



***M***<sub>y</sub> First Attempt

*with*

**More to Follow...**

*by*

**Deborah**

*T*able  
*of*  
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# *P*REFACE



This,  
my first  
published writing  
piece, comes to the reader  
as a shabby little diamond. I've worked on my  
words...polishing them as far as my skill can take me.  
With comments from my classmates and guidance from  
my teacher, my words will grow like crystals and  
will, at the finish of this semester, glow brightly  
and reflect all of the hours of labor and the  
wisdom of my peers and  
instructor.

*Yep,  
That's Me...*

*Deb*



The scene is West Point Hospital in New York State on a crispy, cool December morning right before Christmas. This is where I made my debut. My parents were naïve teenagers and they named me Deborah \_\_\_\_\_. Deborah means “bee” or “swarm of bees” in Hebrew. I love that little tidbit of information. That momentous occasion took place almost 47 years ago.

Today, I live in San Antonio where, recently, our average daily temperatures have been hovering dismally around the century mark for far too long. That is quite a different setting from that of my birth.

There have been multiple scene changes throughout my life. As you have guessed, my young father joined the Air Force and that meant that we moved around a bit. My all-time favorite place we lived was Colorado Springs! We lived on the Air Force Academy. That was an absolutely fabulous place to live for a teenager. I was a cross-country runner and I spent long hours trekking the trails and fire roads that snaked all throughout the Academy. Running on a trail through the woods as snow falls silently all around me is one of the most magical experiences of my life.

I am very sorry to report that the least favorite of all the places we lived is a Texas city. It's Lubbock! I did not enjoy the lack of mountains, lack of water and trees nor did I welcome the odors from nature. The smells of cattle and cotton are not high on my list of fond memories. The sand storms were another of the unique offerings supplied by nature. As a child playing on the block I would spy the forthcoming storm and alert my compadres to dash for safety. If we were too slow, we were pummeled with razor sharp sand and dirt...oh, joy! With all the negatives, there also surfaced one glorious positive...my love of lizards and most other creatures. I had an old Styrofoam ice chest that I would carry with me on my journeys into the vacant lots with my dog, Shadow. I'd return home filthy dirty and show off my treasure of snakes, lizards, turtles, tadpoles, and bugs. My mother was less than thrilled.

**Yep,  
That's Me...**

Now that I'm a mom, I try to respect the fact that all of the quirky things my sons do are just a part of them learning who they are. They'll most likely write about their memories in a writing class someday. They are on a never-ending road to becoming who they are meant to be all the while carrying with them their past as well as mine and those of our relatives before me. My father played the trumpet in the Air Force Band when he was nineteen years old. My older son, Matt, will be joining the Air Force next year and attending UT to earn his engineering degree. My father is an engineer. My younger son, Jake, is a freshman in High School where he plays trombone in the band. I love that I can see my past family in my current family.

Next year when Matt goes off to college I'll be losing my hiking and biking buddy...I don't really love that part. I love my husband and children more than anything and I'm grateful for my home and my car that runs! I work at an elementary school in Northside and I enjoy going to work pretty much every day. When I finish school, I hope to be a third grade teacher. I love third graders. They haven't quite hit the tumultuous hormonal times and they aren't little kids anymore. They are great learners and I feel that a good teacher can make a great impact on their sponge-y little brains. I have bunches of friends and I love to make crazy earrings for them. It's not unusual for everyone in the front office to be sporting Deb Originals all on the same day. I love it! My ultimate goal is to outfit the entire school staff with earrings. Except for the guys!

My long-term dream is to live in Utopia, Texas on a little farm. I want to be surrounded by herbs and vegetables, little tiny goats and dogs and maybe a BlueBell cow. I want a big porch with a porch swing and the biggest television set known to Best Buy. What could be better...except maybe the NFL Network on Time Warner Cable! Yep, that's ME!



