











A decorative graphic consisting of several overlapping, wavy lines in black and light gray, creating a sense of movement and depth.

By

**H**ave you ever been so broke that the only thing you could eat for a month was chicken flavored ramen noodles. Until about two years ago, I constantly had money troubles. Whenever I got my paycheck, I would instantly cash it then spend the money. Most of the things I bought were not even important. I was constantly wasting money and working until I realized that my life was going nowhere, so I decided that I would go back to school. I realized that if I was going to go back to school, I had to have money to pay for my tuition and books, so I started to keep track of all the money I had.





By

growing up in Nigeria was fun, with a lot of good memories. Just walking down the road and hearing a nearby river flowing lazily made me stop, listen, and appreciate its beauty. We had a house in one of the undeveloped parts of the country. Every year, we spent at least two weeks there. It always seemed like stepping into another age. No electricity or fancy buildings. Just the normal log house wherein you had to build fires and light candles. It was in one of these trips that I began to really see and appreciate nature.

I was about 14, and as usual, my family went on their two week vacation. I was not excited about this trip because I had to miss my best friend's birthday party. I sulked throughout the journey and was just being difficult. My Dad understood what I was trying to do, but he ignored me. When we reached the lodge, he asked me to come with him to find wood for the fireplace. Shivering, I followed him. It was cold and

the sky looked orange the sun was going down. I was worried about bugs and every other animal that I could think of.

We walked in silence for a while then he said, "ennie, just stop thinking and listen you will be amazed at how soothing and understanding this forest can be." As I trudged down the road, I tried to follow his advice. Gradually, the forest opened its doors to me, and I gradually walked in. I was let into the secrets of nature. I couldn't help but notice the beauty as birds chirped. It was a tiny pond. The trees were tall and thin. The forest was so beautiful.





I wasn't sure if I would get in. In fact, I almost didn't want to even audition for fear that I wouldn't get in. But, I did audition, and when I saw my name on the members list for A Cappella, I was in utter shock. I had done it. I had made it into A Cappella, and I was only a sophomore. I was so proud of myself, but, yet again, I had no idea what I was in for. The teacher moved so fast there were so many things I didn't understand. Everyone else's voices were so mature, and I still sounded like that little kid from middle school. I felt overwhelmed, and I didn't know who to ask for help. Then there was Tina she was my folder partner. He taught me many little things that made a huge difference. Simple things like standing up straight, holding my feet a certain way. EverThe members list

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rrroom rrroom The dreaded sound of my vibrating cell phone alarm woke me at five in the morning. I reached around like a zombie, trying to turn it off.



As I knocked on the door, I heard an angry voice that sounded like a growl from a lion's roar. You too. Why does everyone forgive him when he's done wrong? The way his face and eyes looked at me was terrifying. It was my cousin, Leng, an eighteen-year-old who was skinny and tall. Aunt Pang welcomed me into their house, and I could feel the humidity of the fresh steamed rice that she was cooking. While sitting on a sinking couch, Leng was waiting for Peter, his brother, to come back home. Leng said to me, I hate my brother. I hate him to my guts. You know how it was when I was younger. I was alone after he left our family six years ago. He deserves to be in that smelly old jail. Mom and I had nothing when he left. When he comes back home from jail, I won't even speak to him or even look at him in the eyes. He will never be forgiven,

After some time, Leng brought out some games for us to play. Even though there were dozens of relatives over already, Leng didn't care about them. Have some respect for your elders, boy, said one of the balding relatives who was in his forties. Leng's face got so red that it looked as if he was about to explode any time. I watched quietly as he ran into his room slamming the door behind his back. I could hear him turning on his old rusty radio. The radio from his room got louder and louder. Aunt Pang knocked on the door yelling, If you don't turn off the music, I will not let you see Peter when he gets here. Suddenly in a split second, the radio was turned off.

Leng was in his room for some time, quite a while actually. Some of the bored relatives began to gossip about Leng. The things I heard from them were so rude. Maybe Peter should just stay in jail, who knows, he might even stab Leng. Who would ever want to live with a kid like that, Though I didn't see it, I could sense that Aunt Pang was crying deep inside her heart. He wanted to say something to the rude relatives, but couldn't because of how the Hmong culture is. Aunt Pang was a woman who didn't have a husband anymore. There was no way

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of a sudden I saw a very dark spot a bit farther from where we were located. The shape resembled an animal, such as a stray dog or fox. I quickly alerted the others, and we decided to start up a fire in our area, hoping that the animal would get frightened and run away.

