

DOGWATCH

Visions from a Sailing Sighthound

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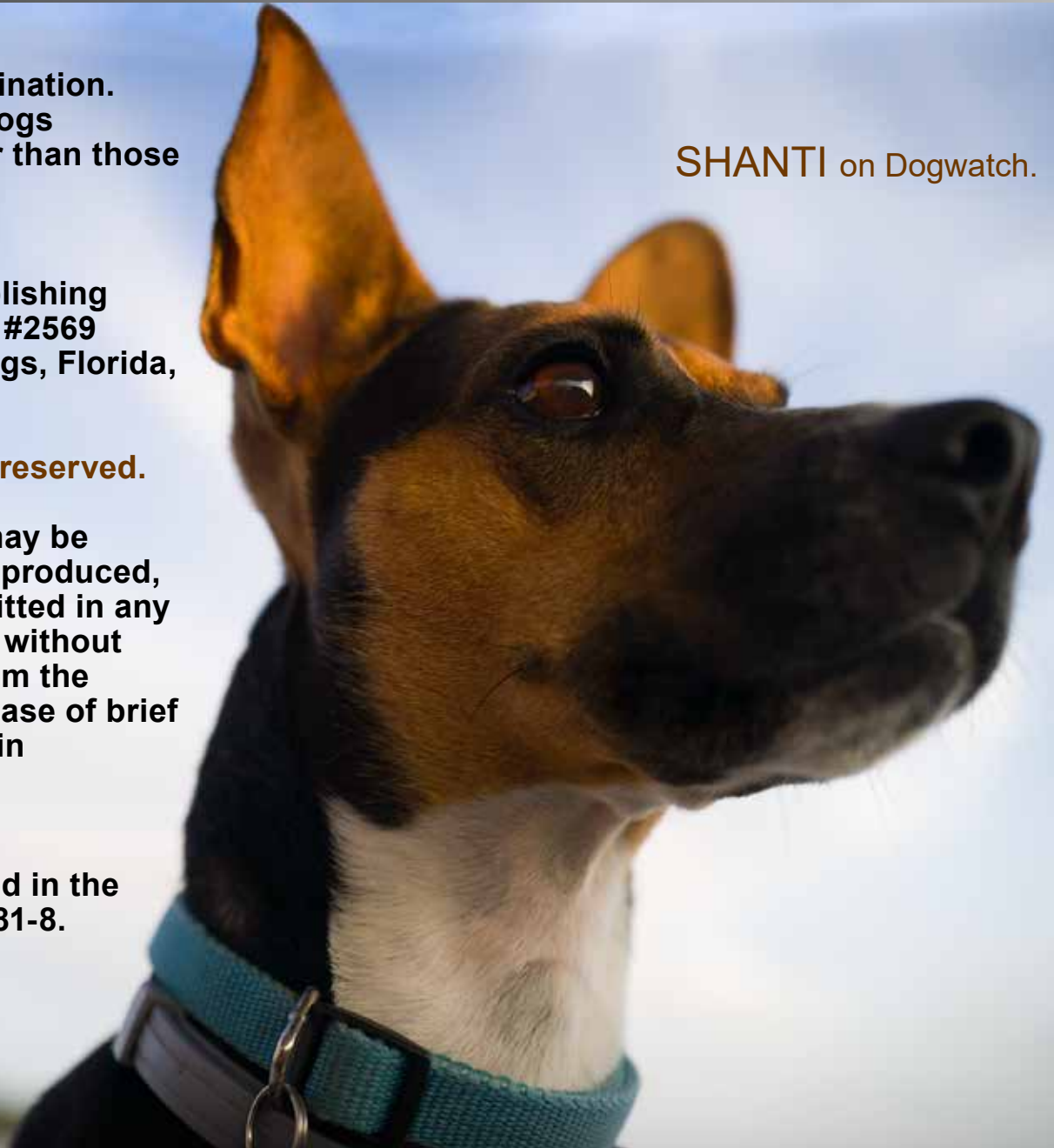
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SHANTI on Dogwatch.



DOGWATCH



SHORTER WATCH (SHANTI) I am short. I live on a catamaran. Aboard, it's me and my owners, the two-leggeds. My jobs? First, I am the dog that keeps watch. Second, I show the camera guy five secrets about how to see.

