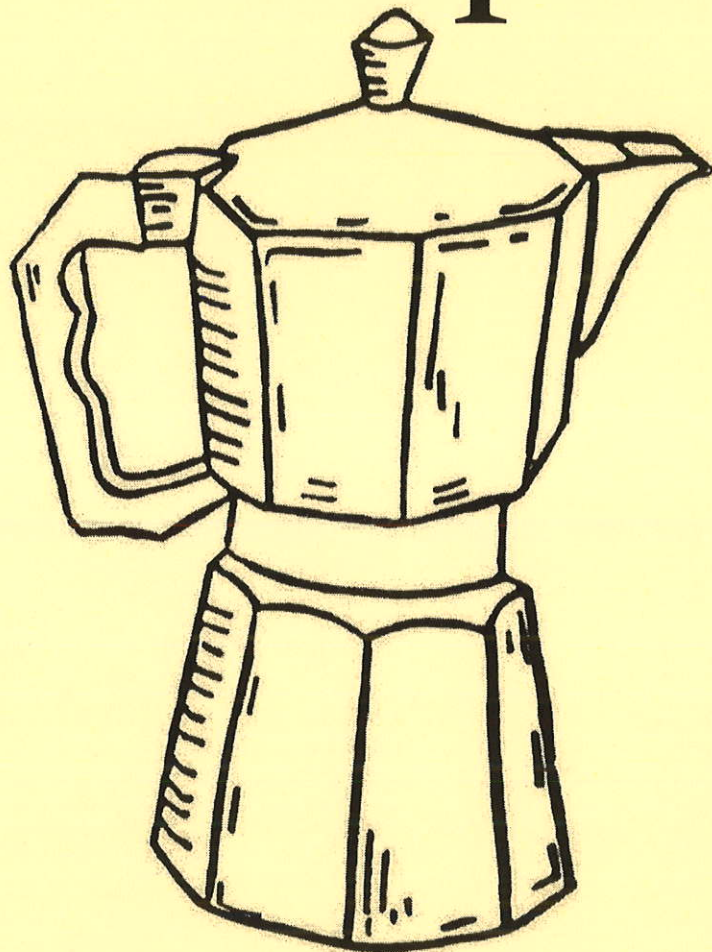


Espresso



A memorial
collection for James
Matthew Green

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Foreword

This is a collection of memories relating to James Matthew Green. The contributors of these brief biographical essays all yearned to share their memories of Matt with each other—as part of the grieving process—and as a memorial to share with his children. His oldest children are the age we were when we came to love Matthew, as these contributions come from his friends from high school in Fort Worth or college in Sherman, Texas.

The theme that ties together all these memories is a sense that Matthew introduced each of us to a world bigger than own. He was able to do this because of his love of travel, but also because he simply possessed a depth of self-actualization that was far more mature than our own at that time in our young adult lives. He broadened our views. He made us want to be worldly and smart like he was. And he was generous in showing us how. Many of these stories detail how he guided us to be the adults we became.

A note about the nature of memory: My doctoral work using memory studies and cultural anthropology has given me an appreciation of collective memory. A close reading of these reminiscences will find inconsistencies and factual errors, but that is not the point. Sometimes mis-remembrances are more powerful because they point to sublime truths and the very essence of the subject. This is a collection of memories from ten friends. No one memory or description can capture him; however, this *collection* of memories may speak to the beauty and truth of our friend, James Matthew Green.

The title of this collection comes from another prevailing theme in the essays: drinking coffee with Matt. Matthew introduced me to espresso—specifically, from the traditional Moka pot depicted on the cover—and the joy of a real cup of coffee. And he very gently taught me to say es-SPRES-so when I foolishly pronounced it EXpresso. He was kind teacher. I think of him every time I lift a little cup of real coffee to my lips.

Alan Arro Smith

Molly Wood

I moved to Ft Worth in the middle of our high school junior year. I remember hearing people asking each other “When is Matt coming back?” I had no idea who this Matt Person was but clearly everyone thought something was missing with him gone. Everyone was talking about when MATT was coming back.

Matt sat behind me in French class. He reminded me of Judd Nelson’s character in *The Breakfast Club*. Except that he wasn’t mean. And he was likely to come to class in a bow tie. I think the reason he reminded me of this character was because he was dark and moody and a little mysterious and very likely to say “bullshit” when some vacuous person was spouting nonsense. Matt didn’t hold back when he thought someone was phony. I liked him sitting behind me in class. I liked hearing the quiet, sardonic and often hilarious comments he made under his breath.

