

THE STORY BEAST

For Story Artists, Listeners, and Dreamers

UNDER the TOMB and TOMBS





About the Cover Artist Asia Starr


Asia Starr is a Storyteller in the Johnson County Kansas Area, the Head of Design & Layout for [The Story Beast](#) and recipient of the 2023 [J.J. Reneaux Emerging Artist Award](#). Asia specializes in fairytales, folk and humorous stories, with the occasionally Spooky story. You can usually find her telling her stories to an audience of children ranging from preschool to high school. She loves to tell to Adults as well. She hopes to bring that childlike wonder and magic to all that have a chance to stay awhile and listen. mamastarrstorytelling.com/

Submit your art to
storybeasteditor@gmail.com to be
featured in the next issue.

The Story Beast 2023-2024 Themes

- Winter- *Peaceful Ponderings*- Due Nov. 1
- Spring - *Stepping Stones* -Due Feb. 1
- Summer- *Chaotic Creations* - Due May 1
- Fall - *Flavored Fright* - Due Aug. 1





*“Stories have to be told or they die,
and when they die, we can't remember
who we are or why we're here.”*

- Sue Monk Kidd, author



THE STORY BEAST

Under the Tome & Tombs

Vol. 2 ♦ Issue 3

Fall 2023



The Traveler's Companion

Series Painted by Kim Diaz Holm / Den Unge Herr Holm

Featured on page 54

The Story Beast
Vol. 2 ♦ Issue 3 ♦ Under the Tome & Tombs
Fall 2023

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Brünnhilde on Grane leaps on to the funeral pyre of Siegfried.

Illustrated by Arthur Rackham 1924

Siegfried & the Twilight of the Gods by Richard Wagner

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Post

WELCOME!

The leaves are beginning to turn brilliant colors and the evening air is crisp and brisk. Hearts may be a little heavier than normal with the seemingly endless cavalcade of natural disasters and man-made calamities. The cumulative effect of such relentless turmoil may be grief. It is normal to feel sad for what once was, feel loss for what is no more. Give yourself permission to feel whatever you are feeling. Feel it, honor it, and let it go.

Part of your healing journey can be relating memories, singing songs, or telling stories. Recalling happier times, talking about past experiences, and telling stories about what once was, can help you process through events and help put things into perspective. Telling stories can also provide an opportunity for others to recall their own experiences and, perhaps, help them on their own healing journey.

We never journey alone. We are the living continuation of our parents, our grandparents, and all of our ancestors. Life passed through them to us. To honor them, we can strive to live life fully. One way to do both is to tell their stories. In doing so, they will always walk with us and giving us strength.

Would you like to share a story with us? The Story Beast is your e-Pub and quarterly forum. We need your poems, stories, and artwork, as well as articles. We do our best to bring you interesting articles and fun stories and poems. We envision The Story Beast to be a place of connection and community. Please spread the word and tell your friends about us. Let us know what you think and sent your contributed works to storybeasteditor@gmail.com.

A heartfelt Thank You to all of you who have submitted your words and artwork to The Story Beast. The deadline for contributions for the next issue is November 1 for the December 2023 issue. The Winter issue's theme is Peaceful Ponderings. Thanks for reading and stay awhile and feast with the Beast!

Thank you very much.

The Spirits of the Beast

storybeasteditor@gmail.com



Dearest Crone:

How exactly do you make a living? You live off kindness?
I don't understand the type of currency that you survive on.

-Nosy About Nest Eggs

Dear Nosy About Nest Eggs:

You're lucky I'm in a good mood or such a question could get your eyelids pulled over your nose! The nerve to ask about someone's finances -- and yet, we do need to talk about it more often. I could ask the same question and wonder what kind of currency you use for your exchange of services. Or are you constantly being asked to do things for free and not even bother with currency or barely getting an egg when it's worth a whole chicken?

When I determine the bit of kindness that someone must do to earn my favor, I size up the person before me. People have an aura. And before you judge me for judging, do we all not judge every day? We look out before us -- perhaps for you it's an audience -- and make the best guess as to how to proceed. What will ring true versus what will get a gawk and a laugh (and not the nice kind of laugh)? Well, so it is when judging the fee (or in my case, level of kindness), required.

It's strange how often what I think is a small thing feels so big to another. For example, the classic hag request is for someone to brush our hair. Simple, right? Tangles galore, bugs crawling up and down, bits of dandruff flying about -- these are the delights of that job. Add to that a well with our heads bobbing about apart from our bodies. Suddenly, the basic job of combing our hair is too much for the average person?

What other jobs are common? Oh, I do love the one separating the rice from the salt. I admit that I look for people who have sausage-shaped fingers to test their kindness, patience, and creativity. I am hoping they think outside the box (or barrel or bin, whatever you prefer) and realize that nowhere in the task did I say they had to do it alone. People who are kind to all find those willing to be kind to them when in a pinch.

And what of you? How do you determine your starting point for the job? Do you like to start at your regular fee and go down? Are you confident and firm of your regular fee and stick to it even if it means that person goes elsewhere or rather admires your spunk and embraces it? Or do you feel about and talk long enough and figure out a number or fee that sounds like it would work within their budget?

Me? I'm a talker. You wouldn't think so with the number of hours I sit on my bum at the side of the road.

But get a living -- or undead -- creature nearby, and off I go. But I go in with a task in mind but do not fully reveal it until that sweet moment of opportunity. If, in the talking with someone, I learn that they are afraid of spiders somehow, then I keep that in mind as how to twist that into an act of kindness.

Perhaps they need to help an injured spider. Perhaps they need to enter a cave of spiders to retrieve something for me or another. My brain gets rolling. Though, if in the course of the chat I discover that there was a traumatic experience that led to this fear of spiders, I may show my own kind of kindness and see if the task could help in the healing while still having them confront this fear. Thus, the person being helped does more than the obvious task of kindness for another. By helping others, they are helping themselves.

I admit, all this talk of spiders is making me hungry.

I would not be doing my job if I didn't tell you where in the library to explore for negotiation or business transactions. Go to Dewey Decimal 658.405 for Business Negotiation. Or you can explore 158.5 where you find a lot of Self-Help books so you have the confidence to face a minotaur or a hydra or any number of beasts or humans to have the payment you need for your living.

What you do matters. How you can take care of yourself matters. Or not. Maybe you are not confident in what you are presenting for fees because you question what you do matters. Oh, does this suddenly get you defensive? Good. Then take that energy and channel it to share in a firm yet kind way -- complete with toothy or non-toothy smile -- or others.

What? You don't like how I'm smiling at you right now? Oh, bother!

Yours on the Road
- The Crone of All Crones



WANTED



Content for **THE STORY BEAST**

Looking for Story in all its exciting forms: traditional, modern or melded!

- Short Stories
- Articles on Storytelling
- Art
- Story Based Activities
- Poems

Themes for Upcoming Issues:

Winter -December 2023 - *Peaceful Ponderings*- Due November 1

Spring - March 2024 - *Stepping Stones* -Due February 1

Summer - June 2024- *Chaotic Creations* - Due May 1

Fall - September 2024 - *Flavored Fright* - Due August 1

For Submission Guidelines go to storybeast.org/submissions

Submit to storybeasteditor@gmail.com



-BOOK NOTES-

“So many books, so little shelf space!”



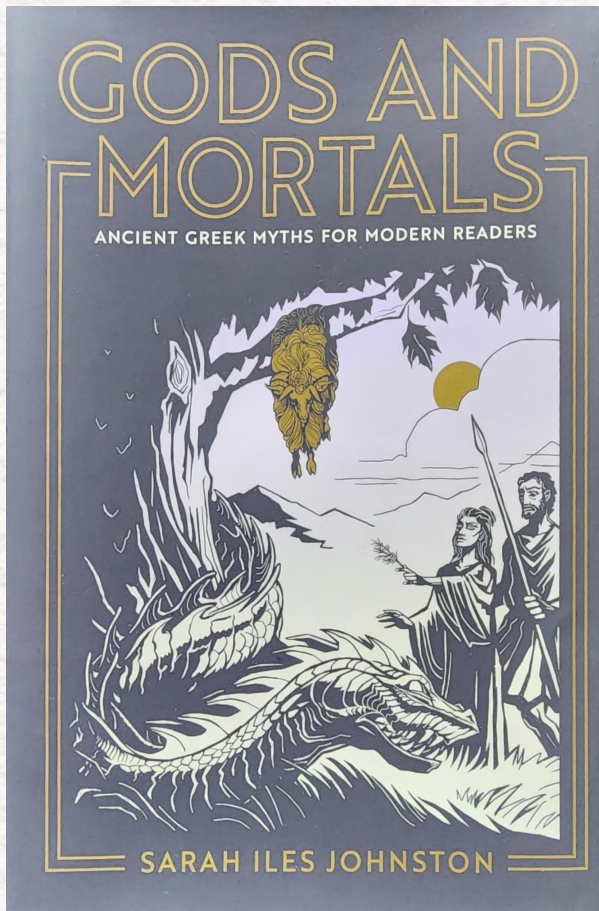
BOOK NOTES

This month's Book Notes present a diverse range of valuable new publications, as usual.

And, my usual problem: So many books, so little shelf space! **I will give any book marked with an asterisk (*) below, FREE, to the first person who requests it by email.** I ask only \$5 for postage and handling. (I note each book's list price in parentheses.)

And yet I want MORE books for review! Have you – or has someone you know – published a storytelling collection or a book about the art form in the past two years? **Please let me know! and I will request a review copy.** Thank you.

Wishing you many glorious stories,
Jo (jradner@american.edu)



***Sally Pomme Clayton, *The Mighty Goddess: World Myths*.** Gloucestershire, UK: The History Press, 2023. *The Mighty Goddess* is a labor of love. Pomme Clayton has gathered some fifty-four mythical stories of goddesses from cultures around the world: Maori, indigenous Australia, China, India, ancient Mesopotamia, Africa, Europe, North and South America. She has organized the myths according to what she feels to be their goddesses' primary identity: Creator, Virgin, Warrior, Lover, Mother, Crone. This book is a personal creation. As Clayton says, "I have taken my own journey through the myths, placing the goddess at the centre of each story, not at the side or lost at the end where she often can be." She presents us with her own retellings from the past forty years, as much as possible from the point of view of the goddess. Motifs echo across the world in these stories, inspiring further exploration. There is a small bibliography of secondary sources at the end; sources of individual stories are not given. The book is beautifully produced, each story illustrated by the imaginative papercuts of Sophie Herxheimer.

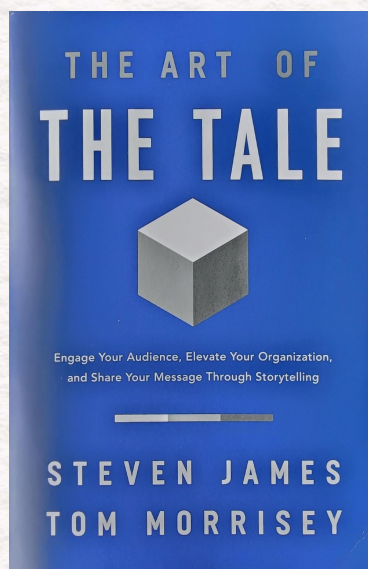
Priscilla Howe, *Clever, Kind, Tricky, and Sly: A Bulgarian Folktale Sampler*. Marion, MI: Parkhurst Brothers, 2021. \$14.95

When was the last time you told a Bulgarian folktale? Never? For most of us, Priscilla Howe’s offering will be the first time we have seen a collection of such tales – and it will be a delicious discovery. Bulgaria’s place in Eastern Europe has given it a rich and varied culture, at “an intersection of east and west, connecting Asia and Europe, looking in both directions,” with a strong component of Turkish influence from five hundred years under the Ottoman Empire. Priscilla Howe has immersed herself in Bulgarian language and culture since the 1980s. She gathered the forty-odd tales in this collection primarily during a Fulbright Scholarship in Bulgaria in 2015, looking for animal tales and trickster stories in the Ethnographic Museum in Sofia, in other archives and folktale collections, and from friends and acquaintances.



The result is a varied, sparkling array of tales – mostly animal and trickster tales, with fascinating Bulgarian variants of a few wonder tales thrown in. Howe translated the tales and has given us retellings from her own repertoire – and encourages other storytellers to tell them in their own styles, giving proper credit.

These are stories tellers will want to tell! Mostly short, witty, many suitable for children but with backbone that adult listeners will also enjoy. Bulgaria has an abundance of tricksters including many animals but also two humans, the Turkish Nasruddin Hodja and Bulgaria’s own Clever Peter. Some of these stories are kin to more familiar international tales, but with engaging variants. Clever Peter holds his crust of bread over a merchant’s stew pot to absorb the steam; hauled into court for the theft of steam, Peter is punished by the judge’s beating his shadow with a stout cudgel. A woodsman who saves a snake from a fire is rewarded with the ability to understand the speech of animals; if he reveals the gift, he will die. Pressed hard by his wife to tell his secret, he digs his own grave in preparation for death, but overhearing common sense from the dog and the rooster, saves his own life by his silence. So many charming stories! Thank you for this hard work, Priscilla.



