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# OnCourse MAGAZINE 2012

The Coconino Community College  
Journal of Student Coursework

Lockett Meadow-Kate Adams

# ONCOURSE MAGAZINE

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# OnCourse MAGAZINE

The 2012 Edition

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# The Bikinis

We needed to be seen because we were going to be famous. We pushed the picnic table up against the wall in my enclosed back porch, and it was transformed into our stage. We needed to be up high, in case the crowd got out of control. We wanted to make sure everyone in the back of the audience could see us. After loading the 45 record on my lime-green portable record player, we stood on the table and waited for the record to drop. Facing each other the spectators would get a side-view of both of us. We placed left hands above our heads and against the back wall. We clenched our waists with our right hands and leaned forward. After the initial hiss of the needle running over the record, the music began. We started swinging our hips back and forth in rhythm to the beat.

Finally, we began to sing.

*She was afraid to come out of the locker.*

*She was as nervous as she could be.*

*She was afraid to come out of the locker.*

*She was afraid that somebody would see.*

*(Two, three, four, tell the people, what she wore...)*

*She wore an itsy bitsy teeny weenie,  
yellow polka dot bikini...*

This was the origin of our variety shows. One of our first routines was this live version of “Itsy Bitsy Teenie Weenie Yellow Polka Dot Bikini,” with the original score playing in the background. We were incredible. The imaginary crowd roared. Although we didn’t wear tiny bikinis for

the live version of ‘Itsy Bitsy,’ we were dressed in the hippest variety show attire: pants with slick white go-go boots, and chain belts around our hips with the extra links hanging down, off to the side. When the dance routines allowed, we could swing the end of the belts in circles, in unison, for a full visual effect. Our other acts required that we dress appropriately in relation to the skit. We were both quite gifted and could play a variety of roles and we each had exceptional skills in make up.

Within a few years when we were eleven and twelve, we actually did wear bikinis. Hers was yellow; mine was orange. Except for the color, they were identical. We looked good; but there was one slight problem. We didn’t seem to be filling out the top half of the suits. Looking in the mirror and discussing the breast size of other girls at our school we decided to take additional action.

“I have an idea!” said Loretta. “Let’s ask Abby.”

So we sat quietly in Loretta’s living room, whispering, trying to compose the letter with the right wording.

*Dear Abby,*

*We have tried the exercises we've heard about, that can increase breast size. But they have provided no results. We need your help Abby.*

*Sincerely,*

*A Pirate's Treasure – a Sunken Chest  
A Carpenter's Dream – Flat as a Board*

As we finished up the letter Loretta’s brother Jim came into the room. In a panic we stuffed the letter between the cushions on the couch.

Frazzled but hopeful he hadn't noticed, we left to go on a bike ride, only to come back to the house and realize Jim had read our letter.

I, in particular, was mortified by Jim's discovery. In fact for many years I thought that experience had stunted my growth. Abby never replied, the exercises did not work, and I didn't start to develop for quite some time. In fact, I never did get much in the area of boobs until menopause.

The following year Loretta started to fill out that bikini top. Me? Absolutely -- zero. I begged my mom and finally got to shave my legs. But Loretta didn't. That's what boobs will cost you.

Fifteen years had passed since those bikinis were worn in our youth. I called and asked Loretta for directions to her new house. My daughters and I were taking a overnight trip from Flagstaff to Phoenix, and we were going to stay with Loretta and her family and go to the water park.

Loretta, along with her daughter Sarah, had married Mark Wahla. Mark and Loretta had a child together named Katy. They also had custody of two children from Mark's previous marriage: Jamie and Jodi. When she gave me the information, she told me to look for the tan van.

As we traveled to the water park I was mesmerized by how quickly time had gone. It wasn't that long ago that Loretta and I were catching a ride to this very water park, in our original yellow and orange bikinis. What happened? How did we get here, in a tan mini van, with six kids?



I remember the suit I wore to the water park very well. I had picked it up on a clearance rack the winter before. The style had changed and the suits had a much higher cut to the thigh, but were more conservative over the belly which stretched just below the navel. The top was like a miniature tank top. Although both Loretta and I didn't realize it at the time – we wore the suits well. We were basically 'hot mamas' in the early nineties, given that between us we had six kids.

A few years later I discovered built-in boobs. Mark and I were dating, and Loretta had a pool party and we decided to go down to Mesa for the weekend and join in the fun. The girls always loved to swim and see Loretta and her family. And they always threw a good party, with a lot of people attending. We ate, drank a few beers and played water volleyball. Towards the end of the party, I snuggled up to Mark and said, "Why does it seem like I have the smallest boobs out of every single girl here?"

"Maybe, because you do?" he answered with his sweet grin. I wasn't offended. I just needed confirmation.

The next day we stopped at Target. We didn't have a Target in Flagstaff then, so it was always a treat to stop there when we were in the Phoenix area. I meandered around the clothing section and happened upon the bathing suits.

"Mark, Mark – come here!" I yelled across the aisle. "Look at this!"

He walked over to see what was so important and had gotten me so excited.

"Those girls didn't all have big boobs, they had built-in boobs!" I said, as I shoved the bathing suit top into

his hand, only to take it back out so I could turn it inside out and show him the perfectly formed cups had been sewn into the suit. “They were all fakes!”

OK, so I was a little naïve. I was still wearing the mini tank top with absolutely no support and had no idea this invention had existed. As we drove back to Flagstaff, I swelled with pride in figuring out the real reason behind all those big boobs.

Now, nearly another fifteen years have passed. Our daughters are the ones wearing the tiny hot bikinis which still, by the way, have built-in boobs.

This past summer I took my eight-year-old son to Old Navy to purchase some new shorts prior to our family vacation to San Diego. Totally on impulse, I picked up a really cute blouse for myself. We used to call them peasant tops. They are gathered loosely around the neck, usually with some kind of tie, and gathered at the sleeve. Since we were vacationing with friends this year, I thought I might splurge and buy a new bathing suit too. My old-lady ‘skirt suit’ was getting on my nerves, and I had been exercising for an entire year. Maybe, just maybe, I could show the upper part of my thighs without being completely self-conscious. There was a really attractive one piece hanging on a rack and the fabric reminded me of the brown polka dot dress Julia Roberts wore during the polo scene in the movie *Pretty Woman*. I was pretty sure I would look just like her once I got the suit on.

Kyle and I shared a dressing room, so I could make sure his shorts really fit. I stripped off my shirt and tried on the peasant top first. It was perfect. I put it in the ‘yes’ pile. Then, I slipped off my shorts and bra – standing only in my hot-pink high-waist Hanes briefs.

As I pulled the suit up over my underwear, I looked at my reflection in the mirror.

The cut of the thigh was well above my panties, right at my hip bones. When I looked in the mirror all I could see was the distinct contrast between the bright colored pink and the brown polka dotted suit. As I focused, I saw the plunging neckline. It barely covered my now decent-sized boobs, which I had recently acquired in the menopausal process along with an additional 20 pounds. God, there was a lot of skin showing. “What’s that?” Kyle said. His expression was one of concern as he looked at me and my reflection.

“It’s a bathing suit, Kyle,” I said.

He swallowed, looking almost like he was going to have to eat a worm or something.

“Don’t get it,” he said with determination.

We checked out with three pairs of shorts and a peasant top.

As we were driving home, about twenty minutes later Kyle said, “Mom, if I ever saw anyone at a pool with that kind of bathing suit on, do you know what I would say? I would say, ‘let’s get out of here!’”

Thank God I didn’t try on a bikini.

*Carlene Klein*

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# How to be a Waitress

Because your customers are going to be quite ignorant  
introduce yourself kindly and  
show off  
your bright whites consistently.  
Do not forget to dress  
professionally  
and wear your hair in a slick  
ponytail  
or tight, bouncy curls.  
You are going to become  
a people-pleasing maniac  
with your apron incredibly ironed and  
pens stocked even for  
a rainy day.  
Bus your dirty, food-infested table—  
totally thrashed and trashed by  
kids.  
Don't disregard sweeping under that  
giant row of tables and booths.  
(Although they will just get messy again.)  
\$4.25 an hour is not too bad.  
The rambunctious cooks may make you  
uncomfortable in your new waitress skin,  
So stay out of the kitchen.  
You have to be a mathematician to be a server.  
A waitress has to know how to add  
and handle money.  
Customers will abuse your service  
by not tipping you the green  
you were hoping for  
and leaving you feeling worthless  
to the point that  
you start to second guess  
what you are doing here.

*Victoria Metcalf*

## Dine' Thli'baah'

There are people in this world who have lived great lives or continue to live great lives. I had the privilege to spend some time with such a person. What makes a man a great man? I will tell you of a railroad worker, animal raiser, and medicine man, one who is called Dine' Thli'baah'.

It is six o'clock in the morning in the front room of the cinder block house. Grandmother is making hash browns with Spam and fry bread. My grandfather is getting ready for the day. I watch as he sits at the table in his blue Levi pants and worn-out white Hanes t-shirt, belt with a silver buckle attached, his blue canvas shoes, and a silver wristband with turquoise rocks and a watch embedded into it. He sips on a cup of hot coffee and thinks about all the things that need to be accomplished for the day: check on the cattle, let the sheep out to graze, check the water for the house and the animals, and check the vehicles to ensure they are all still good to run.