## The In-Between Room

The home where I live with my husband, two sons, and two very spoiled little doggies is a gray rock house with the standard, box-y three bedrooms and two bathrooms. It's fairly standard in its construction and doesn't have much square footage. We have laminate wood floors, vaulted ceilings, and a giant rock fireplace that doesn't see much action with San Antonio weather being what it is!

I love our home. It holds many happy memories and some not so happy. My favorite part of the house is actually through the French doors at the back of the house. I like being outside so for me the back porch is the place for me. It's like a room, but outside!

My husband, my sons, my sister, her son, and I built the porch in 2004. It took several weekends of sweat, bad choices, and fun and it was more than worth it. The porch has screen panels on all three sides that go all the way from the floor to the ceiling so you have a great view of the whole back yard. The panels are actually screen doors we bought at LOWE'S. The paint colors I chose help to keep the space feeling cool, but light and airy. The frame and panels are painted a crisp green. It's almost the same shade as a fresh cucumber dip. Overhead, you'll see a light robin's egg blue ceiling with little wooden beams going from one side to the other. We have an old round, farmhouse table with four rickety wicker chairs for eating a meal, playing Pinochle (the Sharpe tradition), or doing homework. Right in the middle of the porch sits the papasan chair with its white quilted cushion that is a little worn around the edges. The ever-whirring ceiling fan and the bamboo shades from World Market provide protection from the blazing San Antonio heat and the smoothness of the concrete feels refreshing for tired feet. Although, in the colder months, that concrete can be a bit chilly so socks or shoes are advisable. Whenever we are blessed with a rare thunderstorm the porch is the best seat in the house. The shades roll up and I can enjoy the lighting show with crashing thunder without becoming a statistic. On a cold, blustery day there is nothing better than curling up in that papasan chair with the yellow afghan my grandmother made wrapped around me while reading a captivating historical fiction novel.

The back porch is a room *of* our home; it's just not *in* the house. It's the In-Between Room!

## The Education of...ME

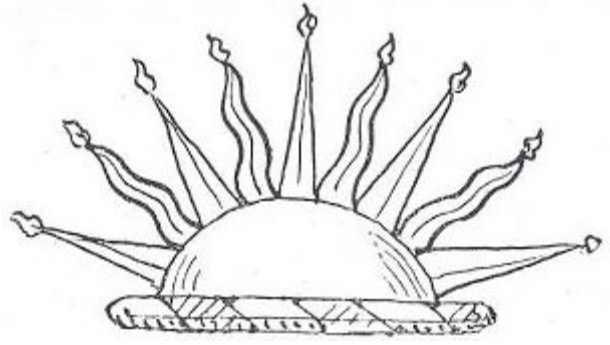
The philosophy on education when I was in elementary school was that of “open education”. I was never really sure about the details as I was a kid and didn’t much care. My parents seemed to buy into the idea because their parents were extremely rigid and forceful. I believe that because of their upbringing and the fact that my parents were so young when I was born, their views on education were very idealistic. Classrooms were very unstructured and we enjoyed many freedoms. I think the idea was to let us all succeed at our own pace and not to push us too hard. School was great for me. I felt very little pressure and I received good grades with a minimum of effort. The whole idea of school seemed quite reasonable at that time.

Then came High School. This was a whole different ball game in a completely different state. Suddenly, I couldn’t keep up and my grades plummeted like a canon ball. I began to feel like a failure and school became the enemy. Whenever my friends spoke of college, they were excited to be going to the same schools and they had great plans for their futures. I knew that my family was to move right after graduation so I wouldn’t be joining my classmates at any universities in Colorado. That knowledge combined with my feelings of incompetence as a student had me questioning the notion of even going on to college. I knew I would be a failure. I didn’t understand that I would only get out of school as much as I put into school. My attitude was one of apathy and hopelessness. I felt that all of my teachers were just happy to be rid of us. I wonder if it would have even helped at that point if a teacher had attempted to reach me and inspire some sort of confidence and hope for my future. I had a very grim opinion of the education system, teachers, and my school in particular.