Preface: Small Talk between a Two Legged and a Sighthound

Jim: I'd like some photography advice, OK?

Shanti: Pawsome.

Jim: What is the best way to take a picture?

Shanti (stretching): Start small. See with your ears, your feet and your soul. Practice.

Jim: But how can I take perfect pictures?

Shanti: VPictures are about seeing, not perfection. What counts is the experience, being there.

Jim: OK, how do I make successful photographs?

Shanti: Look for joy. Forget success, focus on your truth. Want to know my secret for seeing... what I do?

Jim: What's that?

Shanti: Vision comes when you are more enthusiastic, trust your subjects, are playful with others, and can stay curious.

Jim: But how often will I make original photos?

Shanti (ears up high, lips parted slightly): As often as I catch what I am hunting: rarely. Stick to it. Sniff out what you want to find. Learn stillness. If you try sometime, you will get what you need.

Jim: You sound like the Rolling Stones.

But Shanti, don't I need to have "the eye", to have a gift?

Shanti: No, seeing is already a gift that we all have. We just need to get enthusiastic, curious and trustworkthy, like me.

Jim: How can I grow in trust?

Shanti: Practice every day, when we go out walking. You train to perform. Stop trying so hard to control stuff. Trust the sea you sail, and where you are. Go back to places you know. Frame your soul, don't frame selfies.

Jim: Does that mean I can't be me?

Shanti: No, I am always myself when I see all the sand grains that make up the beach, when I am learning to swim the ocean.

Jim: Are you a zen dog?

Shanti: No. I am an empirical girl..

Jim: OK, I will practice.

Shanti: Until our next...



(SHANTI) You see, a time ago in Africa, my fore Paws were dogs that were almost like wolves. In the wild, wolves did not come to humans, but my Fore Paws learned to be friendly to the two leggeds. Because we were friendly and learning to warn the two-legged of danger, we survived.

The two leggeds rescued me. They are strange...sit there making words on a screen. So, I have to get their attention with my tongue; my owners' ears taste salty like pretzels.

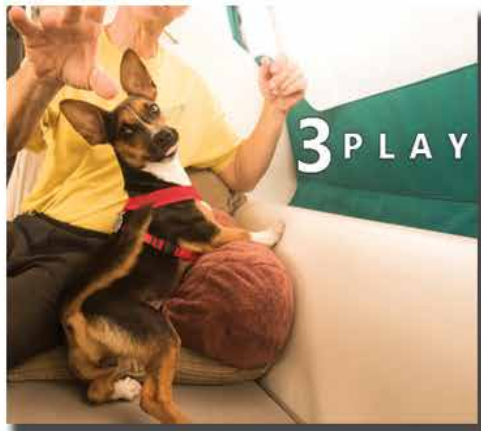
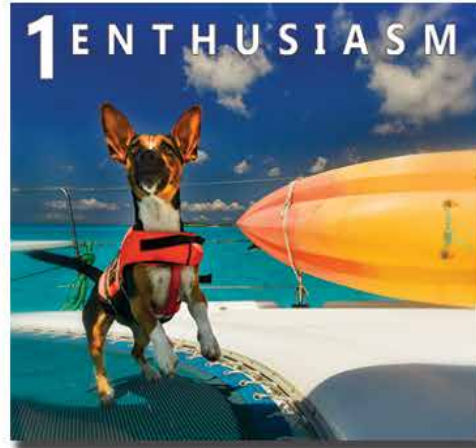
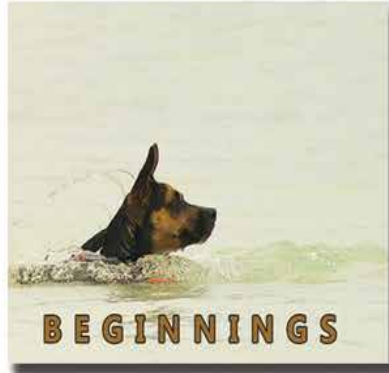
In this book, I talk about my second job. I try to show two-legged camera guy how to feel alive and to listen, smell and stare at what he sees.

Camera guy is not looking at me (sigh). It takes work teaching him to pay attention. He says he is more enthusiastic and getting better at pictures. I have my doubts.

I am happy chasing the waves when we sail to the islands.