***Steven James and Tom Morrissey, *The Art of the Tale*. LaPorte, IN: HarperCollins Publishers, 2022. \$22.99.**

James and Morrissey present a guide to applied storytelling in business settings – and their guidebook can give all of us some useful tips for the art form. They write persuasively about the power of story in organizations and, in fact, in all public speaking. Their points about the importance of telling the truth, even about past failures and embarrassments, make a lot of sense. They advise about when and how to incorporate humor. Despite a tendency to make catchy titles for storytelling techniques (“The Kung Fu Lesson, the Llama Sweater, and the Ice Cream Cookie Stack”), they describe believable situations. And every storyteller learning the craft needs the “five secrets to practicing and telling stories” that these authors name as Transformative Techniques.

The Art of the Tale has some unexpected bonuses, whether or not you are interested in developing yourself as a public speaker – for instance, Appendix C, which offers 365 (!) “story starter” prompts. Altogether, a practical and informative compendium.

Sarah Iles Johnston, *Gods and Mortals: Ancient Greek Myths for Modern Readers*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2023. \$24.95 hardcover.

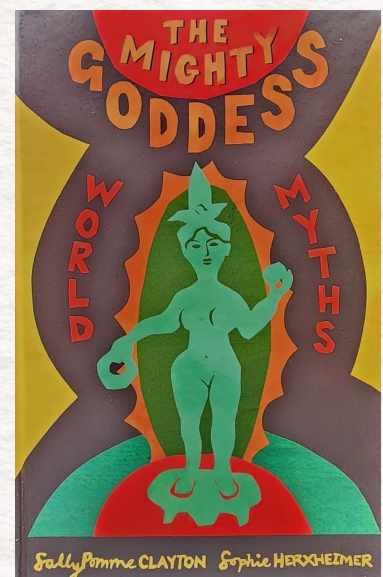
This is a book you will not want to put down. You will read 140 myths, almost 500 pages of adventures in the ancient Classical world, delighting in and deploring the stratagems of the gods, cringing at the plight of mortals, unable to resist the urge to find out what happened next.

Like many in my generation, I was introduced to the Greek myths in Edith Hamilton’s *Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes*, a graceful rendering of the Classical tale-board published some eighty years ago, suitable for family reading. In *Gods and Mortals*, Sarah Iles Johnston tells the stories for adults, today. In a very successful combination, she retells the myths with the drama of a storyteller and the depth and understanding of a scholar. Johnston is the College of Arts and Sciences Distinguished Professor of Religion and Professor of Classics at The Ohio State University, where she has developed a method of teaching mythology that involves first telling her class the story, then unfolding its complexities. In *Gods and Mortals*, Johnston presents the stories dramatically, but also incorporates in them information about the ancient world that helps the reader see the events in the context of the very different culture of antiquity. This is not simply a translation, in other words; in fact, from time to time Johnston reinterprets the stories, giving additional attention to women’s experiences (including the multiple rapes) and filling in what she perceives as gaps in the surviving texts. (She notes these moments faithfully in the notes, which also specify the various ancient sources on which she has drawn.)

The result is a book vivid with detail, sometimes shocking in its realistic rendering of events, and delectable in its ability to engage and inspire.

***Sally Pomme Clayton, *The Mighty Goddess: World Myths*. Gloucestershire, UK: The History Press, 2023.**

The *Mighty Goddess* is a labor of love. Pomme Clayton has gathered some fifty-four mythical stories of goddesses from cultures around the world: Maori, indigenous Australia, China, India, ancient Mesopotamia, Africa, Europe, North and South America. She has organized the myths according to what she feels to be their goddesses’ primary identity: Creator, Virgin, Warrior, Lover, Mother, Crone. This book is a personal creation. As Clayton says, “I have taken my own journey through the myths, placing the goddess at the centre of each story, not at the side or lost at the end where she often can be.” She presents us with her own retellings from the past forty years, as much as possible from the point of view of the goddess. Motifs echo across the world in these stories, inspiring further exploration. There is a small bibliography of secondary sources at the end; sources of individual stories are not given. The book is beautifully produced, each story illustrated by the imaginative papercuts of Sophie Herxheimer.

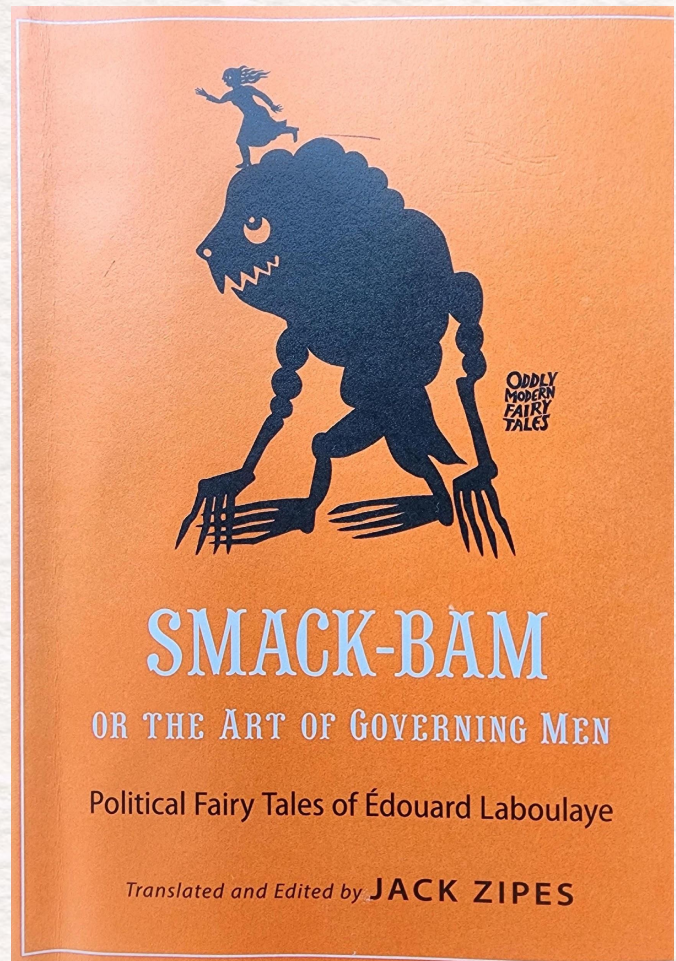


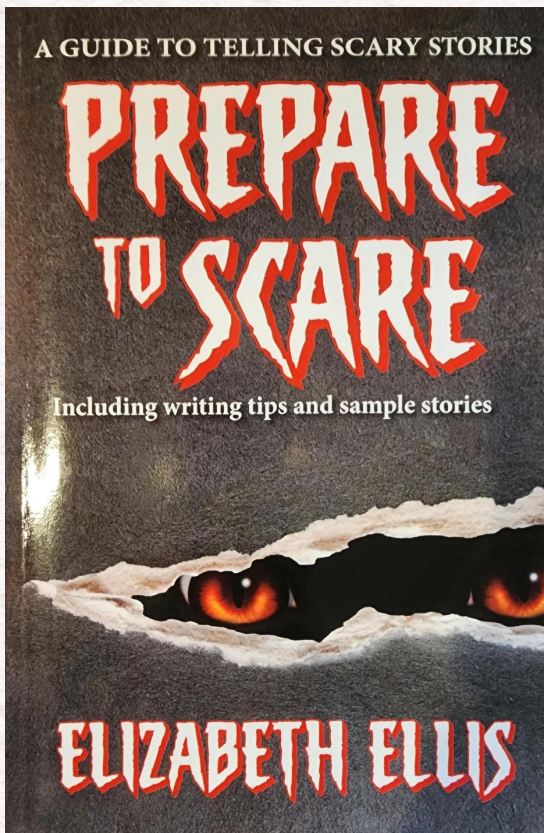
***Édouard Laboulaye, Smack-Bam, or The Art of Governing Men. Trans. and ed. Jack Zipes.** Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018. \$22.95.

Storytellers who have not heard of Édouard Laboulaye are in for a treat. Laboulaye (1811-1883) is mostly known as a prominent French lawyer and left-liberal politician, an admirer of American democracy who was instrumental in establishing the Statue of Liberty. He was also, however, a prolific writer of fairy tales, of which sixteen “unusually just and political” stories are here gracefully translated by Jack Zipes. Laboulaye believed that across the world, fairy tales have had a civilizing influence; he rewrote and adapted tales from many nations, emphasizing their messages of social justice, their assertion of the virtues of the underdog, and their presentation of strong and intelligent women. (Sadly, these messages still need assertion today.)

Laboulaye’s descriptions sparkle. Here’s Signor Mistigris, sly prime minister of King Mouchamiel in “Zerbino the Bumpkin”: “He was a little man, fat, short, round and broad, who rolled into rooms more than he walked. His weasel eyes looked every which way at once. He had a low forehead, hooked nose, chubby cheeks, and a triple chin.” To serve his king and save his skin, Mistigris launches a series of commands that delightfully parody the real world’s buck-passing. Later, his weasel mind knows just the right advice for his king, who has promised to marry his daughter to the uncouth but gifted Zerbino: “Sire, a king never breaks his word, but there are several ways of keeping it.” Into Mistigris’s mouth is placed one of Laboulaye’s wry observations, as the minister finds himself in a magical palace where the walls cry out “You’re lying!” whenever he speaks: “If the walls here speak the truth, we’ll never be able to establish a court.”

It’s tempting to keep on quoting the bon mots of Zipes’ translation. Read the book to enjoy them for yourself!





Elizabeth Ellis, Prepare to Scare: A Guide to Telling Scary

Stories. Marion, MI: Parkhurst Brothers, 2021. \$16.95

I am so delighted by this book. Not just because it is a well-timed must-read for Halloween – although it is. Not just because it models sensitive presentation of scary stories for all ages and kinds of audience – although it does. I am deeply delighted because in Prepare to Scare, Elizabeth Ellis has distilled decades of her storytelling wisdom, and has also incorporated wise tips from a diverse gathering of other intelligent and experienced tellers. Ellis has made a superb guide to telling scary stories, yes – but in the process she has also presented us with a much wider set of reflections and examples about the nature of storytelling itself.

Prepare to Scare offers excellent information about types of scary stories, integrating relevant, annotated bibliographies throughout the book adjacent to the topics discussed. But this is not just another guidebook to story choice: it is a profound exploration of the importance of experiencing buffered fear through stories. We must be sensitive to our audiences; Ellis shows how to recognize and evaluate signs of fear in listeners, and bolsters this discussion with age-appropriate tips on “What do you do if you think you have gone too far?” Her powerful enumeration of the reasons why we should tell scary stories is the best consideration of this subject I have seen.

Going beyond advice about the selection of individual stories, Prepare to Scare pays attention to ways tellers can build repertoire and structure programs, adapt traditional tales and create original stories. A valuable, and indeed crucial chapter discusses elements of storytelling craft as ways of “meeting the needs of your listeners,” first by choosing only stories that have authentic relationship to your own fears, then by creating a mood, adopting an effective point of view, building suspense, attending to language, using your voice well, strategizing the timing, and using movement. Ellis offers the reader five superb exercises to anchor her lessons.

Apart from an occasional campfire with grandchildren, I have never told scary stories, myself, fearing that I might fall into the kind of mechanical, ghoulish posturing I have heard often in Halloween concerts. But now, I think I’ll gear up my nerves and try it. Courage, as Elizabeth Ellis tells us, is a muscle.



About the Author

Jo Radner has been studying, teaching, telling, and collecting stories most of her life, and has performed from Maine to Hawaii to Finland. Professor emerita at American University, Jo returned to Maine as a freelance storyteller and oral historian. She is past president of the American Folklore Society and the National Storytelling Network.

Website: joradner.com



The image is a composite. The top half shows a dark, narrow hallway with hieroglyphs on the walls. The bottom half shows a bright, open doorway in an ancient Egyptian temple, with a person walking away from the camera towards the light. The person is wearing a dark, long-sleeved dress and a headscarf. The walls are covered in hieroglyphs and some colorful murals. The floor is made of large stone tiles.

-TAMING *the* BEAST-

The Art of Crafting Stories



The ‘Ukulele Siren of Kula

by John Shockley

Napua Eleo Chun had a playful heart and music surrounded her wherever she went from the time she was a baby until she passed away. Masa Yonamine was a contract laborer who had finally saved enough to start a small farm on the cool Maui hillsides in Kula. The onions he grew would later have the reputation as being the sweetest in the Up-country — but not half so sweet as the tunes from the ‘ukulele Siren of Kula.

Opposites really do attract. When Masa, the Kepani, first saw Napua walking down the country road, bells rang and he knew where his future would be — beside Napua for life.

“Hey Kepani? What your name? How come I no see you before?”

“Gulp!” Masa froze.

“Hey! No gimme dat shy Japanee smoke screen, eh? No be shame talk.”

“I’m Masa Yonamine from the sugar plantation in Lahaina. I have saved enough money to start one small farm,” he gushed out. “I am poor but will work hard to become a worthy husband for someone.”

“So, Masa...you no mo’ wife?”

He looked down on himself. “No...not yet...not yet. You get flower on your left ear, no?”

“Whoa! Slow down Masa. I thought Kepani men supposed to be da silent type. You sure you not part Potagee?”

Masa smiled. “I talk ‘cause I stay nervous...you so beautiful...I so nervous.”

“Whoo...such flattery! I nevah know Kepani men threw complements around so freely.”

“They don’t. I hope maybe I see you around?”

“Maybe...” They parted. Napua had her ‘ukulele with her and began picking the notes of an old Hawaiian standard: Lovely Hula Hands.

Masa worked hard from sunrise to sunset praying that his first crop would be a success in the marketplace. Everything he had was riding on bringing in a good cash crop.