At eighty-five years old, he still looks like he is in his mid 70's. He's five-foot-ten and stocky with broad shoulders. He has brown leathery skin and short grayish hair. He's bow legged from all the years of work, and he has strong hands from years of working on the railroad. He has a stern face but a kind smile that brings warmth to all who come around, eyes that look gentle and forgiving, and his laughter is deep and soothing.

As I sit to have dinner with him, he jokes around by asking in Navajo, "Where is the lady? She still sleeping? I think I saw her running back over the hill towards Flagstaff." He laughs as he proceeds to drink his hot cup of coffee. I tell him, "She left early in the morning before I woke up." Laughing and joking, he tells me to bring her over so she can make mutton stew and fry bread for him and my grandmother.

The sun is out, and we sit outside the extension of the house. The morning air is still a bit cool. The sheep are bleating as they wait to be released for the day to graze. I can hear the cows mooing as they make their way to the watering hole. In the distance, I can see dust still settling from a vehicle that just went through on the dirt

road. The smell of wet sage brush is so soothing and takes me back to my childhood when I used to be my grandfather's sheep herder. I ask him the one question that everyone in the family doesn't know the answer to, "What was your given name when you were born?" He says, "Dine' Thli'baah" or "light-skinned person." He says that when he was born he was really light-skinned and almost looked like a white man. As he got older, his skin became darker, which usually happens when you spend a fair amount of time in the sun. Raised in an area of Canyon Diablo just south of Leupp, AZ, my grandfather learned how to herd sheep, raise cattle, and ride horses.

As he grew up, he didn't go to school. Many of his brothers and sisters went to boarding school while he tended to work at home. He was also a skilled hunter and tracker. He tells of times when the people in the area would refer him to white people to help track animals or go on hunting trips. He even tells me that one time in his youth, he was in a black and white movie, which was filmed in the area. He didn't know the title of the movie, but says he was a tracker on a horse during the movie. His grandchildren are hoping to find a copy of the movie before he passes on.

When he got older, he worked for the Santa Fe railroad. He tells me that he has been to the east coast working for the railroad. He carried railroad ties as he helped build the railroad. His hands still bear the marks of a hard-working man; his handshakes are firm. He worked until he was able to retire from the railroad. Where the railroads go, that is where he has gone to work. He begins to tell me, "That is where I began to learn most of my biliganaa' words." Many of the people he worked with were from the reservation; some were brothers and some were distant relatives. He would be gone two to three weeks at a time working with the railroad. He would get dropped off at the train station in downtown Flagstaff to get on a train that took him to his work destination. He learned a little bit of Spanish as he worked out of the state. He says that it was essential to learn the Spanish language so that he could communicate with the Mexican workers.

He worked to support three wives, thirteen kids, and his mother-in-law. Of the three wives--all three were sisters--one remains alive. The two younger siblings passed on, one from natural causes and the other from diabetes and cancer. He recounts that the sisters were given to him in the traditional wedding way. He took the oldest to be his wife, and the other two were given to him by the in-laws



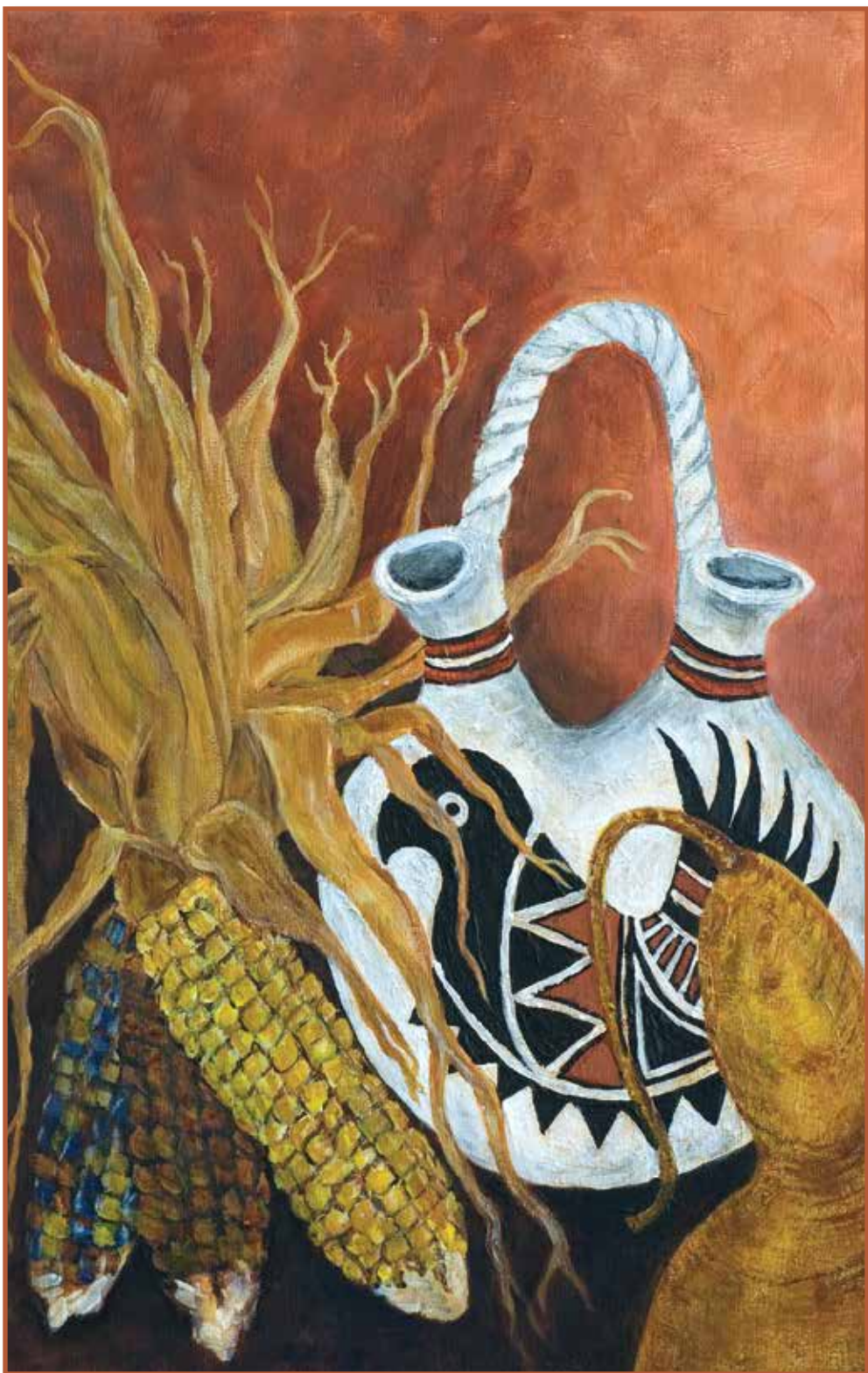
because he was well-off enough to support them all and they had no one else to give their hands in marriage to. This is how he came to inherit the area by the reservation line from his in-laws.

My grandfather has been raising sheep and cattle since he was a young boy. He recalls that “at one time we used to have over 1200 head of sheep and over 150 head of cattle.” As a shepherd, he would take the sheep out as soon as the sun came up every morning when he was not working on the railroad. “It was hard keeping track of all the sheep, but you got used to knowing which sheep would try and lead a part of the herd in one direction, when the others were going in another direction,” he would say. “I had to constantly keep an eye out on the herd because stray dogs and coyotes would try and take a sheep. That’s why you’re not supposed sleep in.” Now that everyone has moved away, the number of sheep and cattle has dwindled. Now he herds about eighty sheep. The cattle have been signed over to his sons. He says, “I’m getting old, and there is so little I can do.”

As an upstanding individual, he does not partake in alcohol, does not bother with pornographic material, and has no foul language. Because of his way of living, he learned the ways of becoming a medicine man. He performs sand painting ceremonies, healing prayers, ceremonies that search for the cause of one’s illness, and many other ceremonies. As a medicine man, he continues to abstain from the many impurities that would bring harm to his body and those around him. He says that in order for one to receive the Holy One’s blessings, “they must walk in a straight path of goodness.” As a medicine man, he gives counsel to those who seek his help by telling them that in order for this ceremony to work, they must do the right things in life so they can have a good life. Many seek his help and guidance because of his example.

As I watch my grandfather each day, the only thing I see changing is his age. He continues to make people around him happy, smiling and playing with his great-grandchildren. Many people continue to come see him for guidance, or they just come to visit and reflect on the lives they lived. My grandfather will always be an example for our family. To many around the reservation area, he is known as a medicine man, but I will always remember him as “Dine’ Thlibaah,” my grandfather.

*Ruben Redhair*



Harvest - Kellye Newton

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## Fascinating Flesh

It was perfect. Dull, but just sharp enough to leave a scar. Angry tears were rolling down my cheeks, creating puddles of black mascara on my desk. How could I let it get this bad? Why didn't I stop it when it was weaker? The darkness in my heart and mind was comparable to the ambiance of my room that night. It was dimly lit, almost scary. He doesn't care anymore. Love is no longer an existing thing. It is a mere plague sent to destroy everyone and leave behind only broken hearts.

It's time. I pulled up my sleeve, and I took the blade from its hiding spot under a stack of old childhood memories. It was merely stumbled upon earlier that day in the garage. I only took it to contemplate further but, I didn't really think I would go through with it. Afraid of what I knew was coming, I took a deep breath. The devil on my shoulder cheered me on, "Go ahead Emily. You can do it!" Shaking, I held the blade on the surface of my arm and began to draw my angst upon my skin. Pain. I felt the worst pain I had ever known and insurmountable to any emotion ever created. Following the razor, there came a stream of bright, red blood; my blood. What had I done? Now people would ask questions. I could just hide it from everyone, right? No one would know if I was happy or not, because a fake smile is just as convincing as a real one.