Meeting me for the first time, two legged human call to me: "Hey Buddy, Hi Boy." I am not a boy, I am a smaller, smarter girl. In the islands, the two legged pupkids touch my tummy and say that I must have had ten puppies because I have have ten nipples. Pull--eee-ase !

CHAPTERS





**"I've found no better place
for making photographs
than wherever I am."**

Freeman Patterson, Photographer

(SHANTI) My breed had beginnings in Africa. In old times —my paws are 10,000 years old so I know— all dog watches were night watches at a time on deck when all but the dogs were asleep. The two-legged sailers in those days took five 4-hour watches and two 2-hour watches. But when they rescued me and I came aboard the catamaran, my owners took watches at their helm for way too long. I taught them about dog watches. Now they are less cranky.

I like to swim. There are minnows. I try to catch them. The two-legged ones say I am a sighthound. They do not know... I hunt with my nose and my ears and my eyes. They watch me hunt, and I cameraa guy learns to use all of his senses when he uses his camera.

My basenji Mom taught me a motto: 'It's not about your size, Shanti,' she said, " Your way is the enthusiasm, trust, play, curiosity and stillness inside you.'



"Nothing great was ever
accomplished without enthusiasm."

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)



1.1 BRIGHT ENTHUSIASM: (SHANTI) He is teasing me with a fetch toy on our trampoline. My friend the beagle, whose owner is a computer scientist, tells me 'nothing lights up the brain like play.' I guess I have a bright brain, because I play a lot.



1.2 GOING ASHORE (SHANTI) I weigh about as much as a fox and I can jump as high as one. I've got the two-legged ones tamed. I wag and rub and wiggle until they take me in the rowboat to go to shore. Camera guy and his captain gave me bacon strips as treats when I learned to swim out to Dog Paddle.



1.3 SAND (SHANTI) I love the beach. I know the crabs are down below cause their crabby smells come up my nose.

I can hear them. I dig deep. Sand all over. I get both paws and my butt in the hole. My two legged can still see my tail.

I remember where crabs were hiding. I have tens of thousands of aromamaps. That way, I can find them a year later. And I don't get lost' cause I smell home from far away.

Each year my owners take me to The Bahamas. We get in Dog Paddle, our rowboat.

I wear my orange jacket so I can float. We get to the sand, where I see somebody, so I am wiggling for them. I love people.

People want to pick me up. I am happy when there are two legged around.

At night, when my two leggeds go off the ship to a party, I keep watch over the boat after they leave.



1.4 JUNKANOO, GOVERNORS HARBOR: (JIM) Shanti shows me about the in-between moments, but this junkanoo parade was too loud for her. (SHANTI) They left me aboard, inside, in my safe bed. If I hear loud drums, or fireworks on land, I start trembling. I am smart, and I do get afraid of stuff.



1.5 ELEUTHERA ISLAND FREEDOM (Jim) After school, the best thing is an adventure in Rock Sound harbor.



1.6 MAN OF GOD: (JIM) When Ali and I first met, he was cleaning fish. At the end of the work day, I made a few portraits of him. Speaking with Ali again a year later, I got to know him. On that morning on the north shore of Grand Bahama, as the fragrance from nearby piles of conch shells wafted around us, our enthusiastic conversation about God began when Ali told me that he was a man of God.



1.7 FLYING GLASSES: (JIM) On Cat Island, an Old Bight High School team warms up with a loud cheer before their annual All Sports Day competition. When a pair of eyeglasses got airborne, I thought they symbolized a spontaneous, unbound consciousness.



1.8 WINDY WAVES: (JIM) I led a beachside photo workshop at Fernandez Bay on Cat Island in March 2019. While Shanti was chasing waves, I had Kesha, our model, hold an Androsian batik shawl. Her eyebrow mirrors the shape of the windblown cloth, and the rest of Kesha's face is hidden, so her emotions are implied, invisible within the visible.



1.9 INSTANT: (Shanti) It was raining hard. We met Bahamas kids. After their school bus ran out of gas on the highway, they all went under a roof to stay dry, like I do aboard when it is the rain. The kids waited for another bus. Camera guy made a right away picture to give them. Camera guy talks a lot, so I try to show him about trust. Kids help.



(JIM) A portrait can only hint at the essence of character. We can not know the essence of another's being, partly because we do not even know our own character. Robin Kelsey, writing in his book *Photography and the Art of Chance*, points out: "we often know the subject proper only through the photograph."

