

Aymin Alhilali

20/9/2024

ENG 1121

Prof. Scanlan



“Monkey checking out a branch” Top right photo

“Two monkeys near the road” Top left photo

“Monkey on a rock” Bottom left photo

“Monkey on a car” Top right photo

(All photos were taken by me)

Have you ever wondered how monkeys acted on the highway? Or to be slightly more specific how they acted near the roadside? Well fortunately I have some photos of some monkeys so I can visually learn about how they act near the roadside. “Like guns and cars, cameras are fantasy machines whose use is addictive.” This quote states that the touch of a camera can make you hooked into them for a while. All of these photos are also located in the same location in Taif, Saudi Arabia. In this photo essay, I will talk about the actions of the monkeys in each photo, the background, and its significance to how the monkeys adapt to the highways.

In the photo on the top left (also known as Monkey checking out a branch), the main focus seen here is inevitably the monkey holding something that looks like a small branch. As you look closer into the photo, you can see that the monkey is sitting on a rock that is surrounded by branches, while his tail is extending towards the floor. His head is also facing down, looking towards the branch the monkey has in his hands. The aforementioned branches have leaves on them, which may pose a question on whether they are possibly used as a utensil, or just straight up become the monkey’s snack.

In the photo on the top right (also known as “Two monkeys near the road”), the main focus is the two monkeys looking at the roadway. One of the monkeys is closer to the roadside curb, while the other is closer to a sign that seems like it says a sort of speed limit or warning, but due to the photo given it is not known for sure. In the leftmost corner, you can see a blindspot mirror, which shows a car, which shows that the picture may have been taken inside of a four wheeled vehicle. In the background there is a tree or a bush that has loads of leaves and greens on it. In the middleground/foreground, there is some grass on the floor, along with a couple of rocks and metal poles.

In the photo on the bottom left (titled “Monkey on a rock”), the main focus of this photograph is the monkey that is posing on this rock. This photograph was one of the funniest ones due to it reminding me of Egyptian folklore due to the hilarious pose. The background is a huge mountain of rocks that have many detailed lines, as it may seem as the rocks are somewhat old. In the foreground, there is sighting of an odd shaped rock, and a pipe that looks like it may have either water or oil. I notice that some rocks have a darker shade of brown than others. On the leftmost view of the photo, it is possible to see leaves that look like that they should be on a tree, as it is not clear whether it is a tree or its shadow is making the bushes look like a tree. “It is because photography has no language of its own, because it quotes rather than translates, that it is said that the camera cannot lie. It cannot lie because it prints directly.” (Understanding a Photograph, John Berger, Page 69) This quote means that a photo may have a strong meaning, but the language used to describe the piece of art might not always be clear. It's similar to how something done in one culture can be done for different reasons.

The photo on the bottom right is titled “Monkey on a car”. The main focus of the photograph is the monkey that is standing on the hood of the car. In the background, there is a view of a street that is slightly turning up, as it circles around the mountain until it reaches the top. There is also a street light in the far back of the photo, most likely used to help drivers drive

up the mountain during the night time, even though it is not recommended for drivers to ride up the mountain during the dark hours. There is also a car driving upwards as well.

Many photos can mean different things to each person, and it truly is never interpreted the same way from different perspectives. Similar to how clouds may form shapes that may resemble certain objects to each person, some photos may resemble to someone more than the other. In conclusion, photos have many very different meanings than what they are prescribed to be sometimes, and the photographer knows what the original meaning was.