Rain leaked through the nail holes in the tin roof shed next to the field Masa tended. The wind rattled the loose boards. When the trade winds stopped, Masa sweated through the muggy nights. His work paid off with his first crop of sweet onions in the open market.

He was ready to pull his empty hand cart back to his farm when he looked up and smiled. It was Napua. Music was in the air.

Crash! Napua rushed to embrace Clyde Kekahuna, the biggest, most handsome guy in the Up-country. Kekahuna was a paniolo on his father’s big ranch — the most popular guy in town.

Masa’s eyes glistened and he trembled slightly as he pulled his rough-hewn cart on the road out of town...face down and lost. His steps were slow and his cart made a squeaky sound when the un-greased wheels rolled round.

Whoosh! His cart was bumped to the side and he was thrown into the ditch on the side of the road. He rose from the mud to see Clyde with Napua riding double-saddle behind him.

“Hey Kepani, No hog up all da road, eh?” Clyde laughed when he saw the mud slopping down from Masa’s straw hat and clothes.

Napua jumped off Clyde’s saddle and trotted over to Masa.

“You OK?”

“Yes...sorry to block your way...”

Napua flashed a stink-eye at Clyde. “Masa no stay block da road...was YOU went kick his cart when we went race by!”

“Eh! Just having some fun...come on, get back up here den we go!”

“I no go wit show-off bullies. Take your horse an beat it! You think you ‘God’s Gift’ or something, eh? I goin’ walk home...bettah than go ride wit you!”

“Ay! No make hu-hu la dat wit me, Napua...you know you like me, so get ovah it. I sorry about da Kepani...so come on, get on da horse and we go!”

Napua looked at Clyde sitting on his rustling horse circling round and round, then caught a glance of Masa’s glistening eyes as he quickly looked down. Mud dropped from his hat right on his slipper with a plop.

Clyde couldn’t help it, his muffled giggle turned into a guffaw when another blob of mud dropped from the back of Masa’s pants like a cow turd.

“I goin’ walk home!” Napua bristled.

“Go head! Walk home. Walk wit da Kepani...now, dat’s one real laugh!” Clyde roared down the road at a full gallop. “See you tonight, eh?” he yelled.

“No bothah!”

Somewhere between the mud and the moon, Napua changed her mind about important things in life. Napua and Masa fell in love.

The wedding was small and the town shied away as Masa and Napua set up home in the tiny shack beside the onion field. The people thought Napua was throwing away the best beau in Kula for the stringy young Kepani.

It was work. Hard work for both Masa and Napua. Masa was wiry and Napua was strong. The crops got bigger and they bought more land. Soon it was time to build a small house. Napua was with child.

Herbert Kaleo Yonamine was a strong little baby. He was followed in steps by two brothers and three sisters: Charles, Wallace, Evelani, Elehu, and Evangeline. With each passing year, the Yonamine home expanded like the Winchester House of Central California.

In the darkness the silver drops formed on Masa’s eyes. It was the best time of his life.

A few months later, Beau had gotten deathly ill. Napua rocked him in her arms as he struggled for breath. The city doctors said Beau’s lungs were straining his heart and nothing they could do would help him. Napua played soft songs on her “ukulele and Beau slipped away.

All of the people of the Kula district came for Beau’s funeral. All the Yonamine family dropped what they were doing in their busy lives and came home. After the funeral, everyone gathered at the big tent set up in the farmyard.

“Hey! No be sad everybody, Beau would not like it. I’m going to play only one slow song: Amazing Grace...then after that, it’s going to all be happy tunes,” Napua announced. On that day, everyone from Up-country was together like a big family singing and playing sweet songs far into the Kula night.

The years went by and the music lessons at the farmhouse rang out happy tunes. A new generation of “ukulele students learned from the silver haired siren of Kula. They played, sang, ate, and played again.

The road by the farm was paved with four lanes now. After the lessons the kids would wait for the bus at the stop down the road. One of the kids had forgotten his music sheets and Napua ran toward the group of kids waiting by the bus stop.

“Hey Jason! You fo’get someting? Napua trotted over the roadway as Jason ran to meet her.

ROAR! SCREECH! HONK! Crash...the bus came over the rise too quickly. Napua threw Jason to safety but didn't clear the path of the bus.

All of Kula gathered once again. Masa's grief would not end. Evelani, Elihu, and Evangeline played the songs Napua had taught everyone. Everyone was singing...except Masa.

After the funeral, Masa cleared up the belongings from the big house and rented it out. He moved back to the shack by the side of the onion field. It was simple living. Masa grieved long and would not sleep...just dozed off in the wee hours of the morning.

One night when the moon was full, Masa was so tired...so weary...that he fell into a deep sleep. The kind that comes from prolonged grief.

The wind blew through the open window and the gossamer curtains that Napua had sewn years ago fluttered. Masa's deep sleep was interrupted. Something was tugging his toe. He awoke as the door closed. There was "ukulele music playing outside in the cool night air.

Masa floated to the front door still groggy and looked outside. It was Napua playing "ukulele with Beau sitting in front of her humming to a special tune: Lovely Hula Hands.

Masa take my hand
I've flown like a bird over the ocean
You'll always raise my deepest emotion
Masa hold my hand
Ku'ipo lani e.

Masa still lives in the little shack by the manicured rows and on nights when the moon is full, 'ukulele music wafts softly from the Yonamine onion field across the hills of Kula.

Diapers and dishes by day and soft "ukulele music singing by night. The fields were growing and the older boys helped after school while the girls learned to clean and cook after their homework was done. Life was hard but not without its joy.

At sunset, the kids would play in the back yard and the screams and laughing ushered in the first evening stars.

When they played, there was always competition. One jump rope turned to two...then the tempo sped up until only the oldest kids could keep up with the whirring eggbeater.

In the field one hot day, Herb asked his father: "Hey, how come all the other kids get to play while we have to work all the time?" Charley and Wally leaned forward to hear the answer from their father.

"I'm giving you young men a gift..."

"Gift? What gift? I no see nothin' but work, work, work!" Herbert grumbled.

"Boys, you no can see da gift now, but you goin' tank your ol' man when you stay grow up. Mark my words." The boys weren't happy with what they heard.

"You know Pop, we work all day on Saturday while all our friends play...'as one kind gift..."

Masa looked at the boy's eyes and could read their sad song. "After lunch, you tell everybody be ready at the garage. We're all going down to Lahaina town for swimming!" The boys were beaming. Wally had already started running to the house.

Masa smiled. His boys had taught him a lesson. Every Saturday afternoon was going to be an ohana outing.

By the end of the next decade, all the kids knew what "the gift" was. Herbert was a doctor, Charlie was an engineer, and Wally had become a City & County lifeguard and a professional surfer. Evelani and Elehu played "ukulele with Napua at all the luaus. Evangeline sang like an angel. All of them had found someone special and were raising grandchildren in the decade that followed.

Napua’s music brought accolades from everyone in the Up-country. She taught “ukulele lessons...for money, to the families that had it, and for love to the ones that didn’t.

Napua and Masa had a “late bloom” child after all the others were teenagers. Beau Joji Yonamine was a sickly child. He almost died of pneumonia when he was three. Napua’s happy “ukulele tunes brought Beau smiles through the pain he suffered from one bout with asthma after another in the years before he started school.

One night, Masa was tired and laid in the darkened bedroom...his hair showed silver tones in the moon shadow. Napua wiggled Masa’s big toe as she had done playfully when she was trying to get his attention.

“Listen, Masa...” She began to play the refrain from “Lovely Hula Hands.” It was the first tune he had ever heard her play. She began to softly sing:

Masa take my hand
I fly like a bird over the ocean
You always raise my deep emotion...
Masa take my hand,
Ku’ipo nani e.

Contributor to be contacted regarding permission to tell this work



About the Author

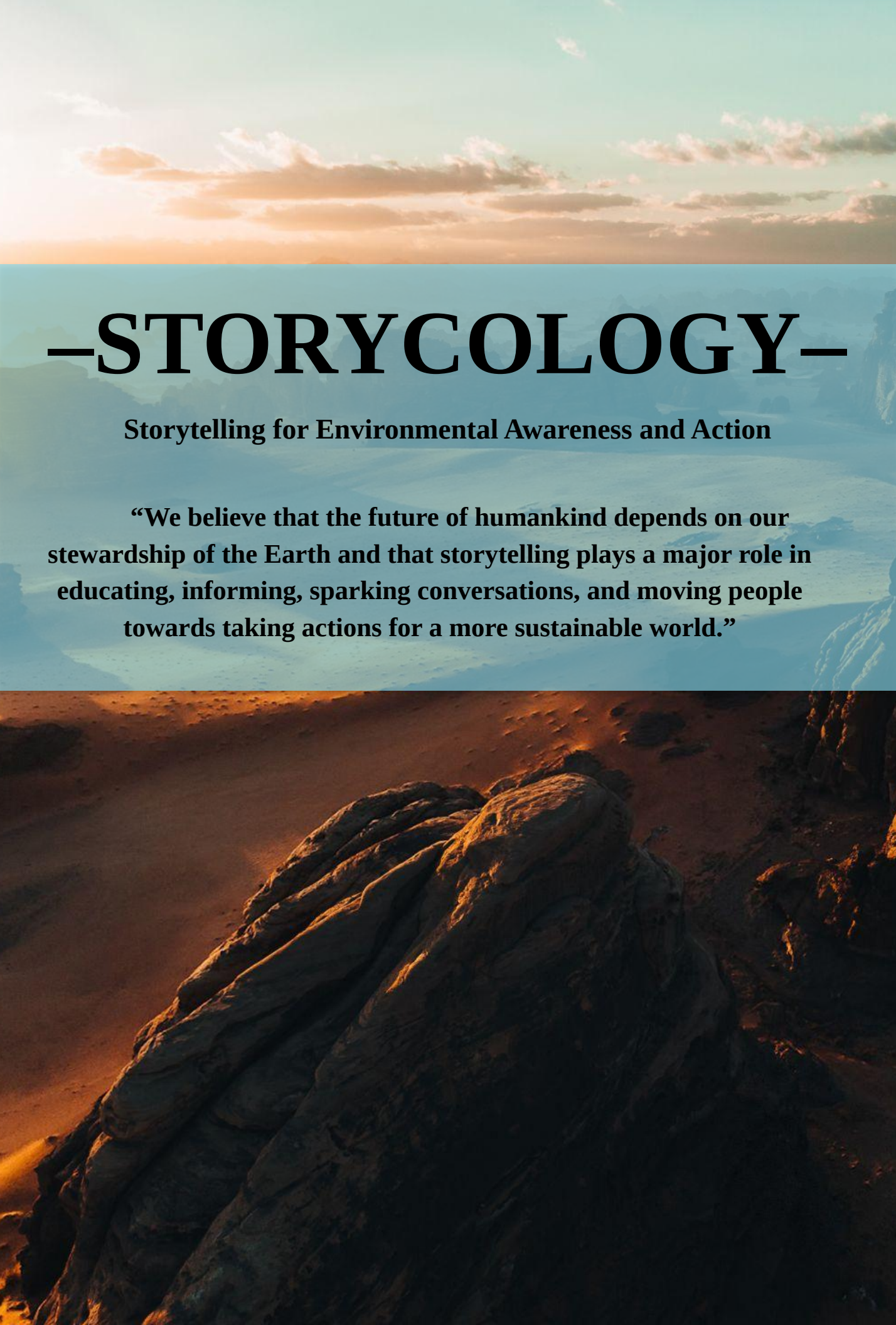
John Shockley is a freelance writer specializing in short-story fiction, non-fiction, and biographies. He coordinates the Free Access Coalition (FAC), a non-profit organization, whose goal is free public access to beaches, recreational areas, housing, and employment in Hawaii. Shockley graduated from University of Hawaii with a Journalism major. He worked at Anheuser-Busch Inc. for 27 years ending his career at the Los Angeles Brewery as the Plant Manager’s assistant in charge of Brewery Communications. His wife, Rita, supports his work with the FAC.



–STORYCOLOGY–

Storytelling for Environmental Awareness and Action

“We believe that the future of humankind depends on our stewardship of the Earth and that storytelling plays a major role in educating, informing, sparking conversations, and moving people towards taking actions for a more sustainable world.”



Starving

By Bowen Lee



July 25, 2023

As I go down to the water, I notice a seal in the surf. It seems to be following a golden retriever that is fetching a blue ball that its owner tosses down the beach. That makes me think it's a harbor seal, because these shy, quiet seals are very curious and will spy on what's happening on the shore: dogs chasing balls, people running, women brushing long hair in the wind. Harbor seals stare from the safety of the waves, bobbing in and out of the rolling swell. But kids on the beach are screaming, "Sea lion! It's a sea lion!" And as it swims closer, I see the ears and the slim head that identifies it as a California Sea Lion, but a small one. Pupping season was in June, so this young sea lion is a yearling, off on its own for the first time.

The retriever runs the other way on the beach, but the sea lion is still going in the same direction, swimming just where the waves are breaking. I think it's following my dogs, who are outrageously funny on the beach, leaping and spinning and rolling where the waves wash up on shore. But then I notice the sea lion is coming closer and closer, past the place where the waves break onto the beach. It can actually rest on the sand of the beach as the waves push it ashore. And then I realize that it is in trouble, and all along, it has been following me. I stop walking, and it comes up out of the water and onto the sand right in front of me.