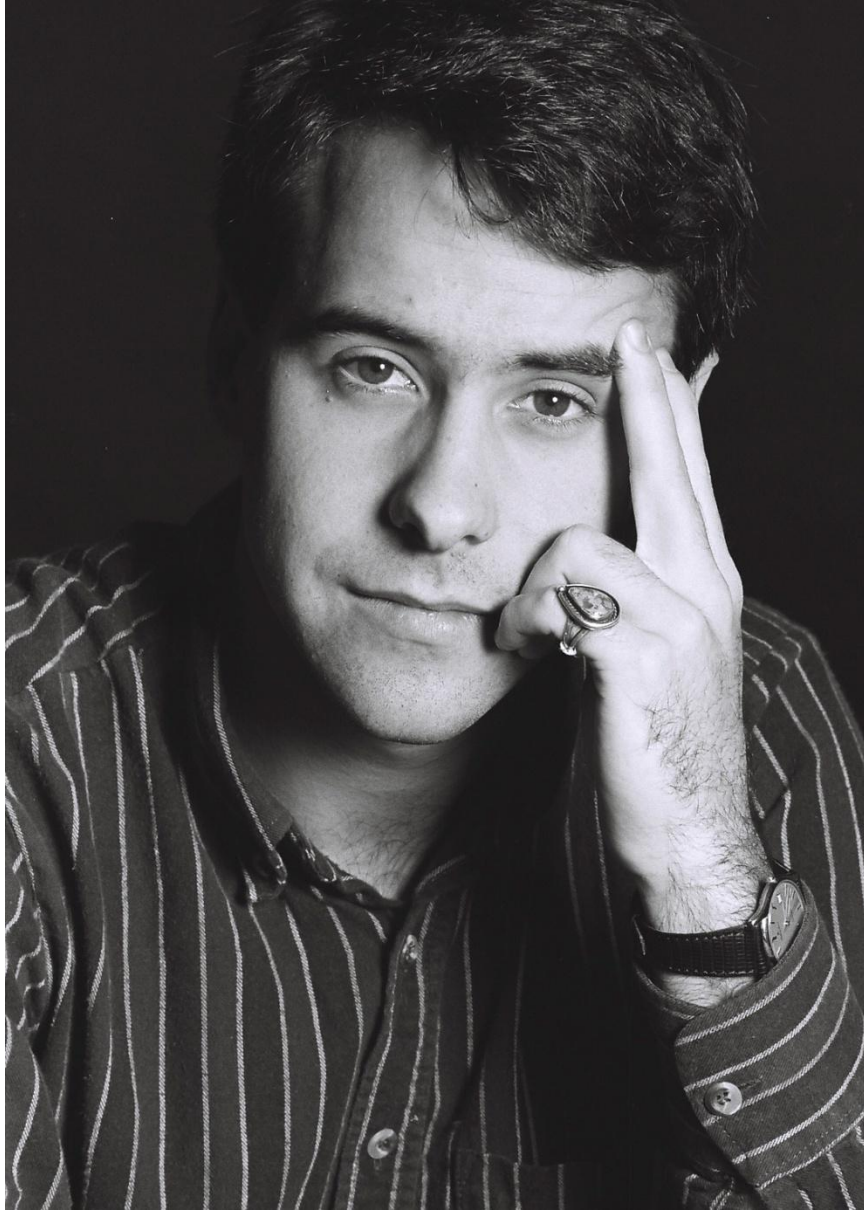
He was intellectually miles above so many of us. As a high school senior, I thought I was smart. I was not. Matt was smart. Matt read things and analyzed them and questioned them and understood them; I only repeated things I thought sounded smart. And he would bust me every time I did it. He would challenge me to defend my positions and think them through. He pissed me off and he made me think. I liked it.

Matt played with knowledge like a child plays with toys. He delighted in brilliant ideas. I remember reading a book called *Essays on Radical Feminism*. In other classes people would see the title and either cringe or roll their eyes or make jokes. Far from being repulsed, Matt would pick it up and thumb through it, comment on authors he had already read, ask me questions, enjoy the discussion.

He was one of those people who turn their gaze on you and make you feel special for having been noticed by him. He made you sit up taller. He made you want to be better. He made you want to be worthy of his attention. Being around Matt felt like you were part of a secret society. He was a core member of a group of people that I fell in love with. Meeting them was like entering a new world. These were the aesthetes, the intellectuals, the creative thinkers, the explorers and world travelers. They gave me a label for what I wanted to be. They set me on my future course. Matt was at the center of this beautiful swirling mass of ideas.

I only saw Matt a few times after high school. I shot a portrait of him in the TCU studio. His grandmother had given him a special ring and he wanted to give her a photo of him wearing the ring. I am including the photos from that session here.

Our paths crossed only a few times over the years. We lived in Vienna at the same time. We wrote a few messages back and forth when we reconnected on facebook and he was in Dubai. We argued about politics. I wish we had talked about Matt.







Here are two additional photos from a party:



Jennifer Breaden Bolognesi

Since I Saw You Last and Often

I've been lucky in my life to have known so many wonderful people. Some stand out and sparkle like stars against the backdrop of a crowd—and for me, Matt was one of those people.

I met Matt in the summer of 1982 when he was just back from France and we both had gotten jobs at this crazy Mexican-themed restaurant in Fort Worth called Casa Bonita. I had been on a trip to Europe with a group from my old high school, so France was probably the topic that started our conversation. We both spent our senior year at Southwest High School, where we had a memorable creative writing class together with a group of students I wish I was in better touch with now.

Between 1983 and 1987 we remained friends; we went to different colleges but talked and saw each other when we could. The Kimbell art museum in Fort Worth was a favorite place to go, or we would drive to the lake in his red TR6, where we would walk around and talk. Matt was passionate about art and believed in anything being possible. He encouraged me to believe in myself and my own power. I probably disappointed him on this topic.

It was a snapshot in time, we were 17-22 years old; I didn't know him at all in recent years.

I wrote a short story once about the last time I saw him, and the story won a prize in a contest. I hadn't known at the time that would be the last time I saw him, of course. But it was like that with him sometimes—magical. An evening could feel full of meaning, possibility, and, against the backdrop of the fantastical colors of the Texas nighttime skies, magic.

I thought he was doing what he had always wanted to do—live in faraway places, be creative, love people. I am heartbroken for his children. I'm just some stranger who knew their father many years ago for a short time. But those were formative years, meaningful years. I don't know anything about him, not really, but I knew something way back then: that I would never know anyone else like him. He sparkled.

Even though I have moved across the country and back, married, divorced, and married again, somehow I have held onto some things he gave me. One of these things is a book containing the

poem “Desiderata,” copied below. He wrote a poem in the inside cover, and the last line was “since I saw you last and often,” which I always thought was a beautiful line. Artifacts are nothing compared to the memory I have, a shiny, sparkling thing, to hold in the palm of my hand like a possibility rather than an ending.

