

# A MILLION YEARS of Erosion

— LARRY’S SHORT STORIES #21 —

Intrigued; that’s probably the best word to describe my thinking, when this small pedestal came into view. Our safari car had been climbing steadily for twenty minutes and we were approaching the escarpment that defines the plateau, far above the river. My professional hunter had seen this sight many times before; but, when I asked if he had ever climbed that pedestal, his answer was no. When I asked why not, he offered only that he had never had a hunter who was interested. Well, he did now!

Growing up in Missouri, mountain climbing was never an opportunity, but I have climbed



*The sides are sheer. Roots and fallen trees offer the only way to gain access to the top.*

many, many trees and hills. This pedestal looked like a great challenge and a lot of fun. Also, it was the next to the last day of our safari and we were finished with all the serious hunting.

This plateau and drainage system was formed millions of years ago and every

year during the rainy season, the escarpment erodes a little or a lot, depending on the intensity of the rains. Apparently this pedestal had been part of a ridge that extended out from the plateau; and the part of the ridge nearest the plateau had eroded away, leaving this pedestal a mile or more out.

The road took us within a thousand yards, after which we parked and walked the rest of the way. The sides were sheer for the last 50 feet, with only roots and tree limbs offering any hope of getting to the top. It was about 100



*This pedestal sticks up like a sore thumb, between the escarpment above and the river far below.*

yards wide and we circled it easily, looking for a better way up – there wasn’t one.

We left our guns with a tracker at the bottom, hoping there wasn’t any dangerous game on top, and started up. It was an easy climb, for a person of reasonable shape, and soon we were walking the top – and smiling.

“...soon we were walking the top...”

It’s an interesting feeling to spend time in a place that has been separated from the rest of the world for perhaps a million years. There is some sense of security, like being in a fortress. And some sense of disappointment, knowing that the world is constantly changing and one day this pedestal will have eroded completely away. I put it on my bucket list to return and climb it again.



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Kibaoni Camp  
Selous Game Reserve  
Tanzania, Africa  
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*Success should always bring a smile; I made it!*