My traditional Chinese medicine mentor once told me that animals know people who can help them if they are in trouble, and they will walk right up to a person that knows what to do. And I do know what to do. I put leashes on the dogs, get people to back away as they are snapping pictures with their phones, and I call the Marine Mammal Rescue hotline. The sea lion lies down on the sand, just out of the waves, right in front of me. I give it 50 feet of space, and direct people to stand even farther back than that.

The Marine Mammal Center is busy. Pinnipeds are always in trouble. This year's juveniles are out on their own, and that isn't always easy for them. This one has no obvious injuries, it can move around well, it isn't acting sick or strange. It is just really skinny. The bones are well defined under sleek brown fur that has no fat. No fat means this animal is freezing in the cold waters off Northern California. Bones that stick out mean it's starving.

The Marine Mammal Center is not going to pick this animal up. It would probably just head out to sea, anyway. The sea lion just needs to rest, and that's what the Marine Mammal Center is going to let it do. But hundreds of tourists from all over the world visiting Carmel-By-The-Sea won't leave it alone. Not without me guarding it. So that's what I must do.

I do not have my state parks uniform on. I am not wearing official Monterey Bay Aquarium clothes. All these are hanging in my closet at home. People are not respecting the lady with the sweatshirt tied around her waist who is telling them to go around the sea lion and stay 50 feet away. A local guy insists on his right to run right past the seal, declaring "I do this every day!" An angry man sneers at me, "What? That thing?" But he goes around, wary of the look I give him that says, "I might not have done it for a long time, but I know martial arts, buddy!" And absent-minded people with ear buds don't notice a thing until I step right into their path.

I am fierce about this. There is a life at stake here.

People stroll past me, and I hear snippets of their conversation. "Too bad, someone should do something about it." "That's a tough situation. Better not go there." "Some problems are just too big and will never get solved." These are for the most part, young people, in their 30s and 40s. Aren't they the ones taking charge of our world right now? That worries me a lot about the future of our planet. Have so many young people already given up on trying to change the problems in the world? Why does it have to come down to a little old lady guarding a little seal on the shore all by herself?



I feel like that person on the beach throwing sea stars into the ocean, one at a time.

A family comes up and I explain the situation to the two little girls. Somehow, it's easier to talk to them than the grownups. "That sea lion is young, like a teenager, and this is the first time it is getting food for itself. It isn't doing a very good job. It's hard to catch fish in the ocean, especially if there aren't many fish because the water is too warm."

The little girl says, "What will happen if it doesn't get enough fish?"

"Well," I say, "it could die. But right now, it needs to rest so it can go back in the water and try again."

"So, it seems that the best thing I can do is leave it alone." The little girl says it straight forward and with common sense. This child is a blessing to nature.

"Yes," I reassure her. "And also, you can help to make sure that the weather is not too warm, because warmer weather is bad for all of us — animals and plants and people." I'll leave it to her parents to talk about climate change with her.

Adults who talk to me overreact with outrage or pity and want to rescue the emaciated animal. Why won't the Marine Mammal Center come and take it? Won't the aquarium do something? But this is just the beginning if our temperatures continue to rise this year. In 2014, the last El Nino, 1,450 sea lion pups were reported dead on California shores due to fish moving to colder open water, out of the range of young sea lions.

But I want to give this young seal a chance, and so I keep as many people and dogs away as I can. The sea lion knows I am helping it, and it lays its head on the sand and closes its eyes whenever it is quiet and there are no disturbances nearby. I can sit 30 feet away with my dogs sitting in my lap or digging holes in the sand (the puppy can't keep still, but he knows to keep quiet) and the sea lion relaxes enough to indeed rest.

I think about the people who don't seem to care or openly defy what I'm trying to do. I have never understood how people could not care about the welfare of animals. It opens my eyes to how people love the ocean in very different ways. For some people, like the local jogger who practically runs over the sea lion's flippers, love of the ocean might mean love of the six-million-dollar house with the ocean view that represents money and power. For some people, like the sneering man who calls the sea lion "that thing," sea lions are nuisances that overrun docks and stink up the town. Hmm. Isn't that what they said about my Chinese fishing family in Monterey in 1880? And so, I can't help but think about people who are right now so affected by climate change that their lives are turned around, their homes are abandoned from lack of water, and their children are starving because of famine due to drought. Third world people did not cause this severe climate change, yet they suffer the most. We in the industrialized countries did this. Can we change the way we are going for their sake? Can we let the Earth rest and recover?

Most people went around the sea lion, but I had to tell them to do this, and not many wanted an explanation why. They just were indignant or indifferent or saying how somebody should do something. I would have gladly appreciated some help.

To be told in educational and professional settings with attribution.

If you would like to help, please do whatever you can to reverse climate change, and encourage others to do so.

-Donate to wildlife organizations or volunteer your time in educating people about the effects of climate change on living things.

-Contribute to my fundraising campaign for climate change resistance in Kenya:

<https://gofund.me/f2b409b9>



Storycology Head Editor

Bowen Lee divides her time between cities, forests, and the ocean around Monterey, CA. She has been a teacher, a writer, an illustrator, and now, she tells stories, incorporating storytelling into all aspects of teaching. She conducts workshops on storytelling to teach educational content in national and regional education conferences.

Website: storyrex.com



**-TEACHER TALES &
TENTACLES-**

Teacher Tales & Tentacles

by Carrie Sue Ayvar

Standard of the Month:

The United States is unique among TIMSS countries (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) as there is not an official nationally defined curriculum. Although many states use similar standards, phrases, or words, it feels like it is national when it is not. Thus, we will introduce words you will find common. Please check the state standards where you will be teaching or performing. Search by the featured phrase or word.

National Site to Find State Standards:

<https://www.ed.gov>

Common Core State Standards for Mathematics(CCSS-M):

<https://learning.ccsso.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/ADA-Compliant-Math-Standards.pdf>

The eight CCSS-M Standards for Mathematical Practice are:

1. Make sense of problems & persevere in solving them
2. Reason abstractly & quantitatively
3. Construct viable arguments & critique the reasoning of others
4. Model with mathematics
5. Use appropriate tools strategically
6. Attend to precision
7. Look for & make use of structure
8. Look for & express regularity in repeated reasoning

These are about process, comprehension, and being able to use mathematical concepts in real life – not just in the classroom or for a test. Often, the hardest part is identifying, analyzing, and understanding the problem, and knowing how to use the math skills learned in the classroom. Putting the math problems into story form can make them relevant, understandable, and lots more fun to solve! No, I’m not talking about the “Two trains leave the station at the same time” kind of word problem but rather using story to give context and meaning and a model for real life uses of math skills and concepts.

For example, in the classic, cumulative tale, Stone Soup, soup is made with a stone (or three or a nail depending on the version) and villagers add the other ingredients, little by little. For Elementary Age students I often hand out the ingredients, corn, peas, onions, tomatoes, etc. and as I tell the story they add them to the pot. One of my favorite ways is to have laminated pictures of the ingredients, with a magnet glued to the back, and they add it to the “pot” that I draw on a magnetic white board. We can sequence, add, subtract, graph, total, compare and contrast amounts and integrate the math lessons that they are already learning with a Language Arts lesson. Best of all they understand and remember how to use the concepts.

Or how about creating our own math story? For example: Once upon a time, there was a Math Monster who hated percentages! He dedicated himself to hunting down percentages everywhere he could find them, in books, magazines, newspapers, sales ads – everywhere! He never understood what % was and, frustrated, he never even tried. He just set out to destroy them wherever he found them, ripping at each % sign that he found with fang and tooth. The percentages, anxious and afraid, finally decided that they would disguise themselves as fractions: 60% changed into 60/100, then changed into 30/50 and, finally dressed simply as 3/5. His friend 8% saw this and thought that he too would try on a different outfit and disguise himself. First, he tried on 8/100 and then changed into 4/50 but thought maybe 2/25 would fit better. Ahh, but then came the idea to change into a decimal, .08, and he knew that the Math Monster would never recognize him!



About the Author

How is it that an Arabic surnamed, Eastern European Jewish girl from Pittsburgh, PA, tells multicultural stories in Spanish and English? Perhaps it is because she is a 3rd generation award-winning storyteller who came of age in Mexico. Blending traditional, international & personal tales, bilingual storyteller Carrie Sue Ayvar (pronounced EYE-BAR) takes her listeners on a journey into the imagination connecting people, languages, and cultures through her stories that flow effortlessly between Spanish and English.

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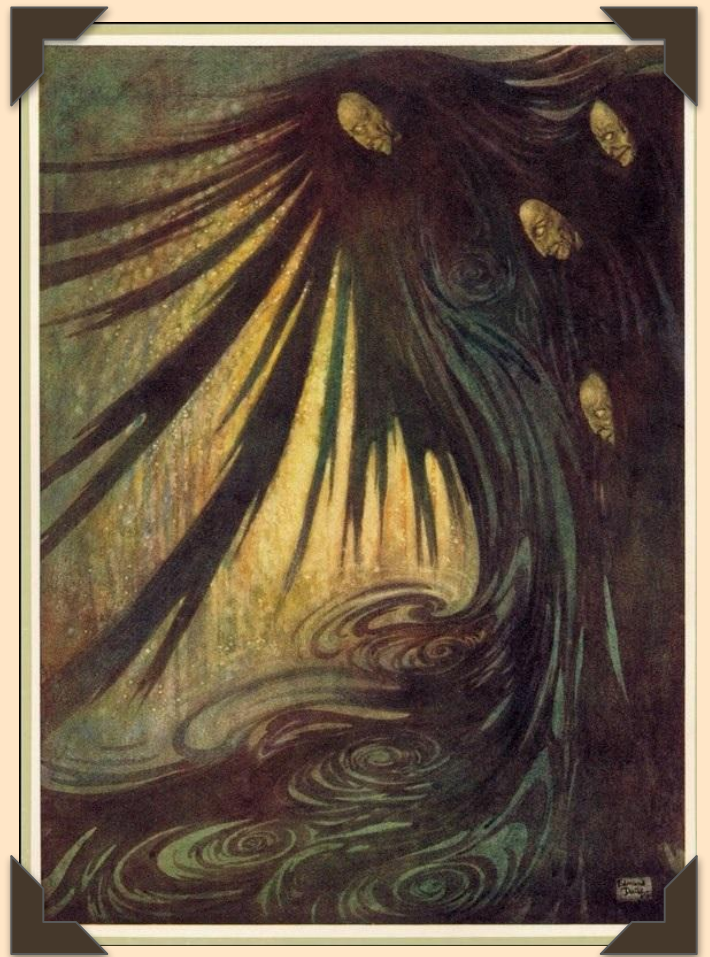


-STORY FEAST-

A bounty to share



***“I do not believe in ghosts,
but I am afraid of them.”
– Edith Wharton***



*The Haunted Palace by Edmund Dulac
from The Bells and Other Poems,
author Edgar Allan Poe, 1912*

STORIES

[The Pumpkin in the Jar – Philippines](#)

[Grinding Stone to the Rescue – India](#)

[The Ghost That Entered the Jar – Khmer](#)

[The Legend of Stingy Jack – Ireland](#)

[How the Devil Married Three Sisters - Italy](#)

[The Magic Pumpkins – Ukraine](#)

[The MacScouter – Ghost Stories - Four stories to fright and delight your young campers.](#)

[NC Legends and Ghost Stories - Seven urban legends from North Carolina.](#)

[The Story Spirits – Korea](#)

[Vampire and Ghost Stories from Russia - Six stories to make your blood run cold.](#)

CELEBRATE

Diwali, celebrated this year on October 31, is also known as the Festival of Lights. I offer you some story sites from India to help you celebrate.

[Hitopadesha Tales](#) - A compilation of short stories following the pattern of prose and verse.

[Jataka Tales](#) - These fables, written in 300 B.C. were intended to impart values of self-sacrifice, morality, honesty, and other values.

[Celebrating the Country of India](#)
[This is one of my older blog posts.](#) It is full of resources consisting of several story collections, along with individual stories, book selections, curriculum and more.

November 13 is World Kindness Day.
Why not spread some kindness with these lovely tales.

[The Crystal Heart](#) – Vietnam

[Evil Allures But Good Endures](#) – Russia

[The Fairy Shilling](#) – Ireland

[Great Joy the Ox](#) – India

[The King of Compassion](#) - India

[Old Woman Who Was Kind to Insects](#) – Inuit/Native American

[The Princess Mouse](#) – Finland

BOOKS IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

[Famous Modern Ghost Stories, 1921](#) -Meet The Beast with Five Fingers, visit The Haunted Orchards and read what The Messenger has delivered...if you dare!

[Goblin Tales of Lancashire by James Bowker, 1887](#) – Tales of phantoms, funerals, demons, devils, and so much more.

[Great Ghost Stories by Joseph Lewis French, 1918.](#) Twelve stories to keep you up at night.

[True Irish Ghost Stories by St. John D. Seymour and Harry L. Neligan, 1914.](#) Visit with banshees, poltergeists, and apparitions if you dare!

[Twenty-Five Ghost Stories edited by W. Bob Holland, 1904.](#) “This volume contains the most famous of the weird stories of Edgar Allan Poe, Guy de Maupassant...and other less widely known writers have also contributed stories that are worth reading, and when once read will be remembered. There is not a story among the twenty-five that is not worthy of close reading.”

SOMETHING EXTRA

Map Shares Every country's Most Famous Mythical Creature-“Every country in the world has a mythical creature every citizen knows the stories of, and a new project has put together a list of every nation's most famous legendary beast. And you can see them all come to life in some stunning illustrations.”