So many words and thoughts flooded my mind like a never ending parade. I was angry at my dad for being so selfish, for allowing "her" to steal him from me forever. How could he get a new wife and just throw me to the wolves? I was frustrated at everyone, my friends and my family for no reason. I guess it was just because they were in my way. They just didn't understand. I felt like my whole world was

crashing down. I wasn't pretty. Who would even like a girl like me anyway? That's when I snapped. It was a single moment in time, so radical, so emotional, so bizarre.

For some time after my first encounter with destruction, watching the blood that came dripping from my own flesh was fascinating. It was as red as the color of the leaves in autumn, only more demented. I became obsessed with the idea of sitting down and taking myself to a new world over and over again. A world where pain was just the basis of existence. Yet, in the end, I always felt overwhelmed with a sense of utter anguish. My friends lied to me. At thirteen, they told me that if I were to cut myself, the pain would simply go away. They said I was able to, "release anger." The question I failed to ask, though, was anger on myself or anger from inside myself? I now know the answer.

For some reason, when we are young, we feel like we need to be in control of everything. We forget though, that we are still only children. We possess an innocence that is far too gentle to be destroyed. It is like a beautiful, pure, white canvas. After a while, we become so bored of that plain white that we begin to hurl color upon it. This creates who we are. Sometimes, the colors are very bright and vibrant. Other times, they are very dark and heavy. All of this depends on how we decide to paint that canvas. Are we joyful and exuberant, or depressed and defiant? This is the choice we must make for ourselves.

The mind begins to think and believe incredible things when it is in such a state of annihilation. I remember thinking so many negative thoughts. I thought about death. Would anyone miss me? I even wished I could be terminally ill, just to see who would come and visit me in the hospital. I was sick. Sick because of the damage I had done not only to myself, but also what I had done unintentionally to others. I was afraid. This fear was unlike anything else, a giant full of anger and rage. It was ready to snap me in half and stomp my lifeless body into the ground to rot. I just wanted to find any way out of the pain I was feeling. Bleeding seemed to be the answer at the time.

The only word to describe this mess is addiction. Not the addiction that first comes to mind, but an addiction to ripping open the skin to discover the wonders inside a wound. An addiction to blood, the way it looks, feels, tastes and flows. An addiction to contact with a sharp object when there is no one there to comfort you; not a hug, or even a hand on the shoulder. An addiction to something to cure the madness.

The question I often ask myself now is, why? Why did I think these negative things? Why was I so angry over something that now seems so childish? It was something so silly and pathetic that I had no reason to hurt myself. I acted as though I was six, and some moronic kid stole my cookie from the lunch table. It doesn't make any sense. Now that I can comprehend my mistake at an adult level, I believe I did it as a cry for help. Help, I so desperately needed. I deeply craved for someone to hold me tight and whisper that everything was going to be okay, and that I was going to do great things someday. I wanted to be told my life was worth something.

So many minutes, hours, days, months went by that I devastated any shred of self-esteem or decency in me. It became an endless game that grew tiring. I was tired of crying excessively about anything sad that would surface in my mind, until I had no tears left to cry. It was like an infection, and it grew more and more gruesome every day, contaminating my body and mind. I was growing weaker and weaker until the pain was too great. It was ready to consume me into a mass oblivion. Stopping seemed out of the question, but in order to cure the disease, it needed to happen. And that end, came on a cold, gentle, winter night a few weeks before Christmas.

This particular night, I had a dream. At first, there was a light. The most beautiful light I'd ever seen. It was a soft, calming yellow. The color drew me in and engulfed me in warmth unlike anything on earth. In the light, there was a door, a wonderfully, decorated door. It had my name on it. That's when I heard a voice. It was louder than any thunder I'd ever heard, like the kind that comes on a rainy night and shakes your whole house, leaving you with fear that something,

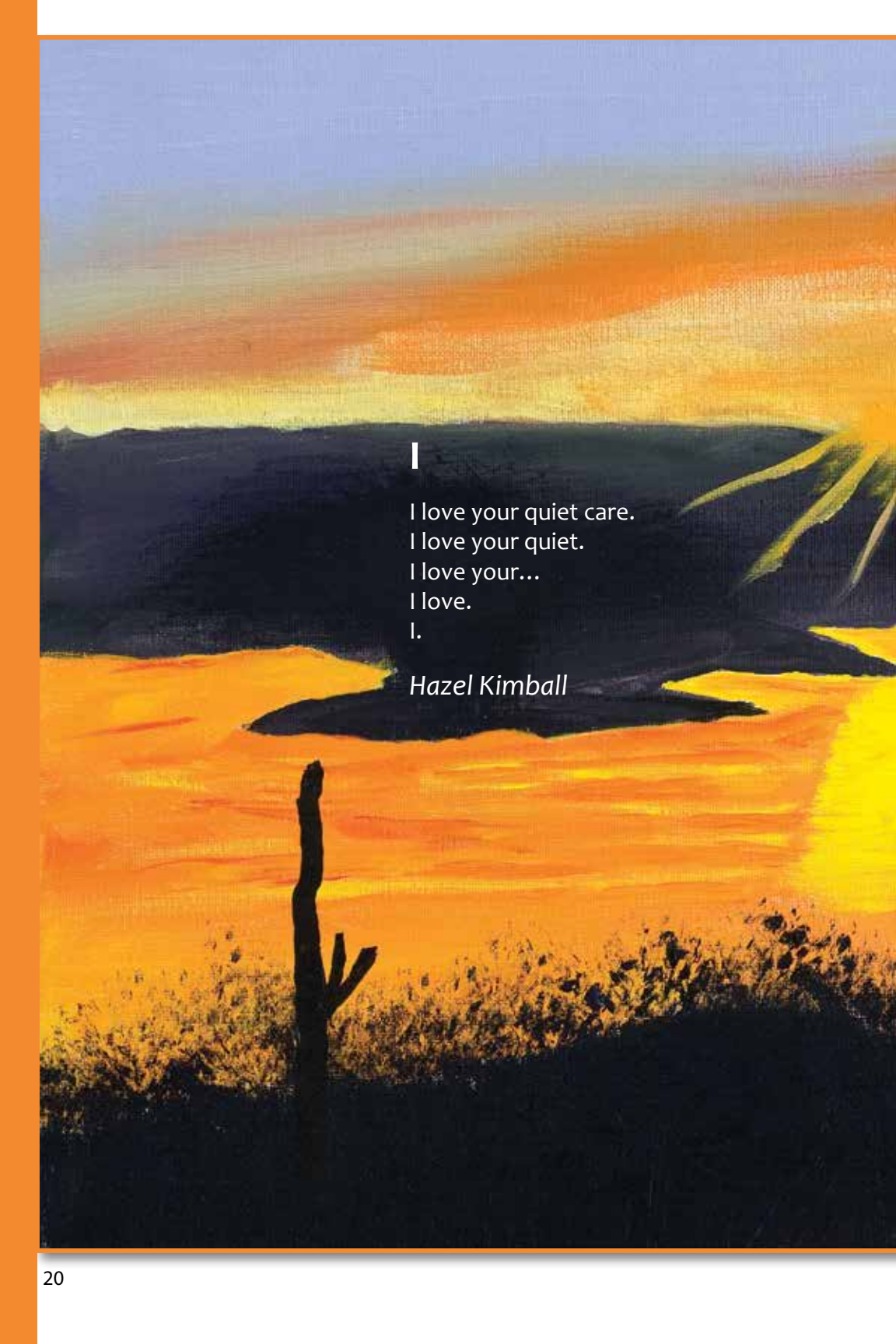
far beyond human, was about to steal all you knew. I didn't feel fear though, it was comfort. There was a man's voice, God. In this glorious dream, He walked with me and showed me the way back home, the way to let go of the pain, and how to remember that I was loved by many individuals, family or friend. When I hurt myself, I also hurt them. My brothers, parents, friends, depended on me far more than I knew at the time. That night, I gave it up, threw away the razors, safety pins, anything sharp. I got my life back.

An estimated two million Americans purposely cut themselves, and ninety percent of those individuals begin as teenagers. The reasons range from things such as: temptation, peer pressure, trauma, and relationships. Cutting is a major problem amongst teens. As you can tell, I had the disease of the mind just like any other teenage girl in America. The only difference is, I got lucky. It may sound strange that I found God and that everything changed, but that's exactly what happened. Life has a funny way of creating hoops for us to jump through. Coming as far as I have, I now realize just how short life is and how little we appreciate the small things. I realize that hurting myself was killing any chance I had at happiness. I'm not saying that everyone needs to find God and then everything will be perfect. There will always be troubles, but if we could all just find something to remind us of how truly special we are to someone, somewhere, then pain would come in smaller doses. This may or may not mean anything to you, but I hope I leave you with a sense of closure. A sense that you'll always remember to treat life and yourself, as the most precious thing you've ever owned, because it is.

"Be in Control.. Don't let it control you.. You're not alone.. If you need help ask.. No one was ever punished for asking for help.."

*Emily Favour*





I  
I love your quiet care.  
I love your quiet.  
I love your...  
I love.  
I.

