

# Literacy Ventures in Tucson



## Proud woman

By Martin Noriega



[http://www.artic.edu/aic/collections/citi/images/standard/WebLarge/WebImg\\_000276/185704\\_3291882.jpg](http://www.artic.edu/aic/collections/citi/images/standard/WebLarge/WebImg_000276/185704_3291882.jpg)

She is proud of her work.

She makes beautiful things with her hands while her family is secure in matters of money.

This kind of work came from her ancestors. She is quiet, skillfull, and responsible for this.

She is an example to follow. When she was a child, she learned from her father and mother. Her siblings live far away from this small town, but they too learned this beautiful trade of weaving.

She has this fixture, a little wooden machine to make the job easier, and save time and effort. When the goods are finished, they are stored in drawers and compartments– ready for its sale.

## Maria, a great human being and beautiful soul

By Jaqueline LaFratta

In 1990s, I met a girl called Maria who had a dream to become the best soccer player in her country, Brazil. Back then, she was 15 years old. I remember how passionate she was about it. She loved playing soccer. Her whole world revolved around it. I can say that she thought of it 24/7. She lived in a simple community with her mother and two little brothers. They lived in a very simple way. Her mother had a small food cart where they were selling coffees and finger foods on the street. She helped her mother during the morning while her little brothers were at school and during the afternoon she took care of them at home. At night, she attended the high school. The weekend was where her world became bright and amusing. She played soccer with her friends in the street from early in the morning until the day becomes night. She was a fantastic player. Everyone stopped to watch her. She was really incredible. Her neighbors used to say she was a genius with the ball. Even, the best professional soccer player would get astonished with her performance and facility in handling it. She knew that to become a good player she needed to train a lot and never stop studying. She used to say it's not worth just being good at using your body, you must know how to use your brain. Someone can take advantage of you.

One ordinary day, a very fancy guy, wearing a black suit and grey tie, knocked on her house's door. She opened it and she couldn't believe what she was seeing. The most important Brazilian soccer player, Pelé, was standing in front of her. She could barely move herself. He raised one of his hands to greet her, but she was frozen because of so much emotion.

He was there to help her with her dream and he did it.

She became a professional soccer player, she traveled around the world and made a lot of money, but her story didn't stop here. During her brilliant journey she never forgot where she came from. With her fortune she has helped thousands of poor people who have some difficulties to reach their dreams. She has helped her entire community to become an example of overcoming and peaceful place for living. To complete her beautiful story of passion and dedication that has never stopped growing, she became the UNICEF goodwill ambassador.

She had a very tough childhood, but anyway, she was always with a huge smile on her face. She was so positive a person. Nothing knocked her in seeing the good side from everything. She was resilient, brave, intelligent and kind all the time. After of being with her for while I knew that I had met a great human being and a beautiful soul.



<http://bit.ly/1UzzbkZ>

## On our way

By Oscar Alcaraz



There was this one day my family and I desired to go to the zoo, but my little brother said “No I don’t feel good today”

He never likes to go anywhere with us. I told him, “Yes, you are coming with us- this is something we are doing together as a family.”

He looked at me with a mean, mad face.

“I told you I don’t feel good,” said Little Bro.

“Get up and get ready! I’m your big bro and you need to listen to me. Come on it’s gonna be fun!

“OK, I will,” he said. He just said that to get his big bro off his back.

“Is everyone ready?” said Grandma.

“Yes!” They said, so everybody got into the big van.

“On our way to the zoo now– seatbelts everyone!”

Half way to the zoo, Grandma felt the AC blowing a little warm. “Oh no,” said Grandma. “I think the AC just went out. Grandma rolled down the window.

“It’s so hot out! I don’t know why I listened to you!” said Lil Bro. Big Bro just looked at him with a smile.

“Almost there!” said Grandma.

So they arrived at the zoo. Grandma and big bro asked everyone what they want to drink after being in that hot van. So they started walking around the zoo seeing all the animals, feeding some of them on their way around the zoo. We saw all the animals.

