Strangers No More

A Wenatchee Valley Love Story

by Betsy Dudash

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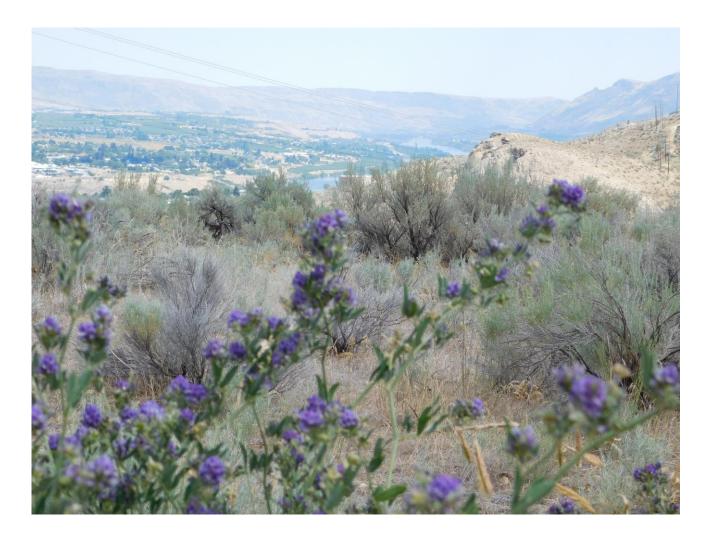
I wandered your rocky trails, A stranger to your charms,



Dazed by the unrelenting sun, Stunned by the browns and greys of your summer,



A chlorophyll junkie in an alien landscape.



I met some old friends Known only by name. It's been too long! Do you feel the same?



Found some so familiar They soon made me feel Like I'd traveled with purpose So my heart could be healed.



I reveled in your complex simplicity, Never leaving with regrets, Just craving more intimacy.



Your names no longer Tripped up my tongue. Their enchanting strangeness An issue now gone.



You revealed your secrets Kept deep in the ground. Your strength and your beauty Like none I had found.



And your trails, once so scary, I used to complain, Now lead me to places of beauty and graces.



And then those winged beauties Of land and of sky



Became an obsession That grew by and by.



Whenever I see them I can't help but try To capture their magic; Still, I don't wish to fly.



With Magpies I'm smitten, But I'm not ashamed.



Without them your sagebrush Might seem kind of plain.



They even add beauty where none was before.



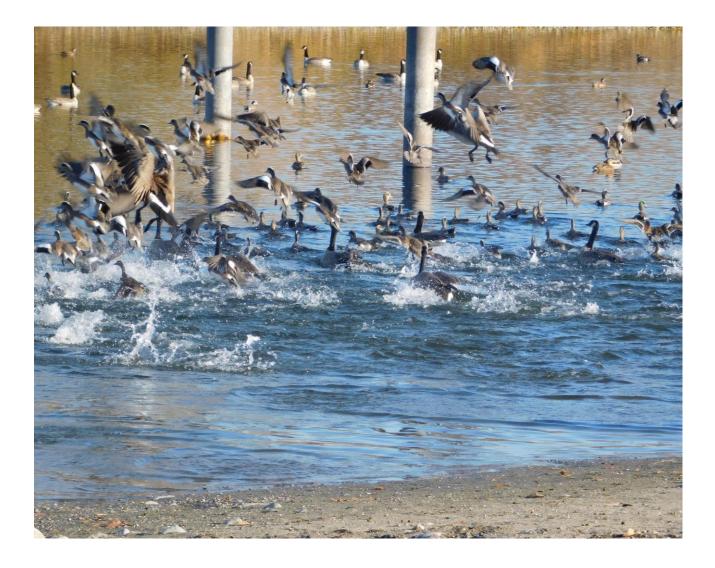
The Kestrel's another That flutters my heart.



I don't care he's a killer He's a true work of art.