I try to end this essay on a positive note, but my heart is heavy, his name catches in my throat as I look up at the stars over North Carolina and grieve for him, his family, and for my own youth. I don’t understand this. I don’t believe that he is really gone. It is not possible to come to terms with a relationship I once had with someone a long time ago, who is no longer here. I had a dream after learning about his death, where several people were gathered in a courtyard somewhere, and there were murmurs of “He’s coming back,” and Drew was there, and Alan, and Molly, and we were all so relieved that he was coming back, as if he’d been on a long trip, and then there he was. I woke up to that strange feeling of happy/sad, my happiness crushed by the reality that it had just been a dream, but the sadness tempered by the feeling that a soul carries on and lives with us always.

If memories from old friends can offer any comfort to those Matt left behind, then I’m grateful for the opportunity to share these thoughts.

Desiderata (© Max Ehrmann 1927)

Go placidly amid the noise and haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence.

As far as possible without surrender be on good terms with all persons.

Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even the dull and ignorant; they too have their story.

Avoid loud and aggressive persons, they are vexations to the spirit.

If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain and bitter;
for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself.

Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.

Keep interested in your career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.

Exercise caution in your business affairs; for the world is full of trickery.
But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high
ideals;
and everywhere life is full of heroism.

Be yourself.

Especially, do not feign affection.
Neither be critical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment it is
as perennial as the grass.

Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth.

Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress
yourself with imaginings.

Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness. Beyond a wholesome discipline, be
gentle with yourself.

You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and the stars;

you have a right to be here.

And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it
should.

Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be,

and whatever your labors and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life keep
peace with your soul.

With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be
careful. Strive to be happy.

Ameriga (Riga) Strache-Alonzo

French Coffee Bean Wars and a C.D.

I first set eyes on Matt during lunch. He was draped across a chair in the loggia, wearing a yellow and white striped cotton shirt and bright blue pants, topped off by those man sandals worn by European men, woven with ankle straps and a buckle. Or maybe briefly in my French class, before he transferred out quickly to a higher level.

Thanks to Shari Frye, my room-mate who tired of hearing about him, we did meet, on purpose, and “accidentally,” outside his art class. Where awkwardly began that common form of painful small talk that takes a week or two to turn into something. more enjoyable.

Then, because my small town Texas accent in French was more than he could tolerate, he asked me to stop speaking French. With him. Which I did. Now, calm down. If it sounds like I want to say that he was a real jerk, don’t be mistaken. He is the reason I speak French fluently, having earned a 6 out of 6 on the Alliance Francaise spoken exam. Which, by the way, earned me residency in Canada. But that is another story.

So, where were we? Ah yes, French. We shared other interests: coffee beans and clove cigarettes. The cigarettes I wish to forget. And the coffee beans, well I can tell you that story.

So, we were studying one night at my father’s house on Orange Street. At the dining room table, ungodly hour of the night, went to grind espresso beans, and as often happened; found ourselves in a heated discussion. Which led to the coffee bean war. Years later when I would phone home, dad would tell me about a coffee bean he just picked out of the carpet, and he would ask after Matt.

In 1998, Matt sent me a musical CD that he compiled, before we knew such things were possible. It's called Rainy Day Mix. In the last facebook message I find from him, I thanked him for the CD which had boosted my spirits and he asked me for the playlist. Because the songs say much more about him, and do it better than I could, because my eyes are tearing and because I must go back to work now, let me leave you with the smell of coffee beans, and some of that playlist:

"The Girl from Ipanema," Astrud Gilberto

"Aguas de marco," Elis Regina

"Gracias a la vida," Violeta Parra

"Barcelona," Jewel

Roger Swanzy

Harla

I met Matt Green sometime in our years together at Austin College (AC). He was one of the many special friends that I would meet from Ft. Worth. I made precious friendships with Robert Heil, Brian McCarthy (along with his brother Terry), Melisa Bodenhammer, and Jim Day. The year that I met Matt, I came to know Drew Kocher and Al Arro. Other special souls that shared that time were Riga Strache, Faith Smith, Lisa Comparini, Becky England, Rick Wright, Kim Sieminski, Kerry Jennings, Adrienne Cox, Julie Steward, Brent Williams and Dana Harris; please forgive the many others I fail to mention. One of the major treasures of going to a small college in a small town was that it made all encounters and friendships shine with an intensity that only comes when our primary source of entertainment was each other. There was not all that much to do in Sherman so we spent all of our time together, conversing, dancing and drinking in the 'Roo Pub and crashing the ongoing parties around campus. Those years seem like a lifetime of their own.

Harla

Without really knowing the how or the why, Matt and I became close friends. The campus cafeteria had a lovely glass corridor which was called the Loggia, which was also joined to the 'Roo Pub. The Art and Theatre people used to eat their lunches and dinners there at round tables and it was common for conversations to extend across more than one table. I loved the free flow of talk about philosophy, literature, art, films and music. The art of conversation was just one of the gifts that AC life encouraged. Matt was an intensely romantic soul. He had a mystic's thirst for wisdom and during the time that we were to subsequently spend together, music inevitably became a part of our friendship. Dropping by his room, he would put on a song and perhaps prepare a cup of coffee as he shared a clove cigarette. I was not really a smoker but I always made an exception with clove cigarettes as I loved the taste and smell of the fragrant smoke. He would then put on another album and we would just sit back and listen to it. Silence is beautiful when it is shared with those that you love. Sharing these songs, I invite you to search for your own special moments with Matt Green. Classical music was only one of our shared passions.