“Time to go home!”

“Already?” said Lil Bro.

“Yes, why did you have a good time with us?” said Big Bro.

“Yes I did have a good time with you all.”

So they all jumped into the van, and on the way home they stopped for ice cream. There were smiles all around.

Photo credit: <http://www.mybadpants.com/images/dodge-sportsman-parts.jpg>

## Colorful birds

By Omar Cunningham

I saw a canoe full of colorful birds today.

The birds were flying out of the canoe to freedom. This means that they can fly anywhere they want including back to the canoe.

These birds are bright red, yellow and green. They flash in the sun as they circle overhead.

These birds look like parrots. Parrots are the most colorful birds. I believe the colors on their feathers are bright like flowers because they eat lots of flowers with their curved beaks.



[http://www.racsofinearts.com/files/cache/5794454dda50a96534382a9c6c221c41\\_f273.jpg](http://www.racsofinearts.com/files/cache/5794454dda50a96534382a9c6c221c41_f273.jpg)

## My family

By Lilian Mutwota

When I was just 15, I left home and I went to live alone.

The government didn't want me to live with my family. My family wanted me to start high school and learn, but the government only takes fast learners.

The government just gave me a house and gave me water and seeds to plant.

That is why I came to America— to learn.

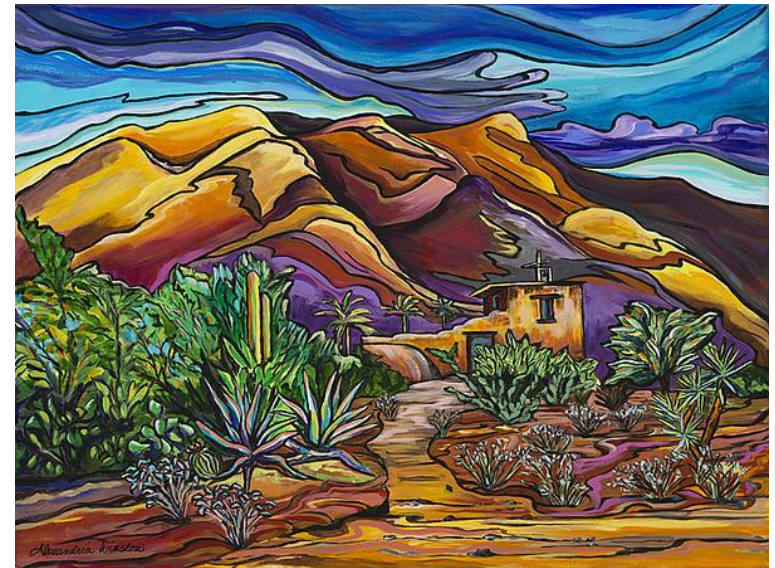


<http://www.bonfireadventures.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/kenya-visa.jpg>

## An August morning

By Graciela Mada

The August morning, unusually cool, reflected what happened the night before.



<http://fineartamerica.com/images-simple-print/images-medium-5/hidden-in-the-hills-degrazia-mission-in-the-sun-alexandria-winslow.jpg>

The strong storm brought very much needed water to the dry lands around the mission. Its walls, still dressed with the humidity, seemed to breath better now. Water around went underground rather quick, and the community members around the building could observe its running marks in the sand.

The smile in the cactuses could be seen from far away, the rocks looked clean and shiny as few times before. Very much like the mountain, which seemed closer than ever to all of them.

The clouds passing by just signaled that for the moment no more water was coming down. Maybe in a few more days...

## The story of the little bell

By M. Carmen Luna



<http://faithbaptistdivernon.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/bell.jpg>

Once Upon a time, an Elderly Woman lived with her family, and needed help with almost everything to survive.

She needed to call for help. Nobody hears when she calls.

She started yelling when she needed something.

One day, a friend came to visit her, and she complains with the friend. The friend tells her, "I think I have the solution for your problem. I promise to come back tomorrow with a gift."

She came back the next day and gave the present. The Elderly Woman was very emotional, and starts to unwrap the gift. She gets "A Cute Little Bell!"