All these years later I am back at college and I am so grateful that I have this opportunity to continue my education. I work at an elementary school and I see evidence each day of how much teachers want their students to succeed. I witness the constant struggle between a teacher’s desire to teach her students and the demands and expectations placed on her by state legislators. My relationship with S.A.C. and with Northside I.S.D. has reaffirmed my desire to become a certified teacher and to work within the Texas education system.

My hope for the future is that my sons have learned the lesson that “*you reap what you sow*” well enough that they continue to be successful students. I also look forward to the day that I have my own class of students so that I might nourish minds and feed self esteems. Maybe I can work to change some things within the Texas education system to put some power into the hands of school districts that know their students and know what they really need to succeed.

# Here Come The Suns!



WOW!! We are awesome...we are young and something more than young! Most of us have spouses, children, and parents who are very important to us. Family seems to be an ever-present presence in our writings. We are diverse but still connected. Most of us are from this area of Texas and those of us who migrated to Texas from somewhere out “there” have found a wonderful home here in South Texas. Some of us landed here when our military-based parents were sent here and we’ve chosen to stay. I’ll wager that if we all filled out a questionnaire about our feelings for our city and this area of Texas...we would be in agreement that this a great place to live.

I am looking forward to reading more of our writings because we do represent some fascinating facets of the American culture. We will agree on the very basics of life, like family and education. However, I’m sure we will offer up differing viewpoints on ideas like religion and politics.

Who are we? We are young, wise, eager, hard-working, honorable, loyal, friendly, and we are all fabulous writers in training! ☺



# *Bits and Pieces* of US



As the never ending heat intensely blazes on the Texas country side, I stumble down the breeze way trying to catch my breath from the humidity and as the sun burns the top of my head. Upon entering my house the first thing that will waft past your nose is sweet smell of hand made Indian incense. In the entrance of the house, there are two shelves for my roommates' and my filthy shoes. Korean people don't allow shoes in the house.

The floor is usually filled with toys from both the baby and the dog. But all the stress melts away as you look around at the cool blue color of the walls. This room is both relaxing and stressful. It where my family spends most of our time together and it's our favorite room in the house. It's almost the same shade as a fresh cucumber dip.

The child jumps into my chest and wraps his little arms around my neck. As I sit here I still remember the day he came home and we laid here together on this comforter. I can close me eyes and still smell, that newborn smell.

Each morning I wake to the sweet smell of coffee brewing in my kitchen awaiting me, isn't life great. I light lavender candles that I have in the corner of my room on my dresser. I love the calming effect that they provide.

For these are the memories and thoughts that my room brings to me. I feel it relaxes the space between these walls and sets a peaceful pace.

# Where are *WE* Going?

In reading the compositions by my fellow classmates several similarities became evident. Most writers work full-time whether that's outside the home or inside the home. That makes us all sensitive to the difficulties of raising a family, working, and going to school. It's a real challenge but everyone seems to be in agreement that a degree is so important to us all that it's worth the struggle.

I love reading about everyone's children...I love kids and it shows in the writings that the rest of us feel that same tenderness. Our families are part of what inspires us to take these courses. We want to strive, excel, and achieve for our future and the future of our families. We want to provide for our families and we want to demonstrate to them that it's never too late.

Some of us are young and are just heading down the road with babies and new husbands by our sides. While some of us are a little more "mature". I used quotes around that word because while I am mature in my age of 47, I fear that my behavior is sometime less so! I actually prefer it that way, though! We, more experience travelers of life have done without enough that we want to make a change – change our course.

I, personally, failed to take advantage of the educational opportunities afforded me when I was a teenager and I have learned the hard way that not having a degree is not the worst thing in life, but it certainly does make the road ahead more challenging. I am so excited about getting my teaching degree. I would love to watch the rest of group and see what wonderful things we achieve as move forward. I believe that we are all in agreement that going to San Antonio College and taking whatever courses we choose is a great gift.

