

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!

