

Weaving the Americas

Emilio Lara Espinoza

(1st place second category 2011)

Pamela had been an itchy feet person her whole life until she was diagnosed as having breast cancer, and, eventually, died. When she was born, her Dad was working at the UN in a division that was in charge of dealing with poverty, not only in the Americas, but in Africa and Asia; he travelled a lot yet he never left his family aside. Despite his very important position, he always abased himself, a characteristic Pamela never forgot.

She was born in Vancouver, Canada, and ever since, the moving in and out never stopped. By the time she turned 17, she had already lived in 15 different countries and had learned 5 languages. She and her sister always had problems due to the fact that they were constantly travelling, so when the time came for her to go to college, she decided to go to the US and study Economics.

Even though she passed all her first year courses, she knew she was not on the right track; numbers were definitely not her cup of tea. So, that summer, she got a job at a museum of Art History and Nature near her house; it was then when she really knew what her calling was.

At the museum she worked as a guide in the Nature section. She chose it for she felt that all these years travelling abroad, and so frequently, were worthy to be shared. Her manager was so thrilled to have her that when College time came, he offered her a full time job at the museum. She dropped out of college.

People appreciated that someone who knew the world as well as Pamela did was at the museum, guiding tours quite knowledgeably, and her tours became very famous. After quite an extraordinary year at the museum she got itchy feet again; these had been 2 years of no travelling whatsoever and she was not accustomed to that; after such an active childhood she couldn't waste her youth.

She resigned from the museum. She was very organized and responsible, so she had saved up a very good amount of money and with a suitcase she hit the road. Destination? Latin America. She set off and went to Panama, and then all the way down. She fell in love the weather, the people, the landscapes, the jungle, the local cuisine, and particularly the sea. She just loved to see either the sunset or the morning light at the beach. She met outstanding people, visited magnificent places and took hundreds of pictures that, in later life would be the elements for her masterpiece.

Time went by and so did the savings, she used the very little money she had left and went back home. Jobs were not a problem, she even turned down many offers, and went back

to her former museum; however she went to the hospital and stayed there instead of going back to the museum. When travelling she totally forgot her health, and breast cancer was to take over her life from that moment on.

Doctors did everything to save her life, but their quest seemed hopeless. Nevertheless, they did not give up, neither did Pamela. As for this adventurous girl, all these journeys within different countries and continents were her best medicine. When the medications wore off, a picture of these journeys was enough. When doctors could not do anything else for her, they sent her home and there she started her own therapy.

With all the pictures she had taken through her journeys, Pamela cut them and made a big picture. Many moments became stripes that simulated a huge sun, that sun she loved to see at dawns or twilights. At the back, the Andes covered in white snow were the masters; at the bottom a mixture of jungle and forest adorned the image. However, in the center of the picture there was only one big picture: a pier lit by sunset light, inviting not only Pamela, but also whoever looks at it to take a boat and sail, leaving troubles and sorrows behind, and enjoy life at its best, just learn instead of complaining.

Nowadays, Pamela sails as a free soul, no doubt that she is free and belongs to these amazing plans she held so dearly. She may have found the end of her journey, but, in the end, the journey is the only thing that matters.