The Rez-Dog

"Lonesome Sam"

Growing up in the San Gabriel Mountains of California

By: Richard Berg III
~Dedication~

To; All my friends and Teyoshpe' at the Circle.
To; my friends and my family throughout my life, U-NO-WHO U-R !
To; My closest friends Jeff and Avon; You are still and will always be very important to me : "LISTEN FOR THE RAVEN!" ☺

To; Russell Eugene, Michael Ray, and John David, brothers of Lakota decent, dear friends of my life, many years ago. You are not ever forgotten...

To; Jessy Portis, descendant of "Mata-oka" (Pocahontas), Powhatan, my heart is with your family and your mother Marlys, for all time. The times we all shared together will always live within a warm place in my heart...
To; one of my Tribal Nephews, Wm. Cody Jackson sr. and his two sons William Jr. and John, My family of Potawatomi and Choctaw blood at Mayetta Ks. Rez. And, last but by no means the least;
To; My Sister ; Sue Mourning Dove Heberding, her entire family and her Grand Son Kyle, My Great Nephew ☺. I pray that you will find an interest in your heritage within these pages, if nothing else, inspiration... Uncle Rick*
~MANY THANKS TO~

My Mother and Grandmothers, Great Aunts and Uncle John, on my Mother's side, Choctaw all of them. Thanks also to the late, Chief Mc Cloud, (Lake Co. Pomo @ Lakeport, Ca.); Corbin Harney, (Western Shoshoni, Holy man, and my friend, Nev.);

Kote and Alukoy, Chumash Doctoring peoples of the Owl Clan and my friends; George Sherman Ironshield, Respected Elder/Holy Man, and friend @ Standing Rock, S.D. (Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara & Lakota)

Chief White Cloud, Modoc of Oregon. Who gave me permission to gather Obsidian from the Modoc lands in the Old Traditional way. You have my eternal gratitude.

Buck Ghost Horse, Lakota Sundance Leader and respected elder. My Aunt, Maxiene Cleveland, (Nez Perce, Suquamish, Skokomish of Colville Rez. WA. My Aunt whom I will forever Love.) And to my Spiritual Advisor and Friend Dolores Tapia Santha- "Grandmother Coyote" who is Seneca and Comanche as well as part of the inspiration to write this and all of my further writings.

You ALL- Every one of you, had some part in my Knowledge and therefore in this writing... Thank You All So Very Much! R*

©. COPYRIGHT,MMXIV all rights reserved, All material within may not be copied or used in any other fashion without written PERMISSION and AUTHORIZATION of the Author. ©-51508-80508 120253 R.B.III L.... III - []L.... R*
# Table of Contents

Native Legends and Stories, Introduction.............................................I

1-Rez. Dog, Lonesome.................................................................1

2-1st Summer Hike.................................................................34

3-Mrs. Brown's Ski poles & the 20$............................................50

4-The Ring of Bone.................................................................63

5-Black Bear & Cubs............................................................66

6-My first Tepee........................................................................74

7-The Preening Tree.................................................................80

8-Charging Bear..........................................................................92

9-My first hunting bow............................................................107

10-Family reunion 1966..........................................................123

11-Uncle John & the Family Feast...........................................130

12-Lonesome takes off..............................................................160

13-How I learned from Sam, and he formed me.......................168

14-Doe and Fawn, I was eleven...............................................181

15-T bones hurt.........................................................................193

16-Rattlers.................................................................................198

17-My Buckskin Shirt.............................................................202

18-Joey and I hike, Wild dogs..................................................212

19-KING, the husky dog............................................................237

20-Lonesome's son Danny.........................................................247

21-Summer, 1975......................................................................252

20-Author's Note........................................................................256
* On "Reading" A Topographic Chart; (An artistic representation of the area.)

I drew a basic Topographic-chart of most of the areas where-in this story took place. It is entirely drawn by hand and only as accurate as my memory can make it. But I included it to give the reader a basic idea of what the, "Lay-of Terrain" was. The only structures I included are the ones mentioned within the pages of this story, there were many more, matter of a fact the population sign at the edge of town claimed there was 1,700 although some local kids wrote on it, "On the weekends" which I found both funny and true.

In "Reading" this chart, Imagine an elevated distance of around ten to twelve feet latitude between the graduated lines of terrain. The closer the lines come to each other, = the steeper the angle of terrain. SEE EXAMPLE:

FROM THE SIDE:⇒ to the Top
Lines further apart, makes the Terrain less steep, to flat:

Something like this ⇒ These lines are represented by those lines on the chart, showing the rise of mountains.

[ MOUNTAIN]

In my rendition of the slide, [Cliffs.] I sketched the slides to hopefully make it a little easier. Both the White Rock Mine and the Mudslide, or (Cirque-Incline) are expressed the same way. The apple orchard and town are in the valley between the ridges with Ponderosa ridge the highest of the two.

Although I could have drawn and named all of the streets, I only drew and named those that were important to the story, everything you can figure out on your own. It's pretty easy once you get what all the lines actually are.
My Great Grandmother and Grandmother were among the story tellers of my family. From as far back as I can remember until just after I turned twelve, I would listen closely to their wonder full stories of "Ancient Times," "Ancient Peoples and Stories of their childhood. Stories that not only entertained me but also taught me...

Great Grandmother was born and raised in a time when "Covered Wagons" were crossing this land. I grew up calling her stories the "Covered Wagon Stories of Great Grandmother." She was a first-hand witness to fading cultures and their replacement by someone else's "Civilization."

My Grandmother Anice and her twin Burnice, (Palokta), "Cricket" and "Grass Hopper, as well as her little brother my Uncle John were all born in Indian Territory, Oklahoma within and upon Choctaw lands. They were all my first Cultural teachers and they had both, wonderful and exciting stories of growing up on and around the Kiamichi River, (pro. Kia-Mish or Kia-mish-e), in Oklahoma / Choctaw Nation. Of living in Caney, Atoka, Rattan, Antlers, and Finley, most all of which are found along that River. Stories of a "Circuit Preacher" who was a relative and the "Threat of Missionary Boarding Schools" Indian children were being forced into to "Civilize and De-Heathenize," taking the Savage out of them...

We, my family, are descended from the Choctaw Nation. My great, great, Grandmother was Mary A. Clover, And my Choctaw bloodline descends from her, her daughter and granddaughters, to my Mother. My Great Uncle was Tobias (Ben) Frasier, one of the first "Code Talkers" of WWI. He used the Choctaw language to get important messages through Enemy lines to our Soldiers at the Front.

I
This was a practice that was so successful it was also used during WWII, using Primarily the Navajo (Diné), Cheyenne, Comanche and Ponca languages. (Though the World War One origin of the practice is rarely ever mentioned, My People originated it then.) All of which were never broken by the Enemy.

Our Choctaw Nation never fought against the American Flag or it's Peoples and Principles, only for them. A sad fact, in my opinion, considering all that this Great Nation has done to break and De-humanize the Choctaw and ALL other of our First Nation's Peoples...

Some of our stories come from the Legends and Histories of the tribes and Nations of the first Peoples, who believe that they were created to be the custodians and Caretakers of this Continent and everything on it...

Stories & Legends from a time when the children were taught lessons and Moral Tribal beliefs, through the Oral Traditions of the Ancients, the Story Tellers, and our families who were responsible for our early learning. With these stories comes the Ancient Traditional Beliefs that the Earth and all of creation are alive; that we are all related to everything else; that all the Animals are their own kind of People, the Four Leggeds, as are the Plants, the Standing ones. Wonderful Stories full of life and color, with lessons, interest and humor for all to share and learn from.

My Great Grand-mother began her journey to the Stars after nearly an entire century had passed before her eyes, and she personally witnessed devastating changes happening to the Peoples during her entire life time.

My Grandmother began her Journey in 1993, and in the Ancient Choctaw way, as well as on the Ancient Choctaw lands of Alabama, I Sang Her Songs the night of her funeral, in the hope and Prayer that these songs would help guide her spirit to find its way to the Hereafter. I Deeply LOVE my Grandmother...

My Aunt Maxiene, Nez Perce, Suquamish and Skokomish from Coleville Reservation in Washington State, who became my Aunt when I was six and she was sixteen. She also added to my knowledge and understanding of our mutual Cultures and Traditions throughout my growing years... A LOT.

After I grew up, I began visiting First Peoples of other Nations and Tribes on this Continent that some lovingly call "Turtle Island." Learning of and Sharing in our different and similar Traditional teachings. From which I learned that we are all Very Different, but that even though we are all different, we have mutual beliefs as well as similarities in our various traditions and Cultural ways of life.

II

viii
"NOT ALL INDIANS LIVED IN TEPEES AND CHASED THE BUFFALO" Apparently the non-Indian populace of this continent, and the rest of the World, were NOT aware of this simple fact. That Indians are as varied or even more varied than all the Europeans are. It's strange, but not too surprising to me. Although, on the European/Asian Continent ALL THEIR PEOPLE ARE NOT THE SAME EITHER. It would seem to me, using some degree of commonsense, that "they" could have used a minimal degree of logic to Surmise that the same might apply to the American Indian Populations as well... However, People are quick to judge and stereotype "Others."

Many more Stories, traditions, and Legends come from my Great Aunts and Uncles as well as many of the Tribal Friends along the Paths of my life.

The stories here-in are some of my favorite ones from my life. I have told these hundreds of times before, this is the first time writing these down for others to read some time in the unknowable future...

It is my hope and Prayer that you, the reader and hopefully your family will enjoy these at least half as much as I have...

I would suggest that the Adult reader first read these stories and determine the "Age Appropriateness" of them for their children / family. I LOVED living all these stories way back then, and still I love the Memories of them now, as much as the first times I told them and the delight with which they were listened to, by young and old alike. Therefore I have written these.

I Hope and Pray to one day be able to follow in the path of my elders, by their lead. So our Stories will continue to live on, and continue to be told for as long as there are lips to tell and ears to hear.

Truly, I was Very Lucky to have been born one of their Grand Children, and to be raised in the era that I was...

A bit of Brief Background information, indulge me here, it I'll help...

In the previous years of my young life, my mother and little brother and I were trapped, living on a poultry farm back east with our abductor in an area outside of Salisbury Maryland.

In 1959 I had witnessed my father being arrested by the cops. I was just six years old, and it had traumatized me to the point that I was terrified of them. And I knew that my Daddy had done nothing wrong, because I was there. My teenage uncle was to blame, not dad.

III

ix
The year before that, I had come down with Scarlet Fever and after being taken to the emergency room they injected me with Penicillin only to find out that I was allergic and immediately went into anaphylactic shock. Thereupon slipping into a coma, I was out for what I was told was eighteen days and awoke to find Mom and Grandma there with me in the hospital room. This also terrified me making me afraid of Doctors and hospitals at a very early age. So I was a rather frightened little boy for quite a while, fearing mostly people and particularly those in positions of authority, like cops and doctors to include nurses. Shortly after witnessing my fathers’ arrest, we were taken back east by a man who pretended to be a nice guy, until he had us. Then he took us back east and stuck us out on that poultry farm in the middle of no-place with no one around for miles. While there I was further traumatized and fiercely beaten by our captor on a regular basis, nearing daily. Two years later I managed to get a letter out to Mom’s folks, telling them all about our circumstances. And how often I was beaten and tortured, as well as what kind of torture I was given.

Then after my grandparents arranged our transport back home, we were finally reunited with my father. He was recently out of prison and not the man I had known anymore. No amount of begging, pleading or praying could make him turn back into my daddy whom I loved and missed for the nearly three years we had been held captive. And needless to say, my torture only continued, just in a little different way, at the hands of my dad and his parents. Though it was still traumatic-torture, but this time I had the mountains to turn to, and all of the life that was there became my redemption and savior, my solace and security. With my new companion at my side I felt safe for the first time in many years and I felt that I belonged there, safe in those mountains...

IV

x
Rez Dog... ; DISCLAIMER, [Protecting the innocent indeed.]

In the writing of this Manuscript, a degree of "Artistic License" was employed, admittedly a very small degree. Partially to help the many facets of this story work together in tandem as the individual segments of the same story. That being MY story and NO ONE ELSEs. This was necessary because I intend to also write stories about my Golden Eagle " Little Thunder", and Bob-cat " Bobbie," each of them their own books. Also, in an honest effort to cover my backside and deter from possible law suits regarding the various characters mentioned here-in. I assure you they all were very real as were their parts here-in. So I have indeed changed and or altered all of the names of, " EVERYONE" except my immediate family and my closest beloved friends among them, "Anita and Bimmey", and Mrs. Brown, who remain my extended family. They shall always be such, for they were always there for me when I needed friends, with-in a community, (Purposely un-named), that treated me less than kind or even respectful. Small towns can be very cruel at times. And one does not have to "do" anything at all...

All of the events and adventures written within the context of this story happened exactly as written, though their exact order or other small features may not be chronologically exact, and some of the dialog may not be exactly word for word. This I am afraid was unavoidable. I am now sixty years old and these events happened more than forty-five years in my past. From the time that I was ten through sixteen.

Although I have attempted to present everything as accurately as memory and self-survival will allow me to, though there certainly are those who’d attempt to capitalize by bringing suit against me because they do not like the way I’ve Represented them herein. Only they would actually know who they are and I think they should have thought about that back around forty five plus years ago.

The dialect and dialog is written as we spoke then, and I have added Lucida Calligraphy handwriting-italics where I am expressing a thought that came to mind as I wrote, and therefore I’m speaking to the reader. Calligraphy is also used in what I believe to be the important lead into this story, kind-of as though reading a letter.

The italicized Comic Sands font & in brackets, reflects me thinking or talking to myself back then. I hope it’s not too confusing, I felt it important to the story to differentiate them...

Please read on...

V

xi
A LONG TIME AGO a Greek philosopher named Aristotle once wrote, "Memory is the Scribe of the Soul." I totally agree!

And be that the case, this writing is the window to my soul and the doorway into my existence. Please, would you come in and visit for a while? Thank you...
Chapt. 1- The Rez Dog;  
"Lonesome Sam" ...

This is a story about my dog and I, while we were living together in the Mountains of Southern California. We lived there from the time I was nine to the weeks before I turned seventeen. Mom, my little brother Joey and I had just returned to California from a very traumatic few years back east in Salisbury, Maryland. And my Grandparents on the American Indian side were the ones who made that return possible. They then reunited us with my father. This story starts just a few months after my tenth birthday. Please, bear with the language and or grammar, I write in the way that I spoke at the time, and I believe that it is pertinent to this story. So read on and I hope you are at least somewhat entertained. All of the following actually happened the way it is written, and is therefore the truth...

~ Winter 1963-64 ~

After staying some time with Mom’s family in the sweet little town on California’s largest freshwater lake called Lakeport, in Northern California, (my Maternal Grandparent’s place near Rocky Point. ), Dad packed all of us up in Dad’s Corvair, and we moved over six hundred miles south, into the San Gabriel Mountains, high within the San Bernardino National Forest.

Our house was the only story and a half house on Evergreen road, and it was about thirty-two miles from the city of San Bernardino. The house was sitting at approximately six thousand and five hundred feet above sea level, and about a half mile from the Los Angeles county line.
The front door faced nearly due south, while the kitchen window and the back door faced north. The mountains all around us were much higher than that elevation where the house and the little town sat. Some were as much as ten thousand feet above sea level.

There were three ski lifts near by that were the financial backbone of the community. They were: Holiday Hill, Blue Ridge and Table Mountain. After working for a time as a chairlift operator at Holiday Hill, my father became the foreman of Blue Ridge ski lift, which was when I was about twelve. Living in the mountains was a magical, enchanting wonderland for me and my best friend my dog Lonesome, whom I often called Sam...

It had been a very cold hard winter, with several deep snows; around late February, I had heard that my Aunt Maxine was going up to her Reservation at Colville, Washington State, to visit her family. She is Nez Perce, Suquamish, and Skokomish Indian, born on that reservation in 1943 to the Cleveland family. Maxiene is her name and she is American Indian in every way including birth. She was ten years older than I was at that time, and she tried very hard to instill in me a sense of pride in "Who we Are".

We had been in these mountains for most of that first winter, and in the following spring of 1964 my aunt and uncle came to tell us of their planned trip north. There she had promised to bring a special surprise when she returned, and I was very excited to find out what it was. That is where I will pick up this story...
I had been praying from the mountaintops for a very long time, since I was nine and since the first time that I had climbed up to Yucca Ridge, (the ridge that was behind my house). I was lonely for a companion, and I had lost my closest friend. My pal and my dog companion "Danny Boy", another dog previously from a reservation, (many of my family are American Indian.) He had been taken away from me, through circumstances that I had no control over and could not change no matter how much I begged and pleaded. He was then, as far as I knew, dead somewhere back in Maryland on the chicken farm where we had to leave him not being able to take him on the Greyhound bus with us.

Now I was a ten-year-old lost little boy longing for the Creator to send me another companion that could help me fight off the feelings of being alone, and being rejected. Feelings of being somehow inadequate, a vial unacceptable creature- a father-less black sheep with no one to relate to or with.

These were feelings that were generated mostly from my paternal German Grandparents whom had no love in their hearts for me at all; they were my father's Parents, born German Aristocracy, of the Rhineland and socially above "Commoners."

Only nine months previous, my buddy Danny Boy, a dog that was given to me when I was six, and in another live, fulfilled that need in me. He defended and protected me, he consoled me when I was hurt, played with me when I was alone, and loved me like no other before him.

My heart ached and I felt a deep loss when I had to be separated from my only companion. He was very sick when we left from eating the dead chickens, and I couldn't do anything for him.
I did not know any other to whom I could appeal but the Creator. So from the ridges above and around my mountain home, I cried and prayed my young heart out. And I told absolutely NO ONE, I just prayed my heart out, often burning Sage, Tobacco, Cedar & wild choke cherry, while offering my blood and flesh as self-sacrifice for the gift of a companion.

Months later my Aunt Maxiene and Uncle Leon came up to visit with us. She was an American Indian from the Rez. at Colville Washington. They stayed the weekend with us, as she was teaching me some beadwork they were socializing with Mom and Dad doing adult things. Whatever that meant.

Together we played cards and board games, and she even told me and little brother Joey stories from her childhood, they were usually tribal stories of Fox and Coyote the trickster. Sometimes they were of a famous relative of hers or a tribal hero. But I especially loved them because they were her stories.

Just before she and Uncle Leon headed out she said she was goen’ up to her Reservation in Washington State to see her family. There she would visit, and when she’d come back she would bring a special surprise.

What I heard was, I would have a surprise that she was sure I would love, that we all would love, which was from her reservation.

In the front yard the following morning, as they were loading up their car, she called to us,

"Ricky, Joey, we will be going up to the Reservation soon. Your uncle and I have something to take care of while we’re there and when we come back we will bring you a surprise of something wonderful which you all will love."
"What will it be Aunt Maxiene, that it must come from the rez?" I asked.

"Well, if I told you then it wouldn't be a surprise would it? But I can tell you that it is a gift of love that the entire family will love."

"Well then, if it's a gift of love, Joey questioned, why can't you just tell us what it is? We'd love it even then, honest."

"Because it is supposed to be a surprise boys, now how much of a surprise would it be if I told you what it is before we got it?"

"Alright, I get it, but what if we guess, would you tell us then?"

"No boys, but I will give you one more clue and that's all. This surprise is also an "Indian thing" which can only come from the rez. And you all are sure to love it."

After a short pause, while Joey and I made close eye contact, she continued,

"We will be away for only a few weeks and then you will see, this is exactly what all of you will love together, as a family. Be patient and you will soon see."

"But couldn't we guess it?" asked Joey in earnest.

"You could, but I wouldn't tell because that would ruin the surprise, so just be Patient Joey, in time you will see, and it will be worth the wait."
And that was it. Then she and Uncle Leon were off, down the mountain to the flatlands and the city.

Every day she was gone, I couldn't help but wonder and then try to guess.

"Whatever could this wonderful surprise be? Why did she have to get it from her Rez? And How an 'Indian Thing' could be something that even Dad would love, Dad is not Indian an' the only thing-Indian I think he loves is mom? Knowing it comes from the Rez, isn't much help. Lots of things can be found on a reservation."

I pondered all of her words for clues or hints, and I became frustrated.

"She actually gave us three clues, one - it is an Indian thing, two - it must come from the rez, and three - we will ALL love it. What the heck can it be?"

How many Indian things could be found on an Indian Reservation? well hell, it's an Indian Rez. So everything there is something Indian also. Why did she have to make it so hard to figure out?"

The list seemed endless. I thought of, "Buffalo skins, No, bear skins, elk and moose. Not that, Bows and arrows, some special beadwork, moccasins, snowshoes, ponies, maybe eagle feathers, can't be that either. But none of any of these things were of any interest to my Dad." So they all have to be ruled out, rejected.

"Certainly Dad would NOT be interested in anything that I would love from her reservation." I told myself, through my frustrated pondering.
"I know that Joey would love all-most anything I would, but prob'ly not everything. And Mom, she loves flowers, kitties, kids, babies, birdies, knittin', cookin' and lots of other stuff. Ponderin' on and on, is hopeless, I am getting lost in all of the possibilities." I thought to myself in total frustration.

Many times thereafter I would fall asleep while pondering all the many things possible, in my bed at bedtime, and before dinner, even in the early mornings while getting ready for school. It was a puzzle I just couldn't figure out.

Days seemed like weeks and weeks like months. It was almost agonizing, enduring the days and weeks that they were away. I was tormenting myself with all of the possibilities, but having to rule out each one no sooner than I thought of another and then ruled that one out as well.

Then, in the late springtime, just before school let out for summer. Joey and I were walking back home from school when he grabbed my shoulder and said,

"Hay Ricky, look there's uncle Leon's car. Up there in our drive way."

Looking further up the hill to our driveway I replied, "Sure as heck is! They must have came up the road when we were in class. Lets hurry an get there Joey, remember the surprise?"

Briefly looking at each other, we smiled wide, and then we both started running up the hill that our road was on and when we finally got home we both shouted in unison to her,

"You're back! I'm so happy you're finally here. I missed you so much." giving her as big a hug as I was able to.
They were all out in the front yard when we ran to greet her. She knelt down to embrace me and Joey:

"Wow, you missed me that much! Well I missed you to, Ricky an' Joey. Come in the house, there's someone I want you to meet."

"There's someone?" I thought to myself, "She wasn't pregnant when she left, so she couldn't have a baby. She's still with my Uncle, so it couldn't be some other man. Who the heck could it be? Maybe some of her family from the Rez.?”

They must have all come outside to greet Joey and I as we got back from school, because it was apparent that they had been in the house for some time. I could tell that as we reached the door, their luggage was still stacked by the door just inside to the right. Stacked up next to the bathroom door.

I went into the house with little brother Joey right next to me. Then Mom turned around to face us and said,

"Look here Ricky and Joey; isn't he just the cutest puppy ever?"

He was beautiful, with long fluffy hair, black tipped fur on his brown and rust red coat, wolf like golden brown eyes and face markings. Inside his mouth was dark bluish grey. His tongue was gray blue with small splotches of pink here and there. His lips were shiny black as were his gums. They were darker than his big black wet nose. His tail curled in a fluffy half circle like a fan, his huge brown feet had thick pads and sharp retractable claws with
webbed toes and he had big brown and golden eyes. (He was a mixed blood Black Tongue Kerr Dog and Wolf.)

( I never thought of a dog, though sometimes now I wonder why that was. It just didn't come to mind.)

Mom handed the fat fluffy ball of fur to me saying, "Here Ricky, you can hold him for a while."

I fell in love instantly, head over heels. "What a wonderful surprise. Thank you so much Aunt Maxiene, I love him. He's beautiful."

As I hugged and gently squeezed him, he licked me all over my face. Turning him over in my arms to cradle him, I patted his head and scratched behind his ear. His little left foot started pumping up and down as though he was working on a mean itch. We all laughed, and I passed him over to my brother Joey, who was smiling and eager with anticipation.

"Oh- he's so big an' fat, he's heavy! I love him too!" Joey exclaimed.

Dad got up from his chair, grabbing his new Polaroid automatic camera and he handed it to Mom. "Here Dot, let's take the puppy outside and we'll take some pictures."

"Okay, let's get one with all of us holding him honey." Mom suggested.

"Let me take the puppy Joey," Dad requested as he headed toward the door.

Stepping outside on the front walkway, facing toward the house, we each had a picture taken while holding him. [The only photo that survived until today is the one of Dad holding Lonesome]
Aunt Maxiene knelt beside me and said, "Ricky, You will need to take care of him, walk him, comb him, feed him and of course play with him. Never be mean or violent with him and he will love you his entire life." Aunt Maxiene instructed, as she went on,

"He's a Rez Dog, from Colville, and like most Rez dogs he can be wild, but let him be that, he is a dog but he is also a Wolf. His father's mother was a Timber Wolf. So trust his instincts, he will know nature and you can learn from him, as you both grow-up together." She added.

(Boy was she ever right!)

All during the picture shooting I thought, "How did she know? How could she have guessed? I didn't tell her or anyone else. Surely there is a God up there who does care. Even if you can't see him, he's there and listening"

After the photo shoot, Dad turned toward Aunt Maxiene and Uncle Leon and said, “We need to go back inside. Mother has made a big meal for all of us.”

Then he took the Polaroid camera and led the parade into the house.

[That was the beginning of a wonderful friendship that lasted until Lonesome passed on, in 1975. He lived eleven, almost twelve years, but there were many great adventures in those years and “I” learned a lot more than one could imagine from that Rez Dog...]

Dad named him “Lonesome," because for the first month or so the puppy whined and whimpered for his family all night, whom I am sure he missed a lot. Mom added SAM, making his entire name “Lonesome Sam.” Dad also declared Lonesome the Family dog. Best of all, we were in the mountains, not much
different than those where he came from. On those occasions when she left for her visits to the Rez, my heart always went with her. Though this time she was gone only around six weeks, it seemed like she was gone forever. The time dragged on, day after day. Every day I would pray from high up in the mountains for her safety, happiness and safe return.

In addition, Lonesome Sam loved the mountains every bit as much as I did. While he was a Puppy, Lonesome always slept, ate and played with Joey and I every day and night. While we were still little enough to share the same bed, Lonesome would sleep with both of us keeping us warm through the coldest winters. As we grew so big that sharing the same bed was no longer an option, Lonesome would take turns in each of our beds, getting up in the night to laydown in another bed. In that way, he took care of both of us the best way he could.

My Aunt and I had a Wonderful almost Magic relationship, and I loved her so very much, for her kindness and sense of identity, that I would do anything she asked. In truth, I was quite taken with her from the very beginning. She married into my family when I was six, taking my Mother's brother as her husband.

Other than my Mother and Grandmother, Aunt Maxiene was the only one outside of my immediate family who really cared that I WAS also Indian, even if only "Part Indian." And that my being American Indian was not a thing of shame, but rather something I should be very proud of. And I very soon was quite proud of my heritage.

She would always remind me that I should be proud of all my Indian Blood, with her soft and confirming comments like:
"Because we belong here Ricky, we are the First Real Americans. And we were created to take care of this land. No one but Indians can truthfully say that. Always remember this, you are a part of all of that ancient history, and you belong here. Know who you are, Ricky." She would say with her bright eyes smiling down at me. Her reassurances were the medicine that saved my young heart from the torment of my hateful German grandparents, and town's people who knew nothing anyway.

These words she always spoke with a soft tenderness in her voice, with love and deep concern, explaining from her heart to mine. And I loved hearing them as much as I loved her for being who she was, my Aunt. Who always gave me the sense of Pride and Value of my own identity. She IS my Aunt Maxiene, a Nez Perce, Suquamish Indian from the Reservation at Colville Washington.

On those occasions when she left for her visits to the Rez, my heart always went with her. And she never failed to bring Joey and I something special whether an Indian game or fruit from up there, it was always something good.

Though this time she was gone only a couple of weeks, it seemed like she was gone forever. The time dragged on, day after day. Every day I would pray from high up in the mountains for her safety, happiness and safe return.

While Lonesome was a Puppy we taught him how to climb the stairs to our bedroom by putting a doggie treat on every step, then climbing to the top and calling and or coaxing him up, one step at a time. It took a short while but he caught on quickly, and soon he was literally flying up and down those steps at a full run.
Very early on Lonesome showed us that he was not just some ordinary
dog, he had a personality and even facial expressions with which he could mimic
our own. He could frown, and look very sad, he could look fierce and angry, and
he could even manage various forms of a smile.

Sometimes he'd smile with his entire face I'd call it a Toothy grin, and
he could form a little smile just showing his front teeth, but the one I liked the
most was his casual smile where-in he'd curl up the corners of his mouth at his lip
tine and they'd turn upward like a humans' smile.

