

KOKORO

Brooks Jensen Arts ~ August 2019, Vol 5, No 4





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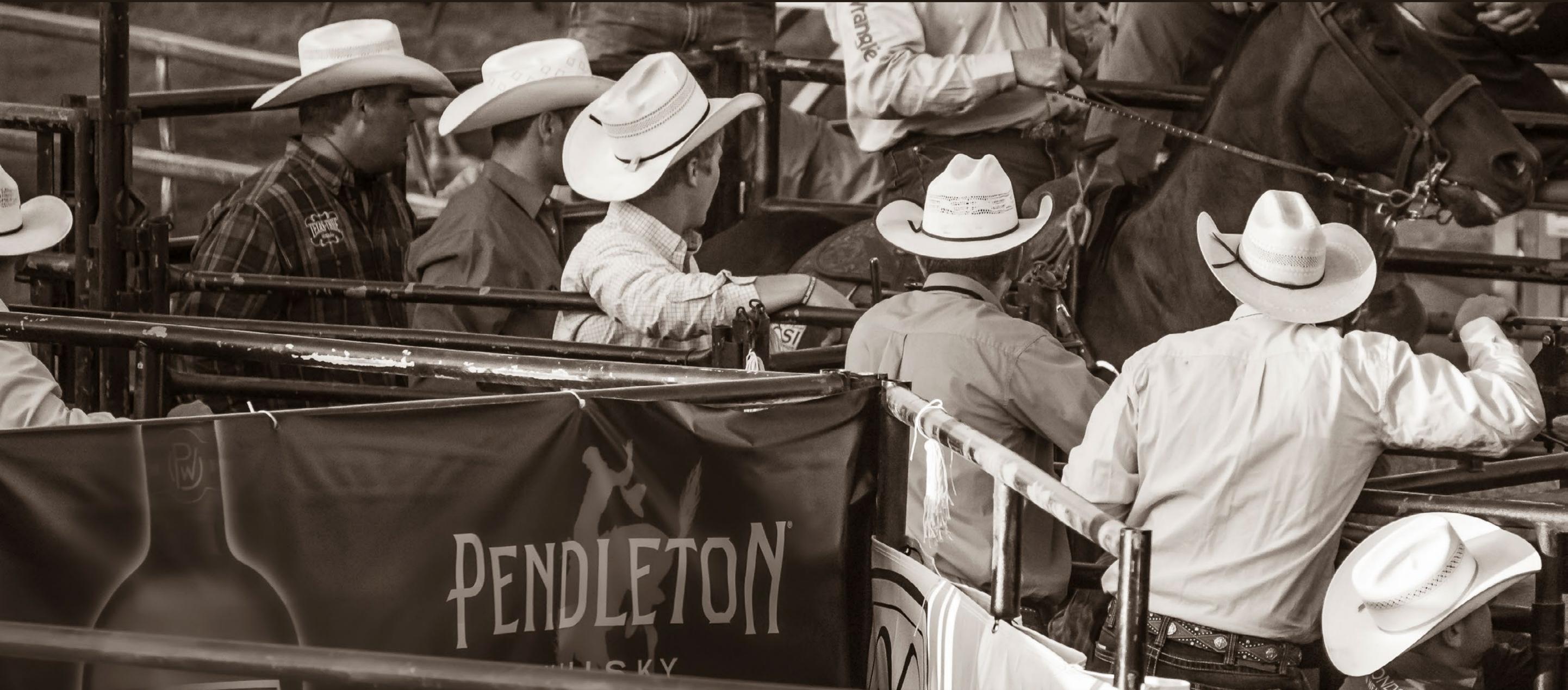
Perhaps Lafcadio Hearn will not protest too much if I paraphrase (almost word for word) from *Kokoro*, his 1895 book of Japanese life. He explains this important Japanese term far better than I ever could:

The entries comprising this volume treat of the inner rather than the outer life, — for which reason they have been grouped under the title *Kokoro* (heart). Written with the above character, this word signifies also *mind*, in the emotional sense; *spirit*; *courage*; *resolve*; *sentiment*; *affection*; and *inner meaning*, — just as we say in English, 'the heart of things.'

#121

Rodeo Hat

Rodeo Hat



by Brooks Jensen

There's nothing quite like the pride of new straw hat for the rodeo.
Even if you're not a cowboy, it just helps you get into the spirit of the thing.
You stand a little taller, smile a little wider, root a little louder.