And then there are others, Not part of your crew,



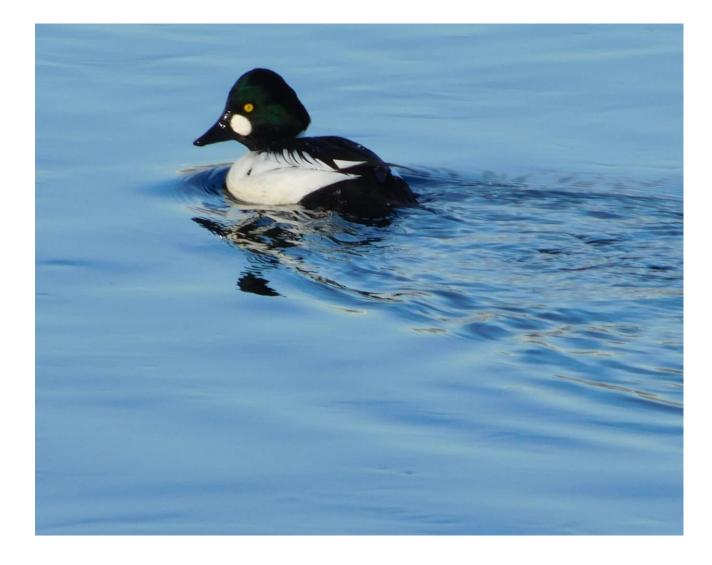
Whose quacking and splashing My soul can renew.



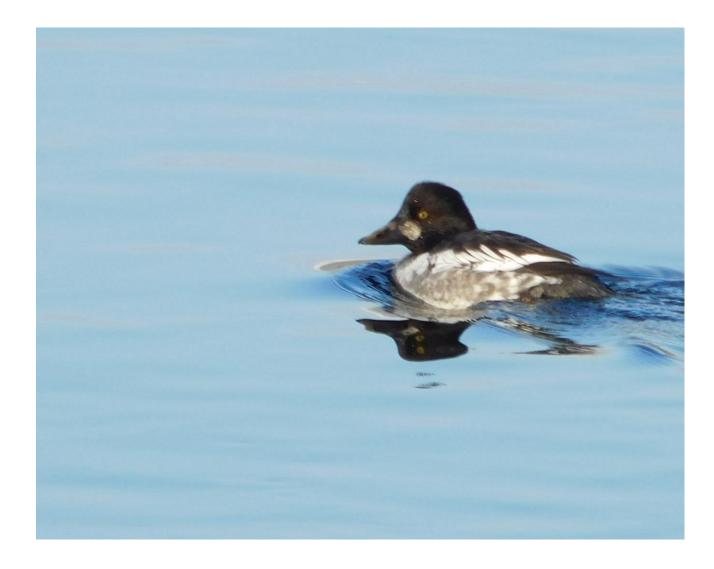
More friends, old and new,



Whose strangeness of pattern Thrills me right through.



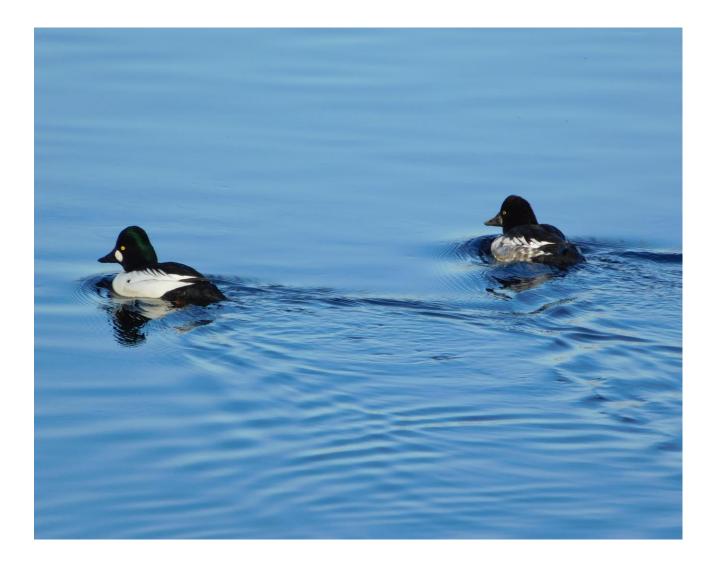
Please don't be jealous, Dear foothills of mine:



For this child of Lake Erie, Water wins every time.



As our journey continues, Together or not, I want to give thanks For new friends like you.



We've shared such adventures This summer and fall. We're no longer strangers--This much is true!