*Hazel Kimball*



Arizona Sunrise - Mike McKay

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## First-Place Winner

### Seven Days of Living Challenge

When I first heard about the Seven Days of Living Challenge, I wanted to do something that would make an impact. I knew that not driving for a week would be good for the environment and my wallet, but it wasn't the impact I was looking for. I tried thinking of possibilities but kept coming up empty. Then, one day while on Facebook, I found my challenge. I was going to stand up to bullies for seven days. At first, I was worried I wouldn't see somebody being bullied each day. Turns out I did, and it wasn't hard.

Day 1. While passing time on Facebook, I noticed one of my friends saying harsh stuff about another girl her age. I couldn't believe people were saying these things to somebody, especially in the public forum of Facebook, where hundreds of other people like me could read it. I quickly jumped in on the comments, expressing to them the concerns and dangers of cyber bullying. I assured her that even if her anger was justified, she should never say such hurtful things to somebody else. I went on to mention that people have committed suicide from cyber bullying. She defended herself saying that what she wrote was true. I responded by reminding her that it doesn't matter what happened, she shouldn't say those things because people could really get hurt.

Day 2. I work at a customer service store. While working, one of my co-workers constantly puts down everyone. She was talking to a co-worker in a condescending tone and even used the word stupid. I leaned in and whispered that she should be nicer, and there were other ways to handle new employees who were learning slowly.

Day 3. Again, while at work, I witnessed somebody being rude. This time a customer was yelling at one of my co-workers. He was

upset my co-worker couldn't find a movie that our system said we had in the store. Normally, when a customer is upset, we give a coupon or some other "we're sorry" item. But this customer had crossed lines with his yelling and was bullying my shy co-worker. I found my boss, and we escorted him out of the store.

Day 4. Once again, while scrolling down my newsfeed on Facebook, I saw a derogatory status. It read: "Sluts these days; all trash and no class. That means you, Brittany." Nineteen people "liked" it, with a few commenting "lol" or "haha." I simply commented that I hope, someday, girls will stop casually referring to each other in these terms.

Day 5. Today while on Facebook, a guy I went to high school with was commenting repeatedly on one girl's photograph of herself in a bikini. He was calling her a "hippo" and saying she'll never lose the weight and get a boyfriend. I tried not to bully him back. I calmly stated it was not okay for him to harass her like that and reminded him cyber bullying leads to awful consequences.

Day 6. Thanksgiving. Fortunately, the closest thing to bullying I found online today were a few boys arguing about their favorite football teams. All I chimed in on this debate was, "Go Packers!"

Day 7. The final day of this challenge. Today I spoke up for myself, against a bully of my own. A manager of mine has been harassing me in and outside of work because of my Christian values. After all the courage I gained this week speaking up for others, I walked into the office and had a long chat with my boss. He said he'd do his best to handle the situation. It's been three days, and things haven't improved. But I'm glad I said something.

I have no idea if speaking up in person or online has changed anything this week, but I hope that others have seen my stepping in and will do the same for themselves or somebody else. Sometimes there were people on Facebook who agreed with what I said, but I know I can't stop it alone. I believe if we stop giving bullies the oxygen to their fire, they'll lose their power and things will change.

*Adrianna Martin-Wyatt*



A painting of a snowy landscape with several evergreen trees in the foreground. The sky is filled with dramatic, dark blue and white clouds, suggesting a storm or late afternoon light. The overall tone is cool and atmospheric.

## Second-Place Winner Seven Days of Living Challenge

11/13-11/20

When I was first introduced to the idea of doing something different for seven days, I was unsure about what I could possibly do to make other things insignificant. My first thought was to cut myself off from my cell phone and Facebook. My opinion quickly changed when I started thinking about all the other people who would be doing something as simple as that. So, I began brainstorming. I thought



*Morning-Riser - Siera Smyth*

of trying to go seven days without football; but I quickly knew that it was impossible when I saw the matchups for the week. After a few more ideas ran through my head, I started thinking about world hunger and how children all over the world are starving. I learned



that many people survive by eating only rice and drinking only water. I knew that was what I should cut myself off from; my mission was to eat only plain brown rice and drink only bottled water.

#### Day One—11/13

Today was the first day of my seven days of only rice and water. I woke up excited to try this out, hoping that I would be filled up by the time I was finished. Turns out by the time I ate two cups of rice I was genuinely full and ready to go about my day. As the day went on I realized it was too easy to eat as much rice as I wanted to per meal. I thought to myself it's not fair that I can keep serving myself with more and more rice because people who are starving don't have that same luxury. When the day was said and done, I had eaten about 8 cups of rice. It was too much and had to change.

#### Day Two—11/14

Today, I have decided to limit myself to six cups of rice and progressively go down each day. This morning I ate two cups of brown rice and drank a few glasses of water. It was not nearly as exciting today; the rice tasted especially plain all day, and I began to feel myself having less energy. Today was also my first day of class while on this rice only diet, and I found it much harder to focus. I could tell it was going to be a rough week. I knew it was going to be a mental test to accomplish this.

#### Day Three—11/15

Day three, and I'm starving. I've decided to have only 5 ½ cups of rice today. Each meal is becoming less and less exciting. I awoke this morning to find my roommate making eggs and bacon; this didn't help my stomach. But, I kept my chin up and made the rice-trying hard to ignore his taunting. I realize I'm nearly half way done with the week, and my energy feels like its non-existent. The water has become better tasting than the rice tonight.

#### Day Four—11/16

I'm officially fed up with rice today, and it's only the fourth day. Only five cups of rice—one and a half for breakfast. I don't want anymore. I had class again today, and this time the focus was a little better. My stomach seems to have adjusted to eating a smaller amount of food and working with what it gets rather than growling every moment it gets. Today, was the first day

I felt confident that I was going to make it till Monday.

#### Day Five—11/17

Today, I woke up and all I have been thinking is two days left! I am feeling better today, though still weak, but satisfied with my effort thus far. I've decided to really cut back on rice today, as I've had about as much rice as I can take. Four cups today. It will be tough making it through the weekend, but I'm confident I can withstand these hunger pangs.

#### Day Six—11/18

One day left, and today I'm really feeling exhausted. I missed my dinner last night so I only managed to take in two cups of rice yesterday. I'm staying consistent though. If someone who was starving missed a meal they couldn't just get food right away like I can. It was a missed opportunity, and it's something I have to deal with for the day. The rice just tastes like cardboard, and I'm glad Thanksgiving is a few days away.

#### Day Seven—11/19

Today is my last day of the rice diet, and I have to say I am relieved. To make it official I decided to eat only three cups of rice today. I feel unfocused, but energetic. Perhaps it's because I know in the back of my head I'll be able to eat something different tomorrow. The rice I've eaten has definitely become dissatisfying in every sense of the word. I almost put my fork down and walked away without dinner and lunch. When the day was over I had eaten only 1 ½ cups of rice, and I figured for every cup of rice I ate, I drank about 5 ounces of water.

#### My Final Conclusion—11/20

After eating and drinking nothing but rice and water for a week, I have a completely new perspective on people who are less fortunate than I am. It amazes me that there are people who go through life eating rice as one of their main meals. I am very happy I chose to eat only rice and water, instead of doing something else that wouldn't have actually made me think critically. I believe after this experience everyone else should be encouraged to try it, just to grasp the concept of what it's like for people who are less fortunate than we are.

*Matthew Polley*

## Third-Place Winner

### Seven Days of Living Contest

During my seven day trial, I decided to try to become less distracted. Some of my big distractions are watching T.V., playing my MP3 player, texting on my phone, and surfing the Internet and Facebook for miscellaneous things.

Monday, November 14, 2011 is my first day. I didn't log onto Facebook after I woke up, but I did watch T.V. It distracted me from doing my Spanish homework, which led me to doing my homework thirty minutes before class. Then after class, I decided to go on the computer to do some more homework for other classes. I then had the urge to check my Facebook, but I didn't. Instead, I started to surf the Internet by clicking the headlines on the Yahoo page. That distracted me for about forty-five minutes. Then I decided to go on YouTube. There I listened to some music. Then I had the idea of getting help for my math homework. To my surprise, YouTube really helped. I was learning more about my math homework from YouTube than from the lecture in class. Then for about ten minutes, I listened to my MP3 player, but I turned it off once I remembered that I was trying not to listen to it. Today is Monday, and I know that the show House has a new episode. I'm glad that I have a DVR to record it, so I can watch it once I'm done with this seven day thing. It was not a very productive day, but I see how I become very distracted by the TV and Internet. Those are going to be very difficult to overcome.

Day Two. Tuesday, November 15, 2011 was a struggle. It felt like forever. When I woke-up, I went straight to the computer to check my Facebook. Then I remembered that I was refraining from it. So I went back into the room to think about what else I could do. I stood in the room feeling like I had nothing to do. I wanted to watch the news or read the popular articles on Yahoo! Then I just decided to get my things together for class and head to the college. At the college, I started to do my math homework and got some extra help with my Spanish class. After I did that, I went to class. Then, after class, I did some more homework. I felt like I had nothing else to do after all that. I noticed

that I have no other entertainment than the Internet and television. Now I'm going to think about other activities I can do to entertain me besides the Internet and television.

Day three. Wednesday, November 16, 2011. I still struggled with not watching TV. I wanted to watch TV to take my mind off school, but I couldn't. I decided to just read a book. I didn't read much because school was still on my mind. So I decided to start studying instead. I felt a little better knowing that I was doing work for my classes, but I still had some distractions. I could hear the TV from the room. I could hear what show or movie was playing and soon I just started listening. I shook my head and went back to my studies. I got a lot of work done by leaving my home and going to the college to do my work. Thursday will be better because I'll be working for almost half of the day.

