trail simply because her husband wanted to. She didn't want to, but she also didn't want him to do it without her. I think I was already a little annoyed with her because she was so afraid of being on her own or away from him she had to crash his trip and potentially ruin the experience for him. If this was something she had really wanted to do from the beginning, but then struggled along the way I would have understood and empathized, but why would someone who doesn't like hiking or camping insist she had to go on the trip? I get facing things we fear, or don't like, or think we can't do, but I don't think doing it at the expense of someone else's dream to do a specific trail or activity is right. Also, her husband had the much more interesting story, fashioning and building much of their gear, leaving his work as a hospice doctor to figure out a new career and finishing the trail.

I also found the descriptions boring and following a "and then we did this, then we did this, then we did this," list type of writing which didn't hold my interest.

It did however make me want to hike the PCT, or least a part of it and their gear list in the appendix was interesting-probably the most interesting part of the book.

Heather Hansen says

For hikers, lovers, lovers of hikers and anyone who has gone - or endeavors to go - into the wilderness in search of themselves.

As I finished *I Promise Not to Suffer*, my flight into Denver began its initial descent. I was trapped in my seat and sobbing into my cocktail napkin! I exchanged glances with the woman seated next to me and told her it's

the best memoir I've read in a long time; rousing, funny and touching. She wrote down the title and author-- she said it sounds like a great candidate for her book club.

I loved this book!

(Lonestarlibrarian) Keddy Ann Outlaw says

If you enjoyed *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed or *Eat, Pray, Love* by Elizabeth Gilbert, I've got another memoir to recommend: *I Promise Not To Suffer: A Fool For Love Hikes The Pacific Crest Trail* (Mountaineers Books, 2013) by Gail D. Storey. For many years the author was a customer at the West University Branch of Harris County Public Library where I worked. Gail, once a librarian herself, wrote two hilarious novels set in Houston featuring a fictional librarian: *The Lord's Motel* and *God's Country Club*, originally published in the 1990s, were both reissued in paperback by Persea in 2011. We always carried multiple copies of her novels at my library. I remember when Gail was the featured cover girl on an issue of *Library Journal*. Gail was known for showing up at her readings and other events wearing a wedding dress or other fun costumes. I often spotted Gail and her tall, handsome husband Porter Storey, MD riding around town on their tandem bicycle before they moved to Colorado. I was glad to learn she had a memoir coming out, and then that the book won the Barbara Savage Miles From Nowhere Memorial Award (for compelling accounts of personal journeys and outdoor adventures).

Gail and her husband, who is at an impasse in his life as a hospice doc, decide to hike the Pacific Crest Trail. Although Gail has survived two cross-country bicycle rides with Porter, she does not consider herself a hiker or even a nature lover. Gail adores her husband. They have been married seventeen years. Porter's son has left the nest. Porter becomes obsessed with buying or creating the best lightweight gear for their hike. Gail has many pangs about committing to the hike. Her mother's life is winding down and she knows they have unfinished business. But she can not imagine being separated from her husband/soulmate.

"Who am I?" is a question both she and Porter feel compelled to examine. As explained by Gail, "The older we grew, the deeper the question plunged." And so they take off. With the sure feet of a gifted writer, Gail moves expertly between her back story (including spiritual and philosophical segues) and life on the trail. As for her actual feet as well as the rest of her body, forget about it -- the hike is pure torture. Extreme temperatures, snakes, tumbles onto hard ground, drought are just some of the trials they will face. The hike is 2,543 miles long and they plan on covering 20 miles a day. A friend in Houston mails their food and medical supplies to their designated stops, often primitive campgrounds or makeshift trailers bustling with much younger hikers. Will they make it? I'm not going to tell you... Will they survive the hike? That I will tell you -- YES and YES, with much wisdom and kismet. You have to read it. This is such an intimate portrait of marriage, perhaps even more so than the story of a hike. Gail shares heart, soul, spirit and body. Thus, my heart, soul, spirit and body ached and danced alongside the rocky way.

I also have to add, that like Gail, I just recently lost my mother. Insights into death and dying from both Gail and Porter's lives made this an especially timely read. Namaste, Gail -- thank you for forging this trail of words and wonder.

text of this review comes from my blog:<http://speedoflight-lonestarlibrarian...>

Sandra Heinzman says

Loved this book! Compared to Cheryl Strayed's *Wild*, I enjoyed this one more. Although I don't want to hike the PCT or the AT, I do want to do some day hikes. I love love love travel adventure books!

Martha? says

After joining our thru-hiking friends and hiking a 200 mile section of the PCT, I came home hungry for others' accounts of the PCT experience. *I Promise Not To Suffer* crossed my path and, although it had few positive reviews, I figured that it would at least quench a bit of my thirst for trail talk.