In the immortal words of . . . um, Lyle Lovett —

You can have my girl
But don't touch my hat























RESISTOL



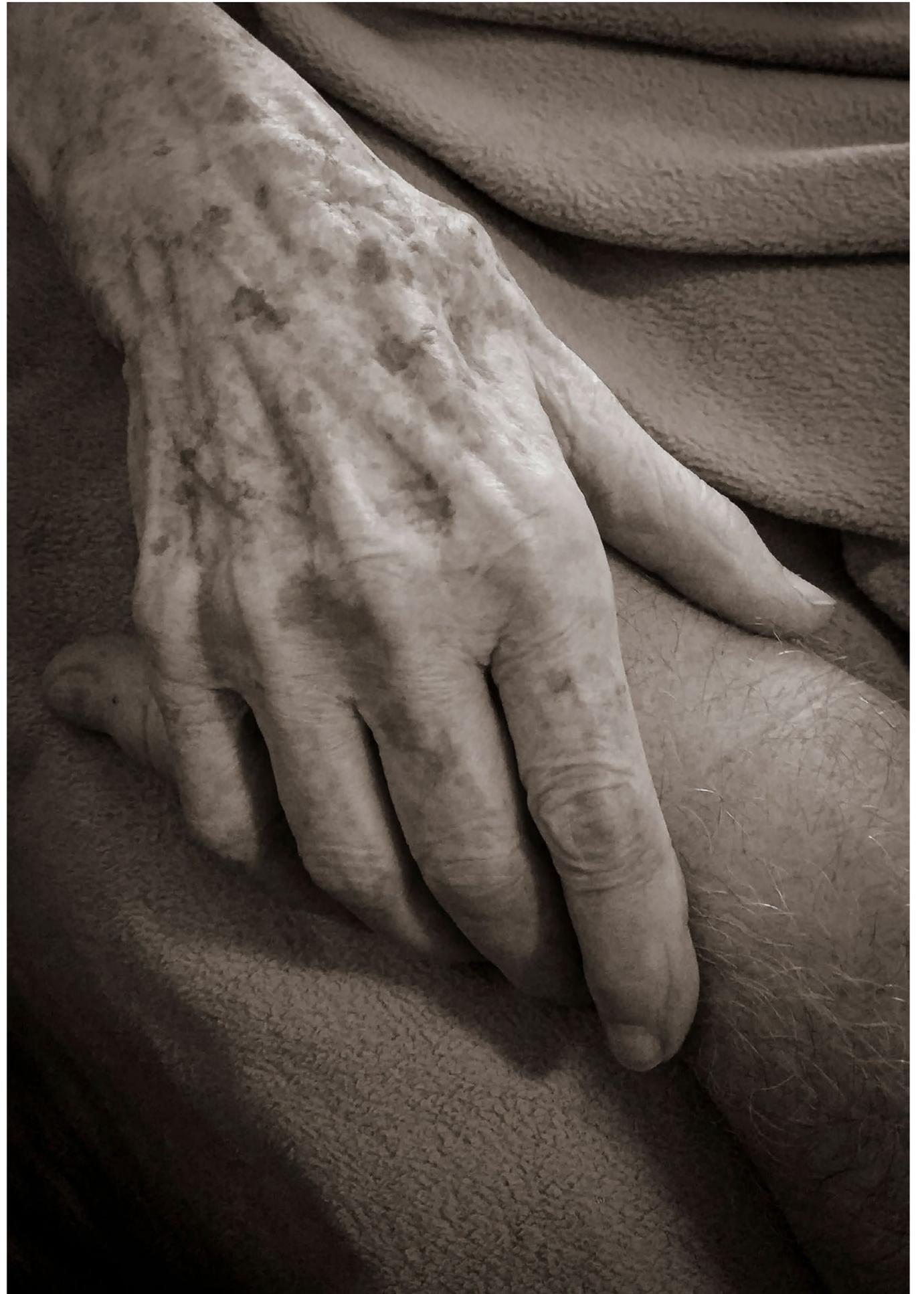




I Remember . . . Sue

A One-Picture Story

My mother-in-law lived with us for the final years of her life. Blind but of keen mind, we spent many evenings tapping our toes to the big band music of her youth. She needed help navigating, and for years whenever I'd approach to lead her somewhere, I'd say in my best baritone Boris Karloff imitation, "*Come with meeeeeee.*" She giggled every time. Now that she's gone, I sometimes say out loud to the empty room, "Come with meeeeeeee." I can still hear her giggle.



#122

The Love of Green

The Love of Green

by Brooks Jensen



The first color she pulled out of her brand new box of crayons was green.

“Is that your favorite color?” I asked.

“Yes,” she replied as she rubbed the crayon across the paper leaving a trail of Mountain Meadow.