It was so cute that when coupled with his ears raised and pulled back a
little it looked like he was smiling without showing any of his teeth, but still using
his entire face. Then there was the one where he'd smile and turn his head
slightly to one side or the other, as If to say " What ?". I got that one often
when we were alone together, up in the mountains ; I think it was because I was
usually hiking so slowly.

Sometimes Joey and I would take turns covering ourselves with a
blanket on our beds or out in the front yard, and then teasing Lonesome into
attacking the monster under the cover, but he usually got the idea to pull the
cover off and commence to tear it up. The proverbial Blanket monster sometimes
got ripped to shreds. Though it was a lot of fun, Mom was not usually very happy
with the end result...

Joey and I would also take turns taking him on walks around the block or
into town and back. Our town was about four blocks down the hill, and one block
beyond our school. Sometimes Mom would have us pick up something from the
little market or the Post office for her. And we'd take Lonesome with us just for
fun, as well as to get him to be more familiar with our neighborhood. That first
summer was our bonding period, also when we all started to get comfortable with
the mountains around us, and I was teaching him in both Indian and English so he
would understand my commands while others didn't.

Although Joey was never able to get as comfortable out there in those
mountains as I was. I found out real fast that Lonesome loved running around
the mountains with me, so we started going up a lot, rather than down, or into
town. We had many delightful adventures up there together...

Starting when I was ten, more exactly the year that I turned
eleven, 1964. (We believe that Lonesome Sam was born near the first
week of March, 1964 in the year I turned eleven.)

My Aunt Maxiene who came to visit us at our home in, the San Gabriel
Mountains, often was an additional source of the wealth of knowledge I gained
about our heritage. Occasionally I would even go down into the valley to spend
the weekends with her and my Uncle during the summer and on occasional
holidays, learning the ways of her people. (Our people)

When I was ten and Lonesome was still quite young, on the weekend I
would sometimes sneak downstairs in the very early twilight of morning after
dad gone to work and...

"Hey Sam, Amp'ah banah' che ?, you want to eat ?, have a snack ?, it's
early enough that we won't get caught, common buddy. Shush we gotta' be real
quiet." I whispered very softly while Mom and Joey were still sound asleep.
“Dad’s gone to work an’ everyone’s still asleep, this is the perfect time Sam.”

Lonesome, while shaking his entire body with his tail, let out a soft woof in agreement. He began to prance over the surface of my bed, as he was certainly anticipating some new kind of play. Sam was always eager and ready to play, and learn a new game.

Very quietly I whispered, “Okay, calm down buddy. I got to find my slippers first, that floor is bound to be very cold.”

After I put the slippers on my warm and toasty feet, I grabbed Sam cradling him in my embrace as we headed for the top of the stairs.

“S-such’, we gotta’ be real quiet on these steps buddy.” I whispered as we got to the precipice first step.
Taking him quietly down the steep stairs we'd tip toe into the kitchen around the corner. There I'd pull a chair up to the fridge climb up and open the freezer to dig deep, way into the back for the tub of ice-cream which was usually there. Quickly I'd grab the ice cream from far back in the freezer, climb down while grabbing a wooden spoon from the little chef ceramic spoon holder on the stove and take it into the living room to share with Lonesome, while he was hot on my back side just knowing that I had something delightful he was certain to get some of...

"Ba-ne'-lee- Sit ! Let's sit here and turn cartoons on the T.V., they should start soon. Ah its' Neapolitan Sam, we like that cause there's three kinds. Here Lonesome, you get first bite." I whispered as I removed the lid, dug into the freezing delight with a wooden spoon and cut a roll from across all three flavors.

With his tail wagging like goose wings taking off for flight I would roll a nice long scoop right down the middle, from all three flavors at once then he'd nearly grab the wooden spoon out of my hand taking the freezing sweet delight of curled color bands off of the spoon as I brought it down to his nose...

"Hey Salaha-hosh I, slow down Lonesome, we aren't gone' anyplace. Just one bite at a time, and leave me the spoon, Okay ? Now it's my turn." I happily explained as I scooped up another frozen sweet tri-flavored roll for myself, wistfully licking the roll off the spoon.

A swift chill swam through my warm body as the freezing treat dissolved on my hot eagerly awaiting tongue. With a quick jolt up, Sam was right back on my lap sniffing and licking the empty spoon for another hopeful bite.
"Okay, you'll get another! Just hold on. I get to have some too!"

Nearly climbing all fours into my lap, Lonesome charged. He eagerly pulled the full roll of ice cream off the spoon, almost before I could get it out of the container. Many times I had to pull back and calm him down before he got so excited he'd try to grab the whole thing. He loved ice cream. We both had a very good time in those very early mornings before the entire house was awake.

We would usually sit and enjoy at least three scoops apiece while we watched cartoons together. Most often, like this time, it was Neapolitan with its' three sweet delightful flavors but sometimes it was dad's favorite, pistachio. I rarely ever got into trouble for sharing with him, only got caught just once that I remember.

I knew that if we were to eat most or all of it we'd be in real trouble. So even as hard as it was to do, I would stop at under a quarter of the contents then put it back before it melted. Then we'd sit together on the couch and I'd embrace him close while watching cartoons until mom got up or until we decided to go outside and play in the yard, which was usually his first choice anyway...

Way up in the mountains where we lived there were tall ponderosa pine and Douglas fir trees all around us, spring and warm summer breezes blowing and surrounded by miles of open wilderness. Where just me and my best friend, my little Buddy, my dog "Lonesome Sam" lived the life of innocent freedom.

We would often go hiking through the mountains together and I'd take the pocket knife grandpa gave me in case I needed to cut or carve something.
Once we got out into the high mountain forests, Lonesome did not need to be chained. So as we climbed, I would let him run loose and free, (which he loved). If on the rare occasion I had his chain with me or his leash, I'd hang it from a tree that I would be sure to pass by on the way back home. There it would sit undisturbed until I could retrieve it. But that was not very often, we were usually loose and free of any restraints, the both of us.

I especially loved running around the Mountains with Lonesome Sam, who had an almost uncanny way of finding the new born animals in and around our massive, mountainous area. Together we would sneak-up on deer, bear, coyotes, foxes, skunks, raccoons, rabbits and squirrels just to sit and watch them bring out their little ones for a day in the sun or a short stroll.

We saw signs and trail markings of the cat family, bobcats, and cougars, but with one exception, we never really saw them or their dens, not during the time they were raising their young anyway. Even though there were always fresh tracks and scat, (Poop) left up on the ridges from them. I could tell that there were at least one mated pair of cougar and several bobcats in the immediate area. Also a few bears some with cubs.

Lonesome and I both also paid close attention to the birds, all of them. From the littlest sparrows and chickadees to the largest Hawks and Eagles, we had them all. (Lonesome loved to chase them if he could get close enough, and to scatter all of the birds that flocked together.)

During my first real-hike in the mountains with Lonesome, was when he was just about six months old, (I was still ten,) and out there in the fall season is where I learned that he loved to chase things. Chasing squirrels around and up
trees; flushing, and chasing large coveys of quail or any other birds quickly became his favorites.

Lonesome would chase squirrels all over even up into the trees and if he could climb them for any distance he would. He was dead-set on catching one but it took him a very long time to actually do it. He also absolutely loved hopping and bounding in the snow, no matter how deep it was. That day was a beautiful day to take a hike, so I thought he’d like to join me...

"Let’s go for a hike Lonesome, we’ll go upon the Ponderosa hill." I said as he looked up wagging his tail and giving out an affirmative grunt like soft-bark under his breath.

The first times when I did take his chain up with me, I’d wrapped it around my shoulder as we headed to the Ridge from my front yard. Sometimes there was about a foot of snow, fresh fall that was crisp cold and powdery and Lonesome loved to run through it.

This particular time I learned that snow could actually cut the skin and make it bled. I’d never experienced sharp snows before. We had a new crisp snowfall on a few layers of previous sun exposed snow accumulation. Each layer had a crisp crust of ice on it and they were layered up as a sugar wafer cookie. Very early in the morning I quietly grabbed Sam with his chain and we took off for the hills.

Then as we got out of sight of the house I took him off of the chain and let him run,

"Okay Boy, run your hardest, but don’t go too far!" I stated as I wrapped the rest of the chain around my shoulder, while looking for a good tree-
hook. At the time we were hiking in almost a foot of snow while the squirrels were jumping and bounding through the inches of snow still burying their acorns, and when he saw them he was always off like a shot.

"Salaha-hosh Sam, Hay slow down!" I hollered, as I struggled to catch up with him, huffing and breathing hard, clouds of warm mist following behind me as I ran.

"Where do you think you're goen? There's nothing but mountains and squirrels all around here." I explained.

"Minte, Kanowah ittim! Common' Lonesome walk close with me, or we will have to go back." I demanded, in a little Choctaw and English, with as much sternness as a ten year old could muster.

Walking and sometimes slipping and sliding in the snow, as it was usually powder and sometimes layered on hard pack in places, which made the climbing a slow venture at best. Breaking through the layers of crust here and there, foot in a hole tripping as I brought my forward momentum to a stop.

But it was still a lot of fun; when Lonesome would see a rabbit or squirrel he'd dart off after it. Plowing through the snows like a steam train then circling the trees where the squirrel had gone up, or digging through the snow where the rabbit had disappeared into a hole under a shrub.

These were the adventures that bonded us to that area and each-other, just for fun. Though we had no idea of the real adventure's yet to come for us. Because he and I were still quite young.

This time we'd hiked up for over an hour and as the snows began to get deeper while we climbed, I started to get very cold. Then looking down at his
feet prints, noticing for the very first time pink snow. I realized that Lonesome's feet were starting to bleed from the ice and rough layers that he was trudging through.

The dark pink stains where he'd walked or ran could only have been his blood. I stopped him and examined his paws; they were scratched, cut and bleeding in the soft places between his toes and across the pads so I knew it was time to get back.

"Common' Sam, we got to get you back so Mom can patch up your feet and we can get warm again. Wasn't that lots of fun? We'll have to go out some more after your feet get better." Wagging his tail as though he heard every word and barking like he wanted to continue, I had to put the chain back on so he would actually go home with me, his feet seemed to be the least of his concerns.

"Wow boy, you really love these mountains, don't you?" I said in childlike surprise, "We'll go out real soon Okay? First we gotta' get you fixed up, Mom'll know what to do she fixes me up all the time!"

Then we headed back. Within less than an hour we were home and upon seeing Sam's bleeding feet Mom got some salve from the cabinet, warmed it up while mixing it with Vaseline and tenderly rubbed some of the warmed Vaseline salve into the pads of his feet.

"Here ya go Buddy, this aughta' help your feet feel better." She calmly said while rubbing the soothing mixture in into his pads and between his toes.

Lonesome seemed to like it cause' he'd plopped down and closed his eyes while she rubbed. Really getting into the ecstatic of the foot rub, soaking it up.
"Ricky, next time you go out into the icy snow with your dog, make sure not to be out there so long. His feet aren't protected like ours from wearing shoes. So you help him to keep his feet in good shape, and remember he isn't wearing any shoes. Alright?" Mom instructed tenderly but firm.

"Yes Mom, I don't know why I didn't think of that before, sorry. I'll remember, Promise." I replied, feeling some degree of guilt for overlooking my buddy's needs.

Every time thereafter when we were out running the mountains we were more careful and Lonesome clearly showed me how much he loved the area. He was quite a jumper. He'd even grab up a mouth full of snow as he'd bound or steam-shovel his way through it.

The fall of 1965 Lonesome and I also ran around the high desert mountains in my back yard, at "Yucca Ridge." I had recently started spending nights and occasional weekends in the mountains, which were now my personal beloved sanctuary. All through the winter and through my eleventh birthday, I'd hike out in the mountains a lot. Sometimes with my dog and other times alone, just Nature and me. There, I feel free, at home and happy. I can sneak up on almost anything out there, at eleven years old, when most kids are still afraid of the dark. I am closely watching nature, and living out among the splendor that our Creator made for us to take care of. Even sleeping up in the trees, wrapped up in a warm blanket and watching the forest come alive as the sun started lighting up the sky.

Joey and I had been taking turns at taking Lonesome for walks, though sometimes we'd all three go together. That was not a constant routine. This particular time the dog and I were going to town on an errand for Mom.
Lonesome was about eight months and it was just after the Halloween festival.

On the way, Lonesome seemed eager to explore at every turn. Energetic Puppy that he was, he loved traipsing off through the snow. So I had a bit of difficulty keeping him focused on going to town and not off on another adventure.

We had just passed my sisters and paternal grandparents place on Apple Avenue, when I had noticed a pair of very big birds flying toward the highest ridge on the northeastern side of the town. Looking down at my dog, I saw that he had caught eye of them as well.

"Wow, that looks like eagles Lonesome, there headed toward the ridge on the other side of town." I said as I gazed upward.

Lonesome looked up at me when he heard me say his name, tail wagging and smiling with an expression that looked to me as though he might be saying,

"Let's go catch them, can we, let's go."

"Kia, No," I said, "We can't go up there yet. Ta-maha eyah, Achufa! We got to go to town first. But we can watch for them."

Several times, while in our little mountain town, we saw the birds hovering and soaring on the wind as we went from shop to shop. I had to tie Lonesome up on a handrail or nearby tree while I went into the stores. Every time I came out, I caught him watching those enormous birds. Once he was even barking and jumping like he wanted loose to chase them.

"Hey, hey, calm down Sam!!" I demanded as I came to untie him.

"There'll be plenty of time for us to hike up there later. We gotta get this stuff home for Mom. Then we can hike around, Okay?"

Panting with his tongue hanging out and tail wagging like gangbusters, Lonesome seemed in a hurry to get out of town. While walking the mile and a
half back home, I'd talk to him about our plans for the next hike and assuring
him.

"It's alright boy, I'm sure that Mom'll let us go off and about real soon.
Okay?" Upon arrival, I dropped off the shopping and hollered back to Mom. She
was out back with the laundry.

"Were back Mom, can I take Lonesome out in the hills for a while?"
"Sure Ricky, just don't go very far and be back in time for lunch, got it?"

"Thanks Mom, back later!" I shouted as the dog and I headed out the
door and off to the area of Yucca Ridge...

[This is the first area that I chose to pray and give
offerings to the Creator. It seemed to be nearer somehow, closer to
God. And many times I could be found up there crying my young
heart out; not knowing what I could do or how I could change
the way things were becoming at my home.

Sometimes I had Lonesome with me but most of the time; I
was alone. I often felt alone in the world, even in my father's
house. And among my German relatives I was definitely
unwanted, un-accepted and virtually disowned. Though, I had
done absolutely nothing to them to deserve being treated that
way. If it were not for having my dog, my companion, I don't
know what I would have done during those distraught times.]

26
When he was free Lonesome loved to run, jumping and hopping, rolling and playing. But mostly he loved being in the mountains with his boy, (me) at his side. No matter what time of the year it was, through all the seasons including the snows, which we both loved. He loved to run free through the wilderness as I followed, rarely would he get so far ahead of me that I couldn't see him.

But the few times that he did, all I had to do was whistle, make an animal call or call his name. No matter what sound I made, he knew it was me, and he'd show up in a few seconds. With an expression that looked like he might be saying,

"What, am I going too fast for you? Hurry up slow poke!" With his head held high and tail straight up wagging fast short sweeps.

Then we'd continue on the journey to where-ever. Because of what my Aunt Maxiene told me, about learning from my Rez Dog, I never made a lot of noise in the Forest, knowing that if I was quiet and watched Lonesome, I would learn a lot more.

Also when I would whistle for him I would use a bird call, or imitate the call of a crow or raven. Lonesome always seemed to know it was me, and upon his return I followed as my Dog led the way, ALWAYS. Lonesome had a variety of Tells', within his body language that would TELL me how he was feeling or basically what he wanted.

One of my favorites " Tells" was this one with his body language and wagging his tail, it was the proverbial signal flag of communication. Held parallel with his body and slowly wagging from side to side was his inquisitive wag. He'd
use this one while checking out another dog, particularly a female, or examining the scent on the side of a tree or shrub and the like.

Another was held high with the curving frocks spread like a fan, wagging in very short swift movements. This meant that he was dominant and ready to back it up, just waiting for any sign of challenge.

Rarely did he ever tuck his tail, I only saw him do that a few times in my life. Usually when dad was mad at him for something, and once in a fight.

My favorite was the happy wags, there were two prominent versions, those being the rapid wag from side to side, head up and ears back, ready to receive any perceived treat or something special.

The other was a full body wag, which involved the previous wag with more emphasis on the movement of the upright curled Flag. Literally swinging his body’s backbone side to side and often smiling displaying his shining white teeth, sometimes even accompanied by his light "Woof" vocalization.

This always meant that he was particularly happy, to very excited, about whatever he was experiencing, or about to experience. He’d even prance back and forth side to side on his front legs, kinda’ like a little boy who had to pee, expressing his excitement and or willingness to go.

I got this one a lot, when we were talking about taking a hike, discussing which area he wanted to go to or what ridge he showed the most excitement for climbing. Then we’d go there. I talked with him regularly every day, perceived the meanings in his barks, grunts and other body signs in response to my inquires, and then following suit, we would do whatever he showed the most interest in.
Within the first two years we became quite astute in this form of communication, as well as his various vocalisms, and he had quite a vocabulary with clear indications to me of his meanings. Our communication skills improved over the years to include sign language as well as my Indian language, but I'll explain that later. In the chapter explaining how we learned from each other.

By the time I was twelve, as we hiked together we were usually side by side or he took a three or four pace lead from me as I followed. When Lonesome stopped, we both stopped. When Lonesome crawled on his belly, so did I. This is how almost all of our hikes went, every place we went in those mountains anyway.

I had also been struggling with things that teachers and the kids at school were saying about the animals and nature. I could not understand how anyone could even think that animals didn’t have feelings. That they couldn’t feel things like we do, it made absolutely no common sense to me what-so-ever.

All my life I had been taught that the animals are their own kind of people and they have feelings and senses far greater than our own, that they can see into the other world, the spirit world. I knew that my dog and cats could feel, I had no doubt that they knew pain, they knew joy and happiness, they also knew sadness, so how could anyone believe that animals were incapable of feelings?

This absurdity that was actually believed by non Indian people bothered me for many years, it seemed to help them make monsters of my animal cousins. For which I never could understand.
It felt to me like I knew the world and all of nature in far differing ways than the kids or the people in my little town. Ways that made them afraid of what I saw as our Creator's most magnificent of creations, I often wondered if all of the non-Indian people felt the same way about our cousins the animal people and nature.

Sometimes the kids in school would tease me about believing that animals can feel or that they have souls and go to the hereafter, they called me stupid for believing such silly things. So I struggled with all of that for many years.

There were only a very few people who understood how I believed, outside of my Indian family, among them were my friends, Mrs. Brown as well as Anita and her son Bimmey.

I tried many times to get some of the friends I had from school to enter the forests and see the life there the way that I see it.

That was to no avail, almost everyone turned out to be afraid of the forests and all of the animals, as if nature was the enemy. To this very day I can't understand why so many people are frightened of the world around them, not understanding that we were created to be their Caretaker's. I may never understand this...

I was eleven years old when my German relatives [Paternal Grand-Parents] forever banned me from their house and whatever their idea of what a family was, and I was totally crushed.
Nothing I could do would ever change their loathing and disowning of me. Believe me, I tried as hard as I could to win their approval, but it only made things worse. That was a very harsh reality for one so very young.

All of the details I will not get into here, because this is not the story of my life’s experiences, or of the futility of changing another’s mind of anything, but rather the story of my dog and me.

I never did anything to the German side of my family, now I believe that they never actually accepted me in the first place. They were just looking for some excuse to disown me and reject me from their world.

This they chose to do when I was just a confused little boy at eleven, much too young to even begin to understand.

How can people be so cruel, particularly those whom are supposed to be your loving family? Just after I turned twelve I quit trying to win them over, and resigned myself to the reality that they hated me for reasons I would never know, and that was that.

Today, I firmly believe that they wanted my father to marry another, other than my mother, that when he married her they believed he had married below his “Station” in life.

When I was born I was the only child my parents had given birth to that actually looked like both parents and one of their kids. Matter of fact all of my siblings were pale skinned and red headed, quite unlike my parents who both had dark complexion and were dark haired, like me.

This was a thing that I never understood as well. Particularly while an adolescent, this weighed heavy on my young heart.
"How could my German relatives even think that I was not the child of their son, when I looked so much like him?"

But I kept all of that to myself, and I only prayed about it from the mountaintops. This is as brief of an explanation as is warranted for this story, only adding some further reason for my seeking out and turning to the wild, and all of nature.

I believe this is the reason that it became my sanctuary, my solace from all of the agony of the un-acceptance from my blood kin and the town in which we resided.

One could say that I was driven there by the feelings of unworthiness, wrought upon me by those whom I thought were supposed to love and protect me, but refused to...
CHAPT. 2 - First Summer hike.

On our first real long forest summer hike together, we had been hiking up a firebreak road not far from our house down in the apple orchard. At about half way up the pine-forested mountain, the area I called Ponderosa Ridge, we pass a sharp right turn where there are large grey stones standing out on their own just beyond the outer edge of the turn, "Look out rocks". I used to like to look down upon the valley on the "Apple Orchard" side of the town from there.

(That's where my house was, on Evergreen rd, in the orchard on the western side of the valley our town was cradled in.)

From there all the houses looked like they were about half the size of Dice and the people were about the size of little ants. There after I used to sit up there often, thinking about where I was going to go from there, or what I wanted to do. Whether it was to go hunting or up the trail and to the left over to the ledge of the Mud slide, or even further up the ridge and turning right toward the ridge where the Ski Lifts' of Holiday Hill and beyond to where Blue Ridge was.

From that ridge in many places, looking eastward I could clearly see the Mojave Desert way off in the distance as far as I could see, and looking to the west on a clear day I could see the Pacific Ocean and the Santa Catalina islands. Often the Los Angeles area was hidden under a thick cloud of "Smog" unless the famous "Santa Anna" winds had been blowing, then all that Smog would have been blown out to Sea and the Los Angeles area was visible. But either way the view from way up there was always spectacular.
(I built my first log cabin up there with a hatchet and bow saw when I was almost thirteen, I often wonder if it's still there or rotted away by now.) This particular time I was eleven, Lonesome and I were hiking together. We were hiking for quite a long time, and I was beginning to get tired because I was not quite used to hiking way up in the thin mountain air.

On this very first Deep Forest hike, in Mid-September of 1965 when I was tiring, we sat to rest along the trail, and something caught Sam's attention. Starting out just before sunrise, we had been hiking for a few hours, when Lonesome stopped, motionless as he gazed up the canyon. Like a bird dog pointing out perspective hidden birds, he stood, still, focused on the upper side of the canyon before us. Then he sat down with his nose in the air, sniffing as the breeze came down the canyon in front of us. I knew that he was smelling and seeing something. But I didn't know what it was, and at first I couldn't see anything in particular except the very canyon above us.

So I sat down with my dog, facing the canyon just like he was. As I smelled the air all around like my dog was doing. I could smell the pine trees that were all around us, and the light almost faint smell of the cedar trees from somewhere up the canyon. The dust and dry dirt from the path I was on and the scent of my dog were all that I could readily identify. I could not tell what it was that Lonesome was smelling or seeing. As I started to stand up, he grabbed my shirttail with his teeth, which was enough to sit me back down. Then Lonesome nudged me with his cold wet nose, as he looked back up the canyon, like as-if to say,

"Look, can't you see it? Look closer, watch you'll see it!"
At eleven years old, I knew there was definitely something up there, which only Lonesome could see. Quietly I sat, and I looked even harder. Then after about fifteen or twenty minutes, something slightly moved. Way Up there near the ridge, something BIG moved.

As I shaded my eyes with both hands and looked intently at that one spot, it moved again. At the ridges very crest, I stared intently. Fixing my gaze on the distant spot next to the bushes just at the ridge, to get a clearer view.

Very slowly, something that was almost the same color as the ground moved once more, in just short and slight movements. It stopped and turned its head down toward the canyon floor. And then I could see that it was a "Huge Mule Deer Buck" (Esse hoh-cheeto) a black tipped tail, with a large beautiful set of grayish colored wide spread antlers. He was about eighty yards up and MAGNIFICENT to behold.

"Wow Sam, Esse ho-cheeto, Big Deer, he's huge! Apisa lee, I can see him now very clearly. My God he's beautiful. How can anyone kill something so beautiful and call it Sport?" I questioned, with all the sincerity of my young heart.

"I wonder why he's way up there, not doin' anything? Let's see what he does shall we Sam?" I suggested.

We both sat there and watched until the Great Buck slowly disappeared behind a big scrub-oak bush precariously perched on the ridges edge. Then as I started to stand up again, Lonesome gently grabbed me by the hand with his teeth, as if to say, "Come with me." And so I did.
“Okay Lonesome, I get it. You want me to follow you. Alright I'm goen, you can let go now.” I said as we started to jog further up the trail.

We ran for nearly the length of a football field, on a firebreak road following horizontally along the slope of the ridge, keeping the same nearly level path as we came around the knoll that was at the base of that canyon's ridge.

Then Lonesome stopped and sat down looking up again as he let me catch up, panting and breathing hard.

I did not know it yet, because this was the very first time, but Lonesome was about to bring us both closer to a wild buck than either of us had ever been before...

"What's the hurry? Wait-up boy! That deer was wonderful, I wonder if there are more up here. What do you think Lonesome? Think he's got some girlfriends up here?" I pondered as I sat down next to my dog and started petting him. There I softly talked to my panting pal,

"You think he has a girlfriend or two up here, or maybe an entire family on this hill? Ya' think he could be out on the prowl an' lookin' for his girl, couldn't he be?"

Lonesome sat there still panting and he licked gobs of slobber over my face, his tail was thumping the dirt behind us, just enough to raise the dust.

(We also took these kind of breaks' when we were tracking; it taught me to always be slow and careful in the mountains, paying close attention to all of the surroundings.)
"Cut that out, it’s yecky. Ki’yah Sam, Stop it!" I ordered as I wiped my arm across my very wet face. He waited until I had completely wiped off and hit me again with a fast short lick, that said… "Sorry buddy."

"Okay, that’s enough!" I demanded as I quickly wiped again and directed our attention back to the hill.

"How long do you want to set here Sam?" I questioned as we just sat there. Sam merely laid down on his belly with his upper torso resting on his elbows, as he continued to pant slowly now, letting out a soft woof.

While we sat there, we stayed until we were no longer breathing hard. Then Lonesome grabbed my hand again, as we slowly started climbing upward toward the backside of the ridge the deer had been on. Very slowly and quietly, Lonesome zigzagged upward making a narrow path toward the rise of the opposite side of the hill. He was actually leading me forward.

"Katima Eyaha hon? Where are we goen’ Sam? Do you see or smell somethin’ up here that I can’t see, again?" I asked while crawling on all fours right behind him.

Scattered through the backside of the ridge, where we were about to climb, it was thick and heavy with brush, and scattered tall pine trees. It was not quite as steep as the slope of the canyon the deer was looking down, but it was still steep enough that I had to crawl on all fours most often. The loose earth and shale was hard to climb in unless you were crawling, but it was a very slow venture at best. Even slipping on the loose scattered pine needles occasionally, only added to the difficulty.

My dog moved very slowly and carefully, as I followed, down on all fours and crawling. From bush to bush, tree to rock out cropping, and back to the
bushes. It took a very long time, and the Sun was high in the sky when we were finally near the backside of the ridge, almost at the Crest close to where that Buck stood. We had passed the outcropping of scrub oak and were reaching a tall lone thick scrub oak at the ridges edge.

Lonesome, crawling on his belly, finally stopped behind a big scrub oak bush. He was lying flat down on his belly, and his nose was pointing into the large bush, as he waited for me, also crawling on my belly. With the knees of my pants nearly warn through, as sweat was dripping from my forehead, cautiously and slowly I crawled up and beside him.

"Nanta mut, What's that? What'cha got buddy? Somethin' in the brush there?" I questioned, whispering as I slipped up beside him.

Then we both very quietly crawled under and around the backside of that great big bush. Moving so slowly that it seemed to take twenty minutes just to crawl around to the other side. I knew we had to be close to the ridge.

As we reached the other side of the bush, there the Giant Buck stood. He was still looking down the canyon, sniffing the air, with his back to us. His hoofed feet looked so close I could very nearly touch his thick black Toes.

"Oh my God Sam, that is fabulous! How did you know he was here?" I quietly whispered to my companion as my excitement elevated. Lonesome just licked my face, and turned back to watch the massive buck.

With my heart thumping hard in my chest, so hard that I was afraid the Big Buck would hear it, I stared-out in total amazement. At that moment, all I could actually hear was my own heart pounding in my ears. I could feel it
thumping in my throat. As sweat began to pour down my face and arms, then I took a few quiet long and deep breaths exhaling them slowly.