Shanti teaches me how to earn the trust of people I photograph. She shows me how earning trust means watching, listening to, and understanding body speak. She has big ears, and is an expert listener. She listens between the words, to the language of the heart. If we seek to know character through a portrait, trust is part of the picture.

TRUST



2.1 Bryanna & Shawna: (JIM) On Eleuthera island, I thought about how I could give back a picture.

(JIM): Watching Shanti say "Hi", her greeting is a dance that makes people happy right away. Some people are moved to give her a hug, hold her, or pick her up to pet her. Then, she lets herself be loved.

I keep Shanti's dance in mind when I meet people I want to photograph. If I am questioning "How do I want to experience this person?" or wondering if the camera is getting in the way of connecting, I stop, and then think of my her tail-wagging enthusiasm. She nudges me to dance now, worry later.

My dog is always moving ahead, to the horizon. Learning from her, I work on three ways to have trust. Shanti teaches me to trust in myself, to trust in my work, and to trust the unknown horizon. Letting herself be loved, she reminds us how much she loves us, and how much we can love another.

Portrait photography is a soul-to-soul connection, not a camera-to-soul connection. It takes time and trust. I've tried to develop a habit that helps build trust: giving back a print. Instead of saying we take a photograph, let's think about how we can give one.



2.2 MARY'S FARM: (JIM) From her farm, Mary picked us an 'apron-full' of Cat Island tomatoes. Later, I gave her a portrait I'd taken of the two of us standing in her field. Meeting Mary at home, I asked her for a picture of her hands. My request was not easy for her as she had to bend down. I mailed her vegetable seeds to thank her.



2.3 COFFEE FOR PEPSI: (JIM) I met Pepsi, 85, at Saint Michael's Catholic Church on Grand Bahama. She said she'd survived eight heart attacks, so her MD advised taking it easy. She glanced at a coffee service, and I fetched her the last cup available. She sipped. We talked. A portrait came.



2.4 Dogwatch: (SHANTI) I am on watch for weather changes at sea, because we are all in the same boat together.

**“There is no faith which has never yet been broken,
except that of a truly faithful dog.”**

Konrad Lorenz (1903-1989)



2.5 Prayer (JIM): I feel it takes trust to close our eyes, let go and learn to experience our faith. Primary school children, Cat Island, The Bahamas.



2.6 GREATER-GREAT-GRANDMOTHER: (JIM) Verlina Maycock talks about her trust in God, joined by 80-year-old Captain Cephas in Duncantown, Ragged Island, February 3, 2015. Hurricane Sandy hit The Bahamas, and left a large hole in her living room roof that year. Over her lifetime, Verlina had 13 children, 80 great-grandchildren and 19 great-great-grandchildren. Verlina's grand-daughter Melania Nixon started Operation Love and Gratitude after caring for 84-year-old Verlina, who passed away on February 19th, 2020 at 94.



2.7 REACHING OUT: (JIM) Lawrence Adderly is a catechist with an Anglican church. He was selling vegetables from his farm at the island Farmers Market in Salt Pond, Long Island. Adderly was born on the island, one of seventeen children. As we talked, I asked many questions, and he shared some of the history of Long Island and his work.



2.8 FRIENDSHIP HAS NO RULES: (SHANTI) We are walking the highway in Old Bight, Cat Island. My owner took me to meet kids at the Children's Home. When the ice cream melted and some hit the deck, I got to lick. I do not follow the five second rule, my rules are way longer..



2.9 CAT ISLAND CHEF: (JIM) Marlene is a restaurateur in Smith's Bay, Cat Island, The Bahamas. She trusted me with food photography for advertising, and then kindly prepared a tasty jerk chicken meal at her bayside grill.

