



## Grand Bassin

There's an expression in English: be careful what you **wish** for. A few years ago, I **witnessed** something that reminded me how true that is. It was 2009, and I was on my very first **hike** ever, in Grand Bassin. We had organised to go with a group of friends for the weekend. On Saturday, we descended, and it was great. It was a beautiful day, slightly **cloudy** and the perfect temperature for a walk. In the afternoon, we arrived at our destination and some of the group **took a dip** in the cold water. Then, we enjoyed a glass of rum arrangé served by the owners of our gîte, played cards and massaged our sore legs. I went to bed early in preparation for the steep hike up the next day.

The next morning, we woke up to a very hot and sunny day. There wasn't a cloud in the sky, and at 7am it was probably already 30°. We all covered ourselves in sunscreen, packed plenty of water and started our hike. Having never hiked before in my life, and being from an extremely **flat town**, I found the walk a bit **tricky** and regularly stopped to drink, rest and **complain** about the heat. But I shouldn't have complained so much, because someone had a far worse experience than me.

About **halfway** to the top of the cliff, we came across a group of 3 hikers **huddled** together over a man who had **collapsed**. Within minutes, the **deafening** sound of propellers started and the other hikers signalled for us to hide behind a large **boulder** away from the rock face. A helicopter was about to land. After the unconscious man had been carried into the helicopter and it had flown away, we asked the remaining group members what had happened. It turns out that the group had set out with only a litre of water between the four of them on an extremely hot day, wearing **flip-flops** and totally unprepared for the hours of walking ahead of them. When his friends had warned him about how challenging and hot the hike was going to be, he laughed and said: "don't worry, it'll be easy. I'll just get a helicopter to come **pick me up!**"

Their story has stayed with me through all these years as proof that our words and imagination can be pretty powerful.





## Vocabulary

to wish - espérer

to witness - être témoin de quelque chose

to hike - randonner

cloudy - nuageux

to take a dip - piquer une tête

flat town - ville plat

tricky - difficile

to complain - se plaindre

halfway - à mi-chemin

huddled - regroupés

to collapse - s'évanouir

deafening - assourdissant

boulder - rocher

flip-flops - savates

to pick someone up - récupérer quelqu'un