My breathing began to get heavy with the excitement of the moment. I was sweating and my eyes were burning with dust and sweat, as we sat there I began holding my breath. Then I whispered to my guide,

"Wow Sam, he's magnificent, Ie ukley fenah, very beautiful. And he's still looking down the canyon. How awesome, I never would have thought we could get this close." I softly whispered under my breath hoping the deer wouldn't hear.

Then I noticed that I could smell what I thought Lonesome must have been smelling all along. It was an almost sweet musky, musty scent that was wafting in the breeze and coming from the deer. As we were behind and just below it, I counted eight points, four on each side of his massive antlers that gracefully swept slightly forward and then directly upward like a pronged crown. We quietly watched as the deer flicked his long black rimmed great ears, chasing deer flies away. Standing proud like the regal majestic king of the range.

He shook his huge antlered head and some of his spit flew out in strands like a Saint Bernard. Then he stopped, as he froze in place, sniffing the air. It was a very big Mule Deer, and by his looks, he was pretty strong and muscular. I was even more excited to realize that this Buck did not even know we were there. He stomped the ground there where he stood with his front feet, and his black ended short tail went straight up. Then Lonesome nudged me under the arm, as he lifted his head and went "Woof!" Not a bark, more like a grunt under his breath, it was not much more than a whisper. And that was all it took.
That Buck nearly jumped right out of his own skin, straight up like a cat. Then down the ridge, he practically flew. In what seemed less than two seconds, the deer was completely gone. All that was left on that ridge were the clouds of dust settling from where the deer had touched the ground, and then us two hikers, sat there alone. Then it registered what had just happened, Sam apparently had enough of merely watching and spooked the great buck to run...

"Now why did you do that? You scared him away, and we will never get so close to him again." I started to complain while getting to my feet. Standing up straight I thought to myself,

"Could this be how the wolves would have started the chase, or did he do that just to see the deer run?"

I may never know that one. Looking down at him, Lonesome abruptly bounded for the ridge and I was right behind him.

While looking down slope as the dust settled, I could see a large wet area that I knew was called a "Stomp", where the deer had been standing, and then I saw the nearly enchanting view all around the valley. I could clearly see the apple orchard and the poplar trees near my school, off in the distance I could see the two small ponds they called the Country Club, or snob resort. Then we both started back down the ridge toward the little valley.

"That was the most exciting thing I have ever done Lonesome! You were tracking that deer just like your wolf ancestors would, and you were amazing! No one will ever believe this, well maybe Anita and Aunt Maxiene, should we tell them boy? What do you think?" Lonesome barked, loud and hard.
"Yeah, we should for sure tell them both anyway." I agreed.

"Let's get started back home, Mom will be making dinner soon and will need my help." I said, as we turned and casually started walking back the way we had come.

That was absolutely thrilling, breath taking and exciting all at the same time. Tracking and stalking in what had taken more than half the day, for only that brief three or so minutes of practically laying under a Buck in the Rut. It was all over in a matter of seconds, but it was also an experience I would never forget, let alone ever match. That was only one of many such experiences. Pretty wonderful for a boy eleven years old; I'd say.

On the way back home, we ran across a couple of rabbits playing around the shrubs along the hillside, and Lonesome took off like a shot.

"Hey, Katima Eyah hon, where ya gone?" I shouted as he rounded the knoll we were on.

"Lonesome! Come back! We gotta get home!" I shouted out. Then one of the rabbits came back up the little hill and shot past me with Sam hot on his back side.

"Lonesome! Wait for me!" I hollered as I started to run after them.

I hadn't gotten ten feet when that crazy rabbit turned around and tried to run between Lonesome's legs. My dog stopped dead in his stance with legs spread as he dropped his head and snatched the frantic rabbit before it knew what had happened, one loud squeal and it was all over for him. "Holy crap Sam! That was absolutely amazing! Shall we stop here and have a snack?"
I suggested, knowing we couldn't take a dead rabbit home. It might upset Mom.

Lonesome just looked up at me with his mouth full of limp rabbit while trying to Woof through his furry muffler, as his curled sweeping tail flag made wide sweeps side to side.

"Let's cook it here and then go home, Okay Sam?" I said as he dropped the unfortunate rodent in front of me.

It took me about ten minutes to build a oak wood and pinecone fire, then another ten to skin and skewer the rabbit while Lonesome quietly watched. About twenty minutes later I began cutting off the front legs to share while the thicker parts continued to roast.

[Oak smoked roasted Rabbit is pretty good! We shared it often after that.]

"Wow Sam, that was great. Guess we won't have to worry much about takin' food with us huh?" Lonesome just barked as I dropped a leg between his front feet. It was pretty hot but he started munching just the same.

It was our first smoked and roasted wild rabbit together, one of many dozens over the coming years. We liked to feed ourselves out there with fresh smoke cooked meat like our ancestors did many centuries ago.

Our first Squirrel was shortly after that rabbit, and on the other side of the mountain, Lonesome absolutely loved chasing the squirrels. There were hundreds, maybe thousands around our area, and they were the common Grey Tree Squirrel that some people call "tree rats." I like them a lot and so did Sam.
He must have chased hundreds of squirrels in our first year of hiking together, until he actually caught one. I was eleven then as well, and we were hiking around the Ponderosa ridge area. This ridge was grey squirrel city from the get go. When we got into the thick of the forested hills, we rounded a big bush and squirrels went in all directions.

"Go Sam! There's dozens of them here!" I shouted as Lonesome took off after them.

He bolted of like a shot from a cannon as the squirrels took off in all different directions.

Sam chose one of them and was hot on its tail,

"Go Sam Go! Don't let it get up into the trees, you'll never get it from there!" I excitedly announced as Lonesome circled and cut off the squirrels escape.

Turning and racing back the way they had come, they both darted right by me as the critter was trying to double back. All I could do was stand there and hope the crazy squirrel wasn't going to climb me like a tree.

"There he goes Sam, He's headed for that log!"

Lonesome charged right by me a fraction of a second after the squirrel, and pursued toward the fallen tree, as the squirrel darted right under it.

"Jump Sam, he's going out the other side, don't let him get away!"

The dog jumped the fallen tree trunk like a gazelle and was over the top of the squirrel as he came up and over the trunk. As Lonesome landed on the other side I could hear the squeal of the rodent when Sam pounced on its back with his front feet.
The Critter was pinned to the ground as Lonesome grabbed it and shook his head from side to side with a fury. He broke it's back and then the rodent went limp, as I shouted

"Got him Lonesome!"

"That was splendid Lonesome, You got him good! There ain't no critter that can out run you, you're like the wind with teeth! You're the champion hunter of the Forrest! That was wonderful, now let's eat!"

Lonesome proudly pranced up to me with his tail swinging wide side to side and the rodent gripped within his jaws.

"Well you gonna' let it go so I can skin it?"

Dropping the Squirrel at my feet he sat down and looking up to me his tongue lulling out one side of his mouth he barked a loud forceful bark as he tilted his head and started panting as though he was saying,

"Well Get to it will you! I'm ready to eat now!"

"Alright, this is gonna be a great meal! You've earned the bigger portion Sam!" I exclaimed as I started skinning and prepping the squirrel.

Setting the body down on its skin I started a small fire and prepared to roast it. Letting my dog sit and guard the meat I gathered up some Dead oak and aspen branches to make good hot coals for cooking. Returning, I broke up and fed the branches to the flames, and dropped sage sticks on the coals to smoke.

Then I skewered the squirrel and held it high in the smoke to darken its flesh before lowering and roasting it over the glowing coals. We sat there for about thirty minutes cooking the quick meal, and then I began to cut off portions for Lonesome and myself.
"Careful Buddy, it's pretty hot at first. But the smoke flavor is delicious with this fresh meat, what'd you think Sam?"

Lonesome first grabbed the leg I sat down next to him, then he dropped it for a few seconds as he licked and rolled it over on the rock I had set there. Seconds later he gobbled the front leg down with only a couple chomps through the bones.

"See I told ya' that its hot. Slow down and try to taste it Sam."

When the rodent was done well enough I laid it on the rock and cut it up unto smaller pieces so we could enjoy a piece at a time together. That was our first smoked and shared squirrel, but there were several in our future of running those mountains together.

My doggie and I shared many of these type of snacks together in those mountains over the years. And I never got tired of them because though they were all similar each experience was as different as night and day. These were all wonderful experiences for a young man to share with his buddy, not to mention the extra protein!

We had hiked for around five hours together not realizing how much time passed, and we went almost half way up the far Ponderosa-pine covered ridge toward the local ski lift, while Lonesome was sniffing and marking just about everything, in the snow. The most surprising thing for me was that I didn't know a dog could hold that much pee. Yep, he was definitely a "Mountain Dog," and loving every moment of it and marking all he could as his...
CHAPT. 3- Mrs. Brown’s ski poles, and $20.00 dollars.

Mrs. Brown was my nearest elder friend whom was someone I enjoyed helping and talking with. I remember when we first met. It was a couple of months after my tenth birthday in the winter of 1963 / 64.

I was walking door to door around my neighborhood asking if anyone needed the snow shoveled from the walkways in their yard. That was one of several sources for money I had during the winter, it worked fairly well even if it was a lot of hard work. While I was walking down Mountain View Avenue, the street behind my house, I saw this little old lady. She was struggling with the snow on her little porch, trying to clear it from the door.

"It is real wet and heavy snow, and it’s far too heavy for her to mess with," I thought.

So, as I came closer to her yard, I shouted out and asked from out in the little street,

"Do you need some help? I could clear all that snow away for you." As I held out and displayed the snow shovel which I had been carrying on my shoulder.

"Oh, would you please young man?" I really liked the sound of that!

"Sure, no problem. Why don't you go inside and warm up, I'll have this cleared of for you in no time." I boasted while grinning ear to ear.

"Thank you so much dear boy, I'll see if I can make us some lunch. Anything in particular you would like?" she inquired as I drudged through the snow to her front steps.
"No MAM, I'm sure whatever you'd make would be fine." I responded as I began shoveling out the steps leading up to her door.

While I was shoveling, Mrs. Brown went in and made hot cocoa and peanut butter and jelly sandwiches on toast. Ten minutes later she came to the door and,

"Would you like to take a short break? I have some hot toasted bread with peanut butter and strawberry jelly, and nice warm cocoa." With such a generous offer, I just had to oblige.

"You bet, it's pretty cold out here and that would just about hit the spot!"

So I put the shovel against the railing and stepped inside. Mrs. Brown gently closed the door behind me as I shook off the loose snow and took a seat by her fireplace. She had a real cute little three legged stool that I could swear was set there just for me. But of course I had never been there so it could have been there all along. Still it felt as though it was solely intended for my occupation, which is where I sat. We had a brief luncheon together and I went back to work. When I finished I asked if she'd need anything else and then she offered to pay me but I told her that the hot cocoa and sandwich was payment enough. Inviting me in again we sat together in her warm little living room next to her freshly stoked fireplace while we got to know each other a little bit.

We continued to talk for a short while about each other's families and some of our favorite things and then before I left, I told her that she could call on me anytime she needed help, and I'd be there. That was the beginning of a long and happy friendship between her and I.
The following year, when I was eleven, Mrs. Brown, gave me a slightly mangled pair of white ski poles while I had been helping her fetch something from up in her attic. She was one of my few friends who understood how I felt about nature, she also believed that animals went to the next world, or heaven as some called it, when they pass on. That they all have spirits and most importantly feelings, which they could and would communicate to their beloveds.

I would visit with her and do odd jobs for her as often as she needed. And our friendship was very important to me. So I would usually check in on her to visit or see if she needed any chores done at least twice a week. You know, I’d do all the little jobs like chopping and stacking of firewood, sorting through goods for the goodwill or just about anything she needed done I was delighted to do. She had some wonderful stories of her adventures with her departed husband, as well as those from her childhood. Boy times were sure different when she was a little girl.

There was this particular time she had come down to my house and asked if I would come up and do a simple chore for her. I agreed to and after dinner I ran up to Mrs. Brown’s house, and knocked at the back door.

"I’m here Mrs. Brown. Can I come in?"

"Yes Ricky, Please do come in. I’m in the hall!" she announced.

"Would you climb up and look for a trunk that looks like this?" she said as she showed me an old black and white photograph that was colorized, of her and her late husband. They were on what looked like a dock next to a gangplank
with velvet rope and handrails. Next to them were three stacked trunks. She indicated the top one.

"Sure. No problem. Do you have a flashlight?"

"Oh dear! I thought I'd forgotten something." She then shuffled off toward the kitchen, around the corner. She came back with one of those large square flashlights with built in handle. Turning it on, she handed it to me as I started up the ladder leading to the attic.

"Oh boy!" I groaned, with a tone of bewilderment. "This is not going to be easy."

The attic was like a museum warehouse. Literally, trunks, chests, old lamps, lampshades, folding tables, wooden crates, and cardboard boxes were everywhere.

"Yes, I know dear, we've done quite a bit of traveling my departed and I. As I recall, it should be way back to your left. There should be a couple of crates it is sitting on almost like in the photo."

I could stand up, but it was a low ceiling of rafters, and moving was tricky at best. There were crates from Spain, Japan, France, Morocco, Hawaii, and about two dozen trunks generously decorated with travel stickers and I.D. tags.

Four of these trunks were the kind that opened out to become a personal wardrobe. Each and every container was as a treasure to me. They all had delightful stories connected to them. Mrs. Brown had shared with me some of their travels together, from previous boxes we had opened.
"I don't see it. Are you sure it is sitting on crates?" I yelled over my shoulder.

"Well, it has been about fifteen years since I have been up there. That was before the mister passed." She paused briefly, "Do you see the white ski poles?"

"Ah yes. There over on the other side of the room. Could the trunk be over there?"

When I made my way over to the ski poles, I found more crates and behind them, right next to the poles sat the trunk in question.

"I found it! Looks like it fell off behind the crates it was sitting on."

"Yes dear. Earthquakes will do that. Can you pull it out here?"

As I reached for the handle, I started to pull it upward, and said,

"Okay, it's pretty heavy- but not too much for me."

It was a struggle but I finally got it to the ladder. I was about to come down when she asked me to get the ski poles as well.

I went back and grabbed them, looking closely one was in excellent shape, but the other was pinched and twisted.

They were made of hallow metal alloy, and painted white. They looked new - very neat.

"Toss the poles down here. Then come down the ladder while pulling the trunk one rung at a time. Go slowly Ricky. I don't want you to fall."

"Oh no, I won't fall." I said confidently as I drug the trunk toward me.
The ladder was the kind that was attached to the trap door covering the access to the attic. When the trap door was pulled, the ladder extended down about five feet or so beyond the door. Like a folding hidden staircase.

Mrs. Brown was at the bottom of the ladder guiding me as I brought the trunk down.

"Thank you so much Ricky. I would never have gotten that by myself."
She said.

"Would you like to take a little walk into the past with me?" meaning to go through the trunk together while she told me about bits of what this and what were.

"HO-Boy would I!" I immediately snapped back.

For the next two hours, she and I gently pulled each item from the chest of fond memories. It was painfully obvious that she not only treasured the memories of her life with her beloved husband, but also that she was very lonely.

Which is why I never turned her down when she needed something. When we reached the bottom of her chest, she said, "That looks like the end of the treasure doesn't it?"

"Yes, but those were wonderful experiences. I wish I could travel like that. To be with my loved one, my heart’s twin, and share all those adventures. I hope to be half as lucky as you, Mrs. Brown."

"Wait a minute, what’s that in the bottom of the trunk? Look deeply Ricky. See anything different?" she suggested.

"It looks like a cloth pull tab, or something."

"Well, why don’t you give it a tug and see what’s in there?"
The tab was hard to pull, and I pulled up nearly the entire bottom of the trunk. It was another trap door.

"This looks like a hidden compartment. And there's papers in here. They look like some kind of certificates." I exclaimed.

"Yes. Pull them out, there should be fifty of them."

I pulled the entire stack out and there was a real fancy type of writing on them. The words written in what looked like old English said, "Barer Bonds."

"What are these Mrs. Brown? I've never heard of Barer Bonds."

"Well Ricky, these represent a tidy sum of money. My departed didn't like banks, although he dealt with quite a lot of them. But, when it came to our future together he prepared by securing most of our assets in easily accessible bonds. A lot were Gold Bonds. And these, as well as a few others, are better. They are like instant money. They are good for anyone who has them. That's the Barer," she explained.

"Wow. Are you rich?"

"No dear. But my departed wanted to make sure we would never have to worry about money or paying the bills. So, when I need to I just dig out another stack of fifty, go to the bank and deposit them. Then my accountant will continue to insure I have the money I need."

"That's kind'a cool. But what if your house gets broken into, or worse burns down?"

"We'll not have to worry ourselves about that Ricky. I am prepared for that IF it may happen. But it is not likely." She assured me.

"That old pair of 'ski poles, can you use them?"
"Sure, I could use a good solid walking stick for hiking."

"There yours. Take them home. And Ricky, here's forty dollars. Twenty for you and twenty for Joey. You should pick up some school clothes and other school supplies with it. Would you do that for me?"

"Sure would!" but how do I explain so much money to Dad? He won't be happy that I have that much money. What should I tell him?"

"Oh dear, that's easy. Tell him to come talk to me, and be sure that you two boys get to spend it. Can you do that?"

"You bet! I can do that!" I said grinning ear to ear. It was getting late and I had to go home before the sun went down, so I thanked Mrs. Brown, about a hundred times.

(That year, Joey and I did indeed get to choose some of our school clothes, but we also got our first Western shirts, Joey's was Red and mine was Turquoise, we both loved them.)

The ski poles were straight type, white metal tubes about five feet long, and one was kinked and bent in the middle. The only thing that it might have been good for would have been using its two pieces to stake up a small tree or large bush of some type.

The other one was in excellent condition and I immediately saw a perfect walking stick and Spear. "Oh very cool," I thought to myself, as I graciously thanked her. Trying very hard to hide my total delight with this most wonderful of all gifts.

The length of the poles, starting from the point was about five feet, the width at the tip was three quarter an inch in diameter and at its opposite end it...
was about one and a half inch around. A perfectly tapered metal spear and walking stick.

After I cut off the handle with its leather wrist strap, I also cut off the metal ring and its leather cross straps at the pointed end that was called a “Basket” for some reason.

Then when I was finished cutting off all the unnecessary parts, it was only the hollow metal tube of the ski pole that was left. So I began to practice throwing my new spear and walking stick.

It was AWESOME, and nearly indestructible. I’d imagine all the clumps of Sage bushes were Buffalo in their herds or migrating Elk. I was a great hunter spearing several slow moving, unsuspecting animals, and making meat for the people. At eleven years old, it was great and I simply loved it!

(I had a Very good imagination back then, bushes don’t move any distance at all, so they are quite easy to spear...)

Mrs. Brown once took a color photograph of me wearing only my blue shorts, that Mom bought me back east nearly three years past, as I posed for her with my new spear in her front yard. (I don’t remember what ever happened to it, or where that picture ended up going; the last time I recall seeing it was when I was around nineteen.)

When I was hiking in the mountains, it doubled for a strong walking stick and an awesome spear. And as I played, in my imagination, the tall standing ponderosa pine trees became ambushers or enemies of some kind, making it necessary to stop or subdue them. After I threw it sailing through the air, my
spear went "Thunk" and vibrated that sound very loud through its hollow tube like a low, deep bellowing wind through a horn or trumpet.

That sound with the impact vibrato simply thrilled me to death. Often there was also a fast vibration accompanying the shaft like the sound an arrow makes on impact of a solid target.

I had a delightful weapon/tool, and I could hit nearly everything I aimed at within only a week's practicing. Learning how to throw it by balancing it in my hand before the launch. Pointing my left hand out toward the target then casting it into a long arc toward my target.

Sailing out in a long wide and level arc, it would stick every time. When it bounced off rocks, on those occasions that I missed, the steel point was not hurt and the shafts' broken white and grey metallic color made it easy to find even in the snow.

In areas where the mountainside was too steep or the loose shale was too thick to climb through, my magnificent walking stick was there to aid and as a sturdy support to steady me.

There were many areas where the loose ground on the steep mountain sides was so loose that it was dangerous to try to climb through 'cause it could start a land slide that would slide my little body right off the slopes and over a ledge. My trusty spear-walking stick enabled me to go through many areas I had not previously dared to try.

(I sometimes wondered if Mrs. Brown actually had that in mind when she gave me the ski poles. Somehow knowing that I'd make a walking stick and a spear from them.)
When Lonesome was with me I didn't use it as a spear because he would often charge at anything he felt was posing a threat of danger to me. He was very protective. And I did not want to risk hitting or hurting him, besides I was never quite so good that I could confidently throw around or over my dog, at or toward another critter.

Though, I carried it with me in the mountains for years afterward, and it certainly gave me extra confidence to brave even more of the treacherous slide areas... 

Over the years, we kindled a very warm and precious friendship. I learned about her life and she about mine. She was like no other adult I had ever known. She was always kind and considerate. I came to be her "Fix-it guy", more or less and I loved helping her.

Sometimes I would accept payment, but that was rare. From when I was ten to eleven, I mostly shoveled snow, at every snowfall, and cut, chopped and stacked firewood for her. She'd have three or four cord delivered to her driveway, and then have me set it up for her.
CHAPTER 4 - The ring of bone-

In 1965 while I was eleven, Lonesome Sam was such a "piglet" of a doggie, that once when the family had a Bar-B-Que of thick pork round steaks; I thought he would like to have one for himself, a whole one. He was still a little young, not quite a year, within a month or so I think. But his big brown begging eyes were just too irresistible. So I, let him have one off of my plate. Boy, he sure did like that! He tore into it like there was no tomorrow, as if someone would take it away from him at any moment. It was totally gone in seconds, and he was looking up at me with those big brown begging puppy dog eyes of his, as if to say,

"That was a nice snack, where's dinner?" While sitting on and swirling his full fluffy tail.

From that time on, until the entire meal was completed, he stayed under the table with his head on my lap or tucked into my crotch, looking up and whimpering now and then just to let me know how much he'd like another one. Glancing down at him I tried to hush him...

"Shush Lonesome, Dad'll hear you. Go lay down." I whispered low enough for only him to hear. He wouldn't move. He'd only wag his tail even more and gaze upward through those golden/brown, deep pools of, "Poor me, I'm so hungry gim'me one more" lap, lap-lick, lick "Please, please".

I was quite sure that he would have been very happy to have the only other one on my plate, but that one was mind no matter how much he thought otherwise. About thirty minutes later, when the meal was done and Joey and I were doing the dishes, Dad gave Lonesome the bones of the others and when he
was chewing on a ring of bone from the "Shank", it somehow got hooked around both of his lower jaw canine teeth and poor Lonesome just couldn't get it off.

He barked, cried, and struggled with his front paws, but it would not give. I went to the front door to see what his problem was, and saw that the ring of bone was securely fastened to his lower jaw, while he was winning and trying to pull it off with his paws.

"Oh crap Sam, that's got to hurt. Hold still and let me try to wiggle it off," I frantically said, as I held his jaw and tried to move the ring of bone.

He was bleeding a lot and nearly in a panic, so I tried to calm him with soft words as I attempted to get it off, but it wouldn't budge, and he was definitely in real pain. So, I hollered out to Dad, "The bone is so tightly hooked on his teeth that I cannot budge it! Would you please help? I can't do it, I'm not strong enough!" I pleaded.

Then Dad went into his toolbox next to his chair, grabbing his "big pliers," he came back in a couple of minutes telling me to steady the dog while he tried to pull it off. "Hold him down and keep him still while I work on the bone." He ordered.

I laid Lonesome down on his side and put my side over him to hold him down while Dad started working. With his left hand holding the dog's lower jaw for better grip, he grabbed and started wiggling the bone with the pliers, while I held him down with my legs spread and my hands and arms around his neck. With some real struggling Dad eventually broke the ring of bone with the pliers, making a loud snapping sound when it broke. I think they were what are called
vice-grips or something close. Poor Lonesome's teeth were loosened and bleeding, but the bone was off and he stopped panicking.

"There you go, maybe next time you'll chew a little more carefully. You silly glutton of a dog." Dad said to Lonesome as he walked back to his chair and I let the dog up while petting and rubbing him.

"That's better, You'll be alright now Sam. But you should be more careful. That could have broken your teeth." I softly spoke as I rubbed him a bit more briskly and stroked his head gently.

Though Lonesome's gums were bleeding and his teeth were a little loose, he was all right, and calming down. We all petted and stroked Lonesome as we spoke soft words of encouragement to him while he wagged his tail, with not another care to worry about. From then on surprisingly enough, Lonesome was always very careful with ring bones, he'd always bite them in half with his sharp back molars at the side of his mouth before he took them completely into his mouth to start gnawing on, he learned quickly.

This fall Lonesome and I ran around the high desert mountains in my back yard, "Yucca Ridge." I also started spending nights and weekends in the mountains, which were now my personal beloved sanctuary.

I'd hike throughout them a lot, sometimes with my dog and other times alone, just me and Nature. I felt free, happy, and I could sneak up on almost anything out there, at eleven years old, when most kids are still afraid of the dark. I am closely watching nature, and living out among the splendor that our Creator made for us....
Later that year 1965, while hiking near the farthest ridges and passing through a small high mountain grassy meadow that was a little bigger than the size of a full basketball court, (above that same ridge where the Buck was), Lonesome stopped. He sat down at the edge of the trees and in the tall grass where the meadow started. While looking up at me and wagging his tail sharply pounding the grass he was sitting on, I smiled down toward him and said...

"Yes, I agree, this looks like a nice place to rest. This is the highest we've been up this ridge Lonesome, and I never would have thought there were ever Beaver up here. But it looks like there might have been some, not that long ago. I've never seen a real beaver dam before, but that pile of trees and sticks sure looks like what might be one, what'd you think Sam?" I pondered as we sat there in the grass, resting with the cool breeze wafting the grasses and whispering through the trees.

"I wonder if you can smell them?" Lonesome just laid there wagged his tail and whined a little as he panted. "Can you smell beaver? Don't you think we should go over there and explore the dam, Sam?" I asked him as I started to get up and head toward the little dam looking structure.

But before I could stand up, Lonesome gently grabbed my hand nearest to my left wrist with his mouth, as he often would when he wanted me to follow him.

"What, are you too tired to move? Okay. Sure, we can sit here in the shade a little longer. There is cool clear water over there, hint, hint. Aren't you thirsty? And I'll bet it feels and tastes real good." I reasoned as I tried to talk
him into moving just another thirty or so foot. He only sat there looking through the tall grass toward the far cool little pond.

There was a rushing creek that ran through the farthest side of the little meadow near the tree line, and then flowing over what appeared to be an old beaver dam, which is what created the small pond at that side of the meadow.

(Later on through the years, we would often go to follow that creek all the way up to the pond that was formed by the distant snow runoff before it went down the mountain and into Sheep Creek wash.)

There were no signs of any current Beaver activity. No chewed or gnawed willows, though there were a lot of willows. No chewed stumps of the aspen trees, which would have been around somewhere close. Only the graying stumps and trunks across the creek, weathered for many years and no sign of trees recently downed, the willows were also untouched. Growing close and thick they rustled in the soft breeze.

On closer inspection, I couldn't see any living beaver anywhere in the area, nor were there any tracks near the water that looked like they're were possibly beaver there. Sure, there were Raccoon, some deer and other recognizable tracks but that's all I could see. So if there were ever beaver there, they either must have moved on, died or possibly were trapped out many years ago.

On the other hand it could have merely been a downed tree that had caught enough leaf and debris to have naturally created the appearance of a
Beaver dam. Because of my young age and inexperience I couldn't or wouldn't have known for sure either way. Though it was a delightful little area.

Briefly describing the area; the grass was the variety usually called "Clump grass," but it had grown thick and tall in the moist soil around the meadow. The meadow was surrounded by fairly thick groves of the local pine trees with a few flat cedar trees in the distance here and there, and some small aspens. We were not quite high enough for there to have been any "Sugar Pines." They were still a few miles further up the ridge yet, beyond the areas where the Flat Cedar grew. There were large and small fist sized rocks along the creek sides that were covered with thick pads of bright green mosses.

The pussy willows were thick and along both sides of the creek, until they reached the area that was flooding by the apparent little dam. There they were not as thick but only in small-scattered basins, patches here and there; along the edge of the slowly rising waters from the snow melt off. This little meadow was large enough to have a regular size Basket Ball court in but that was about all.

There were only a few full Aspen trees in the nearby area, the leaves rustled in the breeze and the currents of winds could be seen in the various sections of rustling leaves here and there. This nearest one had been downed many years ago and was merely graying and splitting as it backed up the creek's water. But there were several younger starts, or sapling aspens scattered around. The meadow that the backed up water had created was very pretty and inviting.