Erik Satie – Gymnopédie No. 1;

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eW33wN2EufY>

Erik Satie - Erik Satie: Gnossienne No. 1, 2, 3

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IUAF3abGY2M>

Claude Debussy - Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun;

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_7loz-HWUM

Harla

Over the course of our friendship, we invented a secret word between us. “Harla.” It was a multi-faceted word which was to become the first word that we mentioned wherever we happened to meet. Harla was Love...Harla was Peace...Harla was Look...Harla was Laugh... Harla was Satori... Harla was Friendship...Harla was Wisdom...Harla was Light...Harla was Joy...Harla was a word which I only used with Matt. It is now a word that I share with another deeply and dearly loved mutual friend. Now, when I say, Harla, it also means Matt. Harla is the sum of all his beautiful qualities. Harla is the forgiveness of his shortcomings. Harla is the impossible expression of how much we will love and miss him. Even before John Moyne and Coleman Barks began to translate the works by the Persian Sufi Mystic Poet known as Rumi, I was blessed to explore the spiritual dimensions of friendship with Matt. Harla. Light is older than love and yet love is what continually shines in us and invites us into itself as Matt’s memory invites us forever into his spirit.

Harla

Memories of Matt are rich and varied. My favorite times include memories of driving in his red sports car to the AC Lake campus. On more than one night, we would sleep beneath the stars lying on our sleeping bags talking about life, the universe and everything. Lunches in the City Limits. We used to drive to the local shopping mall to people watch. We would invent stories about the people that fascinated us. During a project, he had to record video sequences. This involved holding the camera at road level as I drove or following the handrails of stairs going up or down. We almost got arrested in the local Supermarket, a Safeway if I recall, because we were filming pseudo-commercials. The manager brought us upstairs into an office and the store

detective lectured us about the necessity of getting authorization to film on private property. We had to record over that furtively filmed sequence with the camera inside a paper sack. It was a harla experience. Harla and relieved to get off the hook. Harla and something to laugh about.

Harla

Herman Baker Park was also a place with a lake to visit and take a nocturnal dip in its waters. It had a rope swing and it was a delicious experience to plunge into its cold liquid. Freezing cold, we would swim and hoot and holler as we took turns diving into the lake. This was followed by a trip to the local Denny's where we would eat a late night breakfast. These adventures variously involved the friends mentioned above in random combinations. AC constellations were clusters of bright spirits, where at the drop of a hat, we were willing to finish our day's studies and find something interesting to do, however trivial. You never know when an experience will deepen into a memory.

Harla

Matt was an intensely passionate man and at times, his inner conflicts revolved around women. There are those who place friendship above romance. There are certain unspoken codes of trust and friendship, a limit where one should never cross boundaries. Matt was never good at recognizing or respecting these invisible lines. I loved Matt dearly as a friend but on more than one occasion, he stepped on my toes as he did others. Matt became a moth when he met a woman that he was interested in and all that mattered was that light. Friendships, honor, trust... everything vanished in that flame where only the romantic moments seemed to matter. Harla. I continued to be his friend despite such upsets. It was hard but I learned to accept the fact that women were always Matt's greatest strength and his greatest weakness. Women loved Matt and that love is part of his testimony. Harla. People were inevitably hurt by his decisions to chase romance. Harla. In his name, I ask that you find it in your hearts to forgive him. Harla. Time heals all wounds.

Harla

These are some of the albums that remind me of Matt. Every song seems to evoke some shared memory. The lyrics are now Matt's way of speaking to us. Harla.

The Cure- Seventeen Seconds (We wore out this album)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Ref8HbuWDo>

Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark (OMD)- Architecture and Morality

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qxUQiaLRHeM>

Talking Heads – Remain in Light

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R4k1netwWr0>

Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark (OMD)- Crush

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q-pOSnHRoWE>

Harla. Look for Matt in the music.

Harla

Questions. Life is full of difficult questions. We have no choice but to walk amidst the darkness and the light. We cannot help but ask ourselves why. Why did someone we loved so much make the terrible decision to leave us? Where was the love? Where was the faith? When did the fears, the loneliness, the doubts, the economic frustrations, the money woes, the emotional turmoil become unbearable? Sadly, some questions remain unanswered in our hearts. In loving memory, we must hold this person in our hearts. We must forgive his decision to leave us, despite the fact that it has left the deepest wounds in our hearts. Our tears cannot bring him back but they do touch his life in the ways that his life touched our own. Tears struggle beyond the wordless ache in our throats to guide us to our love for him. Harla. Matt, wherever you are now, may it be a good place. Harla.

Harla

Every death has its lesson to teach. Sometimes it takes a long time to learn what these lessons may be. I can only share this. I especially address these words to the beautiful children who survive him. You must not blame yourselves. You must never ever blame yourselves. Cherish only the good moments that you shared with your father. Nourish the light of the good times. Always remember that he loved you deeply each in your own special way. Over the last three years that we chatted on Skype, Matt never ceased to express how deeply he loved you, his dear children. On more than one occasion, he confessed his frustration at not being to provide as much as he would have liked for you. Cherish and honor his loving memory. He will always be there for you in spirit. He will always be a voice in your heart in the dark moments. Harla. Like an invisible sun, Matt lives in the light now.

Harla

What follows is a poem written during the days that I have meditated on our dear friend.

∞

in loving memory of Matt Green

by Roger Swanzy. April 2013

harla

oh love!

teach me to flow

to where you are needed...

oh water!

teach me to quench

other thirsts

other than my own...