Day four. Thursday, November 17, 2011. This day went by fast. I worked for most of the day.

The last three days, I was starting to get stressed out. I wanted to sit on my bed and listen to my MP3 player or watch a movie. I needed an outlet. When I did get really stressed out, I took the truck and drove around town. I listened to the KTNN station on AM 660. This is the Navajo station. I learned a lot about what was going on in the world and at home on the Navajo reservation. Listening to the radio helped a lot. I was also able to listen to some Navajo Yei Bi Chei songs that are only sung during the winter. If I had not done this, I never would have thought about listening to KTNN instead of my MP3 player. But listening to the radio didn't always help with my stress, so I decided to give myself a time limit on the TV. Watching TV took me away from the worries of school.

After the seventh day, I checked my Facebook, and my friends were asking where I was. This made me laugh. For my friends, this is their only contact for me. When I started using all those devices-- the MP3 player, Internet, cell phone and television-- I felt a lot better. I felt like a weight had been lifted, and I was no longer punishing myself. That's what these seven days were like: a punishment.

*Courtney Tallis*

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## For Men of War or Little Spiny Fish

I remember fishing with my friend Marty Mortenson, who has since fallen during the Spring of 2005 in the heat of an Iraqi battle. I remember that I was about ten years old when Marty's dad took Marty and me to Dogtown Lake, which is about twenty-seven miles outside of Flagstaff, Arizona. A good friend of Marty's Dad met us out on the lake. We were to be fishing for a tiny, spiny fish called a crappie.

I don't remember whether it was sunny or partly cloudy. However, I do remember that the sun was a bit hot, and there was a light breeze with the deep, rich, tangy smell of pine in the air. Also, I do not remember whether we were fishing on the north, east, south, or even the west side of the lake. I do not remember whether it was a deer or an elk that scampered off into the rough wooden terrain in the middle of that Saturday morning.

I remember that the crappie catch score was Marty with five crappies and me with twelve or maybe thirteen whole crappies. I am not sure how many of these little bony fish that Marty's dad caught; however, I seem to recall his father's friend, who happens to be an expert fisherman, catching something like ninety-seven crappies or so. He threw every one of those slippery little lake trotters back in the murky lake water. So it might seem to the experienced fisherman that the fish Marty and I were catching were quite possibly the same fish that his father's friend caught.

I have yet to beat my catch of fish that I had caught at age ten. This fishy experience with the sun blaring in my eyes and burning through the skin cells in my face is one of my most memorable childhood experiences. When I look at pictures of my friend as the fallen soldier, it reminds me of when we were just little kids who couldn't wait for the weekend so we could do things like camping, fishing, and just hanging out having a great time.



*Frozen Dreams - Kate Adams*

Marty Mortenson wasn't just one of my best childhood friends; he will be remembered forever as the American hero that gave his life in honor of our country and the freedom we so easily take for granted each day. I don't remember him as this hero; when I hear of this hero, it brings me back to that Saturday morning I fished at Dogtown Lake forming bonds of friendship that remain a beloved snapshot of the most cherished of my childhood memories.

*John Mark Mauro*



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# Isolation

## *A Personal Perspective on the Colorado Plateau or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Isolation*

For two days I had wandered, up and down, through aspens and pines, listening to the silence and cacophonous noise of the forest. I walked through the trees, watching the light ahead grow brighter and brighter. I knew what was ahead, but I was still giddy with the anticipation. I had seen it before, dozens of times, from different angles, different sides, different conditions, and different times, but every time I saw it, I felt like it was the first time all over again. I stepped forward one last time, watching as the edge of the trees stopped suddenly at my sides. I walked out carefully, picking my way out along the spit of rock, staring down at my feet, afraid to look away for fear that I would lose my footing and slip.

As I reached the end of the spit, I sat down between two yuccas and looked up. Three hundred and sixty degrees of the Grand Canyon surrounded me on all sides, empty space connected to the rim of the canyon by a tiny spit of limestone, crumbling with age and weather. I looked around, awestruck by the world around me. I had spoken to the Backcountry Rangers and asked if anyone would be in the same sections as I was; the answer was no. The closest person on the rim was in a section four miles to the west. I sat there in silence, connected to the canyon in a way very few people ever experience. For a moment, a flash of fear lit up my mind. I was so far from another human that if I needed help I was entirely shit out of luck. I panicked for a moment,

and then I felt the rush of the wind up the wall of the canyon, lifting the dirt, creosote, and water smell of the river up to me. At that moment, I stopped worrying, and I stopped thinking about civilization, about the life I held back in Flagstaff, and about the friends I had waiting for me at home. At that moment, I learned to stop worrying and love the isolation.



*Lazy Sunday on Lake Mary - Kate Adams*

Clarence Dutton wrote in “The Panorama of Point Sublime,” “The Grand Canyon of the Colorado is a great innovation in modern ideas of scenery and in our conceptions of the grandeur, beauty, and power of nature. As with all great innovations it is not to be comprehended in a day or a week, nor even in a month. It must be dwelt upon and studied, and the study must compromise the slow acquisition of the meaning and spirit of that marvelously scenery which

characterizes that Plateau Country, and of which the great chasm is the superlative manifestation” (141). I have spent hundreds of hours over the past years at the canyon. I have seen it from many angles, in all of its seasons, in any time of day or night, and with many mindsets. To this day, I still believe that I know very little of the canyon. I open my mind to the canyon and let information flow in, and it always continues to flow.

Clarence Dutton came to the canyon as an explorer to see what could be understood, to see what could be made from a scene that overpowered the senses of a human. I identify with Dutton, with his feeling that seeing the canyon did not mean one understood the canyon. Dutton spends page after page writing about his view of the canyon from Point Sublime. However detailed the description he puts forward is, it can only begin to scratch the surface of what one sees at the canyon. No amount of reading could prepare a person for his or her first view of the canyon. One could know about its history, geology, anthropology, and every other subject possible, but it still does not prepare a person for his or her first sight of the abyss.

I sat on the edge of the canyon for nearly seven hours, watching the shadows play back and forth against the stones. I made page after page of sketches, notes, and observations of the canyon. I wrote and wrote and wrote, trying to place what I was experiencing onto the paper, to give others a way to share my experience, to understand what I was seeing now. I failed. What I wrote is a vivid description of the canyon, much as Dutton once wrote. However, it is not the canyon. I believe that Dutton would feel the same way. No matter what a person reads, no matter how vivid and detailed the description is, one cannot understand the canyon until they behold it for themselves and spent the time to learn about it.

Dutton mapped parts of the canyon region as one of the first Anglo men to see the area. He came to a wilderness that was little known and consisted of story and legend and of fact. I came to this place with knowledge of the canyon that Dutton or Powell would have given anything for. I came to the canyon with a decade of education about the region, with knowledge based in science and recorded history, fact-checked and sterilized by the generations following the original information gathering. I will never experience the true wilderness that Dutton and his crew found, but I do my best to find a wilderness that is as inspiring to me as it was to Dutton.

Dutton's writing came into my life years after I had started to explore the canyon. However, his writing showed me that even a hundred years later, the canyon can still inspire the absolute awe that it one showed him. I go over his writings, feeling the direct lines of connection between his experience and mine, the feeling of viewing an unspoiled land. His work has displayed to me that even a man who had seen the world was still floored by the canyon. This mirrors my own feelings. I have seen great swaths of our country and walked through some of the most beautiful places on earth, but when asked about what I have seen in my life that stands out in my mind the most, I always respond that the Grand Canyon far surpasses anything else. I will continue to travel the world, to see whatever I can see, but I believe, that in the end, it is very possible that nothing will ever strike me as deeply as the canyon does.

*Cosmo Diskan*

#### Work Cited

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*Hart Prairie Aspens - Jennifer Harder*

## Midwest Beauty

I was only six when we moved away. Why this place means so much to me might seem silly. What could I possibly remember? It is so far from me now, though the memories I hold in my heart make it seem as if I never left.

The memories are all around me. I see them in photos, remember them from stories, see them in nature, and re-experience them through the people in my life. I now look back and realize the memories that I remember most might not have meant as much to me if I never left. Leaving made me realize what I love.

For the longest time I did not see it like this. Disappointment came with remembering. I was disappointed by the fact that my family had moved across the country, detaching me from everything I knew and loved. I had to remind myself that I was only six, though when I remember these past times, it seems as if they were last week. The memories are so vivid; the feeling of complete happiness and contentment is what I remember when revisiting this significant beautiful place that allowed for many joyous experiences.

Spending time with my family creates the memories though the scenic views, smells of fresh autumn air, and landscape. Architecture completes the memory. I remember: the way the autumn leaves turned from yellow to red while their color blew with the wind, painting a picture; the grass blanketed with early morning dew created a shimmer that sparkled in the sun; the willow trees touching the ground as their massive streams of leaves acted as a safe haven for our many games; and the tree that sat in our front lawn and was home to our bungee swing.