If I could have gotten my Mom and brother up there it would have made a great place for a Pick Nick. But we had been hiking for several hours and we were hot and tired when we came upon it, so Lonesome and I stopped to rest and
hopefully try out the water. A friend of mine later said that it could have also been the project of some Muskrat who could have made the dam, I hadn't heard of such a thing so I said nothing.

This was a lengthy hike that neither Mom nor Joey would have been willing to make with me, that was one of many areas that were too far off to get my family up to, just me and Lonesome. (We were our own little family anyway). But, it became one of our little special destinations for many years...

Lonesome lay down on his belly in the tall grass and pointed his nose in the direction of the old dam, while raising his head and sniffing at the air. We could hear the running water and feel the cool breeze as it wafted gently through the trees. It had been a hot day and the water was beginning to tempt me.

It was mid-summer, and the cool water was very tempting. Lonesome and I just laid there in the tall grass, resting and feeling the warm summer sun as it shined down on us from there at the far side of the little meadow... (I swam in that very pond many times with Lonesome for years afterwards.)

Then, in what seemed a mere few minutes we could hear grunting sounds and splashing in the water a little distance up stream, with something else, another sound that sounded like the bellow of kid goats.

"Did'ju you hear that Sam ? Wonder what it is ?"

Slowly we raised our heads higher and peered over the tall grass. Out there across the meadow was a big female, white star chested, Black Bear. She was playing, grunting and groaning as she played in the water with her two young cubs. Not a care in the world, just her and her babies, who were grunting and bellowing like two brothers arguing.
~ Bears in Water, playing ~
They looked to be the size of a small adult fluffy chow dog, while the mother bear looked to be around two hundred and fifty or sixty pounds and about three and a half feet tall at the shoulder. Her cubs couldn’t have been much more than about seven months old.

"Wow, a Momma Bear and her babies. So that’s why you wouldn’t let me go over there. Thanks Buddy, let’s watch for a while. And don’t scare them off like you did that Buck." I whispered to Lonesome as we looked over the tall grass.

They were definitely having fun, and it was simply spellbinding. The three could not have been much more than sixty feet from us as we watched intently and very silently from across the other side of the pond and meadow.

For what seemed something like an hour while the mother and her cubs tumbled rolled and played out there in the water. They tossed, tumbled, rolled around and wrestled in the water with one another obviously having a grand-o’time.

While the breeze was blowing down the meadow, and into our faces, we were safe from being discovered by our scent. And as long as we didn’t make any sudden movements we would not be easily noticed within the edge of the distant trees.

"Look Sam, see how she plays with her kids? An’ people think animals are stupid, that doesn’t look very stupid to me. She looks just like a loving caring Momma to me. Don’t you think?" He looked up and licked my face with a sloppy wet tongue, as he wagged his tail, softly thumping in the clump grass.
I was confident that Lonesome knew we were safe where we were, even if it was potentially a little dangerous. I was more concerned with learning what the bears were doing, than I was with any possibility of danger, I had my trusted friend with me and I knew he wouldn’t ever let me get hurt out there...

"Listen Lonesome, they’re talkin’ to each other. I knew it, ALL animals do talk with each other. Just like our legends say." I whispered softly with pride.

It was almost enchanting to hear them “Talk”, for they surely had quite a large vocabulary. It was almost like humans, mom and kids playing in the water, the kids playing then bickering, then tossing each other around wrestling as mom would break them up and splash around in the water with them both. It was wonderfully delightful to behold and I was nearly fixated on their every move.

"Look, the cubs are like Joey and me when we were little. They even argue with each other. How cool is that Sam?"

Where they were playing, the water was only a matter of inches within a foot deep. And it was cooled by the melting snow run off. Their vocal sounds were so much like talking back and forth that it was absolutely fascinating. They definitely had an extensive vocabulary of sounds they shared, and if it wasn’t actual talking, it certainly was the best imitation I had ever heard from animals.

Then, for no apparent reason, the mother batted one of the cubs with her big right paw, sending it rolling up to the embankment a few feet, as she grunted and then stood up on her hind legs, turning to look out toward the old Dam. The cub rolled into a standing position just like hers and stared off in the same direction.
Then they both dropped to all fours and calmly meandered back into the forest in the direction, they had most likely come from. Without any apparent care of danger, they all three calmly strolled away. (I was 11, and Lonesome was just over a year old.)

"Wow," I remember thinking to myself, "I wonder if all animal families were like that, or just the bears. After all, they are very much like people in their manners and movements as well as vocal sounds. The cubs remind me so much of Joey and I, when we were littler' and playing in the water with our Mom as we had many times before."

Though I truly thought that it could have been an actual Beaver dam, currently I'm more leaning toward the downed tree possibility, because I couldn't find any reference to beaver trapping or the like ever happening in the San Gabriel Mountains...

I went home that evening with a lot of exciting things to tell Anita about, and I could hardly wait to tell her about this one. Wish I could have told Mom and Joey...
CHAPTER 6 - MY First Tepee...

Later that same year Mrs. Brown was cleaning out the storage under her house and I helped her. Among all the boxes and crates of stuff there was a large folded up canvas painters tarp with about a dozen splotches of different colors of paint generously applied randomly over its surface.

She told me I could have that ratty old piece of canvas if I wanted it, and I was delighted. I folded it out and it was about 25 feet by 12 feet. It became my first real canvas tepee. From it I cut a 25-foot long, and 12-foot wide half circle, I then stitched it around the edge, making my cover. Then cut and stitched the smoke flaps at the center of the straight line creating the half circle, thereby completing the cover.

All of the hand sewing and other technicalities I will not go into here. (Suffice it to say that, in a few days, I had a twelve-foot Tepee in my back yard, and I loved it.)

Dad wouldn’t let me take the hatchet out in the woods to cut young Jack or Jeffery pines for my new tepee poles. So I got eight long straight grained two-by-four by sixteen, extra-long cut boards with no knots, at the town’s lumber yard and I had the lumberyard split and trim them rounded. And then I had sixteen poles for my tepee’s framework. When I set them up they looked real nice. They even had a length of about four feet in the crows’ nest at the top, above the cross-ties.
My Tepee, in my Backyard with Mrs. Brown's house on All View Road - in near background. (ca. 1965-66)
My 1st tepee and its interior (thanks to Mrs. Brownie-tarp)
They were kind of a difficult "cut" to get but I got lucky and I had to do a little extra work for them to pay the total amount for the trimmed planks, because I didn't have the total twenty or so dollars they wanted for the work.

So I worked off ten dollars' worth, stacking lumber, moving ply-board, and doing the little odd jobs for them. It was well worth it to be sure, and only took me a couple of hours for a few week days.

It was a lot of work but I had a real tepee in my back yard for a couple of years after that. I have made literally hundreds of them since then. (Cheyenne, Lakota, Kiowa and Arapaho styles are the most common ones that I have made.)

There were many times that I'd stay outside all night in my new lodge over the years. I'd even drag the poles a few at a time out into the hills, or up around the O.K. corral setting them up and camping near the horses. I liked it mostly because, when sleeping outside, I could more clearly hear the coyotes from opposite sides of the canyon, previously I'd listen to them from my bedroom and they'd lull me to sleep, particularly during the spring season. They were calling to each other and announcing the births of their new puppy members. Or at least that is what I imagined at eleven and twelve.

The Tepee was also a kind of inspiration to me; I could easily imagine what it must have been like to live in them many years ago, clearly being able to hear even the slightest sounds outside and all the snow falls in winter. I could sit there and draw for hours or lie down and look out at the stars at night through the smoke hole.

Then during storms, the wind and thunder were all more intense, but the rain was the most spectacular. It was like a million drums all at the same time, a
tin roof is the closest comparison and that is not even close. The rain droplets actually sounded like drums when hitting the canvas cover, not that metal tinny sound from tin roofs but a real drum like sound. It was almost comforting, even at the darkest of nights. It's almost unbelievable how comfortable it could be inside the little tepee.

Often I'd retell tribal story's inside my lodge to friends or family visitors. It became my personal place to sing and or daydream of those days gone by, when the ancestors were free and not trapped on some reservation. Even though my personal ancestors weren't Plains Indian, or tepee dwelling people.

My Aunts' People were, and she'd tell me of her knowledge of the buffalo days when the people, her elders, lived in hide lodges and hunted the buffalo. She taught me about all of that and so much more.

From this knowledge I learned that the ancient Bison, which were as big as houses, were great grand fathers and mothers to our current Buffalo. But like the elephants', who's great, great, grandparents were Mammoths and Mastodons', our buffalo were THE North American Buffalo, not the bison, all of whom died out during the close of the last ice age.

I further do not believe that any of the first comers to this continent could have possibly hunted these giants into extinction, or any other species for that matter.

I totally agree with the elders, further, if I'm to call our Buffalo, bison then I must also call Elephants' Mammoth'ians or Mastadanian's or something of that sort. Because, Mammoths and Elephants are just as related to each-other as the Bison are to the North American Buffalo. And in the exact same way.
Joey and I had been taking turns at taking Lonesome for walks, though sometimes we'd all three go together. That was not a constant routine. This particular time my dog and I were going to town on an errand for Mom. Lonesome was about eight months old and it was just after the towns Halloween festival.

(Lonesome was born near the first week of March, or in the last week of February 1964, as near as we could tell. He was just weaned of milk when we got him and that was mid-April near the last week.)

On the way, Lonesome seemed eager to explore at every turn. Energetic Puppy that he was, he loved traipsing off through the snow. So I had a bit of difficulty keeping him focused on going to town and not off on another adventure.

We had just passed my sisters and paternal grandparents place on Apple Avenue, when I had noticed a pair of very big birds flying toward the highest ridge on the northeastern side of the town. Looking down at my dog, I saw that he had caught eye of them as well.

"Wow, that looks like eagles Lonesome, they're headed toward the ridge on the other side of town."

Lonesome looked up at me when he heard me say his name, tail wagging and smiling with an expression that looked to me as though he might be saying,
"Let's go catch them, can we, Yeah-yeah, let's go." With sheer excitement in his eyes and his tail whipping rapidly.

"No Sam," I said, "We can't go up there yet. We got to go to town first. But we can watch for them, an' keep an eye on where they go, Okay ?."

Several times, while in our little mountain town, we saw the birds hovering and soaring on the wind as we went from shop to shop. I had to tie Lonesome up on a handrail or nearby tree while I went into the stores.

Every time I came out, I caught him watching those enormous birds. Once he was even barking and jumping like he wanted loose to go chase them.

"Hey, hey, calm down Sam!" I demanded as I came to untie him.

"There'll be plenty of time for us to hike up there later. We gotta' get this stuff home for Mom. Then we can hike around, Alright ?"

Panting with his tongue hanging out and tail wagging with half of his body, like gangbusters he "woofed" under his breath, Lonesome seemed in a hurry to get out of town. While walking the mile and a half back home, I'd talk to him about our plans for the next hike and assuring him that we'll go soon.

"It's alright boy, I'm sure that Mom'll let us go and hike around real soon, Okay ?" I repeated several times to my very excitable buddy. Upon arrival back home, I dropped off the shopping in the kitchen and hollered back to Mom. She was out back with the laundry.

"We're back Mom! Can I take Lonesome out in the hills for a while ?"

"Sure Ricky, just don't go far and be back in time for lunch, got it ?"

"Thanks Mom, back later !" I shouted as the dog and I headed out the door and off to the area of Yucca Ridge where we had seen the birds soaring...
Lonesome and I had been hiking on the high desert ridge for about three hours. He had to stop and mark specific bushes, trees, and rock outcroppings along the way so the actual climbing went slow. By this time, he had a number of chosen places he'd mark every time we passed them. This particular hike, there was still quite a lot of snow on the ground, but we were hiking Yucca Ridge and that had a southern exposure, so most of the snow had melted quickly except that in the shadows of the trees.

The melting snows left a lot of wet ground and frozen patches of ground among the rocks. It also gave us both some fresh cool refreshment throughout our hikes, enough so that we didn't always need a canteen. These were generally somewhat hazardous conditions to hike in so we took the going slowly and carefully.

We had just gotten to the fire road on the ridge and followed it heading eastward, when we came around a sharp bend in the path and saw the two big eagles perched on opposite Pinion trees that were straddling the fire road.

One was very big and Cocoa brown colored, the other was a little smaller and much darker. They were just sitting there like they were waiting for something in the lower canyon to move. We froze in place, as we spotted them. Kneeling down slowly and quietly to watch as the birds were intently focused in the other direction.

"Shush, be still Lonesome, they don't know were here yet." I whispered, as the soft breeze blew a tuft of my hair into my face.

"Let's watch and see what there focused on, or where they'll fly off to." I whispered as I sat in the shade of a nearby bush.
Grandma was always happy to talk with me about our adventures in the forests near my home.

(Lonesome was a natural fisher, but turtles puzzled and frustrated him; the best he could do with them was to carry them around and or roll them around. He just couldn’t figure out how to get that critter out of the shell. It was very funny to watch his bewilderment. He’d end up giving up after giving that critter a good barking at and the ride of its life…)

After the full count there were over a hundred and twenty family members at that Easter get-together. There were cousin that I hadn’t seen since I was six, among them were Martha Ann and Jimmy, whom I used to live right down the road from on Sorrento Street in Del Paso Heights, Sacramento. They were grandpa’s brother’s kids and they were teenagers when I last saw them, now they are very late teens and early twenties.

Furthermore they don’t seem like the friends they used to be, I figured that came with growing up. Thinking that they didn’t like to play anymore so that is why they felt different to me. And Joey didn’t even remember them, so I had to remind him of the house we used to live in just down the street from them, and the first Halloween we had there, then he remembered.
At the reunion, where there were well over a hundred who attended, I got to run around helping where-ever they wanted me. And I loved every minute of it. Running back and forth from Grandma’s to Aunt Lettie’s fetchin’ one thing or another, harvesting from the marshes and meadows as well as the early produce from their garden.

It was wonderful dividing my time between helping out and running the hills and lake front with my cousins. I visited with Great Uncle John for what turned out to be the very last time. Showing him some of the stone arrowheads I made, and he showed me a few new techniques.

(Great Uncle John is Grandma’s little brother and the 1st of those who taught me about chipping arrowheads and most of my survival knowledge. As well as the things he said he learned back in Oklahoma, from our ‘In-din’ people‘)

Then we went Quail and Rabbit hunting again. He was still living up on the hill in Grandpa’s pump house, and quite comfortable.

I was hunting with him once this time when I had his twenty-two, and I took a long shot at a rabbit from almost across the eighty yard wide meadow.

"Lookie’ there Ricky, that rabbits a-kickin’ like he’s seen a bear or sum- thin way over there!" Uncle John stated as he pointed.
Uncle John & I @ Pump House of Sam.
Hunting of Uncle John @ Meadow Behind Grandpa's Hill.
“Yeah there’s a few runnin’ from that huge blackberry bush over by the creek, they seem to be in some kind’a hurry. Do you think they could have caught our scent or there might be somethin’ in that brier?”

“Well we’re too far away an’ the wind’s to our faces so it ain’t us that’s got’em ah-runnin’. I figure if we’re real quiet an’ we move real slow, we could be able to find out. So let’s get goen’ that their way.”

As we headed up the hill towards the creek we moved as slowly as we could and still make headway toward the large blackberry bush ahead. No sooner that we had gotten ten-feet closer, an entire covey of quail exploded out of the brier in all directions.

There had to be at least thirty birds or more, but they were much too far away too take a clean shot at them, so we just stood there and gazed at the frenzy of wings and feathers rapidly fluttering all over.

“Wow d’ju expect that Uncle? I sure didn’t. There must be three-dozen birds. Think we should try to hit them?” excitedly I inquired turning my rifle their way.

“Nah’, but there’s surely somethin’ there cause’ wee’s still too far for em’ ta’ get that flushed.” He stated with curiosity still glowing on his features.

Just as he said that three more rabbits shot out of the patch, two were headed out away from us and the other was running parallel to where we were standing.
As I swung the little rifle in that direction I hollered,

"I got this'n, he's not that far away, I'll just lead him a little." And I squeezed the trigger.

One clear shot rang out and echoed as the rabbit disappeared in a soft cloud of dust.

"Yah' shot too late, an' just wounded him! I told ya' tah' wait till' we got closer!"

"But I thought I could hit him clean from here uncle, didn't expect to wound it, there was a clean an' clear shot." I defensively shot back as I started to jog further up the hillside toward the rabbit.

As I got closer and the dust settled I could see that I hit the rabbit but only managed to severely wound it through the back at its hips. It couldn't walk or run, but we had to listen to it squeal and scream all the while it took us to get to it. Then I shot it in the head which killed it instantly.

Uncle John became angry with me and he reprimanded me for the foolishness,

"Ricky! I thought I'd taught ch'yah better en' that. Not only did you make that poor rabbit suffer much longer than t'was necessary. But every rabbit huntin' creature out there could'a heard it screamin' like that an' gotten there long ah'fore we could'aah. If that would'aah happened, we would'aah wasted our effort and these 'here bullets. An' caused that rabbit tah' suffer more agony in the pain ya' caused it tah' have. Ya' could'aah waited as we usually do, then got'cha
a closer shot fer'ah clean kill. Yah' do understand what kind' a waste that'd be
don't cha?"

"Yeah, I made the rabbit suffer needlessly, an' could'ah lost a meal to
about anything that eats rabbits. I understand Uncle John I'm sorry."

"Well yah should tell'at tah tha' Rabbit!" He Firmly suggested,
expressing the futility of the issue. So I never did that again.

"Ricky, you always need'ta get close, close-enough to kill it with the first
shot, like when huntin' with your bow, no deff-ern't. However, this'er time we
wuz' after quail. And we had better flush somethin' we ken' hit soon, daylight's
burnin' an' we still ain't' got dinner."

After I shot the rabbit through the head when I came up close enough
to guarantee the kill then Uncle John bagged it while we kept moving through
the hills behind Grandpas property. There were dozens of blackberry bushes
around the area, some bigger than houses, and they were great places to find
and flush quail out of.

Moving further up the ridge and beyond the hill to the next creek my
dog and I spotted another covey skirting the bushes and he ran toward them.
Lonesome and I flushed the Quail together, from those nearby blackberry
bushes.
We ended up bagging nine birds and the rabbit while we were hunting with Great Uncle John, and both of us were delighted with the fruits of our ventures. Uncle John made Quail and drop dumplings, enough for all three of us.

It was great! Uncle John let Lonesome have two of the Quail he flushed and at first he acted like he didn’t know what he wanted to do with them.

"Lookie’ there Uncle John, he don’t know what to do with’em. I think he thinks they are somethin to play with."

So Uncle John tossed some of the innards of the other birds down to him, "Try that’en out-there Lonesome, that’s what they’re made of. An’ that’s food."

Lonesome got the idea quickly, eating the innards then trying to eat the Quail. It was quite funny watching him try to pluck the little birds before he ate them. He couldn’t hardly get the feathers off his mouth and nose. When shaking and snorting failed to work, he finally used his paws to wipe them off. It was funny, you had to be there.

"Now don’t you try to help him Ricky, he’s got the idea, let him do it on his own." Uncle John warned.

"But why shouldn’t I help him?" I questioned after thinking that the statement didn’t seem right to me, I couldn’t understand.

"Cause’ his mamma wouldn’t in the wild or on the Rez. He needs to know that he can eat of the wild world. It’s natural as rain, an’ he’ll learn." Uncle John, looking down at me, thoughtfully expressed, intending to teach me that the dog needed to learn things that I might want to do for him all on his own...
Sam & I sittin' outside Dumplin' House
"Waiting for Rail / Dumplings."
Grandpa built and designed every structure on the property except one. My Aunt Ruthie's house was started by her first husband and gradually finished by the next one.

All of the grand kids, including myself, each had their own part of the various building projects over the years.

The View of Grandpa's from the Pumphouse 1966.
“Okay, but I still don’t like it. He’s my buddy an’ I think I should help him if he needs it. He’d do his best to help me, I’m sure.”

“Yeah, Maybe so, But right now he kind’a sees you as one’ah his pups, an’ he’s sposed’ tah’ teach you. As you both grow-up together, that’ll change some. But you don’t need to change it, let things go their natural way. Understand?”

“Yeah, I guess.” [I didn’t really but I didn’t want to get some long lecture when we were supposed to be enjoying the efforts of our hunting.]

And so I didn’t say any more on the subject, hoping that Uncle John would talk about his childhood in Oklahoma where he and Grandma grew up. He must have read my mind because he started asking me about how my “arrowhead makin’” was goen…

“Well howz’ yer stone work done’?” Uncle John inquired.

“Well, I think I’m done alright. Ain’t made anything very big, but I do have some real nice arrow points. I can show them to you later after I get them out of the car if you’d like.”

“Okay. That’ll be fine, but-cha’ think we could’ah be makin’ a few here whilst’ we wait f’er the stew’s cookin’? Maybe I could show-yah’ somm’ore uh’ the tools yah’ ain’t got ‘tah use yet?” He offered.

This was just the opportunity I was waiting for. So I hopped on the chance to work on more stone-chipping and new tools had me excited all at once.
"You bet'cha, I'd like that, I'd like it a lot. Do I have to get anything for yah' or can we start right now?"

"Well yah' could take'ah peek under my bed th'a're, an' pull out th'a're canvas bag whatz' a hidden' there. Then open'er up an tak'yerself a'gander whatz' inside." He suggested with a rather silly looking smile.

Dragging or sliding the bag out, I could tell it had a lot of obsidian flakes and some antler, because I could hear them rattling together as I moved the bag around. Then when I opened it I was quite surprised to see something I hadn't seen before...

"What's this Uncle John? I don't recall you tellin' me about a stick with antler tied to its end. Looks like some sort 'a digging' tool."

"Well youngen' that-tharz ah flaken' tool, an I'll show yah' how ta' use'er in just a'minite. First you gotta' choose a tool an' ah' piece of stone an' make me ah' arre5' head rite'tcher, an' I'll just'a watch. Ken'ya do that f'er me Nephew?"

"Sure I can, and I can mak'em much faster now. You'll see, takes me bout' twenty minutes." I happily boasted.

Carefully diggin' into the bag of razor-sharp flakes and chips, I found a few chippin' stones, a hammer stone and what we called a cookie stone.
Making a Side-Notched Point

A zig-zag or continuous "S" curve are the key patterns I was taught to use for making stone blades, tools and projectile points. The following are the steps I take to make my Arrow Points.

The Stones that these points can be made from break-and-fracture the same way, and are all worked using these methods: Some goods stones are: Obsidian (Volcanic Glass), Chert, flint, agate, obsidian, basalt, and Quartz crystal. I chisel is the most difficult stone I have ever worked, but produces very beautiful pieces. My favorite is Obsidian and I practice using discarded thick pieces of glass, like old mirrors, glass floor and counter tiles, or even old glass bottles and Jugs. You can as well...

For this lesson we will consider using a flake of Obsidian. Follow this to the best that you can. Then practice often and you'll make them too. ~ First things first; the items needed; ~

An Obsidian Flake

Front A-side (Both faces of this flake)

Back B-side

This is a basic shape of an obsidian flake, and we'll use this to "work".

First off, you must thin down the thickest areas, making your working piece as close to equal all around in thickness as you can get it.

There are 3 Basic Tools:

1. Wide Face Narrow Side edge

"Cookie Stone"

2. A flat and rounded River-bed tumbled stone—Preferable granite—But Not a sand stone—Because it is too soft. This stone is used for striking and for grinding—As you'll soon see...

3. The "Fine" is a tip of a Deer Antler or Elk antler. For Flaking the obsidian and finishing the notches on your point...

(Average length is 6 to 8 inches for leverage.)

Protecting your fingers & hands =

A thick "Welders Glove" works well for protecting the hands of Beginners. The "Leg Pad" gives you a surface to work on. And the "Thumb Pad" protects the palm & fingers while working stone.

Elk or Buffalo skin can also be used.

6"
Start with your Cookie Stone, and grind off all of the sharp edges around the flake, using the flat sides of the stone against the Obsidian flake. Like this:

Drag downward while pushing against the edge. Grind until slightly rounded, & no longer sharp. All the way around the stone flake.

It should look like this, with all the edges smoothed off around the rough flake you will be shaping into your projectile point.

Holding the flake wrapped in the thumbpad, like this, with its setting outward about ½ inch over the thumb pull (Clench tightly)

Squeeze your grip as tight as you can on the wrapped working flake as you strike where the "x" is, with the narrow side or edge of your Cookie Stone. Strike it at about a 30 to 40° degree angle, taking out a flake down the ridge on that side. It will leave a furrow where it was.

1st flake removed, the piece should look about like this. One furrow.

Do it again on the second "x" to run a flake down that ridge, which will leave your piece looking like this, showing the furrows from removed flakes.

Two furrows. One face showing two long narrow flakes removed.

Doing this made your piece thinner and made it ready to use the Antler Tine flaking tool for further shaping. Next steps...

~ Grinding & percussion flaking~
Second Step is “Tine-Work”: Using the Antler tool...

Now your piece has been thinned and is ready for reshaping while setting up “platforms” to take out more flakes using pressure with the tine.

With the Cookie Stone, grind off the points and edges left from running your first two flakes, @exes “X”. With B-side up and A-side down, rub down ward with the flat of Cookie Stone until sharp edges are no longer sharp. Grinding down ward, always in the same direction with each stroke.

Put the thumb pad on your hand with your thumb through the hole, like this:

— Then place your obsidian piece in the pad with "B-side" down and close your fingers as you wrap stone in pad on your Palm, like this:

Enclosing stone tightly in your hand.

Using the Tine, as drawn, push very hard against the edge of stone and then push down into your palm. You must push hard to remove a flake, and it should “shoot” across B-side-at least to the middle, or close, of the stone. Then move tine one half to three Quarters of an inch down and do it again at each of the places marked -X. Remember to push inward hard, then downward to release the flake. Do this all around that edge then turn stone over.
~ Continuous "S" Curve ~

With that done, your piece should look something like this (before turning it over and "working" A-side.)

A-side: looks about like this;
(or close to this)

B-side: lightly worked, now looks something like this.
Each X is a platform for another flake to be removed on opposite side.

The next step creates the continuous "S" curve along the edge of the stone.

With A-side facing down in your palm, take out a flake at every "X" as indicated just like you did on the other side. It should look like this:

Looking down the edge you will see the continuous "S" curve. Make an imaginary line through the middle of the curving edge, parallel with the stone. (A "center line" is useful example here)

Then, take everything off of first one side above the imaginary line, then everything below it, like this:

Everything on the right side of the center line comes off from the right side. And likewise on the left side. This will straighten out the edge-centering it for thinking the stone blade.

When this step is done, then the tip needs to be carefully worked too Point.

Use the same "tina" method - working carefully to center the point on stone. Then it will be time to make the "notches" used to attach the projectile point to the shaft of your arrow.

CLOSE-UP View of edge "platforms"...

Grind => opposites.
Grind edges lightly in opposite direction to smooth sharp edge and bring the platform striking edge more toward the side your flake will run or come off of.

(a) Distance or Strike on theX to remote flake.
(b) Pressure or Strike @ pack X to release the flake from its side of stone.
Notching with Fine

Holding stone like this, work the tip into a point. Carefully rake and flake one curve at a time, centering the point or tip from side to side.

Now, holding your antler, press the time against arrowhead like this, firmly. Push down on the edge of the blade where indicated to make a notch. Then turn it over and do it again on the same spot. This will take out two curved sections, one on each side and you will have one notch. Do the same on the other edge then your point will be done.

The finished piece should look something like this...

A nice point for hunting...
Pushing hand into stone to pop flake off

Raking edge with inward pressure.
Mounting Point & Fletching Shaft:

1. Most American Indians used the two-arrow shaft method. Split the blunt shaft halves as you would a two-arrow set. Make the two-blade fletchings pee each other.

2. Cut the other arrow halves into two-blade fletchings. From the width of one blade, cut the two-blade fletchings into two.

3. Slip the shaft halves through the fletchings. When the feathers are equal and the shafts are even, you are ready to:

- Cut the spine so it is equal to the width of the feathers.
- Slip the spine into the fletchings.

- Take the point of the arrow and slip the fletchings onto the spine. Wrap the fletchings around the spine, slip the point into the blade, and wrap the fletchings around the spine.

- Cut the fletchings off and cut the spine off, leaving the fletchings in the spine.

- The point is now ready to be used. When the point is used, it is important to:

- Clean the point, either with a brush or by hand, before use.

- Always wipe the point with a dry cloth after use.

- Remember to keep the point clean and sharp to ensure proper function.

- When the point is not in use, keep it in a safe place, away from sharp objects.