∞

oh love!

will you ever kiss me with your hands?

will you ever thank me with your eyes?

will you ever touch me with your tears?

will you ever remember me with your lips?

will you ever be kinder than the darkness?

will you ever invite us into your light?

∞

oh friend!

you must sleep now...

do not be afraid...

the sun will find you...

and guide you beyond all pain...

∞

oh universe!
where is the secret corner of paradise
where we will meet again?

∞

oh time!
spring is like childhood...
it blossoms and blooms
every year...
but it never comes to stay...
our sacred task
is to outgrow ourselves...

this is the miracle of water...

∞

oh why!
the wells of truth
shall never run dry...
as long as we teach our thirst
to conquer the truth...
we must always dig deeper...

∞

oh my children!
you must become the part of my life
which only has room for loving...

sorrow places a diamond
in our hearts...
a place where the light comes
to shine...

∞

oh life!
life is more than the sum
of our errors...
forgive me...

∞

oh spirit!
there is mystery at the bottom
of every soul...
no one can tell us where to go...

ideals are like stars...
we cannot touch them...
but constellations can be our guide...

every day must end

for the night to come...
this is the only way...
to see their distant light...

∞

oh sadness!
sorrow is an energy
that patiently waits
to be transformed
into something else...

tears are seeds
and they must fall
into the earth
we so dearly
cherish...

∞

oh heaven!
love is as timeless
as water...

a single word
transcends all
others...

harla

∞

Adrienne Cox Trammell



Adrienne Cox Trammell & Matt, Dallas, 1988?

My memories of Matt Green are gemlike—rich, essential, sparkling moments in time. They are not story-like, because there was never a conflict, or something that required a resolution. They were always open-ended, maybe inspiring a longing for a moment one wants to hold onto or a desire to accumulate more of the same.

We met in 1982, the summer between our junior and senior years in high school, both of us working at Casa Bonita in Fort Worth. He was a student at Southwest High School, and I, at Arlington Heights. He'd just returned from a year abroad in France. Casa Bonita was part of a small chain of restaurants, although owned by the same company which owned Taco Bueno and Crystal's Pizza. The bigger Casa Bonitas are in Denver and Tulsa, and still exist. The Fort Worth restaurant was brand new when we worked there, and many of the employees were high school students, in particular, from Southwest, because it was in the neighborhood. The restaurant was built along the theme of a Mexican village. As you entered, you had the feeling of having walked into an outside courtyard, encircled by two-story buildings with a blue sky above. From the courtyard, you passed a little "hut" on the right, where you could watch sopapillas being made, on the left, there was a little building which had the feel of a fortune-tellers kiosk where kids could come for candy. Further on, there was arcade on the left, then a plunging waterfall, and a bridge across a small pool. Behind the waterfall, was a mine room where you could eat, a village street, a grand dining room in a governor's mansion and in the farthest corner of the restaurant, a garden room.

The summer afternoon Matt was first brought to my attention, I and a fellow employee were on break, ordering an early dinner. We were dressed for work, the guys wearing their Mexican shirts, and I in my white peasant blouse, black skirt and matching floral head scarf and apron. The fellow I was having dinner with, who was also a classmate of Matt's, pointed him out to me saying I don't like that guy, he thinks he's so cool, he just got back from a year in France. If he was thinking to influence me, his comment had the opposite of the desired effect. I was

immediately intrigued. I'd decided to switch from studying Spanish to French, it seemed more romantic. Matt's shift was just ending, and he was saying goodbye to someone working in the kitchen, but instead of saying bye he said ciao, while smiling about something the guy had said, that bright wonderful smile of his.

The managerial staff at Casa Bonita would determine what they thought you were good at, or where you could best serve, and that's what you did. And if there weren't others equally good at that same skill set, you worked a lot. I tended to hostess, cashier and work in the "fortune teller's" booth. I remember one poor cute girl who ended up having to do all the children's parties and dress up in a horrible mascot costume, some kind of big furry animal with a huge head you couldn't see out of. Matt was good in the arcade. He'd stop by and visit with me in the fortune teller's booth, help himself to candy.

I remember the day he decided to quit. He was standing at the schedule, looking upset. He asked, can they do this? They'd scheduled him seven days in a row to work in the arcade, without a day off. Later, I'd heard he'd quit. So I got his number from the employee rolodex while processing the time cards and called him. I knew he was someone I didn't want to lose. He returned my call that night. I had to get out of bed to answer the phone down the hall. We arranged to meet for lunch that weekend. I remember that when I got back in bed, my heart was beating so hard from nerves that I could feel the bed shaking.

The day we met for lunch was a beautiful Saturday morning, early fall weather. Matt was driving a black 1970s Monte Carlo, or maybe it was a Cutlass. Like Matt's other cars, from that time period in our lives, they might not have been the newest, or in the best shape, but they always had character. He'd stopped at a school car wash to have it cleaned. I remember being impressed by that. To have other students wash your car. It seemed such a self-assured thing to do. And he'd obviously gotten into the adventure of it, the experience, laughing about something the students had said or done.

We went to a restaurant at Camp Bowie and Horne for lunch. A restaurant I'd never been to before or since, I think it's now the Mexican Inn. I can't imagine I was hungry. So I must have ordered something like soup. But we found so much to talk about that they were serving dinner by the time we left. That was one of the first times he told me that I struck him as very real,

unlike other girls he knew. To be told that by someone your own age who already seemed an *homme du monde* was a real boost to my self-confidence. To know that someone who impressed me could see me for who I was and appreciate it, that I didn't have to pretend to be someone other than myself.