Gail's book is part trail experience but mostly life memoir. In the style of *Wild* (which I truly despised), she sorts through her past in order to make sense of her present and wonders about her post-PCT future. Luckily, when she delves into these revelations and memories, she separates these paragraphs from the trail dialogue with a few spaces, making it easy to skip over them and get back to the point.

IMO, it is extremely poorly written. Her overuse of metaphor and her heavy reliance on her thesaurus made it a challenge to get through most paragraphs without rolling my eyes. Here is an example:

I rested in deep anonymity here, free as a wraith in this sleekly sensual ambience of modernist blond wood and metallic curves, aubergine sofas beneath bright abstract art.
(eye roll)

Save yourself the anguish. Read something else.

Kathy says

File under yet another "woman hikes PCT" book that is much better than Strayed's. (See also "Girl in the Woods".) This was wonderful. I love these kinds of stories. I didn't expect to love the writing quite so much, somehow. I could see being a bit "woo-woo" and off-putting to some, but it fit with the subject matter. Highly recommend.

Terrie says

I made it to page 96 before giving up. Like "Wild", this woman seems to have issues with sex and feels the need to share that with us. I finally reached a point where I realized I really didn't like her, so didn't care whether she finished the hike or fell in a hole. If you read it, you might want to have some cheese to go with her whine.

Julene Bair says

I know this book is great, because Gail was in my writing group when she wrote it. Still, I can't wait to read it between covers. The book is funny, insightful, and full of fabulous descriptions of the PCT. We get to go along as a marriage evolves, through changes as drastic as the literal ones, from exhilarating heights to frigid lows. Ultimately what we get is a picture of long-term, committed love and how, with dedication, resourcefulness and two wide-open hearts, it can extend to everyone it meets along the trail.

jv poore says

I was fortunate enough to receive this via First-Reads Giveaway. I had just finished Cheryl Strayed's *Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail*, so I was particularly thrilled to discover this book.

I enjoyed Ms. Storey's account tremendously. Barely into the book, I began to feel as if I were reading letters from a friend. Although her determination to embark on this journey baffles me, I admire it. Actually, that may be one of things I like best about her story. The bravery that she continues to summon parallels only with her tenacity to stick with the hike.

For me, the most amazing thing about this book is the fact that she glorifies absolutely nothing about the hike. Any sane person would say "no, thanks" to this adventure after reading her honest chronicles of life on the trail; but despite the thought of frozen socks, fording rivers and sweltering heat, a tiny part of me still says "Man, I would love to do this". I guess that what that little voice really means is: wow, I wish had the courage, confidence and strength to take this on. Since I don't, I'll happily cheer on those who do. Who knows, maybe I'll make a fun "trail angel" someday.

Not only will I be reading more from Ms. Storey, I will most certainly be purchasing other Mountaineer Books in the near future.

Anne Bogel says

Some things are best experienced firsthand, but there are some adventures I would rather experience vicariously from my comfy spot on the couch, cup of tea in hand.

Thankfully, a good book can help me do just that.

I just finished Gail Storey's memoir *I Promise Not to Suffer: A Fool for Love Hikes the Pacific Crest Trail*, and I'm adding through-hiking the PCT to the list of adventures I'd rather read about than experience.

This isn't the first time a memoir has talked me out of something: Michael Ruhlman killed my romantic dream of attending culinary school; Jon Krakauer convinced me that guided tours aside, climbing Everest is anything but easy and definitely not for me—unless we're talking about the literary version.

I knew little about the Pacific Crest Trail when I began *I Promise Not to Suffer*. The PCT has only been around for twenty years; it was completed in 1993, a western counterpart to the Appalachian Trail. Through-hikers—those who cover the entire trail—begin at the Mexican border in Southern California and cover 2,650 miles before reaching the trail's end at the Canadian border. Hikers can't depart until California's late spring storms are over, which leaves only six months to make it to northern Washington before the blizzards begin. Hikers need to cover more than twenty miles a day to make it in time.

Storey didn't want to hike the trail in the first place. But her husband, a hospice director, was desperate to hike the PCT while he was in a major career transition, and Storey couldn't bear the thought of spending six months apart. "The problem is," she told him, "if you hike the PCT, I have to go too," I said. "And I'm not."

But she does, eventually won over by the promise of spending six months together on the trail, far from the

demands of everyday life.

This is not a typical adventure memoir, but Storey is not typical PCT material. Most of the through hikers who tackle the 2,650 mile route each year are twenty-something males. But Storey and her husband are 56 and 52, respectively, when they decide to take on the trail; she calls her adventure her “two-thirds life crisis.”