- Always store the point in a case or protective sleeve when not in use.

- When the point is not in use, keep it in a safe place, away from sharp objects.

- Always store the point in a case or protective sleeve when not in use.
[Because the round stone is flat and shaped like a cookie, though it is used for scraping with its sides and striking with the edges of the cookie shape.]

Then pulling out a nice flake of obsidian, I started to work on it. After using an antler tine on the edges and notches, within about fifteen minutes I had a fairly nice side notched arrowhead about an inch and a half long. Then I showed it to him for his approval...

"Very nice Nephew, an' ah' good side notched huntin' point that will make. Do yah still make the others I showed yah'?"

I loved his praise, and boasted my response,

"Yes Accor's, but I like these much more, cause' I can use them to make sets of matched arrows. The closer in equal size I can make them, the more likely they will fly a true straight path to my targets. I also try to make all the shafts from the same sized saplings, so my quiver of arrows stay in a reasonable range of accuracy, Great Uncle." I proudly boasted, smiling up at his age-wrinkled and wise looking face.

"True it tis, but tha' flight's more in the hands of the archer, it's a certain feel Nephew. You'll get it one day, and then you'll feel tha' ackeracy in each arrow yah' shoot, long before yah' draw an' take care'fel aim. Then you'd know that yah' made the mark as yah's releasin' the bowstring, yah' ken' feel it."
"Thank you, what else do yah have ahf'er me Uncle?" I questioned, remembering that he asked me to get his bag of flakes for a reason other than making one point.

"Take at'air stick with antler in the end an' I'll show yah another way to take a flake off the piece. This'll make real long an' thin flakes, helpin' yah tah' thin an' even out the blades as you figure where you'll make the notches for mountin' on ah handle or shaft." He instructed.

We worked on a few other pieces and he demonstrated the use of his pressure flaker, in several variations to produce differing types of flakes. Some straight, some long, and some that curved slightly following the ridge back of the two faces of the blades we made. That was the hardest to do because you had to twist your wrist just as you forced the flake to pop off the stone.

"That's pretty good, but it'll take some practice f'er yah' ta' get pre'fficient e'nuff tah' do it every time, take y'er time an' you'll do all rite nephew."

"Thank you Uncle, I'll work on them you'll see." I confidently boasted.

After being with my relatives for only a short time, I'd usually start speaking just like them. Picking up they're accent and repeating it as we talked, I guess it was habit, but it never failed to occur.

"Well tis' bout time f'er some dinner, grab yah' a plate an' I'll scoop up some quail an' dumplins' an' toss ah' rabbit leg in on top of it f'er yah." He stated
as he dipped a ladle deep in the stew pot diggin' up a bird and three dumplins, then plopped down a fried Rabbit back leg next to the dumplins. It was great, sharing with my uncle John at the pump house, eating our bounty and hearing about Oklahoma.

We sat down to a delightful meal as he told me a couple of stories from when he was a boy back home and he did this same things with his uncle. I was quite eager to hear every word, as I grub' down some great home cookin' and visualize what he was describing in his recital of the olden' days.

Much like the stories my great grandmother told, though his were about another time and place, they always captivated me every moment.

From that time on, Lonesome loved to eat birds. Even plucking them became almost an art, much like a cat. The following afternoon Grandma had me help Grandpa take the big park bench tables they had in the front yard and put them both together end to end, up on the patio so we could spread a big feast for all of the family guests.

Those were some of my favorite stories. They still are; all that huntin' and fishin' livin' off 'a tha' land, in the olden ways. I'm sure he didn't know it then but those were most all of my favorite stories from my family.

I got to help Grandma make some of the food earlier during the day and then I helped Grandpa spread the food all out on the tables in the front yard as more of the guests were arriving.
Usually during the day, all of us kids would gather together out in the front yard and watch all the racing boats out on the lake. We would also occasionally make little bets as to which boat would get to whatever point first. There were also a lot of water skiers, figure skiers and the like that would keep us kids thrilled for hours. During the summer there was always something happening out on the lake we could take pleasure in watching. When we tired of watching the lake show, there was always sliding down the hill on cardboard, or playing tag in the front yard. Or all the boys would get together and play army.

From Grandpa’s front yard, the lake was about a hundred feet away, the view was very nice and we could also watch boaters and water skiers. His house sat up on a hill that was about sixty feet above the lake front property where Aunt Ruthie’s ice-cream stand was. Cousin Bobby and I got some extra popsicles when we helped Aunt Ruthie with the business there on the lakefront, Bomb Pops I loved them.

That particular evening all us kids were engaged in chasing each other with the Rain bird sprinklers, the boys at the sprinkler heads and the girls running around daring us to hit them with the water. Then we’d take turns blasting each other with the water.

It was a lot of fun when we all got together to play because we lived so far apart. So we managed to make the best of every opportunity. Even Lonesome got into the fun with the rain bird sprinklers; he loved the water just as much as we did. He’d chase the girls through the water and when it was the boys turn he’d chase them as well.
Grandpa and I
in the garden - Stringin' limes for the beans
155
All of us playing together and getting well soaked in the process. The girls tried to make Lonesome's wet dog smell become something better with perfume. It made Lonesome sneeze a lot. I don't think he liked it very much. But the girls surely did.

(There were Cousins: Bobby, Artie who were brothers, and second cousin David with Joey and I. Then the girls were: Cousin Jackie and second cousins Donna, Arlene, Janet, and Elaine, all were David's sisters. All of them are from one side of the family, then Martha Ann and her brother Jimmy on the other. When Aunt Viola brought cousin Butchie over, we had thirteen cousins in all when I was twelve. Later on three more boys were born and another couple of girls.)

Then when all of the women got together in the kitchen, Grandpa and I had to cover the food with a couple of sheets to keep the insects and birds out of it while all the women were yakking to one-another.

"Common' Ricky, they will be in there for quite a while. We'll cover up the food with these sheets. Then we can go out to the garden and do some light work till dinner." Grandpa instructed as he handed me one of the sheets.

[My Grandpa didn't have the same accent that my Grandma and her side of the family did, because he and his family weren't from the Oklahoma area.]

They all took over in the kitchen and we, (Grandpa and I) headed out the side door for the garden, where we picked some fresh carrots, squashes, and wandered around pulling weeds here and there.
Grandpa said that once the womenfolk all got together and started their yammering, it was a certainty that our Lunch would become an evening meal at best. So we had plenty of time to kill.

While Joey and the other cousins were out playing together, I was usually helping Grandpa out in the Garden. I loved working with all of the plants and harvesting the food we grew. It was among the best times I had with my grandparents. And they knew that I loved it.

Grandpa was always happy to have my help, even when I was very little, and later when I grew up, there was always something that I could do on their little farm. That's a big part of what made me feel like I was needed and appreciated, even though I was not a grown up yet, they always made me feel like I was important, loved and appreciated.

Well Grandpa's prediction was right; "It's about to get dark Ricky. We better set up some lights out on the patio so we can have our feast in front of the house as the sun is setting."

"Okay Grandpa, Are the lights still in the boat house?" I asked as I headed toward the building where he kept his Boat.

"Yes, just to the right of the door, there hanging on the wall above the light stands. Well need all of them. So you grab the first set and I'll grab the next ones."

We took them around the front of the house and Grandpa put up the stands after I set the light fixtures in place. Then we plugged them into the outlets that he made for just such purposes. Grandpa literally built the entire house and every building on his property, planning ahead for the family events just like this one.
Setting up lights on patio at Grandpa's
The Lake View @ Night
from Grandpa's Front Yard...
[I even helped with that, on the fireplace, the roof and the second bathroom floor.]

Their front yard overlooked the biggest expanse of Clearlake and was a preferred place for the family to dine. In good weather when you could actually see out across the full body of the lake, there were always wonderful things to observe.

Though, at night, it was also nice to look out on the reflection of the stars and the moon, as well as the lights from the little towns of Niece and Lucerne on the other side of the lake, or another group of lights at the foot of the Volcano called Konacti, where the Clearlake State Park was.

The Volcano was the prominent mountain of the area. And it was directly across the lake from Grandpas front yard. Where you could see the reflection of the lights from all of the campers and fishermen that were on the other side of the lake. It looked very cool at night, even at about eighteen miles away. And often the calm lake would get nearly smooth as glass.

I luckily and happily became one of the family kitchen runners, and helped to refill the serving bowls and run them back out to the tables for all of the family. I helped Grandma and my Aunts serve the after dinner pies, there were several kinds including Mom's favorite at the time, peach pie.

Grandpa loved Grandma’s Lemon meringue pie, there was also Persimmon, Rhubarb, Pumpkin, Apple, Custard and Cherry, not to mention the wild Black
Berry all of us kids picked for the occasion. And everyone got at least one big slice of pie served with a big scoop of homemade ice cream.

It was a lot of work but it was even more fun. Often Grandpa would have all us kids churn the ice-cream maker for the Desert of the evenings' meal, we'd each take our own turn and by the time we had all cranked until our arms felt like they would fall off, the ice-cream was done. It took four big batches to make enough ice cream for this gathering. Homemade is always the best...

The compliments I got from family members I had not seen since I was little made all of the work seem well worth the effort. And afterward, Grandpa and Grandma gave me a great big hug telling me how grateful they were for all of my help.

That was praise that made my young heart sing with pride and confidence, as well as one of the many ways they told me how much they loved me. And usually there was an extra bowl of blackberry cobbler, which was made or left just for me, (my favorite at the time), after all I usually helped to pick most of the berries used in her pies and cobbler.

All of the other cousins would generally eat far more than they picked, and I always thought of all the delicious treats that Grandma was going to make with them. That thought kept me picking rather than eating all the harvest...
We went and visited with my Aunt Viola, Grandpa's sister; whom we hadn't seen in a few years. Joey and I played with Butchie her son and our second cousin, he was around thirteen then. They had three Spider Monkeys, two Chimps, five Horses, and several Peafowl, a dozen or so. In addition, they had an African Grey Parrot that had plucked his little pigeon body literally naked except for his little head. He looked just like a Cornish Hen ready for the oven, wearing a parrot head...

(Surprisingly enough nearly thirty years later, Aunt Vai, [short for Viola,] had yet another Grey Parrot that plucked it's self the exact same way. I never knew why they did that. But those two certainly did...)

While Joey and I played with our cousin Butchie, he showed me something he called an "Oak Ball", which was something fairly common to the area. The local Oak trees grew them by the hundreds and they kind'a looked like a potato, except they were full of a pithy-like substance which made them very light and easy to carve into different things.

The one that he held, he had made into an "Indian chief's head." Using the fallen, molted, wing feathers from the Peafowl he had stuck the quills into the ball in a circular fashion resembling a Plains Indian Headdress. Then he had cut out gouges for the eyes and cut a slit for the mouth. It looked pretty good to me, but it more resembled a "Bad mitten Birdie." For the kids that we were, it was a work of art.
We were up there for a little over a week. And I strived to savor every moment, I considered them and that area my second home. Many times during that period of my life, things would happen so fast that it seemed to tease or torture my heart. So I tried to focus on the times I was experiencing rather than the known fact that they were going to end in short days to come or sometimes mere minutes.

In the very early mornings in Grandma's wash room, I remember lying in my bed she had set out in the Mudroom by the back door, and I'd just listen to all of the birds sounding off singing in all of their early morning rituals. I could easily identify the Robbins, the Meadow Larks, the Red wing Black birds, the ducks, and Grebe, (Hell divers, as we called them), all of their songs were music to my young ears, and I tried to savor every minute knowing that it would soon be gone. Not knowing exactly when or how but just knowing that this would all be gone some day, and I was sure to miss it a lot. And I do...

During that time in my life, this side of my family were the ones who were responsible for my returning back to our home in California and not being lost out in the sticks on that Poultry Farm somewhere back in Maryland. I owe them everything including my life, and there is nothing that I wouldn't do for them. They saved me from an existence that was worse than death, and I loved to be with them.

I think it was mostly because of their obvious love for Mom, me, and my little brother Joey, and not just because they were my Grandparents. There was always something more there, something much deeper, that I couldn't exactly identify in words, but I knew it was there. Even through to their eventual
passage on into the next world, I never had cause to question their love for me, or my standing in their eyes. From the time that I was a year old, they would never tell me that I was worthless or a disgrace to the family name, because to them I was important, I was a valuable member of the family. That's when I knew I truly was loved, and they never had to actually say the words, but it felt that much better to hear it and experience it. My German relatives could never truly share in this, they were another kind of people that were not close to anything that I was aware of.

Anyway, the day we were to head back home, down to our mountains in southern California, I took Lonesome out for a last run in the hills behind Grandmas place,

"Common' Sam, Kanowah eyah, Let's go out for a quick run before we have to leave. There is a nice spring up there behind the hill that we could maybe catch some frogs or polliwog's at."

Lonesome was most eager to run for awhile, and he barked out his agreement to my suggestion.

Together we headed up the hill behind the pump house, and as we crested it several jackrabbits took off in three different directions. Lonesome was ready for the chase and like a shot he darted off after the closest ones.

"Go Get'em Sam!" I hollered as he darted off.

"That big one will make a nice pot of stew for grandma, if you catch it!"

I directed just before they all disappeared down into the little valley between us and the spring.
I jogged down to the spring thinking that Sam would catch the rabbit and meet me there, but after nearly a half hour he didn’t return and I started to get worried.

"Whats takin' so long. He should have been back before now?" I pondered, maybe I should call him back.

"Here Lonesome !, Here Sam ! Ah-Minti ! Time to come home !

L O N E S O M E where are you?" I began to get even more worried. He had never just taken off before, and I was afraid that something had happened.

I ran all around the hills calling and yelling out his name, but there was no response. And I couldn’t catch up with him or find him anywhere once he went beyond the far hills.

I tried to track him and only ended up crossing several other sets of dog’s tracks and becoming lost as to which set were his. It looked like he ran into a few other dogs and they were off to play for a while.

I was out for hours hunting and calling, then I had to head back so I went back to Grandma’s thinking he may have just beaten me back, praying he had.

He was not there and Dad got pissed. I was in trouble again. Needless to say, I must go back, Dad ordered,

"Go find him NOW, IMMEDIATELY !"
Again I climbed the little hill behind Grandpa's and hollered for Lonesome. Then I thought I should back track starting where I left off.

"Maybe Lonesome might have heard me last time, it was only a few minutes ago. I'll climb up Easter hill and have a look around the valley." I thought to myself.

Many hours later, after having hollered until I was hoarse, and wandering the hills for what seemed miles away from our hill, Lonesome came bounding up to me with his long thick hair full of cockle burs, and monster grey ticks.

He had obviously been into the lake or a deep creek somewhere, he was still wet and smelled like decaying skunk, rotting flesh. I knew that I was in deep KA-KA, but there's nothing I could do, except head back anticipating another butt kicking.

* There you are! You've really done it now Sam, an' we're in real trouble. Dad wants to kick my butt. And now I have to find some way to get this nasty stink off of you. Boy, you really know how to get us in trouble. Common' let's get back before it gets dark!* I scowled as Lonesome knelt down just begging for me to be happy again, looking up at me with his big brown eyes.

"I'm not mad at you boy, but you must never run off like that again." I said as I knelt next to him and stroked his head. I held my breath cause his breath was just as offensive as his coat. And I knew he had been eating some dead skunk somewhere, most likely road-kill.
"Wow Sam, you really need a bath, and tooth paste might help your breath." I exclaimed as we both stood and headed for the house. Me, dreading the return and Sam with his head down, dragging his tail the entire way.

It took another couple hours to get back from where we were. Then the sun was setting, AND MY butt got kicked again. I tried not to show Lonesome any anger, I knew he was just playing, and this whole area was so very different from our home in the mountains, his natural desire to explore kicked in and he forgot that I was even there. I felt deeply responsible for his lack of understanding, and the disgust that dad showed both of us.

Or at least that's what I believed at the time. (I Still do; even though Grandma tried to tell me that no one was at fault. I felt differently.) When we got back Grandma helped me bathe Lonesome in Orange juice and Tomato juice mixed, which works pretty well but not completely.

We had to drive all the way back, 625 miles, with the windows rolled down, nearly an eight-hour drive on the long hot trip home. All the way down Hwy 99, through Bakersfield and the Tehachapi mountains, across the Mojave Desert and up into the San Gabriel Mountains. The most miserable trip I ever had.

It was a long and painfully miserable drive, with all the windows open and we had to keep Sam lying down in the floorboard of the back seat. He hated that. The only thing that might have helped the situation was that we were driving at night, there was no glaring hot sun but it was still hot enough that Lonesome was panting heavy, drooling and whimpering all the way back home.
When we got home, Lonesome was chained to the front porch and we all went to bed. Lonesome Never went to northern California with us again.

I felt responsible for that, but I could never talk Dad into taking him just one more time again. That kind of broke my heart, because I knew how much Lonesome loved it up at the lake, how he loved fishing and catching rabbits. And I was the one who let him run off up there at Grandma and Grandpa’s place, it was totally my responsibility.

Maybe I should have asked Grandma to use their leash they had for Grandpa’s dog Lady. That would have changed the whole mess. No one would have gotten into trouble, and Sam could have gone on all of our family vacations up to Grandma and Grandpa’s in Lakeport, northern California. That’s why they say “Hind sight is 20/20.”
In the effort of trying to make up for my own "Inability to be responsible enough to keep my doggie with me" up at Grandma's and Grandpa's, ("at Lakeport", on the large body of water called Clearlake. One hundred and twenty-six miles of shoreline it had back then.) Lonesome and I would spend even that much more time together in our San Gabriel Mountains. Unlike that one time up in Lakeport, I never had to worry about him running off without me at home in our mountains, never had to chain him up there either.

I guess that was because he knew these mountains well, and the rolling hills around my grandparents were all new to him. When I snuck him off of the front porch with me to go into the mountains around home, I would walk him with his chain out as far as it could go toward the driveway, and I'd then slip the chain off of his neck while it was stretched out, letting it drop right there. To make it look like he had slipped out on his own. Then we would run around the backside of the house, and take off into the mountains, for several hours, and I would bring him home as if "I found him running around" and brought him back home. It worked like a charm every time.

Always while we were out on a hike, I'd notice that Lonesome would sniff at the ground when and where we were walking. On a road, path or a trail he'd sniff at the bushes and tree trunks as well. Often times he would hike his leg and "mark" them. But when he was on an animal's trail, his nose rarely left the ground. His head would come up to glance ahead or sniff the air and then right back down he'd go. In that way I'd know he was on a fresh scent, then I would
examine the tracks in the trail that weren't his or mine to discover which were the most recent ones.

Those would usually be the tracks that Lonesome was indicating by his sniffing and nose pointing. Sometimes there were only one set of distinguishable tracks, which made it easier for me to tell what he was following after. Other times there were several and I'd have to check out the most recent ones. Those would usually be the ones that were on top of all the others, which I could distinguish by following for a short distance revealing the ones which continued to be the most recently laid down.

Often times they were Deer, but Bear and Cougar were there as well, not to mention Bob Cats, Coyotes, Coons, Foxes, and dozens of others I don't care to list here. (Lonesome also showed me the difference between the tracks of a Doe and a Buck, they are very different. I learned this by observation at the source of the tracks, which we often caught up to, in time.)

At first, when I was eleven, I had a lot of problems telling the difference between Possum and Raccoon tracks, because their feet were so similar, but not Lonesome Sam. He could smell the difference right off, and I wouldn't know until we caught up to the track maker or spotted it in a tree. Usually after Lonesome indicated that the critter was in a particular tree. He did that by sitting or standing with his paws against the tree and barking while looking upward.

We found a skunk that way once, again it was back when I was eleven, but I could smell it long before we reached where it was. From then on I could smell it's scent in the wind right off knowing what it was, and then I'd find its
tracks in the trail, also knowing that this was likely what had made these particular tracks.

Their tracks are not much different from the Possums’ either, though they don’t have the "Hands" that Coons and Possums do. They can easily be mistaken until you learn the difference.

It may be hard to believe but most animals do indeed have their own unique smell or scent. And with a lot of practice you can get to recognize them when you catch their scent in the breeze. Unless you smoke tobacco regularly, because that herb dulls your sense of smell to the extent that you don’t realize you actually smell like an ashtray.

Also from then on, it wouldn’t take me long to find the little stinkers, thanks to my dog. Even those animals that were not skunks, but had their own strong scent, wild mink, ferrets, weasels’ and even otters carry their own distinct smells as do the deer family and Bears. (Which are often the strongest to catch a whiff of out there in the wilds, and so they’re easier for humans to smell, that is once one becomes familiar with their scent.)

On many occasions, I would even bend down to smell the ground around the tracks and the “Marked” areas as well. You can smell them, particularly if you don’t smoke cigarettes.

(That practice destroys the sense of smell to the extent that only the strongest scents are slightly detectable. It also dulls the sense of taste, making
the food one eats have very little flavor. This is a sad fact, which very few people realize, particularly those who actually smoke, long term.)

I figured that doing this kind of scent-smelling around specific areas was something like what Lonesome was doing, and this practice did indeed help me to become more aware of the various scents of particular animals. Nevertheless, Sam's sniffer was far greater than my little nose could ever be.

I could smell almost nothing when compared to my dog's sense of smell, without a doubt, period. Further, without his guidance, I would never have even considered the possibility of learning the "Smell" of animals or even cared for that matter. How many people actually give any thought to that, let alone children of grade school age?

He was a Wolf Dog, and I had no doubt of it. I was so proud to have him as my companion, protector, and teacher, as well as delighted that Aunt Maxine brought him to me. There aren't words to express how fortunate I was.

At ten years old through age seventeen, to have had my buddy with me daily. And also to be fortunate enough that I could learn from him in the ways that my Aunt suggested. He began to show me many things I would never have imagined possible to know or even be aware of.

Many people truly believe that dogs are just stupid on animals that act and react only on instincts, but they are far more brilliant than that, they have large brains and a high intelligence.

They actually reason and think things out, they learn and understand, as well as perceive language both verbal and through body languages. Sam did all of
this and more. I believed that is why we can learn from each other, why we can love each other, and trust one another implicitly.

I truly believe that Man and dog were meant to be together, but it took dog to be faithful and brave enough to come to man, and not I Believe the other way around.

He and I were in those mountains far more often than I was in school, meaning that I did indeed ditch, or cut, school just to be out in the forests with Lonesome. (Particularly during the, fourth, fifth and sixth grades, these were important learning years for us both.)

I considered it a small price to pay for all of the wonderful things he was teaching me, and actually, I had no real problem catching up with my schooling when I needed to. I was not an exemplary student by any means, but all the subjects I cared about I did study.

Though I never had any aspirations to be on anyone's Honor roll. I certainly had other things to achieve, some were cultural to be sure. And our society's Schools had nothing to teach where it comes to American Indians and our culture, quite to the contrary.

Such a shameful loss to all of our young people, all of our future generations must grow up not knowing the realities of the cultures that were here before the European invasions. Hopefully some will learn from these and many other writings of native American Indian Peoples.
Indians were looked upon as primitive uncivilized and near animalistic, even when I went to school in the fifties and sixties.

To this day none of the schools teach anything worthy of my ancestors. Not even a sentence of our ancestor's high intelligence or of the fact that the Iroquois society had a lot to do with teaching this country about Democracy, and Social practices, which leave out no one but include the voice of all the people concerned.

Thanks to Ben Franklin and Thomas Jefferson whom had firsthand experience with the Iroquois League long before this nations Constitution was thought of. That is yet another untold fact of history.

But history is always written by the conquerors, while never quite telling all the real facts, but rather “painting themselves” in the best possible light. Posing as the saviors or rescuers of their victims from themselves or some other perceived threatening excuse, but rather to dominate and dehumanize the victims for the total control of whatever the conquerors wanted. Be it land or people in the form of slaves, or the biggest killer of the innocence, Religion and Greed for GOLD. Manifest destiny and Imminent domain, what arrogance! Okay I’m rambling on, back to the story...

At school if I could not make up for a test or something, I usually could get one of my friends to help me convince our teacher to let me do a makeup test, or extra work, which usually did the trick. Besides, I was only interested in getting a passing grade so I could move on to the next one.
After fourth grade, I did not desire to be "A full time" student. And so the time I spent out, was not that much of a loss to my scholastic education, maybe a small occasional detour here and there. Gladly taken, again and again, whenever necessary to me.

Getting back on track here, from the time, when I was ten, to well after the time I became twelve, I watched Sam follow and point out tracks in his usual manner. And so by the time I actually was twelve, I could identify and follow the tracks of almost every animal in our area, including most of the birds.

Those birds which would walk the ground and peck, like quail, grouse, and turkeys all of which we had, some even by the hundreds. As well as those who would land on the ground only long enough to pick up something and then take wing, like jays, crows, and all of the raptors. All of this important knowledge was gained from first-hand experience, being there and being taught by my dog's example.

I learned well from just observing my dog and witnessing the animals we caught up to while we were on the trail. Tracking was only a small part of his teachings for me, and his companionship was better for me than anything else could have been at that time in my young life. I was, in all and every way safe and confidant in the capabilities of my Buddy, my teacher, Lonesome Sam.

When I was eleven I started making dried meat jerky that I would share with Lonesome, he liked it so much that it quickly became one of the tools I used to train and further communicate with him.
The reward system is what I believe the process is called, but it was much more to me and Sam. Like using Doggie Treats to get him to climb the steps when he was a puppy, I'd reward him with dried meat for doing "it", or "getting" something I needed to express with him.

One of the first things that comes to mind was our playing ball or Fetch & Catch. At first, it was difficult to get him to actually return the ball, so when I would have him drop it, I would walk over to him and give him a piece of meat as I picked up the ball. Then I'd say "Ball here" pointing to the ground at my feet. Through several successive rounds of that he actually got the idea to bring the ball back and drop it at my feet, by his own perception and not necessarily my command. That gave me the idea to use the meat to train him. We both loved jerky, particularly homemade. Even the meat I smoked delighted him.

There were often those times I would employ signs and gestures with some of my Choctaw language to him, incorporating them with my commands, questions, and or suggestions. By the way I expressed my intent the thought was generally perceived by him. For example, getting him to look for or at something was pretty easy.

I usually looked at him directly in the face, while pointing to my eyes. Then I would gesture to the item or identify it in Choctaw, that which I wanted him to observe, and he'd usually get it, or head off to the trees, down the trail etc. which seemed to me, to convey the message to him quite well because he'd look at and or take off to the designated location almost immediately.
Lonesome readily took to understanding another language and body gestures in communicating with me. I believe it was because the animals naturally communicate in much the same ways.

Sometimes I'd make the Rabbit sign by closing my fist with the first two fingers upward while bouncing the fist in my other palm, as a rabbit hopping, and he'd just "Get it".

There is no other way to describe it, he'd look at me then take off to find the nearest Rabbit, which if I didn't shoot it, he would usually run it down and kill it, then bring it to me for his reward. (We shared many Roasted Rabbits that he had killed in just that manor.) Truly, this was an awesome characteristic, Lonesome was a very brilliant dog.

His understanding of numbers was, I think, far better than the average dog, he could distinguish easily the small numbers almost right away. I learned this with tennis balls, believe it or not.

After having played catch and fetch with him many times over a year or so, we had a large collection of balls in various conditions of wear. He liked to gnaw on them and particularly to burst them with what I could describe as a kill bite.

I could, at the time, sign for look and gesture for ball or throw while holding two fingers out saying "Find Two", and he'd come back with two balls in his mouth. Then I'd reward him and throw them in two differing directions, he'd jump at the chance to catch the first as he headed for the second, that one he'd usually stop with his feet or body. Then he'd bring them both back to me and drop them at my feet.
Even if I didn't actually have a ball in my hands, I could hold my hands about six inches apart with palms facing each other. Then rotating them as though I was rolling a ball in my hands followed by a gesture of throwing the ball, he'd get the idea and find a ball, or two as the case may have been.

So we could play one of the favored games of chase and fetch after he had gathered up all of the balls we were to use. Sometimes when I needed some pinecones for the fireplace or our camp fire, I'd make the sign for look, and toss him one or hold out a cone for him to examine.

He would then take off and bring back pinecones until I either rewarded him or said that it was enough. As with the tennis balls, if I needed another two or three, I'd tell him with the fingers and say the number I needed, he never failed to return with that exact number, in the first trip or the second if he couldn't carry them all at once.

Lonesome Sam loved to play catch and fetch with me, and quickly caught on to most all of my meanings and gestures. Truly Lonesome was the smartest Animal I've ever known.

I have never had another dog I could establish that type of communication capabilities with. And I am not sure if it was because of his mix-breed nature or because we were so very close, as we the family raised him from a very young pup. Possibly both were, rather than one, the cause of these abilities within Lonesome's instincts.
Also, after the Charging Bear incident, I never was concerned when he stopped sideways in the trail; I knew he was stopping me for a reason even if I couldn't tell right away what it was. Though we never encountered another big bear, or similar danger, when Sam stopped me I always let him figure out what we were to do next.