With only one axe available and one flashlight, we were set to find a dried up tree. Luckily, there were some dry trees by our location. I was constantly working the flashlight with my shaking hands, another person was holding the dry, dead tree, and the other was trying to chop the tree down. With trembling voices, we quietly chatted with each other, trying to make a backup plan. Finally, we

After getting a good laugh about our beast, we watched the sunrise slowly come upon us. It was one indescribable moment. There were no other people around, except us. We were merged

got one tree down, headed back to our area, and started up a fire. Sitting back to back, we looked around our space again, and once again, there he was, the shadow of an animal, not moving anywhere. Once the fire was close to dying out we got up again, and repeated our new ritual of going on a hunt for a dry tree, cutting it down, and together carrying it to the site. This continued throughout the night.

Towards the morning two of us fell asleep, and one was awake for the look out. Before the sunrise, we were woken up by some chirping of birds by a tree nearby. The sound was a sound of safety for us, a sound of life, and new beginning. I quickly stood up, and looked toward the area where I had seen the shadow of an animal. To my surprise, it was just a dark green bush that was in the middle of already dry grass. We made a huge fuss about a dark green bush.



ing to further develop and enhance school programs Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe.

On top of all these roles elders used to play, they now have a new one, which consists of keeping their culture alive. Considering that the U.S. Census Bureau marks the number of American Indian and Alaska Native persons at a combined 1.1% of the total U.S. population, it would naturally be hard to resist the mainstream cultural influence that surrounds American Indians today. After all, what once would have been called cultural imperialism by the U.S. is now simply known as mainstream American culture. Now certainly American Indians don't have to resist American culture if they don't want to, but if they choose to find out more about their cultural roots, they can turn to their elders who have in some cases become keepers of their traditional ways.

Some contemporary Ojibwa authors have highlighted this role of elders in their literature. Winona LaDuke, an Anishinabe author and political activist, has written both fictional and non-fictional books, and in her novel, *Last Standing Woman*, she states that, "This is a work of fiction although the circumstances, history, and traditional stories, as well as some of the characters, are true, retold to the best of my ability." LaDuke explains in *Last Standing Woman*, LaDuke incorporates important insights into the Ojibwa culture and their relationships with their elders. One role of the elders in this novel is to pass their people's traditions, beliefs, and history to the next generation. For example, the character Moose Hanford goes on a cross-country adventure to the Smithsonian to retrieve the remains of his people's ancestors that had been taken as artifacts by anthropologists years ago. Upon successfully retrieving the bones, Moose and his people want to give their ancestors a proper burial, which they call the reburial ceremony. During the reburial ceremony, LaDuke writes that "Many of the oldest songs and ceremonies had been forgotten and had to be recalled from the memories of the oldest people." LaDuke explains that

LaDuke also notes that "Dreams were important to the Anishinabe, especially the dreams of old people" and "Many religious traditions, hunting secrets, or medicines came from dream instructions."

LaDuke explains that "Hunting and medicine were necessary for survival, and religious figures often times held prominent positions within the Ojibwa culture. These are extremely important elements to the traditional Ojibwa culture, and they are derived from the dreams of their elders."

Dennis Banks, an Anishinabe cultural and political activist, is best known for co-founding the American Indian Movement (AIM). In his autobiography, *Ojibwa Warrior*, Banks talks about how he was

longing for a spiritual side to life. While on his quest he says, "I talked with one of our elders, Young Bird, who pointed him in the direction of an old man Henry Crow Dog. Banks explains that it was Henry Crow Dog who not only conducted the first sweat lodge in which Banks took part, but also acquainted Banks with a man who



ho will bury the unburied.

During the Liberian Civil War,  
children were dead  
due to starvation.  
Left in the empty kitchen  
on the floor,



during the warmer months, but I looked forward to the months when the temperature dropped below zero. During these frigid months, frost covered the playground equipment, so I had no other option than to slide on the icy banks. I needed to stand in line to slide down these icy slopes. Then, I needed to climb up the slopes to the top and wait again. The wait was worth it, though. With the same zeal as a *Québécois école primaire élève*, a Minnesotan elementary pupil looks forward to lunch and recess. I was a Minnesotan elementary student, but I was not always happy at lunchtime and recess. Lunch overlapped with other older grades, and recess did too. Carrying my lunch, I hung my shoulders and stared at the floor whenever I passed an elder student in the cafeteria to sit down. My parents needed to pay for my lunch, and everyone mostly bought lunch. The school did not allow open lunch, but I remember some parents brought McDonald's or Subway to their kids. After lunch, I would visit the school to play on the playground for recess. The playground had less playground equipment than the one in Quebec, and during the winter months, the supervisors wouldn't allow me to slide on the banks or throw snowballs—thus, I built snow forts and snow angels by myself. One time, I feigned sickness to stay inside during recess. My teacher asked me why I stayed inside instead of playing outside. I answered, "I'm sick, you need a doctor's note," she replied.

