

*Monday, December 5th*

Monday night I scootered out to visit the famous UFO haven: Giant Rock. This was a terrible idea.



*Scooter in front of Giant Rock.*

There's an article about Giant Rock, the Integratron (don't worry, I went there later), and related Space Conventions on the Lucerne Valley's website. I'm not going to recount it all here, but it's worth a read. Giant Rock is possibly the world's largest free-standing boulder, which is easy to believe in person. Photographs are hard to show scale, especially when you're on your own, and there's enough broken glass and nails (why?) in the area to keep your scooter parked far off.



*Lonely and dusty scooter in Lucerne Valley.*

Remember that time I foolishly attempted to ride to the Painted Canyon? You know, the day RIGHT BEFORE this one? Well the road to Giant Rock is much worse. A couple hundred feet from the paved road I could tell it was deep sand. I thought about how close I'd come to falling just yesterday, but figured the sand was soft enough and the repercussions would likely be minimal. Have you begun to figure out that I'm not the smart one in this relationship?

Sure enough, just a few dozen feet farther in, the front wheel sunk down enough to be pushed sideways and I was on the ground. It was a soft landing; I bounced up and quickly righted the bike. I wear all my armor even on short trips over sand, so only had a few minor bruises. The scooter looked fine; the top case was a bit chewed up and the left mirror was at a strange angle, but nothing serious. I clearly had no business on this road, but by then I

was annoyed so instead of turning around I pressed deeper into the desert, inching and sliding along the next couple of miles to Giant Rock. I didn't fall again, I kept my speeds slow enough that hitting a wash of sand wasn't as hard to control, but it was clearly a stupid idea. At one point I gently came to a stop because I saw a man hiking down the road holding a gallon of water. This is fairly normal out here, but I wanted to make sure he was ok. He was and we chatted a bit before he eventually mentioned, "I was really surprised to see you out this way! I have a couple of small bikes but I'd never take them out here." Which is a polite way of saying, "you are an idiot", a statement which is difficult to argue against.



*Art Forever*

Graffiti on rocks is a thing out here. I mostly find it enraging.





*Giant Rock*

By the time I'd made it back from Giant Rock I was feeling a bit battered and entirely worn out. I headed home just as the sun set; the days are short and distances out this way are long.



*Sunset in Yucca Valley.*