

Shield Visions

By Glenn Currier

First night body dripping
mind skipping
can I make it
can I take it?
Serenity slipping.
Frogs in chorus
coyotes sonorous
crickets vibrate everywhere
wind Spirit - stirs the air!

First morning – Grandfather Sun
early warms the day
I journal in tent's shade
my fears and pain allay.
First light dawns my soul.

The sacred circle waits
the spirit within anticipates.
Our guides gently propose:
'Heed what your spirits disclose.
Each a flowering tree
speaks softly a lesson, a dream
a memory of the past
a vision of your path.

My tree, small and straight,
With fresh green growth –
needles point all directions.

Its wood speaks soft reflections.
My spirit feels its lime power.
Inner child speaks his pain
the cardinal's sweet refrain
swifts me back beyond the now.
Hear the Cardinal sing!

And in the heat of afternoon
we hear the wails of past offenses,
paint and cut and image
visions true and dear.



Shields of precious life and growth
spring from courageous souls.

The evening shielded circle smiles
and dances sad and tender spirals.
Spirit-jewels drop like silver stars
Courageous souls open their wings
and soar and cool the heated night.

Second morning found us bound,
gifted with nine spirits there
and countless others: Winged ones,
and standing people and
precious four leggeds.

Gift/lessons learned and cherished:
From Angus/spirit - the lesson of open life,
our teachers and guides -
sacraments - doors to the sacred
from the six angels - courage to heal,
and from the creepy crawlers –
fortitude and humility to touch.

Author's Note: In 1995 I participated in a workshop out in a rural area of Texas in which several "students" were led by a Joanna Jacobus whom I call my Medicine Woman. We were drawing on Native American practices and spiritual ideas. We constructed a medicine wheel and slept in tents overnight. The land was beautiful with a small winding creek surrounded by rich green growth. I was given a name by one of the male participants who had gotten to know me.

I know now that this workshop was not the same as the ways Native Americans do things, but it was for me a spiritual awakening and a growth-filled experience. Just being out in the country where there were coyotes and creepy-crawlers and sleeping in a tent required a degree of surrender for me. And that was a good thing. As the title indicates, from visions or imaginings we had we created "shields" consisting of various materials such as leather, feathers, large metal rings and acrylic paints. The image above is one of the shields I made. It depicts that winding stream. This shield still hangs in our office, a graphic reminder of part of my spiritual journey.

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Written 7-16-1995*