The park that was home to thousands of aspen trees was where I spent many days frolicking and enjoying nature at its best. I love the way the white bark stands out, exposing its true beauty; no other tree looks quite like an aspen. Of course there were many other kinds of trees; one in particular were spruces. When I was little, my parents would walk me through the thick forest of spruces, and I imagined it was Christmas, as every tree resembled a perfect Christmas tree. Surrounded by trees, picnics were held; the birds sang as the deer's spied through the thick trees. Among the wildlife was a river that ran through the town. Every weekend, this babbling brook would be filled with tourists. Hundred of tourists would come and disrupt the beauty, crowding out the birds that sat along the trees or the bunnies that hopped along the brook, however, the week days were mine. I loved how I could play on the trees as they generously lent out their branches. The grass provided me with comfort, as I lay gazing at the ever-changing sky.

These memories live in a small town named Deerfield, a town twenty-five miles north of Chicago, a village tucked

away in the forest. I consider it to be the essence of Midwest beauty. Complete with farms, vineyards, pumpkin patches, and orchards, Deerfield does it best. The beauty is something that sparks my memories, but I also remember this place because of the time spent with my cousins and family in this beautiful place. Whether it was birthdays or holidays, we got together and reminisced about the time spent swimming at the neighborhood pool, playing a massive game of hide and go seek, and the forest was home to our many games.

Deerfield was a place with seasons. I miss the leaves changing, the snow caps forming, the flowers blooming, and the smell of grass that filled the air. After Deerfield, we moved to Arizona. Without moving, I would have never known what I was leaving. It gave me a sense of appreciation that I would not have realized or been exposed to. Having had the opportunity to experience two polar opposites when it comes to scenery allowed me to realize what I love and prefer. In the end, I realize I relate childhood happiness to Midwest landscapes. The landscapes act as a memory trigger. I found that I relate the scenery details such as the fresh cut grass, aspen trees and the endless wildlife to the memories I shared with my family.

The architecture, with porches that stretch across houses, makes it seem like everyone is invited. I envision an old couple sitting on the porch swinging back and forth watching the world pass by. Getting away from the city pollution, roaring cars, and rushing people makes it seem as if there are no cares to be dealt with, no deadlines, no meetings, and no stress. These villages, such as Deerfield, put me at ease. To this day, visiting makes those memories that I had years ago come back.

I couldn't have imagined a better place to create such memories. Deerfield fulfilled me in every way; I loved what it provided me with and am thankful for the time I got to spend in such a perfectly beautiful village.

*Rachel Feetterer*



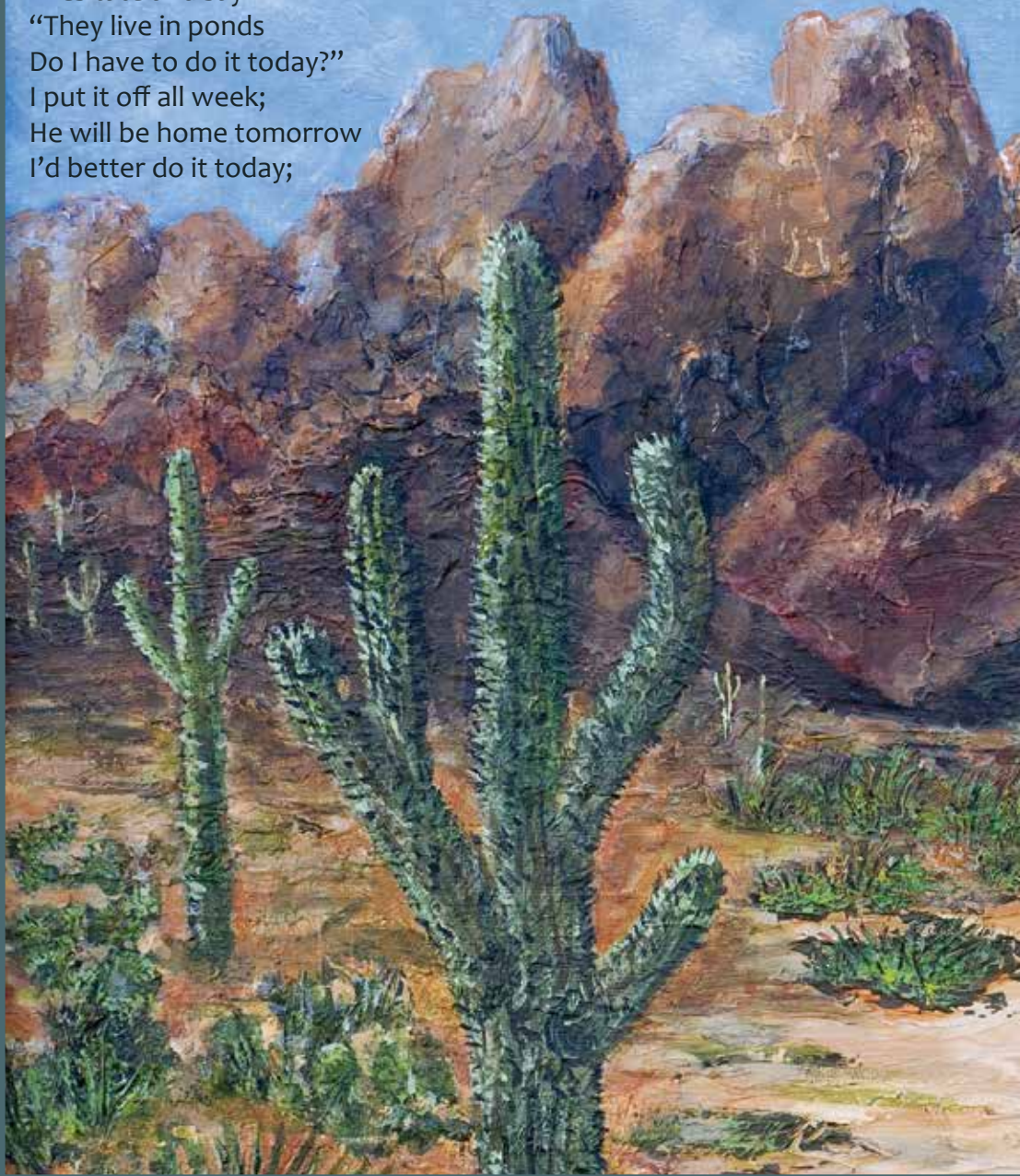


Self Portrait - Jackie Eliason

# Taking Care of a Turtle

My brother is out of town  
His turtle's cage is brown  
"Can you clean it?" he asks  
I hesitate and say  
"They live in ponds  
Do I have to do it today?"  
I put it off all week;  
He will be home tomorrow  
I'd better do it today;

It's smelling bad anyway.  
What happened?  
Oh crap.  
He's not moving around  
I think this turtle is dead  
Laying in its smelly cage  
I threw it on the ground.





The rotting turtle stinks bad.  
I gotta do something;  
I'll go buy another.  
I'll switch it with the dead one  
And won't tell my brother.

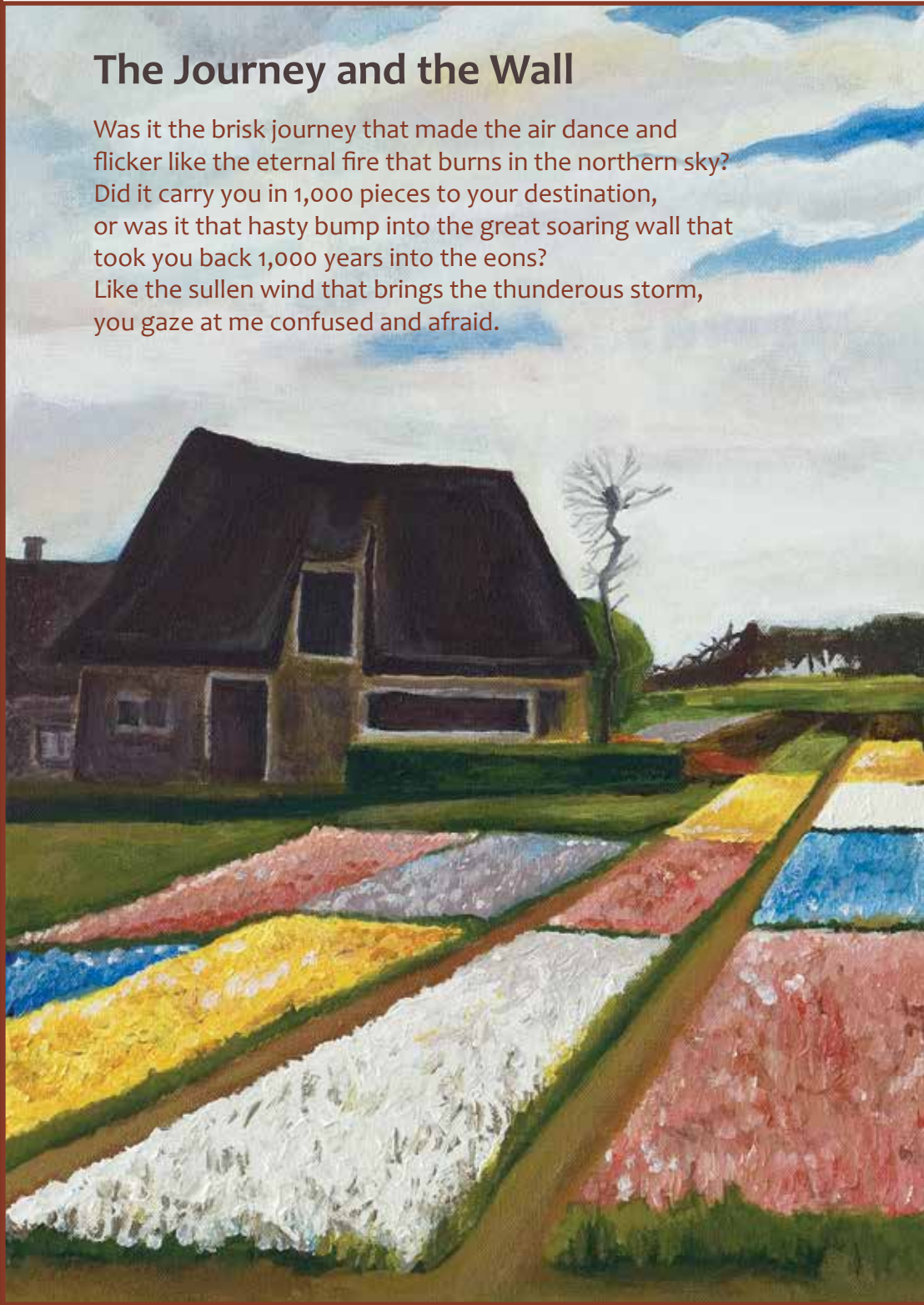
I cleaned the cage  
But no one will know  
That I killed his turtle,  
And this one's from Petco.