“Why do you like green?”

“Because it makes me happy.”

I understand exactly how she feels.



































Sherri

A One-Picture Story

Four of us. Day three of a 7-day backpack down the spine of the Cascade Mountains. Thirty miles to the nearest paved road. Cold in the mountains. A light but persistent drizzle at our camp near an unassuming tarn. It's been a much harder trek than any of us had anticipated. No one is talking — until Sherri breaks the silence.

"I'm done now, Jack," she matter-of-factly tells her new husband, "Take me home."

"What do you mean, *Take me home*? We're *four days* from the car."

"I don't care. Just take me home — NOW."

"How am I supposed to do that?"

"I don't care. Get a helicopter or something."

She was exhausted, irrational, immovable. It was the day we all learned the healing powers of hot soup and an afternoon nap.



#123

A Straight Line from the Sun

A Straight Line from the Sun

by Brooks Jensen



Each sunbeam travels 93 million miles
in a perfectly straight line.

Until it meets an object that absorbs it, blocks it,
turns it into a shadowed shape.

In front of our eyes.

How is this not an *everyday miracle*?













百子信老丹七















Lost Sister

A One-Picture Story



If I had a sister, I wonder how different my life would have been – but, there was a miscarriage.

It wasn't the end, but looking back on it, I can now see that it was the beginning of the end. Mom was never the same again. None of us were.