<https://nerdist.com/article/every-countrys-most-famous-mythical-creature/>

Not Just Halloween: Festivals of the Dead From Around the World- Learn how other cultures celebrate the holiday with this interesting article and complementing links on Japan, Mexico and more.

<https://www.babble.com/en/magazine/ghoulish-ghosts-global-guises-festivals-dead-around-world>

Story-Lovers.com - Jackie Baldwin stirs up a witches' brew of stories ideas. The Halloween Bare Bones book, the perfect addition to your library! * Jackie's site is no longer up but you may still access her amazing resources via the Wayback Machine here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20160302013423/http://www.story-lovers.com/listshalloweenstories.html>

Ten Horrifying Demons and Spirits from Japanese Folklore - This article offers an interesting background on Japanese demons, a great start to help you research some new and unusual tales.

<http://mentalfloss.com/article/59737/10-horrifying-demons-and-spirits-japanese-folklore>

POEM

Little Orphant Annie by James Whitcomb Riley (1849-1916) – This could add a bit of fun to your Halloween set. It has a great refrain the children will love to repeat; “An’ the Gobble-uns ‘at gits you Ef you Don’t Watch Out!”

https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/p_oem/little-orphant-annie



Resources Provided By Karen Chace

Karen Chace an award-winning storyteller, teaching artist, workshop leader, and author. Since 2002 she has taught the art of storytelling to over six hundred students. She is the recipient of the LANES Brother Blue-Ruth Hill Storytelling Award and the National Storytelling Network's Oracle Service and Leadership Award. storybug.net





-FUSIONS





Ukraine: A Changing Story

An interview with journalist, Kanykei Tursunbaeva, August 11, 2023

by Brandon Spars

If I were writing this a year ago, I would not be including Kanykei's name. That was back when there was a pretense that the Russian attempt to occupy Ukraine was going to be in any way limited, civil, or humane. That was back when Ukrainians felt that Russia would only go after civilians who openly defied them in occupied territories. That was back when Kanykei still cared about maintaining relationships with scholars and journalists across the border in Russia. Now, it is all out war, and it is a war that Russians are directing not only at the Ukrainian military and dissidents but also all Ukrainians, whether they are two-year-old toddlers, ninety-year-old great grandfathers, or, in Kanykei's case, a thirty-year-old journalist.

Kanykei Tursunbaeva is a journalist and translator for the European Academy of Sciences in Ukraine (EASU). I first met her three years ago when she interviewed me about storytelling, teaching, and history (I am a storyteller and a high school history teacher). She and Mary Saparkina served as translators several times as I participated in conferences and interviews over the following year, and then February 2022 happened. Odessa was far from the initial military activity, but, as we now know, the entire country has been brutally affected. Currently, Kanykei states, everyone in Odessa is nearly immune to shock waves and air raid sirens. It is as common to hear sirens and feel chandelier-swinging blasts as for us to go about our routines with the background hum of morning, rush-hour traffic.

In addition to not mentioning her name if I were writing this article a year ago, Kanykei pointed out that she would have felt differently about Russia -- more specifically the Russian people. When Russia first invaded, Ukrainians were certain that this was an act of the Russian government and not its people. Ukrainians felt that Russian people were like family to them, and, indeed, many Ukrainians do have family members in Russia and vice versa. Ukrainians felt that it was the greed and ambition of a few at the top, most notably Putin himself, that forced Russia into a war that its people did not welcome or support. This was the story that Ukrainians told themselves, and this was also what much of Western journalism printed about the war. This is also the story that, after a year and a half of war, has changed. This is not to say that Ukrainians now feel that all Russians support the war. Kanykei was quick to point out that the Russian people have been subject to all kinds of propaganda promoting such misguided notions as that Ukrainians regularly eat babies, etc. There are still many, many Russians who do not support the war and very reluctantly send their youths to their deaths. What has changed about the story is more subtle and nuanced.

As I was zooming with Kanykei I took a sip of the iced latte I was drinking. "Wow, that's coffee," Kanykei exclaimed, and my heart melted. Kanykei drinks coffee regularly but she only has access to instant coffee, and that is when there is the electricity to make it.

A typical day for Kanykei takes two forms. There are days when there is electricity, and there are days when there isn't. A day with electricity means Kanykei can make her instant coffee and conduct her zoom meetings and interviews for the EASU journal. But all too often, she awakens to find the entire part of Odessa in which she lives in the dark. On these days she goes to underground garages, which double as charging stations and bomb shelters. Cafes also serve as gathering places where "we pack ourselves like sardines" and where power and Internet access are the only things on the menu. On these days, Kanykei doesn't even have the luxury of instant coffee. "Nobody is waiting tables or serving anything. If there is food there, you just take some and eat it."

The real problem isn't electricity. It is water. A power outage means that electric pumps don't work, but even more insidious is the Russian endeavor to target water supplies to the people of Odessa. Currently there are efforts in Odessa to dig an enormous reservoir for water within the city so that the Russian military cannot cut off the supply as easily. Kanykei is particularly worried about this coming winter. Last winter was extremely difficult for Odessans, and I frequently remember chatting with Kanykei who remained in her sleeping bag from December all the way to April. This winter, she said ominously, we won't have any infrastructure. It's staggering to think how anyone will make it through.

As Kanykei speaks, she does so matter-of-factly. There is no self-pity, almost like it would be a waste of time. Alternatively, she stated that anger was not useful either. What Ukrainians need and seek is resourcefulness. Since the war, Kanykei has learned first aid and even how to use various weapons. She has continued her scholarly journalism as a member of a staff led by Oleg Maltsev, who insists that not having electricity is no excuse for not continuing their work analyzing and documenting the human experience. When you greet other Ukrainians, Kanykei says, you never mention that you have not slept. "Nobody has slept. Nobody has electricity. All we have is respect for one another -- and hope."

Hope, she says, is why she doesn't pay attention to the news. There are reports of numbers of Ukrainians killed and numbers of Russian soldiers taken captive. These numbers, she says wryly, are false anyway. There is manipulation of the statistics on both sides to suit the needs of whoever is doing the reporting. Nobody listens to these reports. Ukrainians are not interested in what has happened. We are interested in the future because that is where hope lies. Thinking of the future brings Kanykei and other Ukrainians to act in the present.

Anyone speaking to Kanykei, or other members of the EASU team, couldn't help but wonder if Kanykei -- if the journalists of EASU -- if all Ukrainians are simply extraordinary. The Taiwanese have been asking themselves if they could exhibit the same kind of resourcefulness in the face of an invasion by China. Recently Taiwanese delegates visited Odessa to try to understand the secret to Ukrainian resilience, resourcefulness, and optimism. While the recipe for the successful Ukrainian response remains a mystery, it was all too easy for the Taiwanese to imagine the Chinese army behaving just as inhumanely as the Russians, attacking civilians and soldiers alike, targeting infrastructure essential to the most basic needs of life.

One thing is for sure. The Russian soldiers who have been captured do not share the traits that Kanykei has pinpointed as the key to Ukraine's resilience thus far. "They have no ideology whatsoever," she mentioned. "They don't even know why they are here." But she was quick to distinguish members of Wagner, who, she says, are at least quite honest about why they are there: to make money. She cited the insignia the Wagner soldiers wear, which states, "Our business is death; business is good."

Ukrainian soldiers fight to save every inch of their homeland. Ukrainian citizens are now feverishly growing potatoes and tomatoes in an attempt to store up for winter. Young Ukrainians like Kanykei have been building ties with one another and with people outside of the Ukraine in an attempt to raise money to buy bullet proof vests, first aid, and even ambulances. Kanykei herself has raised over fifty thousand dollars from abroad, all of which has been converted into items essential for the Ukrainian cause. The war has left little time for pleasurable pursuits a young adult would normally take. She had to grow up, wake up, and become alert. "There is no time," she says, "for anything stupid."

Ukraine has been free of the Soviet Union for thirty years now. During that time, the governments of Ukraine and Russia diverged dramatically, resulting in a Ukraine with free and fair elections and an unregulated press and, conversely, an increasingly authoritarian regime in Russia. The respective people continued to mutually recognize each other as family, kin, partners in a common heritage. However, over the past year and a half, after being bombed over and over, after living without water and without electricity, and after uncovering crimes against humanity perpetrated by a disillusioned and morally vacant Russian military, the story has changed. Ukrainians have shown the world the mettle underlying a solidifying national identity that features resourcefulness rather than helplessness, resolve rather than malaise, and, above all, courage and action rather than fear and withdrawal. The feeling that Russians are family with Ukrainians is gone, and it will never come back. Even though Kanykei and her people are the ones being assaulted, raped, and murdered, she has pity for the Russian people who are, most ironically, the ones who are actually living in constant, inescapable terror. More than anything, the war has made it painfully clear how much the Ukrainian nation has prospered and its people have flourished over the past thirty years since the breakup of the Soviet Union, and conversely, how much Russia and its people have dwindled.

The new story of a broken Ukrainian-Russian family is not, Kanykei is quick to point out, without unfortunate implications. Kanykei becomes somewhat remorseful as she tells me about the new, extreme response to the Russian language by some Ukrainians. Books in Russian are being torn off shelves and burned. Websites in Russian are being taken down.

In a vain attempt to reconcile the censorship with Ukrainian pragmatism, candles are being made from materials printed in Russian and then sold to raise money for the army, but as Kanykei's voice trailed off it was clear that she found very little of what was admirable about the Ukrainian national character in the destruction of literature and philosophy just because it was written in Russian.

As our brief zoom conversation came to a close, Kanykei picked up her laptop and gave me a quick tour of her office. I met two other journalists and one academic scholar, each of whom dropped what they were doing to send enthusiastic greetings (translated by Kanykei) backed by warm smiles. Kanykei mentioned that a lot of the desks were empty because an illness was going around. She held up a thermometer and told me she was monitoring herself regularly. It was at this seemingly insignificant point that I was, to my surprise, nearly moved to tears. She had just told me about living for months in a sleeping bag, about not having water or electricity, about the bombing of a neighborhood through which she walks every day, but it was the holding up the little thermometer that finally broke through the shell of objectiveness I was trying to maintain. Perhaps it was the thought of her taking ill that broke the spell she had woven over me. Throughout the interview, she had been nothing short of formidable in her courage and optimism, so her catching cold was a sudden reminder that while she seemed fearless in the face of Russian bombs she wasn't immune from harm. I thought of her huddling in a blanket, alone with a fever as bombs rattled her apartment, and for just a moment, her fist balled around the narrow stick of glass and plastic, I think I caught a glimpse of the vulnerable young adult beneath the mantle of self-sacrifice and resolve – a beautiful young person who would enjoy a day when she could go to a cafe for coffee instead of electricity, when she could sleep in a sleeping bag under the stars instead of huddled in a parking garage, when she could go back to translating philosophical texts instead of instruction manuals for armored plating.

I read about Ukraine in the news every day. Many days, the articles are pretty far down in my news feed, and seldom make the “breaking news” section. As it moves further and further down the feed, it feels to me like it is moving more and more into the background into somewhat of a permanent condition: something that is going to be happening for a long time; something like wildfires and school shootings; a permanent part of a new reality. And then I think about Kanykei holding her thermometer, a journalist herself, who avoids the news. It is clear the answer to when the war will be over is not there in the print. The only answer I have is Kanykei's confident smile as she assures me that someday I will be able to come to Ukraine for a visit -- and finally meet this extraordinary individual in person.