All of these things in combination with the close observation as suggested by my Aunt, and Lonesome's natural desire to play and to communicate with me, made our learning abilities from each-other far exceed those of regular dogs, or at least that is what I believed. *I still do believe this is the reason.*

Yep, I learned a lot from that Rez. Dog, just like my Aunt said I would many years ago. Anita was also an immediate fan of Lonesome's and when she could, she would bring him a prize bone or something special to chew on. For which he gave her his undying attention whenever she was visiting us.

*Later, Anita showed me how to make "Bear Tracks" that looked very real. And I used that trick to fool a lot of "Unknowing" (Flatlander) People with. It was very cool, and they never knew...*
In mid spring 1966, (Early May I think, or thereabout,) we were hiking the mountain just to the southwest of the house, the pine covered one, basically in my front yard just beyond the Ponderosa Ridge when we came upon something wonderful. But that hike started as I quietly went out the back door very early one Saturday morning, it was just about sun-up, when walked quietly under mom and dads bedroom windows sneaking around to the front yard where I whispered to Lonesome;

"Come here Lonesome, Wanna’ go for a hike?" being very quiet, with my hands held flat and low, as to warn him to be slow and quiet; well sometimes it worked.

He jumped up from his vigil at the doorstep and practically ran to the end of his chain to greet me, wagging his tail franticly. As I gently slipped the chain from around his neck, I let it fall right there in place and we were off to the mountains. As soon as we cleared the front yard we ran for the hill before Ponderosa Ridge.

"Let’s go up to the top of Ponderosa, Sam." I stated as we got to the foothill just past Edna road and up to Lark at the foot of the hill.

Lonesome had heard this so many times that he knew exactly what I meant, and he barked in such a way as to let me know he was game to spend the day hiking up there. Hopping up at my side and jumping around all excited at the coming adventure, I exclaimed as we paused and caught our breath.
“Okay Sam, you lead the way. But don’t get too far ahead of me.”

He was off like a shot, climbing up the hill and then stopping where he sat down just short of losing track of me. There he turned his head and barked out an excited bark telling me that if I wanted to keep up with him I’d have to hike a bit faster, as his tail made the dust in the trail scatter out in puffs with each passing wave of the dusting, wagging tail.

“Alright, I’m commin’ hold your horses on. There’s no big hurry to get there anyway!” I shouted as I was catching up, panting hard from the short jog I had just made.

Just as I made it to him, he started to flank me at about three feet from my right side, and we began to climb toward the upper ridge. Within about ten minutes on the trail Sam indicated that he’d found some tracks.

“Well this looks like deer tracks and they’re real recent. It is a big doe Lonesome, an’ she’s not moving very fast.” I observed while Sam nosed down to them in a quick affirmation of her scent.

“Let’s see if we can catch up with her, buy the depth of her tracks it looks like she’s a very big Doe. Maybe she will take us to her favorite area to graze or even to look for her boyfriend. Okay Sam?”

As soon as Lonesome understood that I wanted to follow these tracks he was on the job. Moving ahead with his nose to the ground and poking his head
up occasionally to look ahead and turn to glance at me, then back to the trail. He directed me further along her fresh path.

We'd been following these same fresh Doe tracks, while Lonesome sniffed often at them as we slowly hiked, for nearly half the day. They wandered around the basic trail just off the fire road gradually heading to the distant ridge. Her tracks were so deep into the damp and sometimes wet, fresh earth that she looked to be a very big Deer, the biggest I had trailed. I was quite excited about catching up and seeing just how big she was.

About two hours later, Lonesome stopped near a clearing in the Pine Forest and sat down. In less than half that time we had reached the distant ridge and were on a trail but still not far from the fire road along the Ponderosa ridge.

"I thought you were never goen' to stop. What's that you're looking at Sam?" I quietly questioned as I sat next to him, Huffing while I caught my breath and started to relax.

His nose pointed in the area of the clumps of grass at the far edge of a little clearing as he sniffed the air, ears back and focusing into the grasses. It was the early-middle of spring, and there were large and tall patches of snow here and there, that lingered in the shadow sides of the trees and bushes which kept the ground damp and kind of wet here and there all around us.

There were places surrounding the piles of snow that had little pools of water where the depressions in the ground caught and held the water from the
runoff of slow melting snows. The larger ones had the tracks of various birds that stopped to catch a quick drink and then darted off.

The breeze was slow and cool to the skin, filled with the scent of the thick pine forest. The sun was high and it was quite warm for such a spring day.

From where we were I could see into the clearing and out on the clearing's sunny side about forty feet away, there I could see a hiding doe dear that was lying in the tall grasses, where she barely moved a muscle, if at all. I took a few more short, slow and quiet steps toward the deer, leaning forward as I whispered,

"Ah Sam, now I see, she has a new born-baby, that's why her tracks were so deep. Wanna' take a break here Lonesome? Yeah I'm with you, let's sit an' watch a while. This is wonderful." Lonesome seemed to agree as he started to sit, thumping my side with his tail as he took his seat next to me.

"Hey, careful with that thing, it's nearly a club there Buddy." I sternly whispered while Lonesome literally lathered my face with his thick saliva.

I briskly wiped my face with my arm as we quietly sat there and watched the Doe while she licked and nudged her new Fawn.

It bleated out a sound that was more like a "buzz" than what I might have thought a baby deer would sound like. I had never heard them before, and on this occasion it was bewildering but also intimately delighted me somehow. We both knew that we must be very still to keep from startling her, as we listened to their talking to each other.
Mule Deer Doe, in the tall grass.
The fawn had to have been born here in the tall clump grass clearing.
“Did you hear that Lonesome? Baby deer have a very different voice. Listen, she's talking to it, very softly. Wonder what she's saying?” Lonesome looked up at me and then gave my face another very wet lick as he sat there wagging his tail. Then he quickly turned his attention back to the Doe and Fawn.

This was absolutely wondrous for me, even as I look back and recall it. They were no more than twenty five or thirty feet away from us, and I was afraid to get any closer because I didn't want to scare them.

“Look, the little one is trying to get up and on its feet. It's so wobbly that it looks like it will fall over at any moment. Sure is determined though. Okay, there he's up. Now it is time for the little one to get used to standing. It will be standing for most of its life.” I whispered as I explained to my companion.

This was my very first close up experience with a baby Deer. It was still wet and wobbly on its very long and flimsy legs. From where we sat, I could almost count its white and pink spots. Lonesome and I just sat there while we watched her and her baby for what seemed like a couple of hours.

“Look Sam, the doe is standing up now and the fawn is looking for its breakfast. That is so cute. Wonder how it knows where to find her tit? Must be the same kind of instinct like what our kittens have.” I pondered, while gazing on in wonder.
I could not be sure that she didn't know we were there, but she didn't appear to be looking in my direction or to be concerned with anything else but her new little spotted lanky legged fawn.

I could only presume that the mother must not have known we were there, because as she stood up and nursed her Fawn, she bleated out her soft short humming type grunts. Calming and comforting her new born, making only slow and cautious movements. Only occasionally looking up and around the surrounding area, then back down to her little youngen'.

"Listen Lonesome, she's humming a soft song to her baby while it is nursing. That's very cool, how can people think that they don't have feelings? I just couldn't imagine that. They certainly do have feelings, and we can see that right here." I whispered to my hiking partner.

As I was whispering to my dog, he slowly stood up and started licking my face again, but this time it seemed he wouldn't stop the successions of the wet tongue lathered with thick wet dog spit. It nearly grossed me out,

"Cut that out Sam! Listen, don't you hear her song? She is comforting her baby, that's got to be love. No different from peoples' love or the love you and I have for each other." Wiping my slimy face again as I softly whispered to him. He wagged his tale, softly grunting at me, I'm sure he agreed.

We very quietly continued to observe, listening to the two deer humming to each other. The sound is hard to explain in words on paper. I didn't believe
that Lonesome wanted to spook her, because he seemed to be intent to observe their every movement. Exactly as I was.

Then after the new Fawn had stopped nursing for around ten or fifteen minutes, the Doe slowly stepped off into the forest. She calmly turned and called to her Fawn, as the still wobbly baby deer scampered into the forest with the Doe and disappeared. My God that was a wonderful first time experience, for both of us up there on that ridge.

(That doe completely ignored the afterbirth, something I later learned which was unusual for wild deer to do. Surprisingly, deer usually eat the afterbirth to keep it from being found by carnivores. So I may have actually been mistaken back then and Lonesome and I might have been the reason why she got up and took to the forest when they did. As I recall we had the breeze into our face so the doe couldn't have smelled us, I don't think. Nevertheless, she moved so slowly that it didn't even come to my young mind.)

I thought about following to see where they would finally lay down for the night, but I thought better of that idea. Figuring that if I spooked the Doe she might run and the Fawn could get hurt. No way I wanted that, particularly after witnessing them together and seeing what I believed were the Fawns first words and steps.
Sitting there deep in thought (and I’m sure I was smiling), Lonesome started licking me all over the face again, and I sort of snapped back to reality. Then he bounded off toward the clearing and started sniffing all around his tail raised and goen like a propeller.

“Okay boy I’m bringin’ a towel with me next time! I know there gone now, I was just thinking... Where are you going now? Wait up Lonesome. Wait for me!” I blurted as I started to stand up and make my way toward the clearing.

When I got there, I was only a few yards behind him, I could clearly see that the Doe had birthed the Fawn right there in the tall grasses. It could not have been more than an hour before we got there, if that. The blood was still drying and the mound of afterbirth was still as a “Fresh lump of Flesh”.

“Whoa man, there’s blood all over here. She had to have birthed that fawn right here.” As I said that, I turned and saw my dog was chewing on something. Looking closer I realized it was the lump of flesh.

Lonesome chose to make that lump of flesh his lunch and I did not care to try to stop him. I was eleven then, and figured that if Lonesome didn’t dispose of it, a Bear or a Cougar, (Both of which will eat Fawns), may find it, then decide to follow the scent to find a fresh meal in that Fawn. So I waited until Lonesome was finished and I tried to cover the entire area with a fresh layer of dirt.
“Now that you’re done we’d better clean this up Sam. You lick up what you can an’ I’ll throw fresh dirt on the area.” I explained as I started scooping up dirt and scattering it around the wet areas and the tall-grass.

(I didn’t know at that time, that either predator could still have found “scent” there and followed it to the Deer. I was naive enough to think I was protecting them, even if just a little. But I was still just eleven.)

It took us around another half hour to gather up enough dirt to cover up all the bloody grasses and earth where they had been. But when it was done there wasn’t a track to be found, and all of the clump grass looked fresh and undisturbed. I was quite pleased with the job we had done.

“Well we better get home Sam, don’t want to be late again or we’ll get into trouble. An’ we got a long way to go before we get there. Common’ let’s go Lonesome.” I directed as I headed back toward the trail home.

I had examined the entire area for what seemed at least half an hour after they left, and tried as best as I could to conceal any sign that they were there, and then we headed back down the hill toward home. Fortunately going downhill was much faster than going up. Though we only had just a couple of hours of sunlight left, luckily we made it home faster than I figured we would have.
But we barely made it back home before dark, and Dad's return from work. We had been gone the entire day, and only the last hour of the daylight was remaining when we started for home. So we actually made it home in record time.

I really wanted to tell Mom and Joey all about the new little Fawn, but I had to fight off the desire to say anything, I was afraid that Dad would find out that I had Lonesome out in the Mountains with me again.

And I didn't want to get my back side tanned, so I kept it to myself, until this very writing. Not even Anita knew about this one.

Though Mom knew of some of our hikes, I know that she would have liked this one...
Chapter 15 - Bones Hurt

The second time that Lonesome had real trouble with a bone; it was 1966, when I was twelve. We had some fairly large "T" bones from some Pork Chops Mom had fried, and we gave a few of them to him. He was chomping on them like they were jerky sticks or doggie chew toys, goen' to town on them. Until he got to the last bone.

One would figure that he'd slow down and try to savor the last one while enjoying the flavor or something. Nope, not happening, he was so enthusiastic about finishing it, and maybe getting more, that he tried to swallow it, slightly gnawed but still completely intact. About half way down it turned and lodged in his throat. Then Lonesome started to freak-out. He was literally frantic with distress, I had never seen him act like that before, and it frightened me. I very nearly panicked myself.

"Dad Lonesome is choking in that bone! What should we do?" I shouted with a great degree of fear for him.

"We need to hold him down and find the bone." He said as he got up and headed toward our dog.

Lonesome was choking hard, and we all thought this was the end for him. Then Dad laid him on his side and we felt his throat to locate the bone while he was still choking.
"Feel right there Ricky, there's the bone. It's turned sideways and you can easily feel it." Dad instructed as Mom and Joey looked on nearly panicking themselves.

Lonesome was also panicking trying hard to get up, and it was difficult for dad to hold him down. Feeling the bone, it was turned and it felt like it was just in front of his voice box. After feeling the place on Sam's throat where the bone was making a large lump I said,

"There it is, can you hold him still Dad? Then I can reach in there and get it." I frantically offered.

"Careful he doesn't bite you Ricky. He is panicking and apt to bite from fear." Dad said in Ernest."

"He won't bite me I'm sure, even if he is panicking. But I will be careful." I said as I scouted up to his nose. There was no thought what so ever that he would hurt me, and I knew I had to work fast.

Dad softly spoke to Sam and held him down by his side, while I grabbed his lower jaw with my left hand opening his mouth and, forming my hand into the narrowest pointed shape possible with my fingers all forced together and straight forward, I ran my small right hand down his throat.

"Oh man this is gross, hope I can reach it quick. I sure don't want him to choke to death on my hand" I thought to myself, while nearly crying.
I was really scared, so was Lonesome, and I was almost crying. Lonesome was trying to whimper expressing his own fear. He was hacking while we had him on his side, and he was obviously in a lot of pain. He nearly started throwing up while I slid my hand into his throat.

(I almost cry thinking about it even now, as I write, nearly fifty years later.)

When I finally reached the bone, my entire hand was down his throat and I had to move as fast as I could. Lonesome was starting to get panicky again.

"Got it! Now I got to turn it." I whispered to myself. So I turned it with my fingertips and then started pulling it out carefully trying not to tear up his throat any more. He started hacking again immediately, as I was pulling on the bone with my fingertips.

"It's okay Ricky, go carefully but twist it so the edges are not scraping his throat." Dad instructed as I was doing exactly that.

"I'm trying, but it's hard to... okay there, I got it now." I said as I slightly twisted it and tried to pull it out. After curling my fingertips around the T section of the bone, I could feel his throat muscles tighten as I pulled up on the turned bone.

Keeping it turned in the fold of my fingers I slowly dragged the offending bone out. I moved as carefully and fast as I could without causing any more pain than I had to. Though I knew I had to get it out quickly so he could breathe clearly.
When it finally came out, it was slimy with thick mucus and blood, as was my hand. Lonesome was still choking and hacking for a few minutes. No sooner did I look at it and my slimy and bloody hand, then I turned my head and threw-up all over, it was so gross. By that time, I was crying but not from fear or pain, I was so relieved that I got it out in time that I couldn’t help from crying. (Still...)

"It's okay boy, you'll be alright. The bone is out and you can breathe freely." Dad reassured as he stroked Lonesome on his neck and side.

"What should I do with this thing Dad?"

"Don't let Sam have it, he'll just get it stuck again. Take it outside and burry it someplace."

So I did just that, taking the bone up to the field that was up the block from our yard. There I dug and buried the bone, when I got home our household went back to our regular routine.

It took a while for his throat to heal up and he had so much trouble swallowing after that we gave him broth for several days while he healed. But he did heal-up pretty fast and in no time it was like he had never caught anything in his throat.

(Dad said that he could not have done that because his hands were far too big. This finally made me feel good about being such a small twelve year old, for once...)
For quite a while, Lonesome still ate like someone was going to take his food away from him. So we started feeding him by hand, making sure he would eat slowly one bite at a time. Joey and I took turns doing it, sometimes Mom would too.

This method of feeding him turned out to be a very good training tool, so we taught him to speak on command, to sit, lie down and roll over, and to sit up and beg. He was best at that one, a real ham when it came to begging for food, table scraps, and attention or to get up on the family couch.

(He wasn't allowed to be on the furniture when Dad was home. But if I had him with me in the early weekend mornings, I had no problems with my buddy sitting next to me. Neither did Mom...)

And he was as smart as any eight or nine year old human ever was, he could even sing with me when I sang songs for him. We'd often harmonize together.

The only thing I think he couldn't do is speak English, though he sure understood it and some Choctaw as well. Additionally, his posture and body language was clear communication to me. He was such a special part of my existence and I loved him with all the love my heart could generate, still do.

Most likely because of my young age at the time, I had quite a unique bond with my dog. It actually surpassed any before or since, and I absolutely cherish all of the memories of that time we shared together...
Lonesome was not afraid of Rattlesnakes, matter of a fact, he showed me how easily you could work around them and even catch them. Although I had been catching Snakes for most all of my life, I was a little worried about the Vipers. But not my dog, he would just run around them barking and kicking up dirt at them as he maneuvered around.

Back and forth, he would charge in and dart out around one side then the other, kicking dirt up and out as he moved from one direction to the other around the snake. Always he would stay just outside of the snakes reach, until it became tired and tried to get away. Then he’d grab it by the tail and in one movement flip it spiraling up in the air. Just like he would when he was playing with a section of rope. That surprised the heck out of me, because the snake didn’t bite him.

At first I was frightened for him, but after a while I could see the snake was getting wore out, and then he would grab it by the head, shaking his own head hard side to side as the snake was limp. Then the head would separate from the body, the snake would be dead of course.

This from a dog that had not ever had any contact with snakes, ( to my knowledge,) had to be instinctive. He didn’t show any fear but did display a great deal of caution, though I’m not sure how he knew to kill the snake before it could get away. I believe it was his Wolf instincts.
Most often, the snakes would get tired of all the confusion and try to quickly slip away in any direction that might be open at the time. Oftentimes Lonesome would toss them up into the air like whipping a section of rope many times in a row. As soon as the snake landed, he would be on it and throw it again and again. After a few times doing that they would be so messed up that they were easy to sub-doo or quickly kill, although I didn't always kill rattlers when I came across them, they have their purposes and an important job to do. Sam killed everyone he caught.

I have never seen snakes as something wicked or to fear, there just another of nature's creatures. And everything has a right to be, to exist, exactly as I do. Lonesome thought otherwise, of course.

I cannot understand how anyone could attach the thought of evil or wicked to the person of any of nature's creatures, people just do, out of fear I guess.

(I tend to believe that nothing in or of nature is or even could be evil. But that IF evil truly exists in our world, then I believe it lives within the heart and minds of PEOPLE, animals are incapable of evil thoughts or actions simply because they are animals. Moreover, anyone who thinks or believes otherwise, knows absolutely nothing about nature or animals.)

We ate several Rattle Snakes up there, some caught by Lonesome and some by me. But that is how I found out that Roasted Rattler cooked and smoked over a Mesquite fire is delicious, So is Rabbit and Duck...
One time when some of my cousins were up for a visit I took them out on a hike. Taking a short trail up toward the nearest ridge, there was a Rattler coiled up in the trail that we were hiking on. So, I decided to show them how easy it was to catch one. Cousin Bobby said I was crazy for even trying to catch a Rattler, his brother Art said that he wouldn't come anywhere close to me with that snake. Needless to say, they were both frightened and would not come anywhere near me until after I had tossed the Snake off to the opposite side of the trail.

I thought it was rather funny, but they thought that I was absolutely nuts for even trying to catch, and NOT KILL it. I am sure they both still think that I am completely nuts for such things. Like many other people, they were afraid of just about any snake, let alone a Rattlesnake.

I don't mind that my cousins still think I am a bit crazy, because after all I was raised up in the high country and they weren't. From then on, I would catch the snakes at every opportunity.

This is not necessarily to kill them, but to test myself, and to move them to another area or out of the path, particularly the bigger ones who I considered to be grandparents of the rattlers, and they were to be treated with respect.

Occasionally I would give the smaller ones to the pair of Golden Eagles that I had been watching and feeding, that lived in the area. Because I knew from observation that they loved to catch and eat them. That is, some of the ones that I didn't kill and eat myself, and I have eaten a large number of them...
Had it not been for Lonesome showing me how easily theSnakes could become tired, and then easier to catch, I most likely would not have been quite as brave with a creature that could potentially kill me.

The time of day and the temperature also played a considerable part in how "Frisky" the snake was, but they could all become tired and then easier to catch. When it was cold in the early morning they would sit in the sun on the rocks and were very slow moving so they were easier to catch.

Lonesome was hell on most snakes, particularly the ones that made that buzzing sound...

During the heat of the day they were usually in the shade looking to get out of the sun's heat so I could find them on the under sides of large rocks and logs or the like. I was twelve then...

(Today, even at sixty years of age, I have no fear of catching Rattles, or any other North American species of snake.)
Later on that same year, 1966, I had a few deerskins so I made my first fringed buckskin shirt, which is literally tied together on the sides and under the sleeves by the fringe. I used only three full skins for the shirt.

The front and back were each a single skin that I sewed together by the top ends, where the neck and shoulders of the deer were. The tail end of the skin was at the waist and lower end of the shirt. I cut another full skin in half crossways, evenly from one side to the other. Separating the Head section from the Tail section and then I cut the Tail section of the skin to match the front so they were identical. I did this by laying the head section over the tail section and cutting off everything that the head section did not cover up. This became the sleeves. The shoulder attachments, (fringe and sleeves), and the shoulders are the only areas that are sewn together. All of the extra pieces from the tail section that I cut into a sleeve, I used for shoulder fringe by sewing it in with the sleeves as I attached them to the body of the shirt. [Then cutting or stripping it into fringe.] See pg. 205

The front and back are sewn together at the neck and chest of the deer, or the area across my shoulders, while folding the head segments down like a front and back bib and tacking them into place. Then the pieces for sleeves are folded and centered on the shoulder seam and then sewn together on the front and back.
Fringe is cut on the excess of the sleeves and across the bottom and the sides, I cut the fringe by laying the shirt down flat and after measuring the proper width for my arms, I marked that area with a charcoal stick. Then with each sleeve lying flat, I first marked the center between the cuff and the underarm, at the edge of the section to be cut and fringed. (Follow the directions I'm providing for making the shirt, it is easier than trying to explain in words alone.)

Next, I marked the center between those, making sections of four quarters the length of the undersides of the sleeves. After I did that, I cut each one from the edge of the skin up toward the sleeve right at the mark I made for the proper width of the sleeve.

I cut all of the marks I had made straight up toward the sleeve, until I had four cut sections still connected to the sleeve, and then I began to split each one of these in half until I had cut an entire quarter section that was even fringe.

Then I moved on to the next quarter section and began cutting just like the first, straight up toward the sleeve, stopping at the width marks I had made. All of the fringes were cut the exact same way, first section in half then in quarters, then in eighths, then sixteenths, then thirty seconds and so on, until I had all the fringe cut around the entire shirt. (See example pg 206/207)

Using this method made all of the hand cut fringes come out an even looking width all around the shirt. The natural shape of the skin was seen in the fringe when wearing the shirt or hanging it on a wall, as none of the long ends were trimmed even, just the thickness or width of the fringe was made evenly. It was beautiful, and I absolutely loved it.
That took the longest of the entire process, and my fingers were very sore when I was done. Then the sleeves and the sides are tied together with the fringes at about every four inches or so along the open sides and under the sleeves. This kept the sides and the under arms of the sleeves open to the breeze allowing the body to breathe. Surprisingly enough that shirt kept me warm in the winter and cool in the summer thanks to the ventilation.

It was a very old traditional pattern using the natural shape of the skins in the pattern of the garment. I loved it, and I wore this same shirt every day for over ten years and during all seasons. I made the sleeves long enough to cover my hands, and folded the sleeve ends back like cuffs.

As I grew up, I unrolled the cuffs a little at a time, and they became narrower until I had rolled them completely out and they were no longer cuffs but just the fringed ends of my sleeves nearly nine years later. One of my younger cousins had a collection of twenty-two shells and together we punched an ice pick through the ends and strung them one at a time on about eighteen of the fringes at my wrists. They made a soft tinkling sound when I walked and moved my arms. Though if I wanted to be silent all I had to do was grab the fringes in my hands and they were quieted as I walked or ran.

When I was in my mid twenties I gave the shirt to the son of a friend, with rolled up cuffs, to start it all over again. I would like to know what ever happened that shirt after he out grew it...

*Buckskin makes wonderful clothing, it stretches where it needs to and shapes its self to your body. In all those years, I was rarely without my buckskin. My daily Attire became: Buckskin shirt, Levi-Bells, & Moccasins, with the occasional tee shirt or thermal shirt under the Buckskin. I folded diagonally*
*Step #1*

**Fringe strips for shoulders**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step #1</th>
<th>Fringe strips for shoulders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Head)</strong></td>
<td>2 skins, one on the other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td>Cut both skins here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>a</strong></td>
<td>Cut front skin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>b</strong></td>
<td>Neck matching here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>c</strong></td>
<td>2 skins, one on the other.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Step #2*

**Center line of ease.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step #2</th>
<th>Center line of ease.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Cuff)</strong></td>
<td>Cut and sew front &amp; back across shoulders.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Step #3*

**Whip stitch.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step #3</th>
<th>Whip stitch.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Left Sleeve.</strong></td>
<td>Stitch snugly - not tight.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Step #4*

**Stitch @ shoulder seam on both.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step #4</th>
<th>Left Sleeve.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Center of Sleeve at fold.</strong></td>
<td>Stitch sleeves after folding in half. Start @ shoulder seam on both. Keep sleeve center and straight.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 5.

Start stitching.

Cut sides down and stitch 1 x one side 3 fourths down.

Opposite side is tied closed with four or five buckskin thong ties.

You may also cut these sides into fringes, then tie them every 6 or so inches to close shirt sides.

Step 6. Sew the Shoulder Fringe.

Pomellos on.

Whip stitch fringe. Section over shoulder seam. Stitch firmly. But not tight. (Too tight will cause the seam to pucker and ripple.)

Step 7. Cutting fringe Straight & Even looking.

Cutting even fringe is very important. Do it like this on all fringed sections.

Mark center of area to be fringed - then center of that segment and center of that one and so on, cutting across.

This will take a long time. But it will produce the best looking even fringe all around the shirt, so it is worth the effort.

Sew down side seam to close shirt.

Fold back here for a cuff.

206
Step #8. Tying Side & Sleeves closed with fringes

Just as drawn here, the fringe will have a fairley even look, when done as suggested.

Step #9. Creating a Bib piece for either, just the front or for front and back...

From the front-leg section of the front and back skins, there should be four triangular pieces remaining.

Sew or tie the Bib down onto the reverse of the Back Panel Bib.

You choose the two best & largest ones for your bib patches, tie them into place centered as in example on the left here.

Because Buckskin stretches and re-shapes while in use, I suggest that when the shirt is finished, it is lightly soaked with cool water, put on and worn on your shoulders/body, until it dries. It will shape to fit your body, the slightly stiffened fringe will eventually relax, or you can roll them in your palms until soft.
My Shirt, when first made...

*(Shoulders clearly show—my Inch-border intended
for decoration, which remained undecorated.)*

This exactly was my Shirt.

Because Buckskin shirts can be rather warm in the Summer, the sleeve fringe can be untied, causing the open panels to catch the breeze and funnel it into the shirt.

I deliberately cut the sleeves long and I folded the "cuff"(fringed ends) back on the sleeve which gave a look of "cuffs". As I grew over the years, I rolled them down a little at a time, until there were no cuffs and I was 22. Having worn it for ten years by that time. A few years later, I gave the shirt to the son of a friend with the cuffs once again rolled up. Though I left an inch widthon the shoulder fringe panels un-cut. I had intended to do some bead work there—but I never did...
a red-handkerchief until it was approximately, two and a half, \((2 \frac{1}{2})\), inches wide and tied it around my head for a headband.

From the age of mid twelve until my 18th birthday where I began to wear a black felt Stetson hat instead of the headband, that was me the way I was dressed. Didn’t matter where I went or who I was with, I wore that shirt. Very rarely did I even take it off, though I occasionally slept in it and swam in it, I didn’t wear it in the shower. There were just a few times I was not permitted to dress in that attire, that was only a very few times over the following decade.

Over the years I had adorned my buckskin shirt with several differing segments of beadwork and even quillwork. But the overall pattern and appearance of it stayed the same.