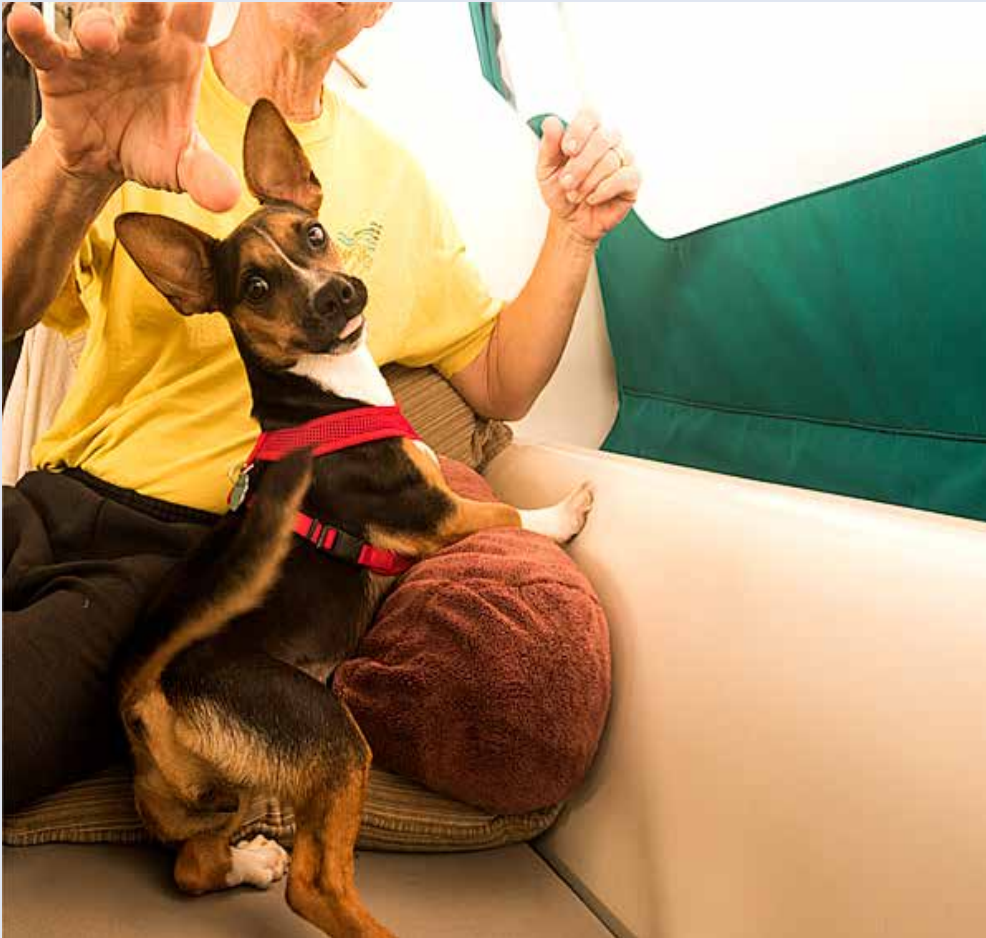


2.10 PASSAGE: (SHANTI) Seas get rolly on trips between islands. My two-legged's eyelids get droopy. It looks like I'm snoozing, but what you don't see in this shot is I am on watch with both my ears up and ready.



“I think what makes a picture is a moment that is completely spontaneous and natural and unaffected by the photographer.”

**John Loengard, Photographer, Author
(1934-2020)**



PLAY

I know how to play. I can stand up on my hind legs. We always have a game to play.

I am showing my two-legged how to play. He is slow. I paw it back a bit so he can keep up, 'cause having fun is better for me than winning. I think I get more fun with my paws and tail than the ten-fingered ones do with their heads.

I know about surprise. I go with the moment. Someday my owner will learn that playing more will make his pictures come alive.



3.1 SURPRISE: Sharing what they thought was a private moment. Cat Island, The Bahamas.



3.2 PLAYFUL GENERATIONS: Lynette, Tara, Altamese and Roselda tend to family, during the All Sports Day held annually at the primary school in Old Bight, Cat Island, The Bahamas.



3.3 SUNDAY SCHOOL: Governors Harbour, Eleuthera Island, The Bahamas.

"Who can you tell in this world, that when a dog runs up to you, wagging its ecstatic tail, you lean down and whisper in its ear, 'Beloved, I am so glad you are happy to see me, Beloved, I am so glad, so very glad, you have come.'" Hafiz, Persian Lyric Poet (1315-1390)



3.4 ARMBRISTER CREEK, CAT ISLAND.



3.5 SNAKE CAY, BERRY ISLANDS.



3.6 PADDLING TO PATCH PIGS: Splashing sounds from our two oars alerted a pack of three snuffling snouts. The pigs live on the Meeks Patch island beach, a couple miles from Spanish Wells, Eleuthera, The Bahamas.