*Daniel Sinden*



# The Journey and the Wall

Was it the brisk journey that made the air dance and  
flicker like the eternal fire that burns in the northern sky?  
Did it carry you in 1,000 pieces to your destination,  
or was it that hasty bump into the great soaring wall that  
took you back 1,000 years into the eons?  
Like the sullen wind that brings the thunderous storm,  
you gaze at me confused and afraid.





The waves of tomorrow crash upon your  
thoughts forever rousing those  
primal ears that sniff the sounds and taste the touch.  
You are listening, waiting, and anticipating.  
Steady as a hurricane and violently plush like a pillow.  
I heard your laughs.  
They echoed into the darkness  
and shook the willow branches like 1,000  
snowflakes weighing down a single leaf.

Nadine Narindrankura



*Flower Field in Holland - Jennifer Harder*

# War is Kind... No, Really, It Is!

The author and poet Stephan Crane was very progressive in his writings during his short stint on earth. His first book, *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*, was turned down by publishers because it was too “ugly” for the reader (Liukkonen, par. 1) He had to publish the book himself, and it was an utter failure as a money making book, but it was very influential to other “realist” writers of the time period. However, his next book, *The Red Badge of Courage*, was a great success. The book’s story was considered so real the reader often believed Crane served during the Civil War, but Crane never served in the military. Crane used a form of writing during the period called “realism” or “naturalism,” both designed to force the reader to view the world as it is, and without sugar coating the subject.

In 1899, the year before his death, Crane wrote a poem he named, “War is Kind.” This literary work is often touted as being a great use of Irony or Satire, and is believed to be an argument against war. Laura Fox’s introduction of the poem on the LibriVox.org website sums up the general feeling by commentators all over the world, “The title takes on a gentle yet harrowing irony as this poem powerfully evokes the human costs of war, both the victims of the battlefield and those left behind” (Fox). My perspective is quite the opposite. In this analysis, I plan to show that Crane was actually trying to explain to the reader why war is kind. His elemental use of different perspectives, vivid imagery, and realism allows the reader to see why, in some instances, war can be kind.

Crane used three different perspectives to tell the story of war from several sides, in turn allowing the reader to see how war is a useful outlet for soldiers who would not be happier doing anything else. In stanzas one, three, and five we are introduced to the effects of war through the eyes of the loved ones left behind, and those who comfort them. Take for instance the first lines, “Do not weep, maiden, for war is kind. / Because your lover threw wild hands toward the sky” (Lines 1-2). This shows us that the speaker is the person comforting a young female who has lost her lover in a war. The use of these

two perspectives, as well as those in the third and fifth stanzas, not only brings feelings of sorrow, but requires us to ask two questions: Why did the lover have to leave for war, and what could possibly be the explanation behind the comforter's words "for war is kind"?

Those two questions lead us to the third perspective, that of the soldier who goes off to war. Crane introduces the soldier's view in the second stanza with "Little souls who thirst for fight / These men were born to drill and die" (7-8). This was a powerful beginning for introducing to us why war is kind. He uses "little souls" to show the ages of the soldiers going into battle. It gives us the vision of children running off to battle, which was essentially the truth of the time. Today no one can enter into service with the military until the age of 18, but at the time this poem was published, there were very few guidelines for who could join. As such, many of those who did join were in their early- to mid-teens, or basically children in the eyes of the reader. However, the word "men" is used immediately after, which shows that, while these boys may be young, they have chosen a life reserved for adults by entering into battle. Then we have these lines in the fourth stanza, "These men were born to drill and die / Point for them the virtue of slaughter / Make plain to them the excellence of killing" (19-21). These two examples give us the reason for, and why the comforters say, war is kind. Simply the repetition of "these men were born to drill and die" is a plain example. The soldier many times feels they should join the military out of a service to their country, but also often feels as though they are destined to fight. This primal feeling is so prevalent in them that it can only be subsided by bending to its will. This is the meaning of the "thirst for fight" reference. The military is an outlet for this type of soldier. The military shows them how to fight honorably, and how to do it with as little pain as possible to the enemy. Ergo, we have the meaning for "virtue of slaughter" and "excellence of killing."

Through vivid imagery, Crane allows the reader to visualize the happenings of the Spanish American war of 1898. Crane was hired to follow and report on the Spanish American war for the American newspaper, *New York World*. Through this exploit he often reported on conditions of the war, casualties incurred, and on famed Theodore Roosevelt's "Rough Riders". When Crane writes, "Because your father tumbled in the yellow trenches / Raged at his breast, gulped and died" (13-14), he is giving us a glimpse into the conditions of the Spanish American war. Through this war America



sustained casualties in the thousands, but much of those casualties were not from battle. A vast majority of those casualties were sustained through yellow fever, an infection passed along through mosquitoes. The words “yellow trenches” can be viewed as the parapets in Cuba lined with jaundiced men stricken with yellow fever. Because untreated yellow fever symptoms include vomiting, internal bleeding, and multisystem organ failure, it is not that hard to imagine why a soldier with this condition would be “raged at his breast,” followed by the last breath portrayed by “gulped and died.”

Another extremely intriguing use of vivid imagery came from these lines, “Swift blazing flag of the regiment / Eagle with crest of red and gold” (17-18). These two lines interested me so much because of the way Crane’s poem is presented most often. Of the many times I encountered this poem it was presented with a brief biographical introduction to the author, and almost always told of the author’s famed civil war tale, *The Red Badge of Courage*. An unsuspecting, and not often reader of poetry, could interpret this to mean that the poem was again written about the Civil War. This is not meant to be an illustration of my ignorance, but instead show how leaving out certain information could lead the reader astray. Nonetheless, Crane’s reference to the regimental flag caught my attention; not a scholar of regimental flags, I had to look this one up. Most of the regimental flags used during the Civil War were simply a perversion of the American flag at the time, and none were “blazing” with “red and gold.” It wasn’t until I found out Crane was a reporter for the Spanish American war that I searched for regimental flags of said war. This is what I found:



Image: Flags of the Spanish-American War Era (Loeser)

The above was the regimental flag for the First United States Volunteer Cavalry in 1898, more commonly known as the “Rough

Riders.” The FUSVC was put together specifically for the purpose of fighting the impending war in Cuba and Philippines. When viewing this flag it is easy to understand the vivid imagery Crane used when he described the flag as an “eagle with crest of red and gold.” This was a blatant use of imagery to set a time period, and location for the war.

Stephen Crane’s continued use of “realism” and “naturalism” in this poem, and throughout his writing career, gives credence to my belief he was giving a real reason for why war is kind. When he writes about the regimental flag, or describes the yellow fevered soldiers in trenches, we see the realism being used. Every time he talks about a loved one’s “weeping” we know that they are really crying. The regimental flag aside, these are generally images we see as unfavorable, and we tend to censor these images whenever we can. Sometimes we prefer to ignore the realities around us, and so we place blinders in front of our eyes in order to shade us from those realities. Crane’s use of “realism” in his writings forced us to look at things we considered too vulgar to confront. It is hard for many to believe that some of us have a “thirst for fight,” or that there can be “virtue of slaughter.” Ignoring these feelings is only a denial of who we really are. Crane understood this psychology, and through his progressive writings made us look at ourselves without our favored blinders.

Stephen Crane was a visionary in the poetry realm of his day. He used different perspectives to make us ask questions about ourselves, and view ideals from multiple sides. His use of vivid imagery thrusts us into the world as he sees it, no matter how “ugly.” And his use of “realism” removes our blinders for the things we wish to not see. In “*War Is Kind*,” Crane uses all these elements to present comfort for those who have lost loved ones to war. By showing how a soldier’s primal instinct is satisfied through war he comforts them with, “Do not weep, maiden, for war is kind.”

## *Patrick Harrison*

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*Apache - Mike McKay*

## Long Awaited Promise

When I was a young boy, I vowed, “Grandma, I promise you that I will not get married till I’m thirty years old.”

Laughingly, Grandma responded, “You’re silly. See the world, go to school, and we’ll just wait and see.”

Looking out into the distant horizon she sighed, “Lil’ Moses, I’ll let you get into all the trial and errors of life as a single man.”

“I don’t understand, Grandma, what are trials and errors?”

She responded, “You’ll see. Go live; go play, baby.”

So, I stuck to my boyhood vows. I feel proud thinking back to that conversation, and we laugh when we reminisce about it. However, the emotions I felt on

February 10th blew my little, easy, simple life away.