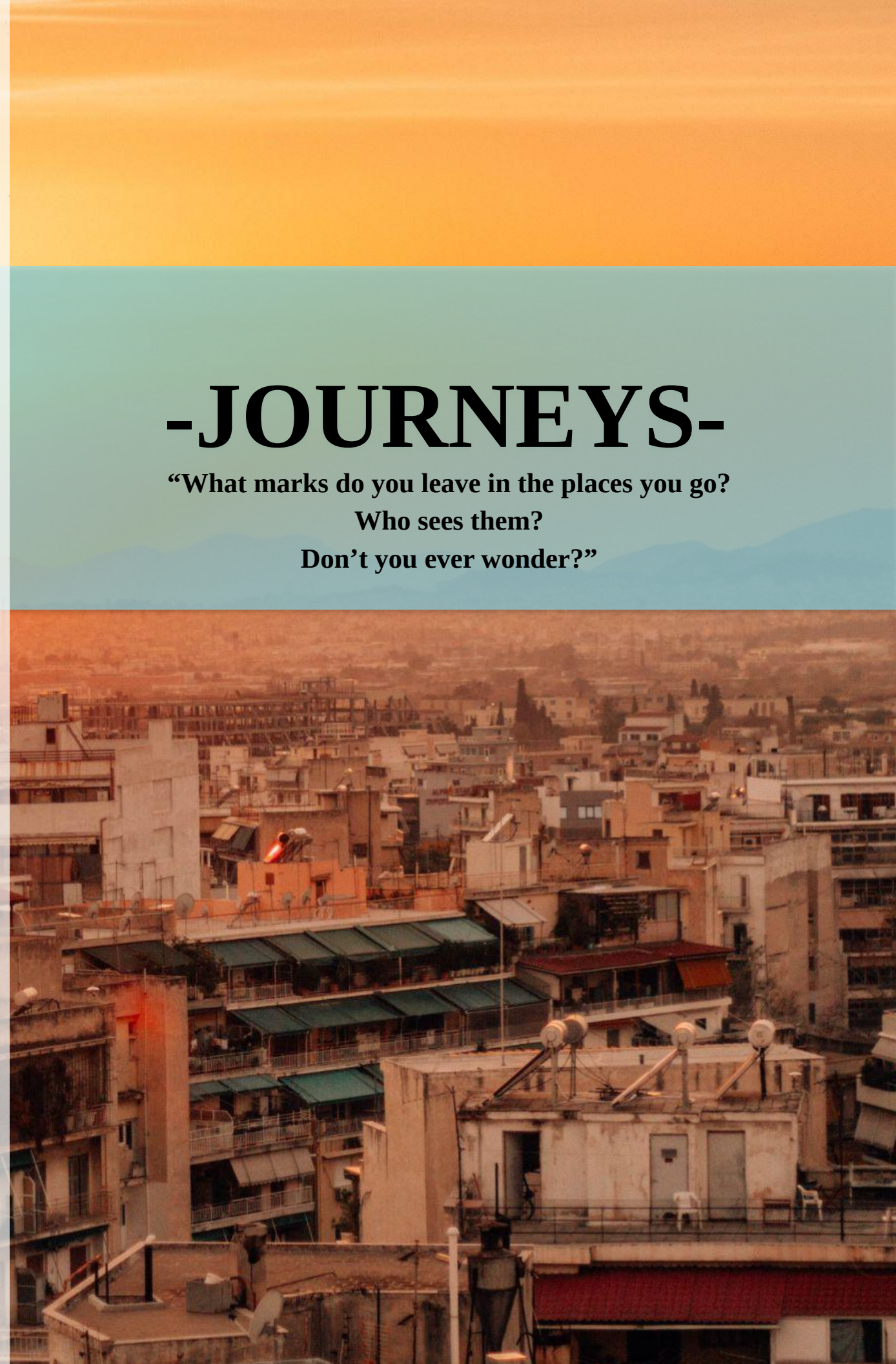
*Contributor to be contacted regarding
permission to tell this work*



About the Author

As a teacher of both high school humanities and college writing, Brandon has always brought storytelling into his lessons. He has contributed to countless workshops and conferences on the intersection between storytelling, ancient history, and pedagogy. He is the author of four books on storytelling.

Website: [.brandonspars.com](http://brandonspars.com) .



-JOURNEYS-

**“What marks do you leave in the places you go?
Who sees them?
Don’t you ever wonder?”**



The Elfin Knight

Traditional Ballad Retold by Ada and Eleanor Skinner

The autumn wind blew sharp and shrill around the turrets of a grey stone castle. But indoors the fire crackled merrily in my lady's bower where an old nurse was telling a tale of Elfland to Janet, the fairest of Scotch maidens.

When the story was finished, Janet's merry laugh echoed through the halls. The old nurse nodded her head earnestly and said, "'Tis well known, my lassie, that the people of Elfland revel in the hills and hollows of Scotland. Come close, and I'll tell you a secret."

Janet leaned forward, and the old woman whispered, "An Elfin Knight, named Tam Lin, haunts the moorland on the border of your father's estate. No maiden dares venture near the enchanted place, for if she should fall under the spell of this Elfin Knight she would be obliged to give him a precious jewel for a ransom."

"One glimpse of the Elfin Knight would be worth the rarest gem I have," laughed Janet. "How I wish I could see him!"

"Hush-sh!" said her nurse tremblingly. "Nay, nay, my lady! Mortals should have nothing to do with the people of Elfland. By all means shun the moorland at this time of the year, for to-morrow is Hallowe'en--the night when the fairies ride abroad."

But the next morning Janet bound her golden braids about her head, kilted up her green kirtle, and tripped lightly to the enchanted moorland. When she came near she saw lovely flowers blooming as gaily as if it were mid-summer time. She stooped to gather some of the roses when suddenly she heard the faintest silvery music. She glanced around, and there, riding toward her, was the handsomest knight she had ever seen. His milk-white steed, which sped along lighter than the wind, was shod in silver shoes, and from the bridle hung tiny silver bells.

When the knight came near, he sprang lightly from his horse and said, "Fair Janet, tell me why you pluck roses in Elfland?"

The maiden's heart beat very fast, and the flowers dropped from her hands, but she answered proudly, "I came to see Tam Lin, the Elfin Knight."

"He stands before you," said the knight. "Have you come to free him from Elfland?"

At these words Janet's courage failed, for she feared he might cast a spell over her. But when the knight saw how she trembled, he said, "Have no fear, Lady Janet, and you shall hear my story. I am the son of noble parents. One day, when I was a lad of nine years, I went hunting with my father. Now it chanced that we became separated from each other, and ill-luck attended me. My good horse stumbled, and threw me to the ground where I lay stunned by the fall. There the Fairy Queen found me, and carried me off to yonder green hill. And while it is pleasant enough in fairyland, yet I long to live among mortals again."

"Then why do you not ride away to your home?" asked Janet.

"Ah, that I can not do unless some fair maiden is brave enough to help me. In three ways she must prove her courage. First she must will to meet me here in the enchanted moorland. That you have done," declared the knight. Then he stopped, and looked pleadingly at Janet. All her fear vanished, and she asked, "In what other ways must the maiden show her courage?"

"She must banish all fear of him. That, too, you have done," said the knight.

"Tell me the third way, Tam Lin, for I believe I am the maid to free you."

"Only my true love can prove her courage in the third way, fair Janet."

And the maiden answered, "I am thy true love, Tam Lin."

"Then heed what I say, brave lady. To-night is Hallowe'en. At the midnight hour, the Fairy Queen and all her knights will ride abroad. If you dare win your true love, you must wait at Milescross until the Fairy Queen and her Elfin Knights pass. I shall be in her train."

"But how shall I know you among so many knights, Tam Lin?" then asked Lady Janet.

"I shall ride in the third group of followers. Let the first and second companies of the Fairy Queen pass, and look for me in the third. There will be only three knights in this last company; one will ride on a black horse, one on a brown, and the third on a milk-white steed," said the knight, pointing to his horse. "My right hand will be gloved, Janet," he continued, "but my left hand will hang bare at my side. By these signs you will know me."

"I shall know you without fail," nodded Janet.

"Wait, calmly, until I am near you, then spring forward and seize me. When the fairies see you holding me they will change my form into many shapes. Do not fear, but hold me fast in your arms. At last I shall take my human form. If you have courage enough to do this, you will free your true love from the power of the fairies."

"I have courage enough to do all that you say," declared Janet. Then they sealed this promise with a kiss, and parted.

Gloomy was the night, and eerie was the way to Milescross. But Janet threw her green mantle about her shoulders, and sped to the enchanted moorland. All the way she said to herself over and over, "On this Hallowe'en at midnight I shall free my true love, Tam Lin, from Elfland."

At Milescross she hid herself and waited. How the wind from the sea moaned across the moorland! Presently she heard a merry tinkling sound of far-off music, and in the distance she saw a twinkling light dancing forward. Janet could hear her heart beat, but there she stood, undaunted. The Fairy Queen and her train were riding forth. In the lead of her first merry company of knights and maids of honour rode the beautiful queen, whose jeweled girdle and crown flashed in the darkness.

The second group passed quickly, and now came three knights in a third group. One rode on a black horse, one on a brown, and there came the milk-white steed last of all. Janet could see that one hand of the rider was gloved, and one hung bare at his side. Then up leaped the maiden. Quickly she seized the bridle of the milk-white steed, pulled the rider from his horse, and threw her green mantle around him. There was a clamour among the Elfin Knights, and the Fairy Queen cried out, "Tam Lin! Tam Lin! Some mortal has hold of Tam Lin, the bonniest knight in my company!"

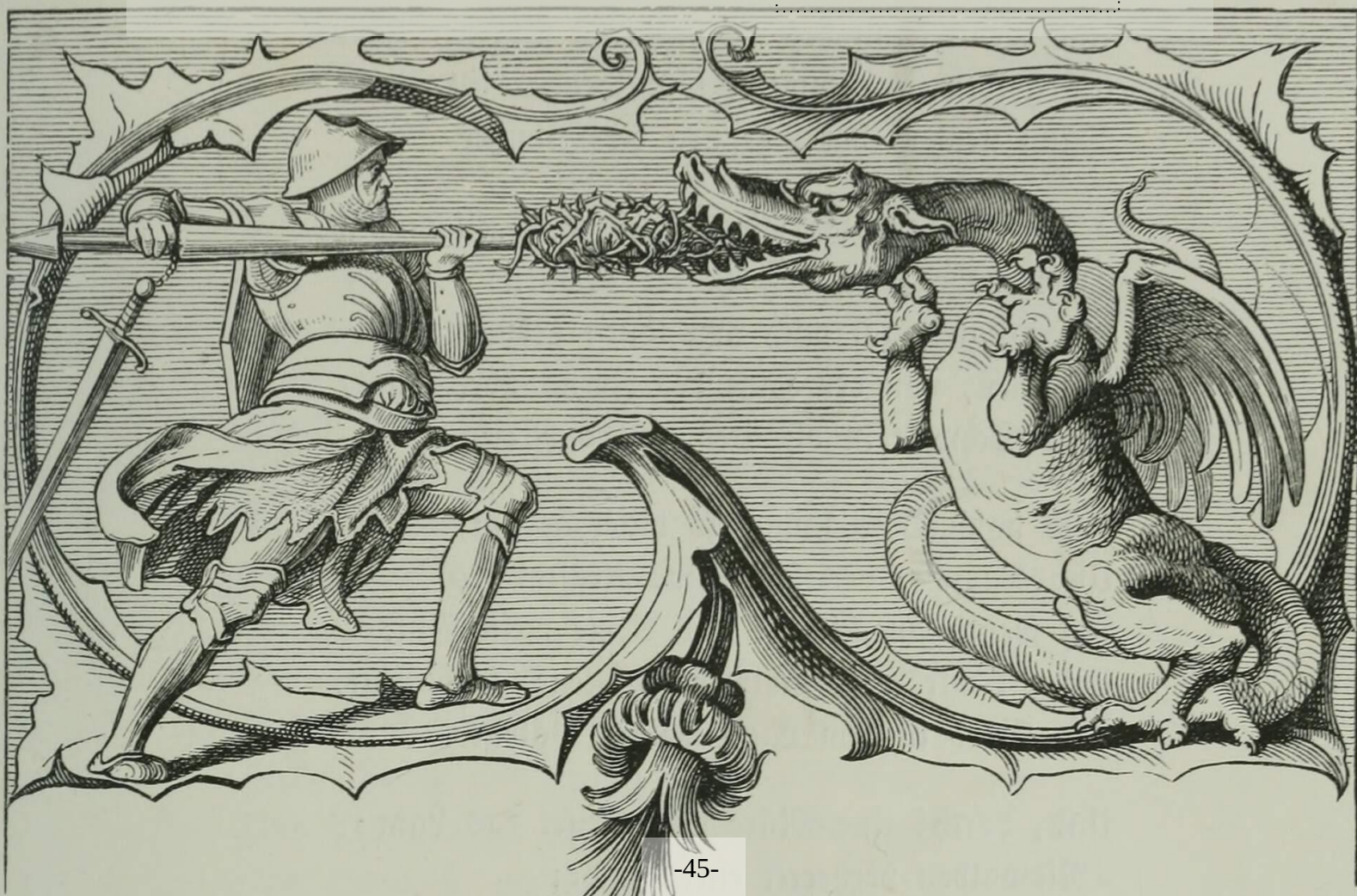
Then the strangest things happened. Instead of Tam Lin, Janet held in her arms a bearded lion, which struggled mightily to get away. But she remembered the knight's warning. "Hold me fast, and fear me not."



The next moment she held a fire-breathing dragon, which almost slipped from her, but she tightened her grasp, and thought of Tam Lin's words. The dragon changed to a burning bush, and the flames leaped up on all sides, but Janet stood still and felt no harm. Then in her arms she held a branching tree, filled with blossoms. And at last Tam Lin, her own true love, stood there.

When the Fairy Queen saw that none of her enchantments could frighten Janet, she cried out angrily, "The maiden has won a stately bridegroom who was my bonniest knight. Alas! Tam Lin is lost to Elfland."

On into the darkness rode the fairy train. Tam Lin and Lady Janet hastened back to the grey stone castle. There, in a short time, a wedding feast was prepared, and Tam Lin, who was really a Scottish Earl, and Lady Janet, the bravest maid in Scotland, were married.

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in the public domain.*





-THE HALL *of the* BARD-

“Music and storytelling are sisters and have always been close; where you find one, you can be sure the other isn’t far away.”



OKIKU

*Traditional Japanese Folktale retold by Matthew Meyer
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Okiku, meaning chrysanthemum, was the name of a servant girl who lost a precious plate, died a terrible death, and returned as a vengeful ghost. Along with Oiwa and Otsuyu, Okiku's tale is one of the Nihon san dai kaidan—Japan's Big Three Ghost Stories. Her story has been retold countless times in folk tales, puppet theater, kabuki, film, and manga. Though the general outline of her story remains the same, the names, locations, and surrounding details vary quite a bit from telling to telling. The most famous version of her story is called Banchō sarayashiki—"The Dish Manor at Banchō." It takes place in Himeji, present-day Hyōgo Prefecture.

