

Dreams Do Come True

By Sheila Johnson

Tightly snuggled in her Grandma's quilt, a five-year-old girl lay on her bed night after night drifting into dreams of travels to places where beautiful flowers grew and wild animals freely roamed. And in the years to follow God saw to it that my dreams came true.

There are some memories that will be embedded in my mind and heart for a lifetime. I remember the slow stride and gentle steps of the brown African camels with enormous teeth that were saddled with mosaic blankets for our dusty rides through the desert sands of Egypt. This was paired with the abundant sights and rich fragrances of rose, lotus, and jasmine flowers offered at the city market. The friendly artisans eagerly offered their wares of papyrus, stoneware, and spices on the sidewalks and riverbanks of Cairo. Oh, and to see and touch the ancient pyramids against a backdrop of catacombs was a thrill of a lifetime! I will never forget the amazing contrast of desert sand and lush green farmland.

I have been blessed to personally witness, from afar, white, fluffy polar bears that blended with the Alaskan winter landscape, while blue and white warblers dug for their meals of insects embedded in nearby statuesque blue ice (icebergs). While visiting local mercantile shops, I joyfully discovered that my Grandma's quilted textiles were almost identical to those handcrafted by Native Alaskan hands—confirming the Native American heritage in my soul. The Alaskan skies were thick with soaring majestic Bald Eagles flaunting their wide wingspan. Their keen eyesight allowed these beautiful creatures to occasionally dip down and extend their strong claws to catch a quick meal of white rabbit. Nothing compares to the Northern lights and sunrises.

Recent memories of my journey to Oaxaca, Mexico flood my mind with sights of bright orange and yellow Birds of Paradise, red dahlias, multi-colored flowering cacti, uniquely painted homes, massive textile factories, wide wooden fort doors, clean narrow sidewalks, indoor and outdoor markets, ancient trees, sculpted landscapes, and beautiful, naturally dyed cotton garments worn by the brown people of Oaxaca. So much reminded me of my native El Paso, and my sisters and brothers from another mother. In addition to the visual treats, the native people of Oaxaca know how to prepare the best Mexican cuisine in the world that would delight any palate. The streets were lined with popular art galleries that held some of the most exquisite canvases and sculptures that are viewed by people from all over the world. While there, I was able to make multi-media art every day with a group of amazing artists.

Although travel has created some of my favorite memories, it is the people that I have met along the way that have made my most lasting memories.