He offered to come speak to my high school French class about his year abroad. The students asked rather lame questions, but he was courteous and responsive. He and my teacher seemed to get the most enjoyment from visiting with each other. She was a stout, dowager-like, French woman, with little sense of humor. But even she was charmed by Matt, laughing at his comments in French, later telling me that his language skills were very good.

Afterwards, I walked him back to his car. He invited me to join a group going to the *Rocky Horror Picture Show*. I was so timid then. I didn't think I was old enough to get in, and was worried about getting in trouble. I didn't tell Matt this, but it's what I was thinking. He always struck me as so daring. I appreciated his willingness to invite me along, and he never made me feel bad for not taking him up on an invitation.

Time passed, I started dating someone else and Matt and I weren't working together any longer, so we lost touch. The next time Matt came back into my life was when I had just started my freshman year at Stephen F. Austin in Nacogdoches. My first week of school, I was in the elevator in my dorm building, and heard some of the girls talking. They were from Fort Worth and had gone to Southwest. They were mentioning various people they knew, and where they were going to university. Matt's name came up, and that he was at Austin College. So Matt was one of a few influences that nudged me into transferring to AC my sophomore year.

In the spring of 1984, I attended AC's weekend orientation, Roo Camp, for potential incoming students. My first night on campus, I was walking into the pub, and there was Matt, and with no surprise or question in his voice welcomed me with a simple "Hello, Adrienne." We hadn't been in touch. He did not know that I was coming. He escorted me into the pub, the



Thompson House, Present Day

wonderful old pub, with its room-like booths and introduced me to his friends. We hung out, wandered about campus, talked about philosophy and religion, found our way back to his room in Thompson House. Thompson House was the language house at the time. The students living there were required to speak the language of the house – either Spanish, French or German, whichever was the language that year – while in the common rooms of the house. It was French house that year. In order for Matt to be living there as a freshman, I’m guessing someone made an exception. Or maybe he’d usurped an absent student’s room. That sounds right.

His room was this wonderful cozy little space at the top of the stairs with its own balcony. He introduced me to the music of *The English Beat*, and as the evening progressed suggested that we try an experiment where you gaze into each other’s eyes across the flame of a candle in a darkened room to try to see the other’s soul. He told me he could see auras, and that mine was multicolored. He was good at saying such things which could be perceived in a variety of ways, but which I always found flattering. As I was leaving, he gave me his mailing address, which was not his student p.o. box number, it was the street address for Thompson House. Of course, it made sense for him to receive mail where he was living, but not something many other students would have thought to do. It amused me. And I did write him, and mailed my letters to Thompson House.

He often showed up in my life, unexpectedly in surprising places. When I’d just started my semester abroad in France my junior year on a study-abroad program I’d found through the University of North Carolina, I was sitting in a theater in Paris waiting for a play to begin, when Matt walked in, saw me across the theater, simply saying “Hello, Adrienne” while smiling his Matt Green smile. A few years after college, I had friends in town from France visiting me in Fort Worth and we were hanging out on the lawn of the Kimball Art Museum. I looked up, and there was Matt strolling across the lawn. Of course, in these instances, *I* was always surprised, and so pleased. I remember that that evening he had everyone laughing at dinner, speaking French with a perfect *African* accent.

Other favorite memories.

I'd dropped by Matt's dorm room second semester our sophomore year. He had a small room to himself in Luckett with no windows. With no windows, you couldn't tell what time it was – day or night. I was having boy troubles, not unusual in my college years. So I'd come to ask his advice. A late Saturday morning, Matt still in bed. I had the impression he'd lost track of time, been up all night studying. He wasn't ready to get up, so pulled back the covers and invited me to climb in. I remember how snug it was, lying there, telling him whatever the problem was. I'm not sure if he had a solution, but the memory is one of comfort. He made me tea, which I didn't finish. He said women never finish their tea. So, even now, I often notice my half-finished cup, and think of him.



Luckett Hall (1950s?)

At Christmas break one year, I rode with him from Sherman to Fort Worth. He was driving a little red convertible MG or Triumph. The weather was cold and so was the interior of the car, with its cloth top. There was a string of bells hanging from the rearview mirror. He always added little touches to his spaces which made them feel like someplace other. Touches such as the blankets strung across his and Al's dorm room sophomore year which gave the room the feel of a desert tent.

Anyway, the starter on the car wasn't working, so when he'd park, he'd either have to leave it running or find a hill so that he could roll it to jump start the engine. I don't remember him being irritated or frustrated by this fact. Instead he seemed amused by the challenge. He suggested that we get together to see a movie over the break. The only one showing we both were interested in seeing was *The Killing Fields*. A strange movie to see together. It's a very



Buford Craig and Matt at AC

emotional movie, but it was comfortable being with him. I remember his yellow shirt and the steam on the insides of the theater's windows.

Senior year, I'd gone back early at Christmas break to spend time with my beau, Buford Craig. New Year's Eve, Matt showed up for the evening, as did a high school

friend of Buford's, and my twin sister. The house was the typical substandard student housing, no insulation, see-through walls, a kitchen sink with an outdoor faucet. Another student had dubbed it Ghetto House. Buford had an Hibachi set up on the rail of the house for cooking. Matt suggested that we light a fire and each write on a piece of paper something we wanted to let go of in the new year, then burn the paper in the fire. I remember that whatever I wrote, smoldered and stayed put. I guess I wasn't ready to let it go. While the paper which my sister had written on went from flame to ember, still retaining its shape, then was caught in a current of air and sailed off across the yard. I remember Matt's joy and enthusiasm for the occurrence. It was magical.