C U R I O S I T Y



“To be on a quest is nothing more or less than to become an asker of questions.”

Sam Keen, author, philosopher.

(SHANTI): I often think... if I had a camera like my owners, I'd take smellscape.

I may be short, but I am strong. I can run faster than a crab on the beach.

My two legged says my nose is my GPS, gustatory positioning system. Whatever. I know I can track the trails of what I am tasting.

Camera guy also says my tail starts moving like a hummingbird, whatever that is. He is always making comparisons. He asks simplistic questions too: "Shanti, what are you smelling? " Well . . . you gotta be there."

I can't speak his words, but I try to show that I get inside of smells because I am smell curious. When my two legged watches me, he starts to take more time with where he sets his camera box and when he clicks it.

(JIM): In the 14th century, the word curiosity was akin to "cura" or care. It meant careful attention to detail and skilled workmanship. While photography tips tell us to be curious, this advice only taps into our surface desires to know. It has to come from inside each of us. I imagine being inside Shanti's vision, perceiving as intensely as Shanti does, and joining her on a quest together, asking questions on the way.



4.1 BLUE MOVES: While photographing shells, I saw movement at my vision's edge. Eight inches wide with eight muscular arms, it seemed to roll across rocks just three inches below the water surface, attempting to get away from my lens. Often misperceived, octopuses have a fast-escape repertoire. Their brains are more complex than we can know.



4.2 CLAMMY KISS: The two sides of a sunrise tellin clam embrace each other at mid-day in The Bahamas. I've been drawn to the shapes of shells since my childhood.



4.3 SUNSET CONCH: (JIM) Our anchor was set. The sea was calm. Shanti was sniffing a queen conch shell we'd cleaned. Watching the sun sink to the horizon, I got curious: "What would a conch shell look like at sun set?"



4.4 SMALL MYSTERY: (JIM) "How close can I focus?" I wonder. A visit to a tidepool is a mysterious journey. It reveals many small worlds. I rarely know the names of tidepool residents, those marine plants and animals that make their home in a tidepool, but I appreciate the variety of forms within these pools. Like Shanti, I often move just a sniff away from the mystery, and encounter something entirely novel. Given it a name is not important.



4.5 MAN O' WAR: (JIM) Named for an 18th-century sailing warship, the Portuguese Man O' War is a Siphonophore, not a jellyfish. We do not know if a Siphonophore is a single animal, or a colonial group. Perhaps they are animals that work like separate tissues and organs. I kept the dog away from this one as we explored tidepools of Grand Bahama.



4.6 OLD MAN OF THE SEA: A shallow seascape is bathed by tidal waves. Nerites are mollusks with bright colorful shells, named after Nereus, a mythological, shape-changing Greek sea god whom Homer called the "old man of the sea." To reproduce, nerites need salt water, like that in this tidepool off the Grand Bahama Banks.



4.7 COLOR CHANGER: Hidden deep within in a green plant, this Cuban tree frog changed its color to match the plant, and was almost invisible. These nocturnal frogs are native to The Bahamas. I asked the "how close can I focus" question and did not touch this two-inch long climber, leaving it alone to enjoy Grand Bahama.



4.8 LIGHTHOUSE HERMIT CRAB: (SHANTI) I stand about eight inches high at my ears. There's a small world that lives below the one foot high line. Where my two-legged ship mates see a lighthouse floor, I see a painting.



4.9 EYES AND WINGS: (JIM) Dragonflies mesmerize us with their flight. Dragonfly flight is complex for three reasons. First, their wing muscles are embedded in the base of their wings. Second, these muscles let them quickly change their stroke plane, or the direction they flap their corrugated wings. Third, dragonfly flight patterns are unpredictable. When Shanti is not chasing them, I watch dragonflies. In return, they watch me with the 30,000 motion detectors inside their optics.



4.10 BREATHING LESSONS: (JIM) Shanti is on deck, motionless as she watches the Bahamain waters. When the mother and baby bottlenose dolphin surfaced to breathe, Shanti ran to the bow. Each time the dolphins surfaced, she launched into orbit, bounded from starboard to port and back, running at top speed over the trampoline.



"Dogs do speak,
but only to those
who know how to listen."

