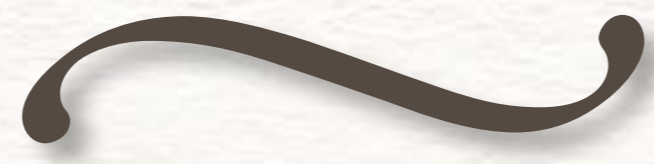


# HOME BASE



*J Brooks Jensen*

*A Brooks Jensen Arts Publication*

**She was only six years old**, but she knew how to hide as well as anyone, even the older boys. Darting across the open school yard, she glanced behind her every few steps with an expression that mixed concealed laughter, anticipation, and a certain sense of urgency. She knew it would not be long before the boys stopped counting and began their seeking.



She found a sagebrush that was sufficiently larger than she and darted behind it, panting, then crouching, waiting. All ears now — quiet — straining desperately to hear beyond normal human range. She took great pains to forcedly regulate her breath so that its noise might not prevent her from hearing even the faintest crunch of one of the boy's footsteps.

Across the way, she could hear Mary and Susan giggle as they tried to conceal themselves behind the chimney of the little one-room schoolhouse. They would be caught far too easily. The chimney was much too obvious of a hiding place and much too close to "home base" — the merry-go-round. She knew her hiding place was better, but even so, it would require every ounce of her courage to wait patiently for her chance to spring for home if one of the boys were to come past her hiding place from the front side.



There. What was that? One of the “seekers” running on tiptoes toward her? No, just a scared jackrabbit dashing for cover. Safe, still, all ears once again.

More giggles as the less-talented girls got caught before they had a chance to run for it, or were caught by the faster boys.

She knew her chance was coming near. She leaned down to peek under the edge of the foliage just in time to catch a glimpse of Michael’s boot noiselessly coming round the back side of her sagebrush hiding place. She could feel her heart deepen and quicken its pounding and rise right to the top of her chest. It was now — or never.



With a jump, a squeal, and a rush of adrenalin, she sprinted toward safety, her legs straining to stretch every last quarter-inch from each stride. Michael shouted and burst into the race right behind her. She felt her shoes dig into the dry desert dirt and the ends of her pigtails thumping against her back as she picked up speed. The summer sun warmed her arms and her cheeks. Her breath came quickly as she pressed her face to the wind and the race. She heard the steps of first one, then two, now three, four, five boys chasing her in a desperate race.

Just over the din of her own breathing and footsteps, a chorus of high-pitched voices encourage her with a cheer of, "Run, Sissy, run!" intermingled with a contrasting, lower-pitched chorus of "Get her, Michael, get her!" from the boys. With a final burst of speed and girlish pride, she reached "home base" just ahead of Michael's final lunge for her elbow. Her slap on the merry-go-round sent it spinning in a victory dance and her laughter could be heard above all the cheers of her fellow "hidiers."





**Brooks Jensen** is a fine-art photographer, publisher, workshop teacher, and writer. In his personal work he specializes in small prints, hand-made artist's books, and digital media publications.

He and his wife (Maureen Gallagher) are the owners, co-founders, editors, and publishers of the award winning *LensWork*, one of today's most respected and important periodicals in fine art photography. With subscribers in 73 countries, Brooks' impact on fine art photography is truly world-wide. His long-running podcasts on art and photography are heard over the Internet by thousands every day. All 900+ podcasts are available at [LensWork Online](#), the LensWork membership website. LensWork Publishing is also at the leading edge in multimedia and digital media publishing with *LensWork Extended* — a PDF based, media-rich expanded version of the magazine.

Brooks is the author of seven best-selling books about photography and creativity: *Letting Go of the Camera* (2004); *The Creative Life in Photography* (2013); *Single Exposures* (4 books in a series, random observations on art, photography and creativity); and *Looking at Images* (2014); as well as a photography monograph, *Made of Steel* (2012). His next book will be *Those Who Inspire Me (And Why)*. A free monthly compilation of of this image journal, [Kokoro](#), is available for download.

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