My life changed forever that day. I had been married ten months and felt like I found purpose in life. We were at the Flagstaff Medical Center where I became a brand new dad. I was in the hospital from the start of labor to carrying my son in my arms. The long eighteen hour event lasted all night and into the next afternoon. At about 3:15 p.m., all the parenting classes we took months before kicked into full gear. I held my wife's hand as she crushed mine, helping her breathe along with the pain.

Around 4:15 pm, my wife felt like she needed to push, however, the midwife was not there. Despite the fact that we were not ready for his arrival, our son was coming anyway. By now, my hands were losing blood circulation. We cleared the room of everyone but the staff because we wanted the experience just for ourselves. My wife started pushing very well even when the nurses tried to keep her from doing so. This being our first child, we did all we could, but five minutes later, our son's head was beginning to crown. Finally, in popped the midwife. As soon as

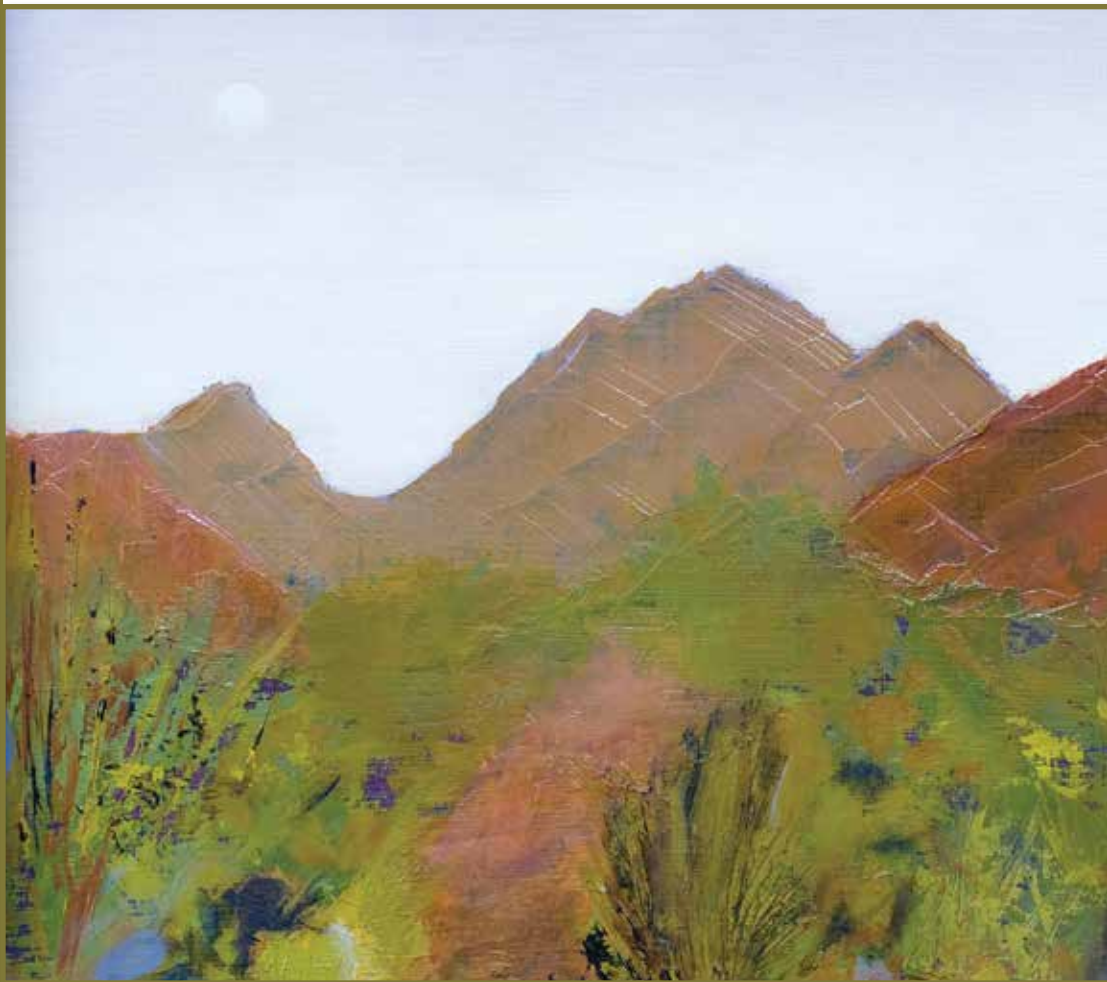
***“I held my wife’s hand  
as she crushed mine,  
helping her breathe  
along with the pain.”***

she sat down, our son was taking his first breath.

I heard his first baby cries, and I felt overwhelmed with mixed emotions, completely filled with smiles, happiness, and protectiveness. I watched him like a hawk, with a sort of tension, but overcome with joy. My wife had him in her arms, and I grabbed both

of them with tears of happiness. After an enduring labor, my wife exhaustingly exclaimed, “We did it! Mommy’s here, and look, Daddy’s here too!”

Excitedly, I showed off my new son to my mother and sisters after we invited them all back into the room. I proudly acquainted them with his proper and strong name, Kingston Moses Upshaw. Even now, I cry a little to be blessed with a beautiful, healthy son. He came into this world six pounds, six ounces and twenty-one inches long. Thrillingly, eyes wide with excitement, my little sister gaspingly said, “Let me see him; let me see him, aaahh!”

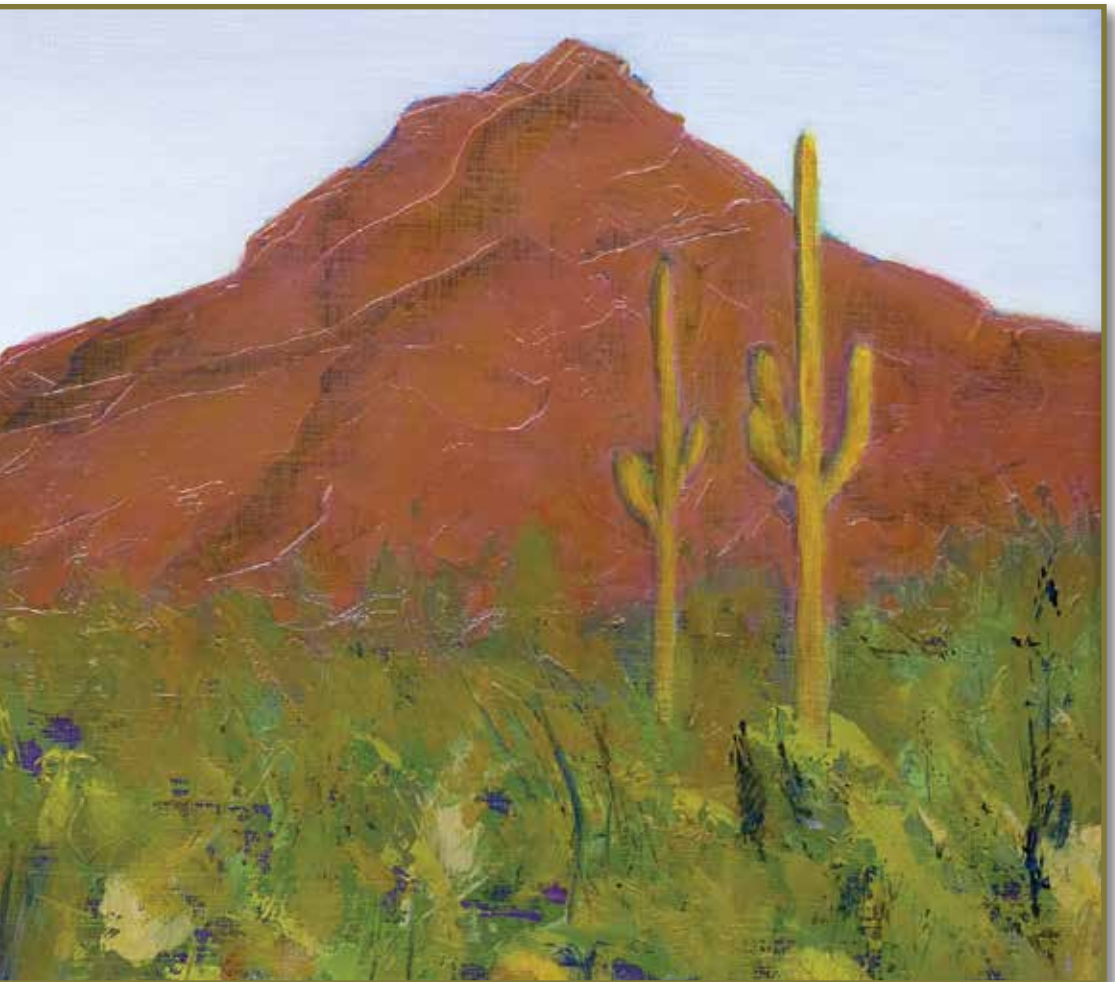




My mother, with tears in her eyes, held her grandson and whispered, “You’re finally here. I’m your grandma.” My mom was softly kissing his cheeks, looking deep into his almond brown eyes, running her fingers through his full head of hair.

I reached down with clammy hands, running my fingers through my wife’s hair and said, “I love you, Mama.” My own new family was here, after patiently waiting because of my boyhood vow. All thanks to the long awaited promise.

*Edwin Upshaw*



*Moonrise: Tucson Mountains - Jackie Eliason*





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