When I became a quick draw gunfighter, doing skits for a frontier town then called "Movie-land Frontier Town" in Colton, California, I had made beaded two and a half inch wide shoulder panels to dress up the appearance. Shortly after that I removed them and used the panels elsewhere, returning the shirt to its original appearance.

[After that, I continued to wear the same shirt well into my late twenties, and have made for myself and warn at least a dozen long fringed buckskin and Elk skin shirts throughout my life. And I have made and sold far more of these traditional shirts than I can possibly count...]

211
CHAPTER 18 - Joey and I hike, Wild dogs

Often times I would spend the weekends at Anita's Ranch in Sand Canyon, sometimes with my brother Joey. Anita used to take us all, including Mom, out on Pick-Nicks, to Jacksons Lake, Table Mountain, or Pick-nick hill near her place. Once we even had our little 'Pic-Nic' at the Big Pines Ranger Station at the crest on Hwy 2 just before Angeles Crest Hwy turnoff to the "Lookout Point".

We always had a blast together and she and Mom became good friends. (I still miss Anita Matthews.) This particular experience is the scariest time that together my brother and I had while returning home, up and over Yucca Ridge from Anita's ranch down in Sand Canyon.

(Also, it was the very last time that he ever hiked with me in the mountains, unfortunately. I included this story because our lives were literally saved due to some things which I actually learned from Sam, before this encounter. I wish that the fear in my brother was different, Joey would have liked some of the things that Lonesome and I found together...)

Once in the early fall of 1967 when I was thirteen, while Joey and I climbed up the canyon and over the mountain at Yucca Ridge, back home from Anita's, we heard a whole bunch of dogs barking and yelping just a ways down the canyon from where we were.

It had taken quite a while to talk Joey into climbing up and over the ridge with me to visit at Anita's Ranch. A matter of
weeks in fact, But when he finally went with me, the trip became nearly a fight for life. The first time I took him we almost didn’t make it back home. I had been trying to get Joey to go up the mountains with me for a very long time, but he was more than hesitant. This time I had a real good reason to take him which might be more to his liking...

"Hey Joey, Anita and Bimmey invited us both to their ranch for the day but they can’t come and get us so we’ll have to hike up over the ridge. It will be just a short hike, but there is a lot that you could see an’ learn along the way. Wanna’go with me?"

"I don’-know, how hard of a climb it is, if it’s too long my knees might start hurting?" he responded as though he was actually thinking about it, (for the first time I might add.)

"Well it’s just over Yucca Ridge, but then we’d have to walk out through the foothills for a little while, so I would guess it would be about an hour or less."

"Could we bring Lonesome with us?" he enquired.

"Well, I don’t think all of her dogs would like that, they might want to fight because it’s their yard. So I wouldn’t want to risk it."

"She got lots of dogs? Couldn’t they just be friends?" He wondered.

"I don’t think it works that way Joey, not with Dogs I mean. They understand things like territory and top dog and things like that. So they
wouldn’t want to be friends with another Dog who just showed up. They would have to fight to figure out who is the strongest, and then they would have to fight to establish an order of authority, you know like who is the next in charge. They don’t just make friends when there are so many of them. Understand?” I tried to explain so he might learn the way of the wolf pack. It would be the same Laws that her dogs would have established, an Alpha or head dog.

"Then that means Anita has a lot of dogs right?” he pondered and continued, "And because Lonesome is a strange dog from someplace else, they wouldn’t like him, right?”

"Yes, very much like that. They might consider him a challenger for the leader of the Pack, like wolves. And that would be enough to start the fight for lead dog.” I explained.

"So we would have to hike with just us, and then after maybe we could take Sam with us another time, Right?” He reasoned.

"Sure Joey, it will be a nice hike up and over the ridge. We could stay the whole day and visit. You and Bimmey could play or maybe hunt rabbits or something. And then we could start back before the sun starts to set. Would you like to do that?”

"Well I don-know, what if we get lost or something? How would we find the way back? I don’t want to be out there in the dark Ricky, I don’t want that.” He stated with certainty.

"Look Joey I go out there all the time and you know that. I have never gotten lost, nor have I gotten hurt after the sun went down. There is nothing there at night that isn’t there in the day time, just a little harder to see some places, that’s all. Besides, I will be there and I won’t let anything hurt you,"
neither of us will get lost, cause’ there is nothing confusing about the hike. We’re just going up and over that ridge, we will go the same way up and back so there is no way for us to get lost. Okay, just follow me and you’ll be alright.” I tried to encourage him.

“Just the same, something could happen Ricky, you don’t know, could be wild animals out there, or monsters or something you haven’t seen yet, you don’t know everything.” He retorted:

“Ok, right, I don’t know everything but I do know the way there and back. I’ve hiked it many times and there’s no crazy critters or monsters just mountains, forest, jack rabbits, an’ lizards an’ things like that, common Joey it’ll be fun, you’ll see.” Practically begging him, I sighed and shrugged, “Well ya goen’ or not?”

“I’m thinkin’ on it just give me a men’it, I ain’t been up there before, an’ I don’t wanna’ to get lost or worse.” He said as he stalled, but by that time I just about knew that he’d go. He was, after all, really thinking about it this time. Before he just said flat out NO, and would go find something else to do before I could continue to ask. So, I was pretty sure he’d eventually go with me and I was more than excited about it.

“Common Joey, you know you want to go, y’er just scared, admit it. Did Bimmey ever tell you about all the cars they have out there? I’m sure that Anita would let you an’ him work on a few of them. Common you’ll have a lot of fun. Honest?” I just about had him reeled in, and then when I got to the cars, His passion, then he started to bite, and that got him.
"Well he did say they had some cars over there, but I thought he was just sayen' that to brag. They don't look like they'd have lots'a cars. I figured Bimmey was just sayen' that, you know, cause' he wanted to trick me or somethin' Like that. You're not just tryin' to trick me are you?"

Then I had him, "No Joey you'll see that they do hav'em. But if you're goen' we got to get goen' soon. Unless you want to go on another time, cause' we're burnin' daytime."

As he thought about it a little longer I could tell that it was the cars that got his attention. Since he was nearly infatuated with cars of all kinds there was a near certainty that he was going.

"Well, were burnin' up day light so if were goen to go we gotta' do it now."

Then he began to smile real big, tilting his head sideways at me he said,

"Okay, I'll go with you. But don't get me lost up there alright?"

"Great! let's get our canteens filled and start up the hill."

As soon as we got across the little highway we started the climb. It was a rather steep hill so we had to go slowly. Zigzagging our way toward the ridge.

"Joey be careful cause' the ground's real loose here. Don't want to lose your balance and slip, you'd be at the bottom of the hill quicker than you'd want to be. Just follow me and step into my tracks and you'll be alright."

"Okay Ricky, didn't you say that it's a short hike and we'd be there pretty fast?" He said, huffing between breaths.
"Yes, but the hardest part is this short climb, cause it's real steep. But when we get to the top of the ridge you'll see that the best part is all downhill. There's a neat long canyon on the other side and at the bottom of it there's a nice cool spring where we can get some fresh water. Spring water is the best, you'll soon see." I explained as we continued to climb.

"Is it far from the ridge, can you see their ranch from there, or is it too far to see?"

"No it isn't far from the ridge, but you can't see it cause there's a few hills between where we will be and they're place. You'll be able to understand better in just a few more minutes. But you will love the view from up there cause' you can clearly see through the desert almost all the way to Victorville, an that's about forty miles. It is really a beautiful scene to look out on, you'll see."

We continued to hike and talk about little things; trees, birds, the view behind us as our house grew smaller, and some of the local critters. Joey liked the Hornet Toads and even caught one during the hike, when we were almost at the ridge.

"Hey there's a road up here. You didn't tell me there's a road up here. Why do they have this way up here, cars can't get up this hill, so what's it for?"

"Well yes, it is called a fire road. And the forestry uses it to find shortcuts to places that might let them head off forest fires. You know, to stop them from spreading." I tried to explain.
“Okay, but how do they get up here, it’s a dirt road an no way to get up to it from the highway way down there?” He puzzled as he pointed back at the distant highway.

“Do you remember where Table mountain is? This dirt road starts way up there behind the big parkin’ lot, an’ that’s where the fire and forestry would get on it at. It is pretty far but this is the only short cut to get down this ridge. Understand?”

As we reached the clearing on the other side of the fire road we could see out across the desert. Joey was as surprised as I thought he’d be.

“Wow, that’s far. You said we could see to Victorville Ricky. I don’t see the town from here all I see is the desert. Were you just tellin’ me that to get me to climb up here?”

“Look over there Joey. Do you see that spot way out on the far edge of the desert where little spots and small squares look like they’re sittin’ on water ripples?”

“Yeah, but there ain’t no water at Victorville. It’s in the desert.” He snapped back, smartly.

“That’s an illusion Joey. It’s where Victorville is, and it just looks like water, cause’ were so far away an’ the heat of the desert makes ripples on the surface of the ground. I guess cause’ there’s a lot of water in the air that the ripples of heat make it reflect like water does or somethin’ like that. They call it a Mirage.” I tried to explain.
"Yeah, I think I heard of that from school. Or maybe it was on a western movie, but I heard of that. This is the first time I seen it for myself, it's pretty cool huh?" He responded as he gazed out at the distant desert.

"Well we gotta' get goen if were goen to get to Anita's. Follow me it's just down that way, through those bushes is the down slope of this hill. We can start down from there. Common' it'll be fun seein' what's in this little canyon." I added as we headed in the downward direction of the ridge.

"Will there be snakes down there Ricky, I don't like snakes, you know. But we used to catch an play with lots a lizards Remember?" Joey asked sounding unsure of himself.

"Yes there's goen' to be some snakes cause they live here an' we're cuttin' through their yard kind'a. But it'll be alright cause they're not gonna' bother us, you'll see. Anita's place is just beyond the hill with twin peaks."

We continued to descend down the mountain and as we passed several of the interesting things along the way I pointed them out so Joey would learn something on the hike. When we got down to the cool spring we stopped and I used that opportunity to show him something else...

"Do you see all those Beavertail Cactus over there Joey? They are full of plump purple fruit an' it's about ready to eat."

"You can eat them? How, without getting your fingers all full of stickers?"
Joey & I Hiking
(my favorite one)
I walked over to the closest cactus and pulled out my knife. Then I carefully cut off one of the prickly pear fruit, scraping off the little clusters of fuzzy cactus stickers so I had a clear place to hold it, then stepping closer to him I started to slice it in half while Joey looked on. As it began to open up and show its purplish-red juicy flesh I said.

"Take a look at this an' you'll see the inside of the fruit. Looks juicy an' sweet huh?"

"Yeah, do you just eat it like that? Or do you gotta' cook it?" he asked.

I pinched up a small piece and put it on my tongue, showing him as I squashed it on the roof of my mouth.

"Like this, an' then suck the juice. Its good, kind'a slimy an' sweet, but pretty good, here try it." I said as I pinched up another for him and he stuck out his tongue to taste it.

"Mm, not too bad. But it doesn't taste like any fruit I ever tasted. Not very sweet, but not exactly bad either." He said with a little squint of his face.

"Well it is a fruit, it's a cactus fruit called a Prickly Pear. An a lot of Indian people eat them regularly. Some folks even make preserves an' jams out of them." I replied, with a smile from watching Joey's expression.

"Sure don't taste like any pear I ever tasted. You sure it's a pear Ricky or are you just callin' it that?"
"Yes, it is called a pear, but it isn't like any pear you know. It is a cactus pear and they call all kinds of cactus fruit 'a Pear' Joey, I didn't just call it that. That is the name of the fruit, honest."

I built a small fire to show him another way to eat them, and then we roasted one a piece on sticks like marshmallows, while burning off all the fine stickers and thorns, he liked that after they cooled down. He even noticed that they tasted sweeter when roasted. Then I put the fire out and we headed on to Anita's.

We had spent the entire afternoon there at the ranch, and stayed so late that I had lost track of time. Anita gave Joey an old car to work on with Bimney.

Just as it was getting toward the late evening hours, I realized that evening was coming upon us faster than I had anticipated. I knew we would need at least an hour and a half of sunlight to make it back over Yucca Ridge and home. We had to hurry just to make it to the canyon, before the sun was too low in the sky to see our way down the trail.

Joey had never hiked over the ridge with me before, and this was his very first round trip. So that made it very important, to me at least. Going up and over previously that morning went well. I was able to show him some of my favorite places. The Beaver Tail cactus that had fully formed with ripe "Prickly Pears" on them were quite good. I cut a few and sliced them in half to show Joey how to eat the purple and red juicy fruit. And he seemed to be fairly comfortable with this first part of the adventure with me, so I was feeling good about it as well.
After spending the day and Joey playin' with Bimmey in all of their cars it was time to head back. Anita even gave Joey that old Fiat car they had so he and Bimmey worked on it nearly the entire time, planning all the wonderful things they were going to do with his car. [They had around five or six old cars that had been just sitting there making homes for the local packrat population].

In a bit of a rush we said our farewells, and set out for Sand Canyon Road toward Trauger’s Turkey Farm. From the farm, we headed up to the ridge. I was very happy with the things I got to show my little brother, and the day’s adventure seemed to be a success. So much so that I was anticipating taking him with me out on the higher ridge above our house, out to my favorite places. And we talked about the possible future hikes along the way back.

[Unfortunately that hike never happened.]

While we hiked back home toward Yucca Ridge, I told him about hiking all of the other ridges and secret places I had explored. I was hoping he might be interested in exploring with me. We were making good time getting back to the canyon, so we stopped at the little spring to rest at the bottom of the hill, and refill our canteens before we started to climb up to the ridge.

"There's a lot more to see over on the other ridge, an' if we packed a snack for the trip we could spend the entire day in the mountain forest," I suggested, hoping that he would be interested.

Joey looked up at me and said, "Could we take Lonesome with us Ricky?"

"Sure. I take him with me a lot anyway. He has been to all of my favorite places. I'm sure he'd love to go with us." I smiled, as I knelled down submerging my canteen in the cool spring water, bubbling and gurgling as it filed.
"Could we go over to the mudslide? I think that would be cool."

"Well, it would take almost half of the day to get there, but if we’d start out early, we could do it." I stated with a big grin, delighted at the thought.

Then Joey filled his and we sat for a few minutes longer, looking around as I pointed out various features of the area.

After sitting there talking for about ten minutes, I heard a bunch of dogs yapping from somewhere near the bottom of the canyon we were in. *Wild Dogs*—I knew what it meant, Joey did not hear them.

Calmly I turned to my brother and said, "It’ll be getting dark soon, so we should head up now, Joey."

"Okay, how much longer to the ridge?" Joey asked as we stood up and started hiking.

"Shouldn’t take too long. Not far from here. But, if we don’t hurry it may start getting dark before we get there." I urged, just to get him moving a little faster.

We kept up a decent pace and we hustled up the canyon. Then Joey heard them. "What was that, D’ju hear that? I heard something down there." He motioned behind us.

I didn’t want my little brother to worry so I said,

"Sounds like some dogs, maybe Trauger’s dogs have caught our scent and are barking at us from the bottom of the canyon. We should keep gone."

"Do the Trauger’s have a lot of Dogs?"
I shrugged my shoulders, "Don't know, but they'd prob'ly need several to chase off the Coyotes, so they don't kill the Turkeys."

Although I know, the Trauger's had only three dogs. I had to keep Joey moving and as calm as I could. So to coax him to move faster I said, "The ridge is only a short distance up there, wanna' race to the crest?"

"Yeah, but you can run faster. Give me a head start?"

"Sure, I'll count twenty. Then I'll go - Okay?"

"You're on!" He shouted as he started running with a smile on his face.

I jogged to allow Joey to get a longer lead on me, and then I started running harder. Seeing me coming faster, Joey started giggling and digging in as he was climbing the loose ground in the middle of the slope. Then we both heard a whole bunch of dogs. They sounded like they were hot on our trail and running our way.

Joeys eyes grew wide as he said, "D-ju' hear that? Trauger's got that many dogs?"

"I don't know, that might not be Trauger's dogs." I responded.

We both know about Wild Dogs, but I couldn't stop and explain to Joey the urgency of our situation, although I'm sure he had some idea by this time.

"Listen Joey, we gotta get up an' over that ridge, now." I explained.

"Can't we just hide somewhere, till they go away?" He asked as tears started to well up in his eyes.

"No Joey. They'd find us where ever we hid out here. We've got get up an' over that ridge. Let's Go!"
Both of us were scared. We had heard about people being killed by wild
dogs out in the desert. With some very gruesome details. So to keep Joey
moving and somewhat confidant I kept my fear in control and hidden as much as
I could.

"Look! It's right up there, not half a football field away. You've run a lot
farther than that before. Follow that outcropping of rocks for solid footing, and
I'll be right behind you, Okay?" I suggested as I pointed to a rocky point to the
right.

"I'm scared Ricky. Are they gonna get us?"

"Nah, we got a good lead on them, but we gott'a keep goen."

Joey struggled to quickly get through the loose shale between us and
the outcropping of boulders. Once he got there, he started moving much faster.
Sending him around the far side, so he wouldn't see the dogs until he got nearer
the top of the ridge. I went around to the left side, I was on the same side of
the rocks as the dogs, but Joey couldn't see them through the boulders. I was
hoping that if they actually caught up with me, that I could fend-them-off long
enough to give Joey a chance to get away.

"You go that way around these rocks, an' I'll go this way. We'll meet at
the ridge - Okay? Get movin!"

"Okay, but I don't wanna'split up. You come with me." Joey demanded,
fighting back tears that were already in his eyes.

"It's alright. This will be faster. You got good footing over there an' can
quickly reach the ridge. Okay?"
So, he headed around his side of the boulders, and I started around mine. From the canyon below we could hear the dogs. They were very loud and definitely in pursuit. I could tell that they were at the spring where we just were.

"Hurry Joey. Don't look back. Just keep goen. I'll see you up the ridge."

I yelled, hoping he'd hear me over the dogs.

As I neared the crest, I saw Joey coming around the stone outcropping. He was about ten feet below me, when we both could hear and see that pack of dogs through the trees.

"Keep goen, y'er almost there. Don't look back. Just keep climbing!"

Just as he got to where I was, we both looked down the canyon. There, through a wide clearing between the trees, we clearly saw all of the dogs. They were about forty yards from us, and running fast.

"Okay. We made it this far. Now we need to go down the other side. Hurry Joey!"

"Are we gonna' make it Ricky?" There runnin' real fast. "Joey pleaded, with water trails on his little cheeks.

"We'll be alright. We can go downhill a lot faster than they can. I'll show you. Okay?"

[At first I wasn't so sure, but once we reached the other side of the ridge I knew for sure that we were going to be alright, down was a breeze.]

"Okay, but there commin' faster." He hollered with tears flowing down his cheeks.
We went over the ridge, crossed the fire road and started down the other side. Getting to the slope, I said,

"Joey, jump like I do. Land in the lose piles of shale, and ride them like skiing. Keep your footing and you'll slide twelve or fifteen feet each jump." I hollered as we reached the best place to start our sliding descent.

"Okay but don't get ahead of me, Alright?"

"Alright, Get movin' Joey, we don't have time to waste."

As we literally slid down the steep lose slope, the tension lightened, and Joey started to laugh. You have no idea how relieved I was when we made the bottom of the mountain. That was the fastest decent I had ever made down from the ridge.

"That part was fun. Could we do it again at another time?" Joey said with a big grin on his tear and dust stained face.

"Yeah-sure. See I told you we'd make it. Let's get across the highway. We'd better be in our backyard before dark."

As we crossed the two-lane Highway, we could see the dogs bunching up at the ridge crest. A few of them started to descend down the slope, but started wobbling and sliding down, and then they had turned back for the ridge.

I pointed back up to the ridge,

"Look Joey. See they can't come down where we did. So they're all turning back."

"Yeah, how come? They were right behind us. Could have caught us. Why can't they come down?" he asked rather puzzled.
"Because they have four legs. They'd have to come down head first. And cause' the shale is so loose, they're afraid, they're afraid they'd tumble down. So they have to back track to find an easier trail or quit all together. That's why."

Joey frowned, "Did you just make that up? Or did you already know it?"

"Well, I told you Lonesome hikes with me. He can't go down slopes like that, but he can climb near rock ledges and outcroppings. So yes, Lonesome taught me that." I explained.

"Hey, that's really cool. Can he teach me?"

"Sure, just do like Aunt Maxiene said. Take him hiking and watch what he does. That's all." As we casually strolled into our backyard, we looked back at the ridge. They were gone. Not one dog could be seen.

"I guess they couldn't find another trail, so they had to give up!" Joey exclaimed smiling ear to ear.

"Yep. Guess so. Let's wash our face before we go in. Don't want Mom to think we've been eating dirt." [Or crying in fear, I thought to myself.]

Joey and I both knew "Wild Dogs" (Farrell) are dangerous, they do not fear man or fire, and they know their strength is in their numbers. All we could do was beat feet to try to reach the ridge and over it before they could catch up with us.

During the sixties there were several instances of wild dogs attacking people in the foothills and around the area of Pheland, the little community in the desert at the bottom of the foothills.
situated at the edge of the Mojave Desert. We were never as on guard for them as we were thereafter, and I never had a closer encounter with them. But that didn't matter to Joey. Fortunately, we made it back and we never told anyone about it, as far as I know this is the first telling. I'm sure I will write about this one again sometime.

After that Joey never went anywhere in the mountains with me again. No matter how much I pleaded, he would not go. I even had to talk him out of telling Mom and Dad about it. But, he never did as far as I know.

Brother Joey doesn't remember this but, I remember teaching him the alphabet and how to count when he was two, how to tie his shoes when he was three, and working with him using the very same flash cards that mom did with me. They had simple math and spelling examples. When I was four years old, Mom had worked with me using the same cards for two years. I did the same for Joey when he was three and four.

When I started into school, kinder garden, I was four. That was three months before my fifth birthday, so the school let me enter early. Then I continued to use the flash cards with Joey for another year.

But he doesn't remember any of it, such a shame. I had a lot of fun with him then. Here he thinks he should have been advanced a grade in school, rather than me. That may be my fault because I told the teacher that he was copying off of my papers, so they separated us by one grade, me in third and he second.
In the mountains where I spend most of my time, I learned by observation of the ways and habits of the animals and nature. Lonesome showed me how to track and follow a trail, even how to check the wind and sneak-up on things or places without being seen or heard.

He's the smartest Dog I've ever known, and he seems to understand me when I speak to him. He was much better than, Rin-Tin-Tin, or Lassie, because Lonesome is very real. I remember well all the food plants and medicines Grandma and Uncle John taught me.

I remember how to make several types of traps for game, I can tan hides, (squirrel was my first), and I can make all the tools I'd need for survival including fire for warmth, cooking, and safety, but none of all that will stop a pack of "Wild Dogs." If they were to tree me I could die of exposure, and dehydration, they could easily out wait me, and or overtake me at a run.

So I had to always keep their presence in mind. That pack was at least 60 animals or more, I didn't take time to count them. Though I saw many different kinds of dogs, Shepards, Hounds, Great Danes, Bull Dogs, Wire Hair Sheep Dogs, Large French Poodles, Blond and Spotted floppy eared dogs of several breeds and many more. All of them were the larger breeds, though there were some mid-sized as well.

Down in the valley, in the town of Pheland and into the Mojave Desert, the wild dogs are shot on sight because they are such a danger to people and their pets, but very few actual packs really exist, most run the canyons near Trauger's Turkey Farm, Sand Canyon, and the rolling hills around Pheland or out toward Pear blossom. (The canyon we were hiking up was behind Trauger's ranch. I was 13 and Joey was only 11. This was one of the few
times that I went out in the Mountains without Lonesome, and it convinced me that I didn't need to be out there alone.

Not in the high desert mountains any way. So when I went over the hill to Anita's thereafter, I chose a different way each time. Not always relying on the same path. And surprisingly enough never ran into the dog packs again.)

Many times in my young mind I tried to figure out what it was that prompted abandoned dogs to become feral, I mean how they could ignore their first instincts and turn away from their desire to please or to companion with people. I might have understood if they were all tortured and drastically mistreated before they were abandoned, or before they ran away to find a better place to be. I mean, I would if in their places, I thought. Sure some may have been abused but surely all of them had not been.

I just couldn't fathom all of those wild dogs actually being victims of that kind of severe abuse. I just didn't want to believe that all of those onetime pet owners could have given all of those beautiful dogs reasons to turn wild.

So in my mind there had to be more, something deeper or more intense. Heck, I was severely mistreated in my early childhood by persons outside of my family, but I didn't become feral or abandon all my natural instincts to become a companion with dogs and or nearly all other animals.

As a matter of fact I have, for as far back as I can remember, I always loved all animals, but particularly Dogs and cats. I just don't feel that way about all people, in fact, I never did like or trust people in general. People most often seemed to have a hidden reason for making contact or approaching me, and that made them un-trustable in my book. Very few humans were worthy of my trust when I was a child, and I didn't waste much time trying to befriend them, but all
animals were worth giving a chance. I guess that is one I shall never figure out, even to this day...

Earlier that year Mrs. Brown had given me a straight hunting knife with a sheath, telling me, "A good Indian or Woodsman is never without a good knife; a tool for survival." She heart-fully expressed as she handed me the beautiful hunting knife.

I, of course, loved it and carried it for many years nearly every place I went. By this time, I could make a "Strike Fire" or a "Friction Fire" so I don't need matches and this gift is the completion of my "survival" tools. At one time during my young life, I had carried at least three and sometimes as many as five knives on my person.

Usually I carried them if or when I went hunting, and because I had been practicing throwing them and had become fairly accurate. Although, I don't recommend hunting squirrels with a knife, unless you are prepared to climb the tree that you pin it to. I have, and after a few times it quickly becomes a big pain in the backside...
Not quite a year later, I believe in the very early or mid-spring of the year 1968, [I had just recently found Bobbie and she was still a little kitten] I was taking Lonesome for a short after dinner evening stroll with my bicycle and his long chain. I had taken his chain and tied it to the gooseneck of my bicycle so he could run ahead of me and pull me along when he wanted to go faster. It also made for a nice ride up hill without having to pedal the bike.

I figured he could pull me around the apple orchard for a while and get in a good run as well. Then on the way back, I decided to take a short-cut back home taking Snowbird lane up to Mt. View Avenue, around to the back way into my yard.

My street, Evergreen, was pretty steep and Mt View was a gradual slope so that would be an easier pull for my dog. I did that a lot to keep from over working or over heating him, and to cruse past Lendy’s house of course. I still liked her a lot so it was a good excuse to say hi. I thought anyway, didn’t turn out that way though.

Lendy was one of the young ladies who I was teaching to write in Indian Pictograph, and I kind’a liked her a lot. We would even write notes back and forth to each other during the weekdays at school. Pretty cool because no one could figure out what we were saying.

So Sam and I made the turn off-of Acorn road onto Snowbird lane and then Lonesome and I started our way up Snowbird...
Sam putting me on my bike.
"Common Sam, it's getting late so we'll take a shortcut up Snowbird. We gotta' get home before sundown an' we still gotta' see our girl, Right?". I hurriedly stated as I looked and saw the sun begin to set upon the hill at Ponderosa ridge. [That meant that we had about twenty minutes before it became dark.]

As Lonesome and I were walking from Snowbird lane up toward Mt. View, we passed by the Karton's place, and their Husky Dog "King" came charging out into the street and attacked Lonesome, who was more than happy to oblige. Then a major fight ensued between the male dogs, I guess for dominance and certainly some degree of Sam's protecting me from another attack. He did that kind of thing while with me in the mountains frequently and I loved him for it.

"Sam, look out! Here comes another dog, and he's not looking very friendly!" I shouted as I was heading for the other side of the street, and peddling harder.

I was at that exact time trying to ride faster on my bicycle, and I immediately had to hop off while the bike was still moving. From there I tried to keep the bike between me and the mass of flaring teeth and fur that was right next to me.

"Careful Sam, he goen to get your front leg! Look out! No! Stop, Stop!" I screamed, as they literally tore into each other.

While Lonesome was chained to the gooseneck of my bike he couldn't run or move farther than about eight to ten feet, the other dog had promptly
charged out into the middle of the street and attacked both of us. No matter what I did or how much I yelled, the dogs were not about to stop fighting.

Then Randy Karton, (whom was my little brother Joey's age), came running out into the road trying to break the fighting dogs up. He got bit on his calf muscle in the process as he screamed out to his brothers.

"Here comes Randy, Lonesome, stop! Come here! No Randy, don't get in the middle of them, let them finish! They're not going to kill each other! Awh, Now you done-it', an' got bit for not listenin'! That's not very smart!" Said I, as the dogs were tiring and their exertion started looking like slow motion.

The wound in Randy's leg started gushing dark blood when he went down to his knees and rolled to the side of the street. There was no doubt that it hurt, the pain was etched in Randy's eyes as he cried out.

