

Rain In Doha

My head aches and my temples feel heavy. The air pressure increases. Clouds cover the sky slowly. The morning is gloomy and sarcastic: this is native weather for you, homesick travelers...

I do not belong to those sufferers, and the grey sky brings to my mind only grey weekdays of departed life, winter dampness and dripping umbrellas which turn bus passengers' somber faces into spiteful-rat-ready-to-bite expression.

The rain in Doha is almost a national disaster, especially speaking about this year's rains, which neither the dessert nor wild camels and inhabitants have seen. Old residents, however, recollect the hail in one thousand...eh-hm..., but critics considering the age of those witnesses suppose that it took place in the prehistoric age and marvel at such a good memory.

This Friday morning I was awoken by a familiar sound. A heavy shower! You cannot mistake it for any other sound. Streams of water tried to refresh my room through the open window. I had no desire to get up and close it. I had no desire to get wet either.

For that morning I planned a far away drive to a supermarket for rye bread and "After Eight" chocolate.

For the following morning, I planned to get my car serviced, which meant a day without the car. So, it was better to go shopping.

My reckoning was correct. Dead calmness occupied the city. Occasional adventurers rose fountains of mud. I regretted wasting bucks for washing my car the day before.

But the most exciting awaited drivers on roundabouts. And since most of the cross-roads in Doha are roundabouts, you can imagine that challenging "obstacle course". The three-lane roundabout had two lanes fully covered with water. Moreover, the depth was good enough for cars to sink at full wheel height.

So, the morning was picturesque and amazing if you drove carefully...

I was really surprised to see a half-dried roundabout on my way back an hour later. It was that same one where I had showered a van on my right hand. A mystery of the local climate?

The answer was blinking with yellow lights on the next roundabout. A huge water-tank truck was soaking up water through a hose.

Well, there is no drain system in the city that grew up in the middle of the dessert. However, the rescue service works at its best.

By the dinner time the weather got better and the sun appeared to dry out Doha streets.

The rain in Doha is almost a national treasure. Even wastelands get covered with dark green bushes. The dessert obtains deep rich greenery and strikes the eye with numerous puddles. Some of them remind of small lakes with bunches of grass around. It can be summed up in one word: an idyll.

Only one question bothers me, "What do poor wild camels do when it rains?" There is no shelter in the dessert for them.