



by Miles Mathis

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Once again I am not thinking what I am supposed to think. Or what everyone else is thinking. The video that picture above came from [hit headlines all over the nation today](#), and if we check comments at Yahoo we find not one person of thousands saying what I thought when I saw it. Every man, woman and child is (apparently) against her, coming down on her for breaking the rules and endangering herself. Most also wish harm on her, hoping she gets gored or gets her cosmic comeuppance for this heinous deed later. We even see her fixing her bangs for the shot with the buffalo! Oh my God! Burn her!

My thought? He seems to like her. He couldn't be calmer if she were actually giving him a head rub. I caught myself wishing she would come take a selfie next to me.

As it turns out, she is only about ten feet off the human walkway, and she never touched him. So she didn't approach him, *he approached her*. Given his demeanor, she probably spoke sweetly to him and he plopped down contentedly. Does he look threatened? His eyes are closed, for Pete's sake. He may be purring.

So why are people so triggered by this? Are they really so in love with rules? Are they really so frightened of everything? Do they really hate pretty white women so much they hope they get gored to death for taking a picture with an animal? That's a bit extreme, isn't it? It isn't this woman who I have a problem with, honestly, it is all these sad, grumpy, and malignant people commenting. What empty lives they must lead. What a black cloud must hover over them constantly.

To me, it is more proof that people can't read a situation. They miss what is really in front of them and

just react based on some preset script they have been read by the media. Or, there is another possibility: **these comments were written from Langley or by bots, specifically to steer the news.**

[**Added next day:** a reader pointed out something I missed. In the video, we have signs of tampering, since the bison's head has edges that are too soft, and when the woman's hand passes in front we see indication of superimposing images. Meaning, this film is a composite and the woman and bison aren't there together. It is faked.]

But even assuming this was real, do I hope she gets fined, banned from parks, or gored to death? I certainly do not. I think she should be more careful around wild animals, since she may not know what she is dealing with here; but if anything I think the park should do more to protect her from her own naivete—if in fact that is what we are seeing. Possibly she is a bison whisperer, and works with animals as her job. We don't know. But if not, and she really is in danger here, I don't see it as totally her fault. To see what I mean, let's look at another close encounter from earlier this week:



As you can see, these Asian tourists are actually on the provided walkway, and the bison has again come up to them, not the reverse. This may be in the same general area as the first picture. The woman has been taken to task for reaching out her hand and then looking away, which I admit was somewhat foolish. If I reach out my hand I keep my eye on it, to be sure someone doesn't bite it. But you can see why these people might be overconfident. If that bison is really dangerous, why would the park build a human walkway right through its grounds, with no guard rail or other protection? Even without reaching out a hand, they are sitting ducks to any animal who wants to charge, for any reason. Could be mating season and someone is wearing a brown coat. Could be rabies. Could be anything. So I am having trouble making sense of this picture. Right after this the bison head butts her gently

and she freaks out and falls down. We are supposed to see this as some near-catastrophe and as another blemish upon all young women, tourists, and perhaps Asians.

But in my opinion it should be *assumed* that tourists are naive when it comes to wild animals, and you would expect them to be protected from their own naivete. We are told there are signs warning visitors not to interact with the wildlife, but what about cases like this, where the wildlife decides to interact with them? Is this woman egregiously breaking rules by standing on the provided wooden walkway? If, like the woman above, she walked ten feet off it, is that a rule-breaking punishable by death? I don't see how.

In my opinion, we have evidence here of a problem beyond the silliness of tourists or the vanity of a young woman. We have people being endangered by the park itself: fed into a wild environment without the proper training, preparation, or protection. We have perfect proof of it from that last photo. Wild bison *are* dangerous and unpredictable, so how did this encounter happen at all? Why is this male bison allowed to menace tourists on a path? As I say, it makes no sense. Yellowstone has caught itself in some nowhere land between a walk-through open-air zoo and a wildlife sanctuary. It obviously needs to pick one before someone or something else gets hurt or killed. I would say job one is installing some fences.

And in more related news, we find a man fined a thousand dollars at Yellowstone for saving a bison calf from a creek.



We are told rangers soon arrived but couldn't reunite the calf with its mother. They therefore killed it. This story makes even less sense, and I don't believe it. They obviously made the part up about euthanizing it to try to traumatize people into leaving these animals alone. Maybe a worthy goal, but they don't need to lie to do it. It shouldn't have been that hard to reunite the calf with the herd, but even if they weren't able to do it there would be plenty of animal rescue places in that area of Wyoming willing to take the calf. Beyond that, a bison calf is worth a lot of money as a food animal, so you don't just kill it and throw it in a ditch. You do everything you can to get it grazing somewhere, since in a few years of free grazing, it will be worth thousands. Every rancher knows that. That guy above is

probably a rancher who has saved his own calves in the same way. Even if you care nothing about cute baby beasts, you don't let good money wash down the drain.

Taken together, these three stories look to me like a scripted propaganda campaign to educate tourists for the upcoming season in Yellowstone. But the whole thing is the usual mash-up mess, composed by the vaccine-injured. It doesn't make me mad at these tourists, as it should. It makes me mad at Yellowstone for not being able to compose a sensible policy or a sensible campaign. My guess is the number of tourists at Yellowstone is out of control, but rather than address that and lose money, they have decided to hire some PR company to solve the problem without limiting numbers. They don't even want to spend the money to build fences or guard rails, apparently, and think they can get by with some half-ass public service announcements that demonize a few tourists.

With more digging, I found that is in fact the case. Around five million people visited Yellowstone in 2021, generating around \$600 million in economic activity. But catastrophic flooding in 2022 damaged large parts of the park, which will force the same number of tourists this summer into smaller areas. Maybe this fiasco has something to do with that.

As my own public service announcement, I announce that if you are feeling depressed for any reason, try visiting [this Youtube video](#) called “One hour of red pandas eating crunchy snacks.” That should raise your spirits.