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We could remember many positive things about my hometown. First, the weather was excellent—it stayed between 40 to 75 degrees Fahrenheit all year around. Therefore, it's not surprising to see people wearing sandals in the middle of winter. We could also play outdoor sports any time of the year. Ice storms, snow, and black ice never happened in my hometown. In addition, we did not experience tornadoes, hurricanes, or any other violent winds. For those reasons, there was not much complaining about the weather in my hometown.

By

I also remember that my hometown was a safe place to live. We could leave our possessions out on the sidewalk without worrying about anyone stealing them. Everyone was friendly and the whole town spoke the same language. People in my hometown never cared about their accent because it was the same as everyone else's. Therefore, violence caused by language barriers was completely absent.

Finally, we always ate fresh food because the farm and the ocean were not far away. For example, fish would come to us the same day it was caught. Also, fruit, vegetables, meat, and any other food we needed came to us the same day we ate them. Moreover, the food we ate was familiar to everyone so that it was not necessary to ask whether certain meats were kosher or not. I long for you, Burao, Somalia.

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*No biography was submitted for Khalid Farah.*



sobering up a try. It was a big deal, me considering getting sober. I had a lifelong love affair with liquor. Quitting was the absolutely last thing that I wanted to do ever. I thought that people who actually wanted to get sober were a little mentally ill or, at least, kind of dumb and boring.

I had been brought to the meeting by a friend of mine. Because of her kindness and grace, I wound up finding whatever it was that I needed to find. I had been in the sobriety game for a number of years and was one of the few people that I knew who I was willing

to trust with my current situation. The fact that she was willing to help me at all was a little miracle in itself. I hadn't treated her very well over the previous few years. I was a terrible friend, to be honest. I abandoned her when she needed me the most, and the fact that she was willing to help me at all was a testament to her character and personal growth over her time in AA. I took me to the meetings and showed me the ropes. I was, and still is, a terrific friend and teacher.

The lessons that you learn in early sobriety are difficult ones indeed. It comes as a genuine surprise when you figure out just how selfish and ungrateful you have been in your life. It is even more shaming when you are taught these things by people that are the definition of selfless. I found myself becoming involved in an organization that was almost religious in its fervor to help other alcoholics. It was as

close to religion as I was willing to get, still is. Many of the other members develop relationships with God that they have never had before. Many others strengthen relationships with God that they used to have but let go because of the progression of their disease. Luckily, they don't proselytize the God thing I do too





By

ood memories or bad memories . which memories do people hold onto throughout their entire lives. People usually hang onto the best and the worst memories for a long time. One of the best memories in my life was made by my 6th grade class teacher named Mr. Arat Chandra Das who taught me and other students how to improve and change our lives just by changing our negative thinking habits.

In every grade, we can find good and bad students. And all of the bad students are not getting poor scores because of their study routines. Sometimes they focus more on what other people think about them. Other people's negative thoughts discourage them to work hard. After the first day of the 6th grade, we learned that by giving priority to others, we were just hurting ourselves. According to Mr. Das, we all should take those destructive thoughts under consideration with a positive attitude. If we set our mind and heart into something and work hard toward the goal, then nothing can stop us.







the boat decided to throw his body into the sea after many hours of persuading his family members. People were saddened by the death of the old man. Two of his grand children cried and tried to hold his body from some young man who came to take it. Day after day passed. Everybody was so tired, thirsty, and hungry. People lost all hope because they heard stories about people who died for lack of food and water. They were praying and waiting for a miracle to come from God. Then this miracle came indeed.

It was a big ship coming from far away straight to the boat on the eleventh day. Every person saw a big flag waving at the top of the pole on the boat. It was a Navy ship. They cried and yelled, thank God, thank you for help, The ship stopped. The Marines came and helped. They were treating people on the boat very carefully. They gave them food, milk, chocolate, cakes. Thank you Americans, the saved people cried.

The Navy ship pulled the boat to the Bidong Island, Malaysia. On the island, the boat people stayed in the refugee camps, where they studied English and waited to find a new place to live. They didn't worry about clothes, food, or medicine because the United Nations High Commission for Refugees had set up camps, whether they were big or small. They were very happy because they had food, water, and shelter. They were also given medical care. They were very grateful to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. They were very happy because they had food, water, and shelter. They were also given medical care. They were very grateful to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees.



By

**B**ale National Park is a beautiful place in Ethiopia. It is located in the southwest