Orhan Pamuk
Turkish novelist, screenwriter.

STILLNESS

(JIM) Shanti is showing me that stillness is not the absence of something.

Shanti is teaching me to sit still before I react. She has taught me to stare. She is trying to teach me about silence. With her help, I hope to make pictures from a deeper place and to pay attention to the interval between myself and others to earn trust.

Except for one, all photographs in this stillness chapter were taken from our home, the vessel Salty Paws. They show shallow Bahama waters, sparkling with a billion shades of teal, sapphire, azure, and cobalt. On deck, Shanti watches the water, in silence, from her seat next to us.

When I asked Shanti why silence was part of her, she told me it was about our souls. She told me that being with silence opens the heart to a divine beauty. I believe Shanti, because I once read that the Catholic nun and missionary Mother Teresa said: *"God is the friend of silence. We need silence to be able to touch souls."*



5.1 SUNDOWN CAT ISLAND: (SHANTI) I am sitting on deck, watching small pink waves rippling out off the iron shore. The wind and waves make the only sounds.



5.2 SOLAR PANEL REFLECTIONS, ELEUTHERA ISLAND.



5.3 LAST LIGHT, WEST END, GRAND BAHAMA.



5.4 DINGHY, PIGEON CREEK, CAT ISLAND.



5.5 DOLLAR HARBOR, LONG ISLAND.



5.6 FERNANDEZ BAY, CAT ISLAND.



5.7 ABOARD, HALF FULL, THE BAHAMAS.



5.8 BELOW A PIER, WEST END, GRAND BAHAMA.



5.9 FANNY CAY, BERRY ISLANDS.



5.10 AT EASE: (SHANTI) All the dolphins are gone. I turn round three times and then, butt down first, I lie in the shade on starboard. It's hot. I pant. I watch the sky. He comes and I wag my tail. I get up and wiggle. My dog watch is over. I am resting now.

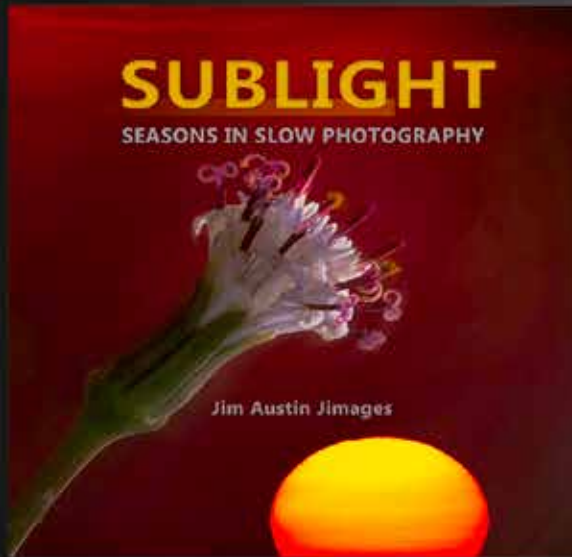


5.11 GREEN FLASH, THE BAHAMAS (Jim): I forgot to ask you one more thing, Shanti, what did you mean about seeing the silence in-between the moments?

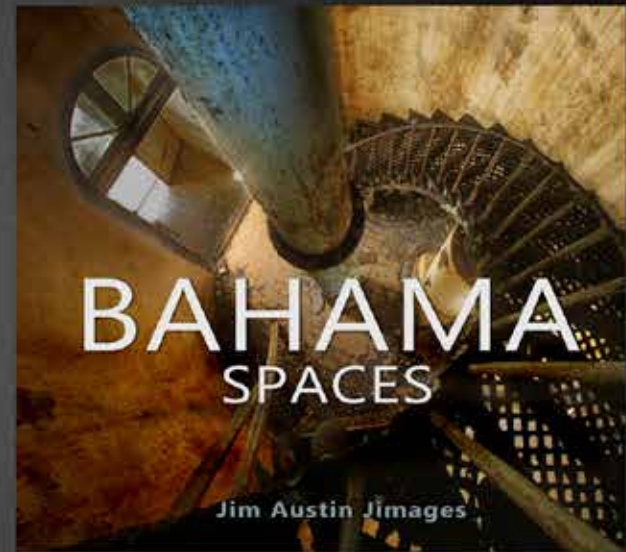
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