With the bike between the two dogs and myself, I could not clearly see which dog had bitten the boy. But as he rolled away the wounds were apparent and deep. With the fire of intense anger in his eyes he glared up at me and screamed out...

"You sonovabitch! Get your Got-damn demon dog off of my dog! You got no reason to be here. Get the hell out of here now!" Demanded the freshly wounded enraged boy, shouting through his clenched tightly teeth.

Lonesome and Karton's dog, "King," were both Dominant Males and neither would stop until one of them was beaten. It is "The way of the Wolf Pack," and a Law of Nature. Randy's older brothers Tom, Kenny and Stan came
running out of their house yelling obscenities at me and threatening to kill my dog if I didn't stop them.

"Berg, get your freggin' devil Ker-dog out of here! I'm Going to get my gun and kill him if you don't leave right now!" Ordered the older brother, Tom, while dragging his little brother further off to the side of the road.

But at that time I couldn't actually do anything, neither of the dogs paid any attention to me. *(Their dog was losing anyway, and if they would have waited another two minutes, it would have been all over with.)*

In my defense, I tried to tell them that Lonesome and I were walking on a Public Road and THEIR Dog attacked us, while pointing out the chain my dog was on, which was also tied to the goose neck of my bicycle.

"Move NOW goddamned you, get!" he screamed as he lunged for me.

But none of them were listening to me, and then Tom, who was more than twice my size, charged forward and pushed me backwards by my upper chest and shoulders. As I stumbled back a few steps and Lonesome started to lunge back at Tom.

Sam had by then stopped beating-up "King" the Karton's poor dog. Upon which King ran back into his own yard and up toward their front door.

"No Lonesome, Stop, Stay!" I shouted in all the Command my little voice could muster.

"You better control your Damned mutt before I kill it!" Demanded Tom as he started to back-up toward his younger brother.
"Hey, what the hell can I do? You're damned crazy flea-bitten deranged mutt jumped us, we were on the Public road and not in your yard or on your property!" I pleaded.

"Get out of here! Damned you! Or I'll kill it. Do you hear me?" Tom said as he lunged forward and pushed me from the other side of my bike.

"No Sam, Don't! He'll hurt you!" I shouted to my dog as he bolted for Tom the second time. All I could think of was that big bear up on the ridge, and Sam was sounding just as fierce as he was back then.

Tom stumbled backward as Lonesome lunged all the way to the end of the chain. At which time was still wrapped around the Goose Neck of my bicycle and there also wrapped around Sam's body from the tussle with King. I could clearly see the terror in Tom's eyes as he shuffled backward, nearly tripping on his own feet.

Then Lonesome's chain jerked the gooseneck so hard that it nearly jumped from my grip, had I not had both hands firmly on the handlebars leaning it backward toward me, I wouldn't have been able to hang on to it.

Then Tom yelled out again that he would kill my Mutt if I didn't control him. Just then, Mr. Karton, their father, came running out of their front door while ordering the boys back into the house. Whereupon he pointed outward and faced me saying,

"Listen Kid, You get your little ass away from here! I'll be talkin' to your father about this, count on it! And you're paying for Randy's medical, whatever
is the cost on that as well! You'll hear from the authority's tomorrow count on it kid I, now get gone!"

Mr. Karton sternly ordered me to go home. He told me to expect a visit from the Sheriff. While I was still standing in the middle of the road, I said I would do just that as I tried to explain,

"Sure Mr. Karton, but I done nothing wrong! I was just walking my dog and your dog attacked me out here in the street. He was just protectin' me, honest!" I tried to explain to him before I rode up the road with Lonesome in Tow. Lonesome didn't like that man either, no more than his kids anyway. And then I hustled as fast as we could to get home.

All the way home I was worried that Tom and his brothers would try to kill my dog and I hoped that my dad would help me to protect Lonesome. Throughout the near fifteen minutes it took us to get home, I considered various ways to tell dad about what had happened.

But as I got to the front door the only way that seemed to be the best way was to tell him the truth, as the events happened. Getting back home, now after dark, I told Dad about what had happened that had made us so late, and he had me bring Lonesome in for the night, just in case the Karton boys had some idea to make good on their threats. I was relieved that dad was accepting of my retelling of the events, and that he would let Sam stay indoors for that night.

The next day the Sheriff did indeed show up Mid-Saturday morning, and after listening to me and Dad explaining the incident he decided...
"There's no way to prove that your dog provoked the fight, and you both were on a public throughway, (his words not mine), with your dog on a leash or chain. So, it looks very innocent." He went on to say...

"And there is no way to prove which dog actually bit Randy, could have been either of them in a fight. So I'm ordering a 14 day Quarantine for both dogs, until the medical report is in. Doesn't look like responsibility can be put on anyone, just the dogs, an, dogs sometimes fight. You did the right thing by stayin' out'a it Ricky, but you should have called just as soon as you got home. So next time remember that, huh?"

(Now I'm pretty sure that these are as close to the exact words the Sheriff said as I can remember, though I can't say Positively that they are exactly-word for word. It is what a fourteen year old understood him to have said at the time and therefore what all I remember.)

Nothing else came of the incident, except that Lonesome's Quarantine seemed un-ending, and their dog King was never chained up even through the supposed Quarantine. I walked by their place many times after that, and King always gave me a hard time just walking down the road. Though he never attacked me out in the street again.

The Elders once told me that if my dog did not like or trust someone, that I shouldn't either. Lonesome never trusted Randy and all his brothers.

I believe it was because Dogs know and can detect a bad or wicked heart in people: And Lonesome Sam did not like any of the Kartons', not any at all.
This was just before my Uncle Leon came down and picked me up to take me up North to Clear Lake, at Grandma and Grandpas' property for the summer. Lonesome and I didn't get out together much that summer because I came back by the first of September and had to enroll in Seventh grade.

When I came back I tried to make up for all the time I had missed with Sam, but the winter season was coming on rather fast, so our mountain trips were necessarily shorter and closer to the house.

This next Chapter in this story started while I was up North, but it includes my dog so I include it here.

Additionally, "Karton" was not this family's actual name ; I invented it for a cute substitution, comical isn't it ?

Though this family is indeed real and I am quite certain that if they read this they will most certainly remember this incident, all of them, I spare them the embarrassment of revealing exactly who they are...
CHAPT. 20—Lonesome’s son Danny

My neighbor one lot down and across the road in 1967 and 68, was Tom F. Patrick; he was also one of my close friends at the time. We were as close as any of my friends there ever were, and therefore we got into quite a bit of trouble together, as teens often do. His sister Mary was, or at least claimed to be, one of my sister Sue’s friends.

They had a female wirehair Sheep dog that got tangled up with Lonesome. In that summer, they made Puppies. We got the only one that they couldn’t get rid of. All of them but one looked like Lonesome, and we got the only one that looked like the mother.

(There are several dogs in that little community still that are Sam’s descendants, but Danny is the only one we raised...)

Danny was so ugly he was cute, and I loved him. We named him Danny Boy, after the song and our first Doggie from when I was six to just after nine.

I used to sing to both of them that old Irish melody, and he’d help me with the high parts, just couldn’t get him to put them where they were supposed to go so he sang the high notes through the entire song. We were quite a pair at times to be sure.

Anyway, in early 1968, when Danny was about eight months old, he came down with what looked like Distemper. I isolated him from all of our other pets and nursed him through it using an old Indian herbal and mineral remedy mixed with his food.
I had to force feed him at first, and clean up the mess later. He was so sick; his nose was cracking, hot and dry all the time. His mouth and nose ran with globs and streams of mucus that resembled puss which smelled like rotting flesh. Up there in the mountains we had nothing resembling a Veterinarian, so we had to do our own medical support for our pets, and often our-selves as well.

Then, days later, he started lapping up the soupy mixture, as good as he could. That is when it started looking like he might make it. He was still going into Seizures whining and groaning while tensing all of his mussels, and it was terrifying for me at times. But the episodes were becoming less frequent. It took the better part of three weeks before he showed any real signs of improvement. But he was never exactly the same doggie after that.

Danny was always a very playful, happy and frisky little doggie, but he was kind of loopy and even wobbly like he was dizzy a lot when we played together. He never actually fought with Lonesome, his father, but they did argue from time to time. And it was pretty fierce to witness the challenge, until Danny would back down and yield to his dad.

Although when he did fight ANY other dog, he was frighteningly Fierce, as though he was fighting for his very life. I have never before or since witnessed any dog that fought more fiercely, he even scared me sometimes. And I have watched Pit Bulls fight. But he'd never hurt anyone, though if he was protecting me or the family. He could make ANYONE-ELSE believe he was as fierce as an old Grizzly Bear.
Extremely frightening, he was at times. But I always knew he loved and
trusted me explicitly, we had an amazing connection and I could merely yell his
name and he’d stop whatever he was doing and look up at me like he was saying,
“What? Do you want to play now? With his long lolling tongue hanging out the
side of his gaping jaws and the same smile his father could produce while his
wire ears were perked up. His anger and mood was so quickly changed even
reversed merely with the sound of my voice, that it was most surprising...

Though this second Danny, (our first doggie was named Danny also, as I
mentioned), was rather loopy, he survived the Disease—, and was there after
the eight month old Puppy he was when he came down with the often fatal
affliction. Danny lived for almost ten years, he died in Fontana California in his
sleep, while chasing Rabbits in his dreams. It was around the mid to late 70’s,
and I think his heart just quit beating. He was a good doggie, and as good a
friend to me as his father was, I loved them, very much. I still do...

(I included this story of Danny so the readers will know that Lonesome
had a son, actually three more. This one we raised with his father, and Lonesome
and he were buddies for a long time, even though poor Danny was kind of a ding-
bat at times, they were good together. And Danny had a lot of heart for both
his dad doggie and for me his people daddy. I never knew any animals that ever
gave me even near the same degree of love, friendship or protection than
Lonesome Sam and Both Dannys’...)

The Tribal Elders, when I talked to them about it, said that it was
Danny’s time to go and the Creator honored him by letting him run and chase
that Rabbit all the way into the next world. I’d like to believe that is true,
because as hard as his life was, I think he deserved to just go to sleep and wake up in the next world to chase Rabbits as far as they would go...

The tribal elders told me that our dogs can see into the next world, and often when they are looking off into what we would perceive as "the distance," they are seeing something in that other realm. We were told that during the night or the daytime, if our dogs are barking and or growling at the distance, and we can't see what it is, they are seeing what we cannot. They never bark or growl at nothing, there is ALWAYS something there. That if they don't like someone, whether or not they may be your friend, you should be careful how much you trust that person. And I believe that ALL they have told me is true...

Denny: Chassin' Rabbits into the heavens.
Many Years later, when I was 21, in the summer of 1975, while I was working in Reno Nevada at the Mape’s Hotel and Casino, and driving back and forth from Reno Park out near the state line. I had a very troublesome bad dream. It was so realistic that it tore me up and I woke up crying. I dreamed that my dog Lonesome had died an extremely agonizingly painful death, and the particulars of his death were an extremely painful experience for me as well.

With-in the reality of my dream, my family and I were living in the suburbs of Rialto near San Bernardino California. There was darkness all around, there were no sounds of the birds which were usually present, there was nothing that made any sound what so ever, though I clearly was at the house there on Pepper street. Silence all around, it was almost haunting and cold. I was sleeping in the futon bed I had when I was a teenager. Hearing a sound that equaled the moan of an animal in dire pain, I got up out of the bed and walked into the next room. There in the corner on the floor was my buddy, he was rolled up in a fetus type of position and whimpering as he trembled from the agony. I knelt next to him and he looked up at me, I tried to stroke his brow and comfort him, but my hand went right through him.

It was as though either he or I was a ghost, and I couldn’t tell right off which. I could feel the agony that was in Lonesome’s gut, and then I doubled over in pain right beside him. I couldn’t speak not even a whisper, all I could do was to groan in the agony of the intense sharp pains ripping through my intestines. Sam groaned and I immediately felt a lightning bolt of the searing torturous heat as
it ripped through me. The agony was unbelievable, I cried out with a groan the same as Sam's. Doubling up into a much tighter ball of molten flesh, afire with the intensity of lava churning inside of my body, again I groaned out from my pain. Yes it was, my pain, and we were both having the exact same experience of the moment. Lonesome then arched his back spreading out his four limbs with toes spread wide, groaning and howling out at the same time. Then there was nothing, He collapsed and so did I. At that same exact time, I awoke sweating profusely and soaking wet, still in the doubled up ball of flesh from my dream.

My face was wet as I woke up crying and I almost couldn't stop. Moments later the alarm clock went off and I had to get to work. I was living out at Reno Park near the California border just off of Highway 395 and it was getting late. There was still a twenty minute dive just to get to Reno and the Mape's hotel and casino where I worked, as a waiter in the Coach Room.

I had no time to waste, and arrived nearly ten minutes late for work. This dream was so vivid and realistic it was as though the event was happening right in front of me, then like it was happening directly to me. Upon being awakened by my alarm clock, and snapped quickly out of the experience, I had to sit there and regain my bearings. And then I recalled that I had to be at work. Trembling as I Prayed that I would not be late, I rushed to get dressed and headed out the door, still sweating and crying from the terror.

I didn't feel well the entire day, I had an uncomfortable feeling in my gut and deep distress over the possibility that it seemed so real it was actually happening to me. Throughout the whole day I couldn't pull my heart together with anything resembling thoughts of coincidence or "just a dream." I had felt it
all, and my stomach muscles were sore from the intense contorting and twisting in the dream.

When I got home from work that evening, I called Mom and she told me that Dad had gone up to Lyttle Creek to Burry Lonesome in the mountains that he loved. I about fell over, as she was speaking on the phone, my dream was True, Painfully True in all of its explicit details. She said that our dog had been poisoned by the neighbors behind us in Rialto, and that he lingered on in pain and agony for several days until he finally died in Dads arms, on the floor right next to my old bedroom. And there Dad cried for a long time, at 649 north Pepper, Rialto.

I immediately dropped everything and I drove down to the Rialto and Fontana area. Dad wouldn’t tell me exactly where he buried Sam, just the Canyon. I never understood why. Lonesome was eleven years old, and would have been twelve, that year. I felt crushed that I was so far away that I couldn’t do anything for my buddy or my father. I should have been there.

Dad laid our Beloved friend and family member, (my buddy), to rest just inside the ridge at Lone Pine Canyon. In, and between there and Lyttle Creek. The very canyon that was the back way up and into the place where we used to live. That is all I was privileged to be told...

(To this day, I think that Dad did not tell me where he buried Lonesome because he was afraid that I might try to take some souvenir off of our Dogs body, “a certainty that he did not know me at all,” if he felt that this truly was my intentions. But I guess I will never truly know now because they both are gone. Dad left this world in May of 2009, and I shall miss them both for the rest of my life ...)
Just as soon as I could, I drove up to the ridge Dad told me about, the dirt road up and behind a place called "Dunham's Bar," at Lyttle Creek. It had burned to the ground a few years earlier, but it's foundation was still there as was the camp grounds that was behind the place. While I was up there on the far ridge, I sang some songs for him, the ones we would sing together when I was a little boy, and then also. That ridge was the same one that went all the way to our old home, and became Ponderosa Ridge above our old house. There and then I cried, I cried long and hard, my heart was forever deeply wounded in many ways.

Many times, I could have sworn that I heard him barking like he was calling to me, and I also believe that I caught a glimpse of his spirit, down there in the canyon. I was up there for a few hours at least, and tortured myself with agony over my not being able to be there or to have helped him.

It was well after dark when I started back, with my heart broken and heavy with sorrow. I wish I could have been there for him, as he was there for me so many times throughout my childhood. In My heart, I will always miss him...

There were several other experiences that we shared together, Lonesome and I. And maybe I will write some more of them down sometime, but these are some of the most memorable. We ran around those mountains for years together, not always every day, but there was not a week that went by, which we had not been on at least one long hike and or two short ones. We both loved those Mountains, and easily knew every path and animal trail there for at least seven miles in any direction...
Authors NOTE:

My quaint little town, which is still nestled within the vast grandeur of that mountain canyon, has changed significantly over the decades since I lived there. They have turned what was to me a very viscous and hated community of self-righteous arrogant & heartless excuses for human beings, into a delightful community that virtually caters to the needs and even the desires of their greatest salvation.

That being the "Tourist and Adventure seeking hobbyist" of the year-round mountain experience. Though the town's people still have much to learn about respectful treatment of those within their own community, truly they have come a long way toward their humanity.

This is, I believe, the absolute best I can possibly say for my once tormenting community in the day's long gone by. We can all learn to excuse and forgive our little misfortunes, from time to time, can't we?

I haven't actually been back there, as I am certain that there are a few who would still remember me and I would not want all of that hatred and humiliation to begin all over again.

Maybe one day I will return, but that is up to fate or happenstance, I don't plan to stir the Coles of a long dying flame.
Suffice it to say that; IF YOU, MY READER, DESIRE TO SEE FOR YOURSELF THIS LITTLE DELIGHTFUL VILLAGE, all you need do is follow the directions I've carefully laid out within the pages of my story and you will indeed end up on the main street of that little town. Which is still nestled in the middle of the Swarthout valley, at the foot of Wright's Mountain, as it was this Mormon family, known as the Swarthout's, that the valley was named after, and this mountain that the town was. It was once the hunting and gathering lands of the Serrano Indians, who were nearly driven into extinction, their survivors now live in the city of San Bernardino, as far as I know.

If you decide to see for yourself the little town that I speak of, I might suggest that you show up for your "First-time Visit" on July forth, for their "Pioneer Days' Festival". It's delightful!

But I would arrive early, even make reservations if you can, because it is the town's greatest shin-dig, next to their car show.

I still think that is the ONE TIME that all of the community is on their best behavior. And if they don't know you or your past, they will be more than friendly hospitable and welcoming.

Though, many of my tormentors still reside there, for the sake of burying the hatchet, I will not reveal any of their true names. They know who they are, so do I, and that's all that really matters.
I most certainly could have written more about the adventures that I had with my Buddy Sam out there in those mountains, but I will save that for some possible other writings in the future. I sincerely hope that you have been half as entertained as I was living this life I have now related to you.

Many years later, my father found religion, and even became the deacon of his Seventh Day Adventist Church. My Mother was more than delighted with the new man he became. I think I would have liked to know that man, because he truly was more like the man I had known when I was six.

Dad and I had made up our differences when I was seventeen, and he finally became the father I had always needed him to be for me. But it took me getting arrested and going to a boy’s Ranch that had Group therapy classes twice a week for six months, followed by an aftercare program of six months.

In those classes my father had to actually sit down and hear me out, for the first time. Likewise I had to do the same. I learned that he held himself responsible for all of the torment that happened to me while he was in prison. Which had never come to my young mind, I had never even considered it.

To this day I DO NOT hold my Dad accountable for the actions of my kidnaper, the actions of either of Dad’s parents, or the treatment of the town’s people toward me.

On the other hand: If I had never been made to experience all of the torment I survived through my childhood, I couldn’t imagine who I might
have become. And this, as well as, all of the other books I’m writing would never have existed. Because that too would have become something else entirely.

Lonesome would not have been my dog companion, my eagle Little Thunder would have died at the foot of her nest tree, my bobcat Bobbie would have starved to death right there by the side of the road, and I would not be the person who I am today.

I could not imagine who I would have become. And maybe that is as it should be, hind sight is truly twenty-twenty, and we can never re-live our past or change it, it is gone forever except for these books and all of the stories within my memories and few writings...

Lonesome Sam lived a pretty long and exciting life while we were in those mountains, but after we moved to the lowlands he was mostly miserable and uncomfortable. The heat was often too much for him and we gave him regular baths to help him keep cool. I even shaved his hair in the first year, but it wasn’t the same for him ever after.

Much to my great torment and agony my buddy was poisoned by one of the neighbors. And he died an’ agonizingly long and painful death. In my heart I wish I could have done something for him back then, but I was getting on with my adult life and no longer had the time for him.

I shall forever regret that. He is often in my dreams even to this day and I am quite sure that we will see one another in the distant next world. For that I must wait the long wait of existence without him.

This then seems the best thing which I can do for him, to immortalize him in the written word, to give him a permanent place in history. Something I think he might have liked. Really he loved people, and particularly kids.
Maybe then this will do just that.....

Now Many years After all this, and reflecting back on that Wonderful time in my Childhood, I feel I owe our Creator a great deal of thanks. For throughout all those years that I was permitted to watch all of nature and the Eagles, to befriend and learn from them, to learn from the Animals of the forests all around us, and finally Blessed beyond all my Natural beliefs or desires, to be freely given the responsibility to raise some of their young. And to run the mountains with my best friend Lonesome Sam at my side, teaching and protecting me...

Every day, Every single year, each and Every second I shared in the mountains or in the life of the Eagles with my companion Lonesome Sam and all of Nature, was a precious gift. Through the hardships, the scars, and the many difficulties, all of the Joys the pleasures and the Wonders, I had to be one of the Luckiest Boys in the Whole World. To be granted such an Honor, with-in many honors which that gave me, the privilege to Shadow eagles and the animals of the forests for so many years. That was a Rare Privilege, very rare indeed, for how many kids in the World could have shared or even survived this experience?

Yes, I was truly Blessed, and now I have many wonderful memories to share with the world. All I have written here-in, and so many more that I can-not Possibly count them, these were the Precious times in the life, of a long ago; that seems like an Ancient Legend now. Even to Me, and I lived those years,
dreaming of the time when I would finally Grow Up... (Didn't we all dream of one day finally, growing up, when we were kids?)

I Thank You Grandfather Creator, Thank You Spirit of the Eagles, Thank You Grandmother Earth, and most importantly- Thank You Mother of My Birth. I am truly indebted to you ALL... Mere Love, simply doesn't even come close in comparison or definition to the well of emotions involved here-in.

It seems such a small, little word, to express so very much, which truly is un-definable... Ricky, still; the Mountain Boy.

© Copyright; MMXII-08302011-9 13 11 120253 RJB
1. Halito, (ha-lee-toh) = Hello
2. Chem Achukma?, (Cheem-Ah-chuke-mah) = You good?
3. Ahm Achukma hokay, (sum-Ah-chuke-mah hoo-kay) = I am good, (O.K.)
4. Ahm Achukma akitney, (_ah-keen-leh) = I am good, as well
5. Ahm Achukma Cheesh na toh?, (_Cheesh-sheh nah-toh) = I am good, and you?
6. Che Hoschifi Nanta?, (Chee-hoshfi-chee-foh nhan-tah) = What is your name?
7. Sah Hoschifoh Ut, = My name is...
8. Che Hoschafa hoh? (_hosh-fah-chah-foo hoon) = are you hungry?
9. Sah banah, (seah-bah-nah) = I want, desire it, would like
10. Kamena fah Hocheliana?, (Ka-tee-mah Eye-ah Hochee-la-nah) = where can I find?
11. Kamena Mah, (= maa-h, where is it?
12. Esia Aplia hinla hoh?,(eh-see-yah ah-pee-nah heen-lah hoo-n) = can/will you help me?
13. Salahshosh anumpoli, (Sa-hah-lee-hoo-shsh ah-num-poo-leh) = Speak slowly
14. Mihah Momah,(mee-hahh moo-mah) = please say again
15. Chem chukka, Katima fah hocheliana?, (_chuu-kahh) = Where can I find your house?
16. Chem Chuka Katima Mah? = Your house, where is it? (Lit: where is it, your house?)
17. Alishke, Katima fah Hocheliana? (Ah-litch-chee ____) = where can I find a Doctor?
18. Chatah hon fah achi hon = Do you speak Chataw? (Also, Achi, & acho, = say.)
19. Tamaha Eyah hoh? (Taah-mahh ee-yah hoo-n) = Going to town?
20. Ah, Tamaha Eyah. = Yes, I'm going to town
21. Sa yohba, (Sa yoo-bahh-bah) = I am lost
23. Chesno pisa yurka si = I'm happy to see you my friend
24. Issis alek siyah = I am mix blood (Literally, = Blood mixed I am.)
25. Sah Yokoche abin = I am thankful
26. Nittak achukma, = Good night
27. Nnak Achukma = Good day
28. Eyah leh = (eelah-leh) I'll go now
29. Minti, Kanowa itiim = Come, let's walk together
30. Tinkhe sakh, chatah okla ut = My ancestors are Choctaw people
31. Chem Chesno sakh, beliya cheh = You are my friend, always
32. Sah Yukpa feechah ikie chem... = You make me very happy
33. Taloah Chunkash sakh ikie chem. = You make my heart sing
34. Chem Teelamumpoli hohtina _nanaah? = What is your Phone number? (**"Telephone" is a new word.)
35. Hon Hinla Sah banah, Chesh nato hon = I want to dance, and do you?
36. Alyancha ut che chuka hon? = Do You live near?
37. Sah chukka ut, = My house is...
38. Akostineechu? (Ah-Kos-tah-neem-cheh) = Do you understand?
39. Ak akostineechu = I don't understand
40. Ah Akostaneen chile = Yes, I understand
41. Minti, Awah ampa Tamaha eyah = Come. Let's eat in town. (lets go to town and eat)
42. Che Hulolenaah belyah cheh = I will love you forever
43. Yakoche Cheshno = Thank you friend
44. Pisa aboh = window
45. Ah = yes Keyo = not Kia = no
46. Ah = designates negative
47. Hoh, or Hon = designates a question
48. Ba-nil-leeh = sit, ie: sit down
49. Abu-yah = Climb
50. Hax-yoh-lee = Stand, ie: Stand up
51. Nan-tah = What
52. Pish = Look, See
53. Pish-leeh = I see, and Pisah che = you see
54. Ah-tokah = Shield, Protect.
55. Ibye = Nephew
56. Mooshi = Uncle
57. Aila = Child
58. Nish-ken = Eye, eyes... Sah Nish-ken = My eyes.
Nez Perce (Nimipu) = real people. Words and Meanings.

1- Eeyec,(E-yets)= Woman
2- Qine, (gew-neh)= Old Man
3- Tota, (toh-tah)= Grandfather
4- Nimipoo hacwal,(Ne-mee-pu hahs-wal)= Nez Perce boy
5- Miyapkwit, (mee-yap-ka-wit)= New born baby
6- Tekash,(te-kash)= cradle board
7- Siluhixhix,(se-lu-hik-hek)= White eyes people
8- Soyapo, (So-yah-poo)= Across the waters people
9- Miyoxat,(mee-oo-khut)= Leader
10- Teto’oquan,( te-toh-quan)= Indian/s
11- Teto’oquan Nim,= I am Indian,
12- Tewelka,(te-wel-kah)= Enemy, to fight
13- Timuni,(tee-moo-nee)= Weapon/s
14- Wallowa,(wah-lau-wah)= Nez Perce homelands
15- Tamanmo,(ta-man-moh)= Salmon River
16- Kuseyniskit,(ku-se-in-is-kit)= Buffalo trail, path
17- Lapway,(lap-whay)= Place of Butterflies
18- Qalawin,(quah-la-win)= Beads
19- Ehe,(e-heh)= Yes
20- Unah= Oh!
21- Tac,(tots)= good
22- Hamolic,(ham-o-lets)= cute
23- Hewes,(he-wess)= it is
24- Ke’uyit,(kew-u-yet)= First meal
25- Hunyawat,(huny-a-waat)= Great Spirit
26- Wyakin = Guide, Spirit helper
27- Hanit,(hawn-it)= Creature, animal
28- Nssoox,(na-so-kh)= Salmon
29- Sikwm,(sik-em)= Horse
30- Iceyeeye,(itsi-yea-yea)= Coyote
31- Qelxel,(quell-khul)= Spider
32- Mattheu Nim= Book of Matthew, translated to Nez Perce
33- Waco qualo,(wah-koh-qua-loh)= That is all...
34- Lema= people, the people
35- Meli-lema= grass people, people of the grasslands.
36- Pakiu-t-lema= Canyon people

[585]
My inspiration, Mom's letter...

Dear Rick,

Hi Rick! I just read your letter and thought I'd write to tell you what I think of the stories you write.

First of all, they are very good. I believe you should try to write something that can be made into a "movie." If indeed "movie" it is a good idea even if I say so myself.

The kids would love your stories of "awesome you in the mountains." I also think a story of "The Eagle" you found would tell it was good enough to fly on its own as a good story. It's "The Eagle" of it, growing up, being strong enough to "fly" is true and very fitting.

Tell your story because it tells your life. I also believe the "crowns" of people by kids would enjoy a movie about a young boy named to show how you grew up into a man who loves his "Our" heritage. Sorry about the spelling, you might be surprised to find out how many people would love the story of your life while in the mountains of Cali.

End also "self-portrait" that it would be something to try. I believe.

Love Always
Mom

Dec 7 72