Adventure is no under-statement. I’m a city girl, and was genuinely surprised at how harrowing their journey was: they endure summer storms, pick their way down icy slopes, encounter a mountain lion, and nearly drown crossing a river. It’s no wonder that only half of the hikers who start out each year make it to trail’s end. The hardships of the trail make a community out of the hikers, and my favorite parts of the story involve these friends and the “trail angels” who make their journey a little easier.

No spoilers here, but I wasn’t expecting Storey’s journey to unfold the way it did. 900 miles in, something unexpected occurs, and the turn of events improved my opinion of Storey—who had seemed a little self-absorbed up to that point—and the story itself.

Martha Rice says

I Promise Not to Suffer: A Fool For Love Hikes the Pacific Crest Trail (Paperback)

This is not a book about a hike so much as it is a book about a life. Having said that, I rate a book based on whether: 1) I enjoy the writing, and 2) does it provoke me to think about new ideas, and to think in new ways? Applying this standard to Gail Donahue Storey's latest book, I had to give it five stars. The writing has that quality of both Jane Austen and Janet Evanovitch, i.e., the ability to recognize the humorous aspects of life, while dealing gently with human idiosyncrasies. And because the author has both an extensive religious and philosophical background, her responses to the challenges of the adventure are unique. Her motto might be "An unexamined life is not worth living" (Socrates). I can't imagine reading this book without giving your own life a quick once-over as well.

Sarah says

This memoir, I Promise Not To Suffer, tracks the 2,663 miles Storey and her husband attempt to hike – the Pacific Crest Trail – over a 6 month period. Often times the PCT tales seem like a vehicle for Storey to mostly write about her life, specifically her past transgressions and complicated relationships. She cleverly intertwines the two topics and I think she pulls it off.

“I never cared much for nature, or rather, thought it okay as long as it stayed outside.” That is how the book starts out, really setting the tone. My first thought was, “she’ll never make it.” My second thought was, “she must really love her husband.” See, this was all his idea, the outdoorsman that he is, and she just tags along on the hike over mountainous terrain from Mexico to Canada. Anything for love! I suspected from the beginning that she likes nature more than she lets on, but let’s just say she is not the typical PCT hiker (young, male, fond of camping).

Living in Palm Springs, CA, I was so excited for Storey and husband, Porter, to hike into my town. They got pretty close, tromping through one of my favorite vacation escapes of Idyllwild. She even mentioned walking through the wind farm, which I can see from my street. The sound they release is quite overwhelming up close... the whomp whomp whomp.... I read most of this book lying in a hammock in my

backyard, my view the stunning San Jacinto mountains, which Storey had conquered.

This fact made it easy for me to sink into the book and appreciate how difficult the hike must be. These mountains are unforgiving and dangerous with super slippy footing. The climate is extreme, ranging from snow to blistering heat. And they are just the beginning... hello High Sierras and Cascade Range! Though Storey keeps the tales of the trails pretty upbeat and distracts with her life musings, I know it must have been a real bear... or mountain lion.

Porter, a hospice doctor, resigns from his job and the couple sell their house, along with some belongings to fund this 6 month hike. The word that comes to mind here is courageous, but they both needed the hike to regroup. Porter worked hard researching, buying and even crafting the most lightweight gear he could. When you are hiking 20 miles a day, the lighter the pack the better. They didn't even bring a tent! *gasp face* That would be a deal breaker for me. I found the amount of planning and thought that goes into this hike to be fascinating. I also loved learning about the trail etiquette and found the camaraderie of fellow hikers to be really something special.

I consider myself pretty outdoorsy but if my husband suggested hiking the PCT, well, it would be one short conversation ending with a big no... or maybe now I would consider it when the kids are grown. If Gail can do it, so can I! I think...The scariest part for me is not the physical exhaustion, though that would be rough, but the mental exhaustion and all that time to think. Storey struggles with this as well, really getting into her own head. Though I imagine hiking is much like writing for her, in that it can be very cathartic, so she is able to sort some things out.

I recommend I Promise Not to Suffer: A Fool For Love Hikes the Pacific Crest Trail I Promise Not To Suffer by Gail Storey {book review} read outdoors mom hike camping book , the perfect length for the Labor Day Weekend by the pool or in the sand. You will find Storey to be quite adorable and relatable. While she takes you on her incredible journey across the PCT, she herself takes another journey, a personal one in which she explores her marriage, her relationship with her dying mother and her past (and a deep-seeded questioning of choices she made as a young woman...which I can totally relate to). It is an easy read that has a great flow. Storey writes effortlessly and allows her great personality to shine through the cracks. In the end I was rooting for not only Gail and Porter but love in general. Team LOVE!