Long ago, there was a woman named Okiku, who worked as a dishwashing servant at Himeji Castle. Okiku was very beautiful, and it was not long before she caught the eye of one of her master's retainers, a samurai named Aoyama. Aoyama tried many times to seduce Okiku, but each time she rejected his advances.

Eventually, Aoyama grew impatient with Okiku and decided to trick her into becoming his lover. In the castle there was a set of ten very expensive dishes. Aoyama hid one of the them, and then called for Okiku. He told her one of his master's fine dishes was missing, and demanded to know where it was. Okiku became frightened. Losing one of her lord's prized dishes was a crime punishable by death. She counted the dishes, "One... two... three... four... five... six... seven... eight... nine..." She recounted them against and again. Each time she came up one short. Okiku was distraught.

Aoyama told Okiku that he would overlook her mistake, and tell his master that it wasn't Okiku who lost the dish—but only if she would become his mistress. Though Okiku wanted to live, she once again refused Aoyama. This time the samurai became furious. He ordered his servants to beat Okiku with a wooden sword. Afterwards, he had her tied up and suspended over the castle well. He tortured Okiku, repeatedly dunking her into the well, only to pull her back out of the water and beat her himself. Aoyama demanded one last time that Okiku become his mistress. She refused. So Aoyama struck her violently with his sword and dropped her body down into the well.

Not long after, Okiku's ghost was seen wandering the castle grounds. She had become an onryo — a vengeful Japanese ghost. Night after night, she would rise from the well and enter her master's house, searching for the missing dish. She would count the plates: "One... two... three... four... five... six... seven... eight... nine..." After counting the ninth plate, she would let out a blood curdling scream that could be heard throughout the castle. She tormented Aoyama in this way, every night, robbing him of his rest. Those who heard part of Okiku's counting became very sick. Those unlucky enough to hear her count all the way to nine died shortly after.

Finally, the lord of the castle decided that something had to be done about Okiku's ghost. He called a priest, and asked him to pray for her and exercise her spirit. The priest waited in the garden all night, chanting suttras. One again, Okiku's ghost rose out of the well. She began to count the dishes: "One... two... three... four... five... six... seven... eight... nine..." As soon as Okiku counted the ninth dish, and before she could scream, the priest shouted out: "TEN!" Okiku's ghost appeared relieved that someone had found the missing dish. From then on, she never haunted the castle again.

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in the public domain.*

-HEALING SPRINGS-



Through Tomes and Under Tombs

by Sara deBeer

Through tomes and under tombs,
I prowled through many and varied rooms.
Who greeted me? Great portrayals
of historical figures, females and males:

Thomas Paine and Calamity Jane,
and Samuel Clemens (you know, MARK TWAIN!).
Josephine Baker, Madame CJ Walker,
Rosa Parks and George Washington Carver.
Harriet Beecher Stowe and Juliette Low,
Edgar Allen Poe and Galileo.
Sojourner Truth and Lucy Stone,
Langston Hughes and Mother Jones.
Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Edison,
Hans Christian Anderson and Dolley Madison.
Patrick Henry and Phyllis Wheatley,
Frederick Douglass and Annie Oakley.
Walt Whitman and Rachel Carson,
Bessie Coleman and Clara Barton.

They greeted me, each and every one,
then I spotted the cast of Hamilton.
So many of them! I'm such a fan!
but I got flustered, turn and ran
back to my friends and those they portray --
I settled in for some Q & A.

Was it a dream? I hardly know
but I can tell you, if you go
to storytelling events across this nation
you might see these interpretations!

To be told in educational and professional settings with attribution.



About the Author

Sara's great love is telling folktales from world cultures. A listener said, "Sara is a captivating storyteller, sensitive to her audience and their interests. Her extensive repertoire enables her to present programs on a wide variety of themes." Sara is a published poet who also teaches poetry-writing classes. Website: storydebeer.com

Under the Stairs

By Laura K. Deal

Deep in the basement under the stairs
Lies a box, she says, where all of her cares
Were packed away in the dark long ago
On a night when the world wore a glisten of snow
But her heart was hotter than molten lead
And she sought, in her way, to bury the dead.

She never let me look at her truth there interred
Nor told me her secrets; I only inferred
From her sighs that gave way to the tears,
And the way her eyes gazed back through the years.
Till the day, just today, when she gave me the key
And said that the time had come. I should see.

She can't make the journey down the old stair,
There are spiders, she says, so I should beware,
But the box, I will see, is tied in a string,
Behind the dark angel's broken left wing
And under the old coats her grandmother wore
When fur was a sign of status, no more.

The chain for the light bulb is too short by far
And cobwebs cling in a gossamer tar.
The dust on the bulb burns a musty incense
As I gaze at the coats in a strange new suspense.
What is in the box beneath the old stairs?
How could a box contain all her cares?

The key in my hand has warmed to my skin
I push back the coats, the fur soft as sin.
The eyes of the angel make me shudder and start —
I'd only heard tales of the wood carver's art.
Her eyes seem to follow wherever I go.
She's sad to be buried so deep, so below.

I murmur apology and lift her aside.
There's her wing on the floor like a thing that has died.
I hold it pressed to her, a prayer for the dead
But there's no magic here, no words to be said
To repair all the grief in the break of that wing.
I prop it on fur. Another dead thing.

Light struggles past the dusty old coats
To shine on the box. Under string, there's a note.
Her handwriting there, so steady and sure
In bold broad ink, designed to endure:
"For the living," it says, "I have buried this here
"I relinquish it all, and with it, all fear."

I wonder again what this box will contain.
Letters she read? Some part of her brain?
Now morbid thoughts fill all the free space
And I yank at the string in a sickening race
For my head wants to know what's contained in this box
But my heart wants to hide it, toss the key to the lock.

I have the string off now, but there's no lock to see.
Just a sagging old cardboard box. And me.
I fold back the flaps and breathe decades of dust
And peer into gloom the flavor of rust.
The box seems to be empty, all sad and alone,
But then I see something whiter than bone.

My fingers reach in, much against what I think,
And I pull out a photo; a dress tinted pink
On a girl in the lap of a man, who is stern,
Next to a woman who is waiting her turn.
How did I know that? Her turn at what?
There's a look on her face, indefinable but...

She stares out at me and her lips move a bit.

“At last,” she whispers, “a witness for it.”

I drop the old photo, scrambling back to get out

But the woman’s voice calls, not a scream, but a shout:

“I am here, you will listen! I saw you! Come back!”

I knock over the angel to escape the attack

Of the woman’s fierce cry that requires so much more

Than unpacking a box on a cold cement floor.

I struggle to stand, to escape from the space

Under the stairs and the fear I can’t face.

The key goes spinning away from my hand

My sanity’s slipping away like loose sand.

There’s nothing to hold me but the angel’s deep eyes

Suggesting I breathe and take on a guise

Of a healer, a witness; to step past my dread

And hear what the living should learn from the dead.

I can’t hide from the angel; I set her upright,

And my finger encounters a hole, out of sight.

A keyhole, I find, where her right wing juts out.

A place for my key, I haven’t a doubt.

I slip the key in, give a small gentle turn

That sets her ablaze, yet the wood doesn’t burn.

She reaches for me with fingers of fire

Her voice now a chord, rising louder and higher.

“Listen,” she orders, as flames touch my ears,

And the voice from the photo shouts, “All of the years

“I have waited to tell her and she sends me you.

“Well, tell her my pain wasn’t buried. It grew.

“It blossomed within her. It’s what made her ill.

“But tell her I love her. I have and I will.”

The flames die away, and with them, the voice,

And I sit there with angel, and photo, and choice.

Should I tell her? She’s sent me down here to see.

I pick up the photo. I take out the key.

I kiss the dark angel, its wood now gone cool,

And wonder if I am just mad or a fool

I emerge from the dark and climb up the stairs

The photograph heavy with inherited cares.

I call out her name, still not sure what to say,

And the photo’s pale colors fade into gray.

I find her, not breathing, a tear on her lash,

And the photo flames once, then crumbles to ash.



Laura Deal is a poet, storyteller, and dream worker. She hosts Poets Standing Strong Together, a monthly online gathering of poets. Her stories have been featured on Story Story Podcast and the Apple Seed on BYU Radio. Find more of her poetry in her book *Marbles: New and Collected Poems*.

LauraDeal.com

Email- Laura@LauraDeal.com

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ARCADE OF THE BEAST

The Traveler's Companion

Series Painted by Kim Diaz Holm / Den Unge Herr Holm

This is a interactive art gallery, watch the art come to life and the story be told.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dmNLsmDZwYA&t=1093s>

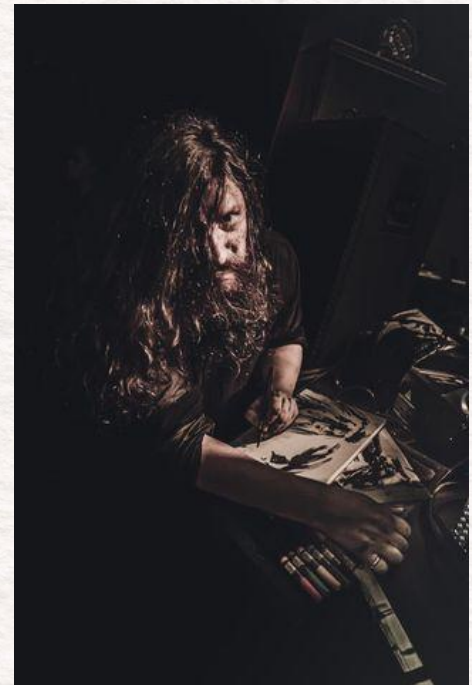


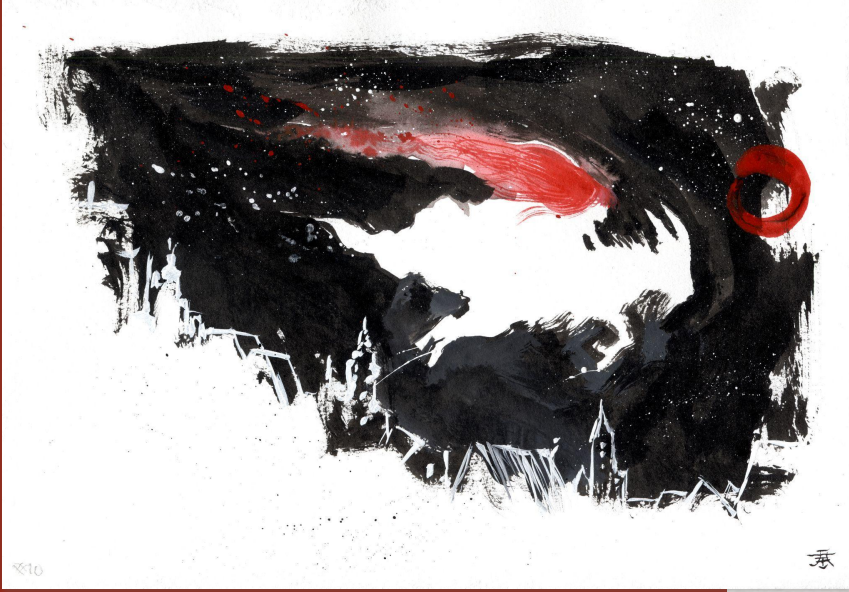
Photo credit: Uncle Allan Photo



About the Artist

Kim Diaz Holm / Den Unge Herr Holm (1980) is an artist and storyteller. He has drawn thousands of concert sketches while headbanging, and made cover art for bands like Abbath, Solstafir, and Vreid. To his over one million followers on TikTok and Youtube he draws monsters and tells stories of mythology, mental health, and anarchy. [Youtube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...) denungeherrholm.com





Have art you want to share? Share at storybeasteditor@gmail.com





-PUZZLES and GAMES-

"Curiouser and curiouser!"

A Riddle For You

The head of a whale is six feet long; his tail is as long as his head and half his body, and his body is half of his whole length. How long is the whale?

-SB

Last Month's Answer: A Clock.

LOST WORD SOCIETY

by Carmen Agra Deedy

Once again it's time again to play along with Carmen Agra Deedy's LOST WORD SOCIETY.

The leaves are turning, stirring in the brisk evening air. The summer fruits in the stores are being replaced by squash, pumpkins, and apple cider. It's also time once again, to trundle backwards to a time before this to find yet another rarely used word in modern English.

Each month we will give you an archaic, obsolete, or otherwise "lost" word. We will make up three silly sentences using the word, probably incorrectly. Your job is to make up a definition for the lost word. The challenge, should you decide to accept it, is for you to use your new word in a story, just for fun. Next month we will publish the true definition of the "lost" word and provide you with another one. Have fun!

BALTER (v.) Archaic. Origin, Middle English.

- 1) He stared at the bill, his mouth going dry, his palms sweating, his mouth moving, but no words surfacing as he began to twitch and balter at the exorbitant fee circled in red.
- 2) She bundled up the pelts representing the entire season of toil and heartache and began the long trek to town where she would barter and balter for the meager supplies to see her through the dark and lonely winter.
- 3) "I am not an evil man," he said smiling, his single golden tooth glinting in the candlelight, "yet you have no choice, but to beg and balter for your life, as I hold all of the aces," as he placed a large pistol upon the table.

Last Month's Lost Word:

SMATCHET (n.) 19th century; obsolete.- an annoying, unmannerly, and sometimes contemptible person.



For more fun explore:
Carmen Agra Deedy's LOST WORD SOCIETY
at [facebook.com/carmenagradeedy](https://www.facebook.com/carmenagradeedy)
for new words every weekend!