Campisi's Egyptian Lounge

After college, when I was living in Dallas, one night we went to dinner at Campisi's, the Egyptian Lounge on Mockingbird. An interesting old pizza place with some connection to gambling or the mob. While at dinner, he told me a story of having been very ill in high school, in the hospital, and close to death. He said that after his illness, he began having recollections of a place that he felt was outside of this world. The memories were insistent to the point he began to draw and paint pictures. While at a gallery, or an art opening, he saw another painter's image that looked exactly like the place he had been depicting. The artist had entitled the image "Gateway to the Pleiades." He told me that he believed that while ill, he had in fact died, and that the soul that had been his as a boy had left his body, and been replaced by who he currently was. And that he believed that these images had come to him after his illness because his current soul had come from some place near the Pleiades.

Of his letters to me, only one has surfaced since his death. I have a vague recollection of a purge many years ago in which I burned old journals and letters. I'm afraid his might have gone on the fire. But the one which remains is oddly, or maybe not so oddly, apropos. A letter which he wrote me while travelling on a train, in which he begins "Writing a letter is sort of like opening a door or a window..." So, at this moment, it comforts me to imagine Matt's lovely soul travelling, maybe back to that place amongst the Pleiades from whence he believed it had come.

And if I am sad that he does not still travel in this world with me, in some place foreign, yet reachable by Earthly means, it comforts me to know that I might find him yet again in the night sky, up amongst the seven sisters.

Here is an additional picture of Matt, Eva and Daisy, that I didn't find a place for with the text, but it's a sweet picture, and I thought the family would like to have it.



Adrienne Cox Trammell

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Buford Craig

I haven't seen Matt in at least 20 years and have communicated with him little since I saw him last.

This shouldn't be that hard, but memories of him have become muddy and slip back behind today's necessities of having to pay rent and walk the dog. And when I attempt to write down what he means and meant to me, the words seem so much smaller than the space the meaning of those words fill inside me.

I loved Matt and am so sorry he's gone.

- Matt and I would sit and read and talk about books in his room.
 - Matt was reading Proust
 - He never made fun of the books I read.
 - I was not reading Proust.
 - He never let on that he had already read those books, although I'm sure he had.
- Matt told me I didn't need to feel bad about not liking *On The Road* and not wanting to read it when everyone said I needed to.
 - He said he didn't like it either.
 - He thought it was not well written.
- Matt used to get coffee mailed to him and had a porcelain container to keep it in.
 - He always shared his coffee with me and wouldn't take money if I offered.
 - The coffee was Gevalia and he ordered it out of the back of a magazine.
 - I think he had a coffee club membership of some kind.

- Matt and I learned a song and sang it at the A.C. Pub
 - I think it was Folsom Prison Blues.
 - I have a picture of it somewhere but I can't find it right now.
 - I found it (See Below)
- Matt had access to a VCR camera from somewhere
 - He wanted to drive very fast down Grand Ave. in Sherman and film it
 - holding the camera out the window
 - holding the camera very close to the ground
 - I don't think we ever did this
- Matt had an Triumph convertible
- There was an intramural girls softball league at AC
 - Our friends were in a team called the Schifos
 - We, among others, were part of the all male cheerleading squad
 - Matt made up several good cheers
 - I cannot recall any of them
- A hypnotist/mentalists came to AC to perform a show
 - Matt and I called him "Mr. Trista Gizmo" and made up a stage patter for him in a funny accent.
- Matt and Adrienne and I went to a show in Deep Ellum once
 - We had to park in a parking lot where you had to pay
 - The man we payed didn't look like an actual Parking Lot attendant
 - He looked like a bum
 - I told Matt that I was concerned we had just given away our parking money to a bum and the car might be towed.

- Matt said, “It doesn’t matter who you give the money to, as long as you give it to someone in good faith.”
 - I have quoted him several times and he has never been wrong.

Matt came to a small New Years Eve party I had in Sherman in 1986. I was living in a house called, appropriately, Ghetto House.

At midnight Matt told us to write down our regrets for the year and had us go outside into the cold, read the regrets aloud and then burn them in a small fire we had made.

He told us that those regrets were gone and we no longer had to think of them.

He told us to start our new year clean.



Dana Harris and Candace Bender

I was in high school when I met Matt, through Alan -- I think at one of his afternoon house parties. Like so many girls, I was immediately charmed by him. He was handsome, he was suave -- a word that I don't have much use for, but on him it fits -- and most of all, his intelligence and humor were immediately palpable. So I had a crush on Matt, which wasn't an extraordinary occurrence, but there was a weekend that I spent with him and my best friend, Candace, that deserves to be remembered.

Candace and I went to visit him at Hulen Mall; he worked at Chess Club for Men, the *very* coolest menswear store in southwest Fort Worth. And so strong was the tractor beam of Matt's charm that he got Candace -- the best of good girls, who had an 8pm curfew and was often asleep before 9 -- to agree we should go dancing at Camp Beverly Hills on Camp Bowie.

Never mind that none of us were of legal age; I don't even remember that being discussed. We arranged that Candace should spend the night with me; I don't know what excuse we gave my long-suffering parents. But there we were, standing in line at Camp Beverly Hills at 10 o'clock and once inside, dominated the dance floor until the place closed at 2 am.

Somewhere along the way, we decided that we needed to go swimming the next day at Benbrook Lake; Matt dubbed it "big fish country." So Candace and I pointed our 10 speeds toward K-Mart for malliot bathing suits that we hoped would be sufficiently impressive. I don't know what he thought of them, but it didn't matter; the three of us had a great day playing in the less-than-sparkling Benbrook waters.

Although Candace and I both went to Austin College with Matt, the three of us never hung out again. But back in high school, Candace and I listened to The B-52's first album -- another cultural introduction from Matt -- and as we danced furiously to "Rock Lobster" in my bedroom, we felt somehow special and wild and wildly sophisticated. That was Matt's magic.