And the family now knows when she needs help— She shakes the Little Bell, and everybody is very, very HAPPPPPY!!!

## A legacy of love By Gilda Soto

When I was born, my mother gave me a special name in honor of my great grandmother named Gilda. My mother made a promise, which was about the family legacy which started 71 years ago. This is the story.

It was my mom's 15<sup>th</sup> birthday when my great grandmother talked with her and she said to her:

"Teresa, I want to give you a special present."

"Really, Grandma?" asked my mom.

"Yes sweetheart!

"Can I look at it, Grandma?"

"Yes, but first, I need you to promise me something in return."

"What kind of promise, Grandma?"

"That when you are a mom, if you have a daughter, you will name her Gilda, same as me"

"That's fine Grandma, but what present is it?" asked Teresa, my mother.

"My dear, the present is a family legacy, and an heirloom"

"That's wonderful!"

"Yes, but this is not enough. I want another promise," said Grandma.

"Another promise, Grandma? Please, first show me the present! Please please please!" Grandma despaired at this typical adolescent's reaction, and gave the present to my mom. My mom opened the gift box which contained a beautiful gold ring with a big emerald.

"Wow! It's amazing!" exclaimed my mother.

"Now Teresa," said Grandmother, "this ring will pass to your daughter when she turns 15 years old, and the legacy will continue for future generations."

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30 years later, I was born. My parents, my sisters and my brother were outside of the delivery room, waiting because they didn't know if I was a boy or a girl. When I was a born a girl, my mother named me Gilda, after my Great Grandmother as she promised.

When it was my 15<sup>th</sup> birthday, my mother prepared a dinner for me and all my friends came to my house. She got everybody's attention to speak.

And she remembered the promise she made my Great Grandmother. She gave me the beautiful gold ring, and the family legacy.

## The professor By Shahrolch Jafari

The first time I saw “The Professor” it was after dawn, when I woke up with sunlight shining on my tent and the smell of smoke was felt in my nose.

An Italian Old man with a long grey beard and mustache, who sat down on the ground was re-preparing his magic pipe to smoke. Some people who got together with peace and love were in his circle, so I joined them. He passed over the pipe to the circle after he smoked it. I didn’t smoke, but I liked listening to his glamorous speeches about astronomy and any other scientific subjects.

“The professor” was the title which the people in the “Rainbow Gathering” had used as his name.

Indeed, we were a big family on a virgin island in South Thailand with a kind of primitive lifestyle. We lived there during the period between two full moons– one month.

I remember that it was the last day of our staying on the island and we had to leave. In the morning, I went to the professor and sat down close to him in the circle. I was interested in trying his pipe at least one time.

He smoked, and it was my turn then. After two puffs on the pipe, I had my head in the clouds. I wasn’t aware what was going on. I stayed in that mode for some hours.

I should have been packing my stuff to move to the boat, because it was the last chance to leave the island that week. I couldn’t wake up! I was laying down, dosing in my tent with a strange feeling. I could see everyone passing me with their baggage.

Around afternoon, some of my friends came to help me. Finally, I had got on the boat, I stared at the sunset while I was thinking about the professor’s speeches.



Photo credit: <http://dongbufeng.net/site1/images/stories/s2%20chars/gurupathik11.gif>

## My life in Grenada

By Easllyn Williams

When I was a little girl growing up in Grenada, I used to wash in the river, bathe in the river.

One day when I was ten years old, I was washing in the river and suddenly the gravel started moving under my feet. Then I remembered what my great grandmother said.

Whenever one is in the river, and the gravel starts rolling under your feet, the river will over flow!

I felt scared! I heard a roaring sound. Loud like gunfire. It was the water rushing down from the mountains to overflow the river!

So I threw the clothes out on the riverbank and packed them in my basin. I hurried home to thank my grandmother.



[http://www.gobc.ca/media/members/member\\_4164\\_2.jpg](http://www.gobc.ca/media/members/member_4164_2.jpg)