-STORY SIGHTINGS-

What's going on?





Rear view of sound from Dumas Bay Conference Centre

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By Margaret Read MacDonald, Conference Co-Chair

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Elizabeth Ellis is the Grand Dame of American Storytelling. A native of Appalachia, she moved to Dallas, Texas early in life and there became a mother, a grandmother, a public librarian, and eventually a professional storyteller. She now tours the nation telling stories and leading workshops to help other storytellers grow in their craft. This is her fifth book.

Learn more at www.parkhurstbrothers.com

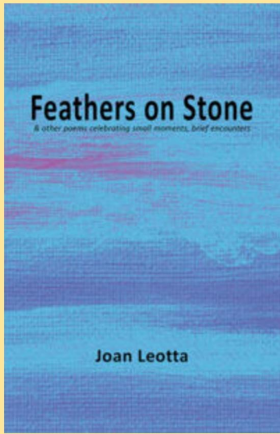


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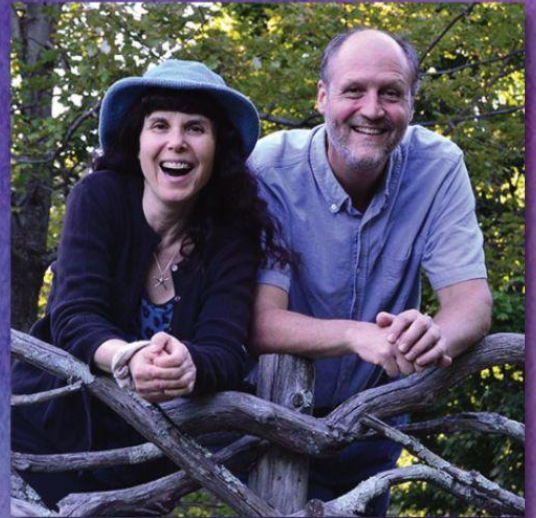
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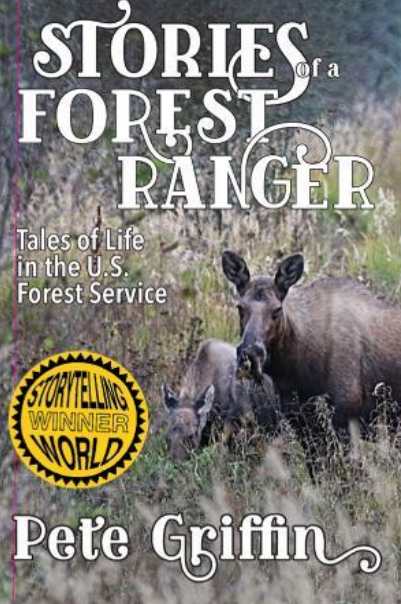


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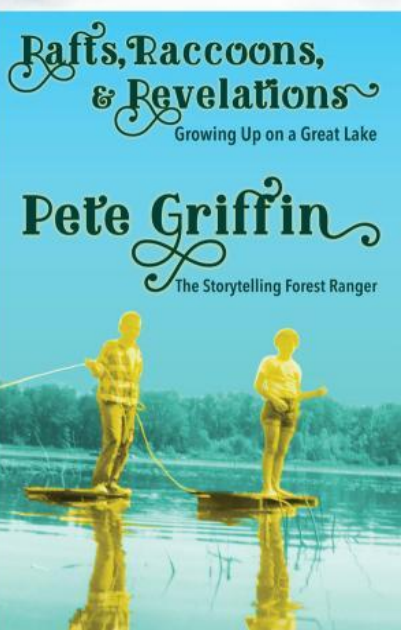
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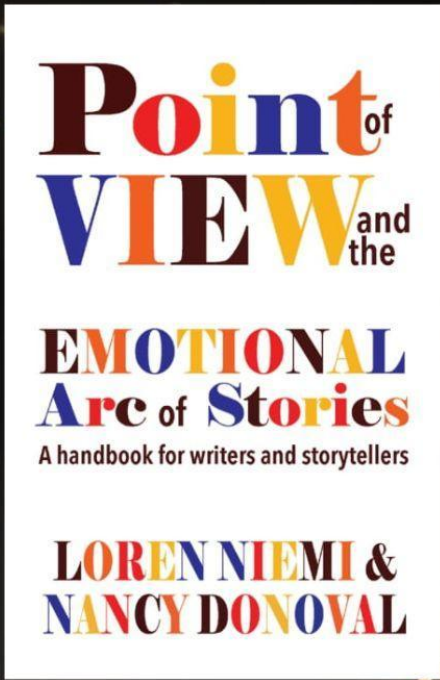
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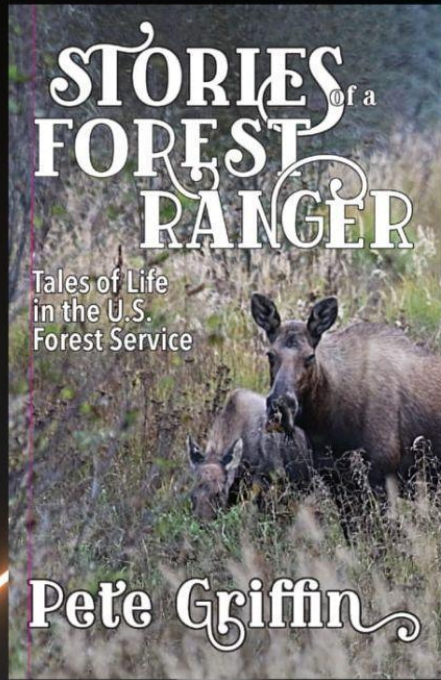
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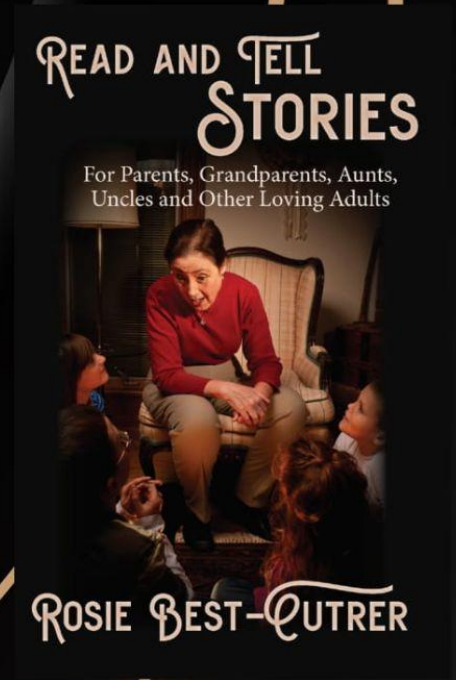




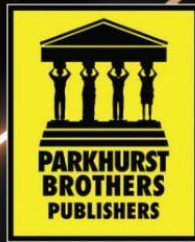
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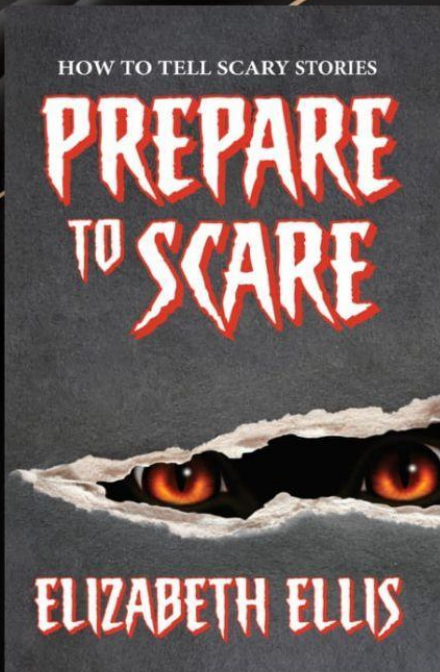
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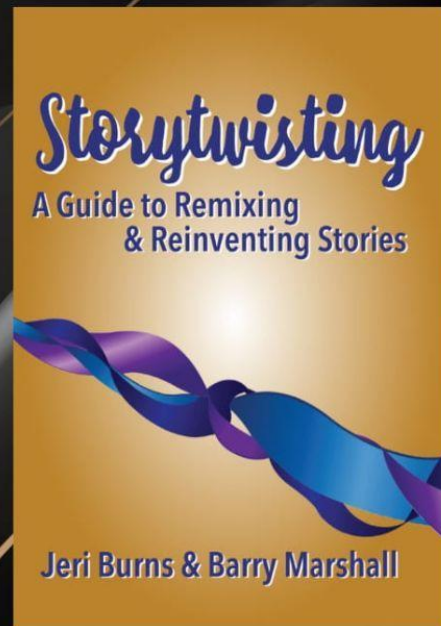
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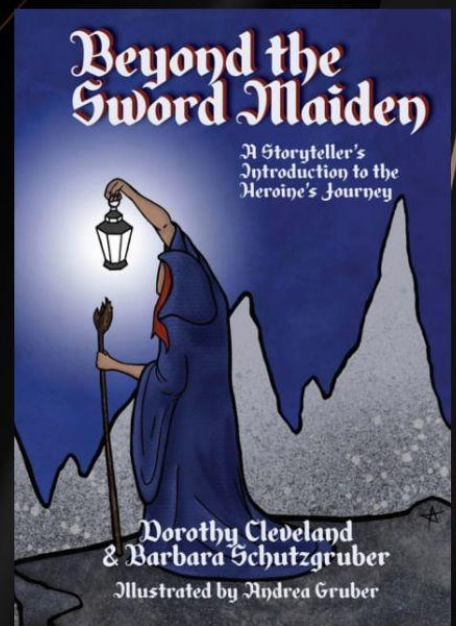
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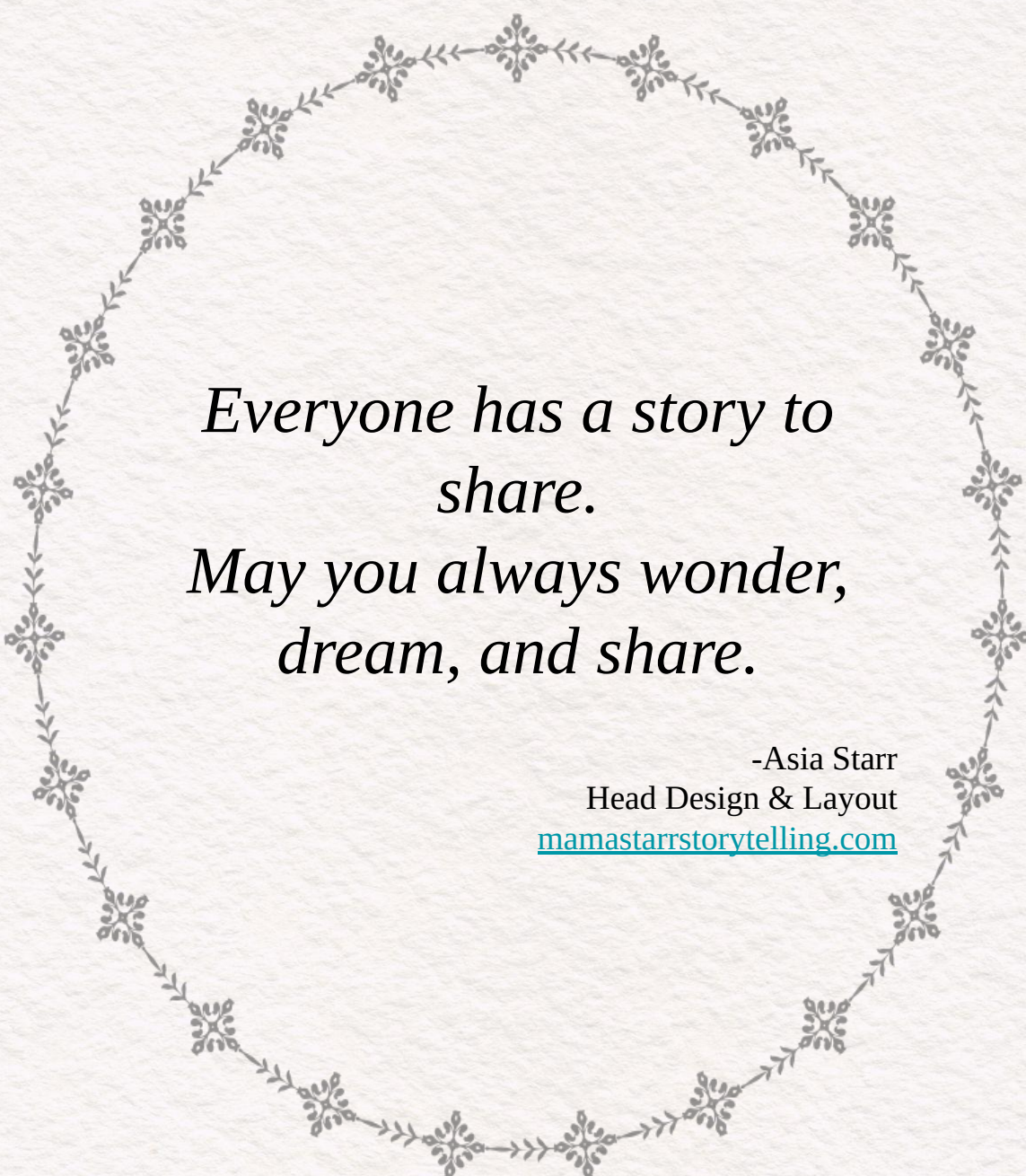
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