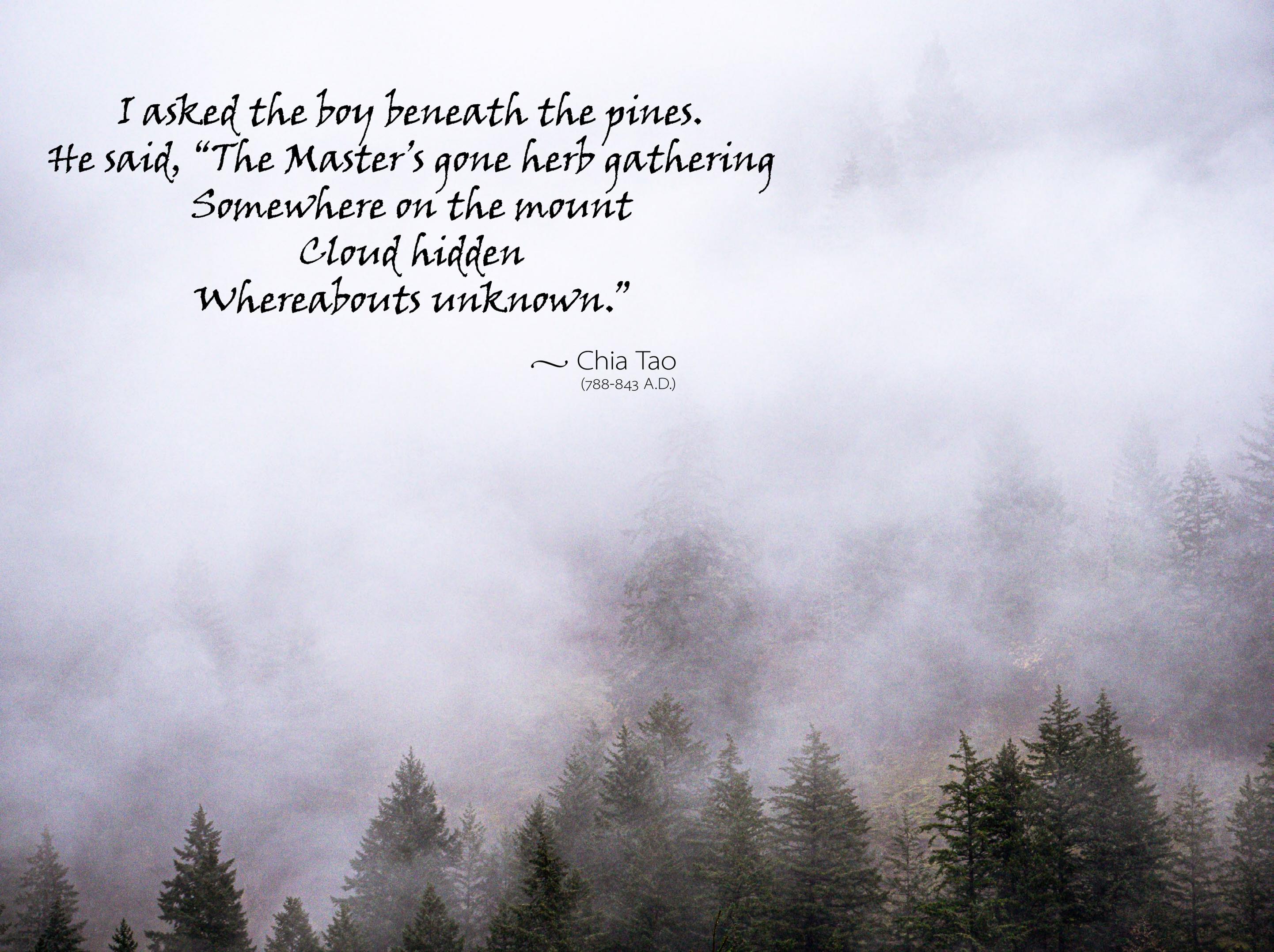
#124

Whereabouts Unknown



Whereabouts Unknown

by Brooks Jensen



I asked the boy beneath the pines.
He said, "The Master's gone herb gathering
Somewhere on the mount
Cloud hidden
Whereabouts unknown."

~ Chia Tao
(788-843 A.D.)

















Notes

Rodeo Hat

Sometimes a photography project is a big thing requiring months or years, producing hundreds, perhaps thousands, of images. However, I've recently become more and more enamored with the *small observation*, something that can be photographed and completed in a short period of time. Small observations don't attempt to make a grand statement, but instead bring to attention something that otherwise might never be noticed.

I went to the rodeo to photograph the events. My kit included a long telephoto lens. Sitting high in the grandstands, I couldn't help but notice all the new straw cowboy hats. A small observation, but one that entertained me – as you can see.

Tech notes: All without moving from my seat in the grandstand. All shot hand-held with a Panasonic G9 and a 50-200 Leica lens. Who says you can't get shallow depth of field with m4/3 cameras?

The Love of Green

I don't know anyone who doesn't have a favorite color. Isn't this odd? I've always

been particularly fond of green and blue. Am I a landscape photographer because I love these colors? Or, do I love these colors because I love landscapes? All I know for sure is that I have thousands of images of insignificant subject material in questionable compositions – but which *revel* in a glorious shade of green or blue. I love Miles Davis' album *Kind of Blue* and in particular the song *Blue in Green*. Probably not related, but I thought you should know.

Tech notes: Nine cameras, nine lenses, and fourteen different shutter speeds – and thousands of greens. ;-)

A Straight Line from the Sun

Serendipitous light is one of my favorites. It's the kind of light that can easily slip into a room and out again without being noticed. It's light sneaking in on kitty paws. It presents itself at times when I'm not even *thinking* about photography, and gently whispers "I'm here!!!" When I'm lucky, I see it and reach for my camera.

Tech notes: This kind of project is more about the light

than the camera or lens. It's not even about the subject – I suppose because the subject is *sunlight itself*. So, 5800° Kelvin. That's about all I can tell you.

Whereabouts Unknown

The Fraser River Valley in British Columbia, Canada, consists of steeply forested canyons that attract the moisture-laden Pacific air. I know there are no 9th century Chinese mystics wandering these hills, but it seems as though there should be.

I spent two days photographing up and down this scenic valley, all the while Chia Tao's poem played continuously in the background of my thoughts. How strange it is to be so viscerally connected to someone who lived so far away, 1200 years ago in the Tang Dynasty. Perhaps his spirit rides the mists.

Tech notes: Panasonic G9. Shot during two days in November of 2018, mostly with a 45-200mm lens.

