

God in My Images

We were taking the driving tour through the National Park that they only open for a short couple of weeks in May for the migration. My goal was to see if I could capture some images of the many bird species that fly thru on their way north to nesting grounds. The kids were with me and we drove slowly thru the area with the windows open even though in early May the temperature is not warm enough to warrant it. We wanted to spot birds.

I remember the wind that day – a cool breeze that raised waves on the lake and pushed the long grasses over at the water's edge. We were rounding a corner and I saw an egret on a mound. There was



no safe place to stop as the turn was a hairpin and I knew if I got out of the car, the elegant animal would take off. So, I aimed my lens out of the car window. The breeze had just kicked up, ruffling the egret's feathers and shaping its long tail into an S – almost matching the shape of its neck. I got the shot and it is one of my favorites. I knew that God had provided the opportunity for me to capture that image – He controls the wind afterall!

As a photographer, I depend on God's help to try to capture the beauty of His creation. The lighting, the weather, and the appearance of the animals are all gifts that He provides. The images I capture are His reward to me for putting in the effort to be where He has provided the opportunity. Sometimes I am able to get the image, sometimes I just am able to see what he offered and keep it in my memory instead of on a disk drive. I am thankful for all of them, though I do have to admit that I am disappointed when I don't capture the moment with my camera.

So, I wait until the next moment – and there always is one - God never stops giving! A butterfly that wouldn't sit still and kept getting further into the brush in Virginia finally stopped just long enough



with its wings open for me to capture the image – its wings are white with red and blue spots but the background is dark, winterburned grass. It shines like the moon in the image and the small splashes of color on the wings keep the image from being monochromatic.

Moments happen even with my dogs at home! To watch them play together in our yard and the sheer joy they have at just running and playing – its contagious! I find myself smiling as I take a few shots! I can see their canine smiles even though they never said “cheese”!

When visiting research and rescue centers to take images, I feel His influence. I stay close to the animals and watch them. I have to be very aware of the surroundings so the background doesn't have the fences or buildings in it. And then I see it, the moment that God is providing for me. The wolf steps out from behind the tree and I capture it. Having a dark coat, she almost blends in completely with



the background, but the texture of the bark on the tree is very different from the texture of her fur. There are splashes of green lichen on the bark that bring color and an idea of life to the winter dead tree. Her yellow eyes stand out in her dark fur and are staring at something off in the distance. I was so happy to capture this beautiful animal at that moment. It is one of my favorites from that visit and I am thankful to Him for giving me that moment to capture!

The hand of God moves me and I know I am going the right way as my happiness increases. I try to look for new places to capture images and as I was planning another trip with my family, God put new opportunities for special moments in my path. I was just trying to find a hotel to overnight in when I found an exotic cat rescue. I'll be stopping there in a few days to take a photography tour and learn

more about these special animals and their stories. Always, we go as a family – my children are with me and will join me at these special places. Capturing beautiful images and sharing the moments with my family are my joy – and God gives me that joy. I don't thank Him enough for all that He provides, but I am grateful. My hope is that my artwork honors God's Creation and that it moves people to see the beauty in this world.

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