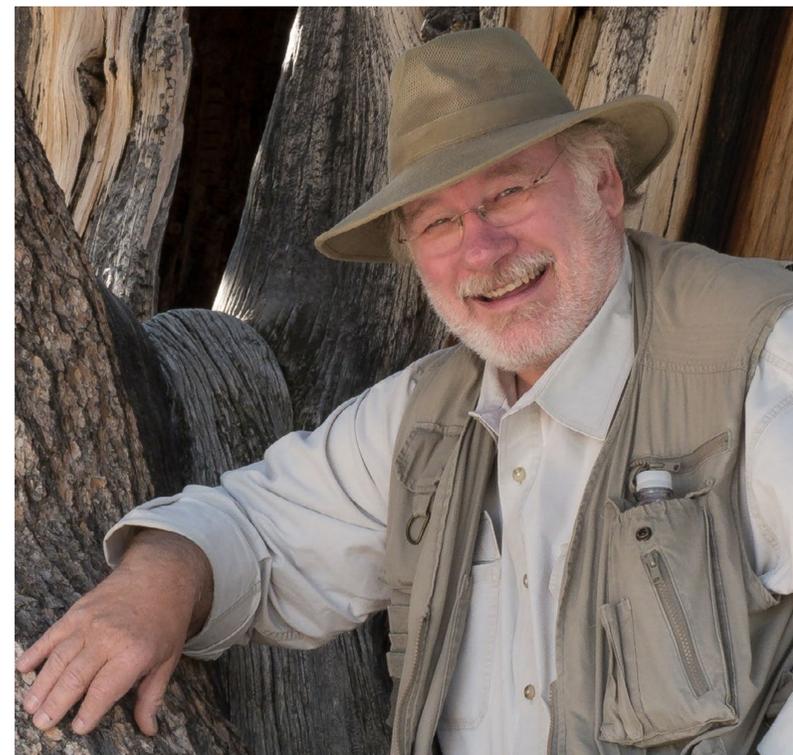
One-Picture Stories

Memory, like storytelling, is all anecdotes and snippets – the story of our lives.

Folios, Chapbooks, Prints

Support the artist!

For over 30 years, Brooks has shared his photographic lessons, failures, inspiration, creative path — and more than a few laughs. If you've enjoyed his free *Kokoro* PDFs publications, or been a long-time listener to his free audio commentaries (his weekly podcast *On Photography and the Creative Life*, or his daily *Here's a Thought* commentaries), here is your chance to tell him how much you appreciate his efforts. Support the artist!



Choose whichever level of support fits your appreciation and pocketbook. We thank you, he thanks you, and here's looking forward to the exciting content that is yet to come in all our *LensWork* publications and media as Brooks continues exploring this creative life.

\$15 Applause - Thanks!

\$25 Standing Ovation - You'll receive a signed copy of *Dreams of Japan*

\$50 Basic Support - You'll receive a thank you of a signed 6R (8-page, 6x8") chapbook, handmade and signed by the artist

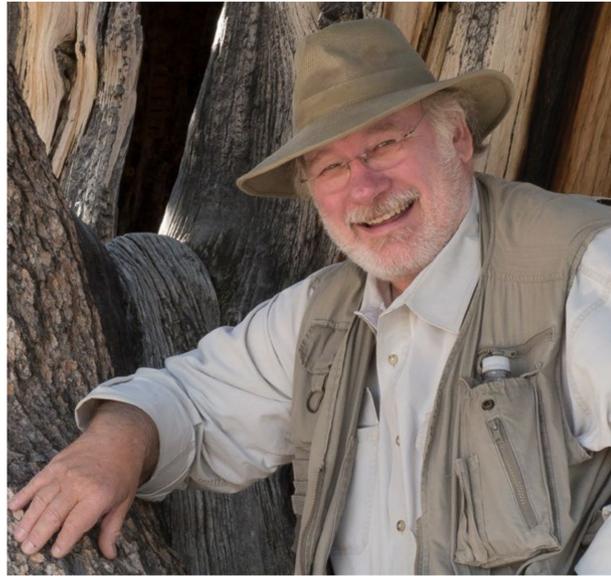
\$100 Essential Support - You'll receive a signed Full Quarto (16-page, 8x11") chapbook handmade and signed by the artist

\$250 Sustaining Support - You'll receive a thank you of an original, signed print + wall hanger

\$500 Friend of the Arts - You'll receive a thank you of a signed original print with wall hanger plus a Full Quarto chapbook

\$1000 Patron of the Arts - You'll receive a special thank you of, well, you'll see!

[You can donate to support Brooks' creative life using this link.](#) Thanks!



Brooks Jensen is a fine-art photographer, publisher, workshop teacher, and writer. In his personal work he specializes in small prints, handmade artist 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 worldwide. His long-running podcasts on art and photography are heard over the Internet by thousands every day. All 1,200+ podcasts are available at [LensWork Online](https://www.lenswork.com), 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 fourteen books about photography and creativity: *Photography, Art, & Media* (2016); *The Creative Life in Photography* (2013); *Letting Go of the Camera* (2004); *Single Exposures* (4 books in a series, random observations on art, photography and creativity); *Looking at Images* (2014); *Seeing in SIXES* (2016); *Seeing in SIXES* (2017); *Seeing in SIXES* (2018); *Seeing in SIXES* (2019); *The Best of the LensWork Interviews* (2016); as well as a photography monograph, *Made of Steel* (2012). His next books will be *Those Who Inspire Me (And Why)* and *Looking at Images 2019*. [Kokoro](https://www.kokoro.com) is a free, monthly PDF e-magazine of his personal work and is available (both current and back issues) for download from his [website](https://www.brooks-jensen.com).

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