Brian McCarthy

Dear Arro –

The moment is preserved like a golden prehistoric bug in amber: but the amber is a photograph I know exists, somewhere among my boxes of books, papers, and sundries. And the bug... I guess the bug is actually a VW bus.

It is a photo taken inside Drew Kocher's old bus, one dry blazing summer day when five of us were tooling around near Benbrook Lake. Summer before my senior year of high school, your and Matt's and Drew's junior year. The picture, taken from the front seat or thereabouts, shows three people careening loosely about in the back seat, noisy and smiling huge as the bus rolls and sways over uneven landscape, nowhere near any asphalt. As I recall it, the three are: Matt Green, Nixi Cura, and a very loudly laughing you. Drew was driving, and I stood in the space between the two front seats to take the picture with an ancient Argus camera.

I mention the camera because every control on it, especially the focus, was so clunkily manual and approximate that you never quite knew what you were going to get. Each snapshot was a combination of educated guesswork, sheer chance, and then a final letting-go: a leap of faith.

This photo turned out to be miraculous in its clarity and in the amount of information and emotion it serendipitously captures and conveys. These three people are very young but not naïve. They enjoy each other's company without reserve. It is a brilliant summer day bursting with light, and they in their tans and shorts and T-shirts are as free to fly about in it as the cicadas you can practically hear droning just outside the bus. This is clearly the inside of an old VW bus, doing what the VW bus always does, mysteriously making people happy by its very existence and simplicity. These people are quite distinct from one another, each carrying a very evident, unique, and fascinating depth—but right now they are one, bursting with this moment's laughter and chaos.

After a while of looking at the photo, one sees a little beyond the wild kinetic energy. Matt is way off balance, pushed to his right by the ever-shifting forces flying around in this space, and by the weight of both Nixi's and your torsos, also leaning—really, falling—toward Matthew. His face though, even as he crashes about and beams joy, seems composed, slightly quieter than the surrounding chaos, a little floating island of calm. He maintains a certain control, even when out of control. The classic Matthew physical gracefulness and composure, even amidst all this flailing.

I will probably never find that photo again. Now amid all this emotional flailing about that I am doing, that we who loved him are doing—grasping for memories that can calm us, or explain for us, or give us some peace with his departure—I could sure use a little glimpse of that island of calm. His cool summer smile. Magic camera, snap just one more for us. Please.

§§§§§§§§§§

Guess what, Arro. I found that old camera again recently. It was battered by the years, and by some hard neglect—too much time exposed to elements that wore it down and locked up some of the mechanisms that made it work that magic so long ago. I guess it will not be able to deliver another picture of the way things were, another golden memory to soothe, to make us smile. Our existing memories will have to suffice. Our certainty that this Matt we knew was—and remains—an enigma, a blessing, an extraordinary gift to our lives, and to the world. All that I could do with the camera is all that we can do now with our beloved friend—kiss the memories, wrap them in our heart forever, and let the hardware go. Take the leap of faith, that we will somehow all be joined again.

Thank you for honoring Matt this way. I hear him smiling, with a slight, sincere “Hm.”

Love,

- B.

Brian took the following photo at Matt's grandmother's funeral, Trinity Episcopal Church, Fort Worth, Texas, February 2012.



Alan Arro Smith

I met Matt the first day of my senior year in high school. Though we had gone to elementary school and the first years of high school together—and his grandmother lived a block from my grandmother and we must have played in the same park as children—I have no memory of Matt prior to that first day of Creative Writing class at Southwest High School in Fort Worth, Texas, taught by Ruth Thrush. He was sitting quietly across the room from me. And I was jonesing for one of the cigarettes in the pack of Marlboros peeking out of his shirt pocket.

Mrs. Thrush was apparently jonesing for one, too, because she introduced herself and gave us quick writing assignment, then crossed the room directly to Matt's desk and said, "Young man, cigarettes are not allowed." She confiscated them, went to her own desk to extract a lighter, and then left us unattended for about fifteen minutes—presumably retiring to the teachers' lounge for one of Matt's smokes.

At the end of class Mrs. Thrush returned the pack of cigarettes. I introduced myself, and we retired to the parking lot for a smoke of our own.

Matt had just returned from a junior year abroad in France. He was dark, with smoldering eyes. And the hair pattern on the nape of his neck—what is sometimes called a ducktail on boys that can pull it off—grew off to one side and curved back to the center of his neck. Everything about him was sexy. Even though I did not have the language to identify it as such at that time, I fell madly in love at first sight.

And it must have been obvious to Matt. But he was so self-assured and—what psychologists like to refer as—self-actualized, that my budding homosexuality did not seem to bother him at all. This nonchalance was quite rare in 1982. I think Matt's acceptance of my sexuality has a two-pronged root: The first is the self-actualization—he was just very evolved and mature, much more so than our peers. The second reason why he was so comfortable with my sexuality was that he was so masculine and comfortable with his own sexuality. My gayness in no way threatened his heterosexuality. He desired women: there was no question about that.

It is not unusual for young gay people to be particularly adept at acting and drama. Many social science theorists have written about this as a successful coping strategy to deal with budding sexual desires that do not conform to society's hetero-normative templates. And although I was not an actor on the stage—nor member of the drama club—I was a master thespian throughout my first three years of high school. I carefully constructed two distinct “roles” which I consciously inhabited. Depending on the day, I was either an archetypal preppie, or a punk. I had two completely separate wardrobes that matched the two distinct attitudes toward life: conformity and radical non-conformity. (I was also seeing a psychologist at the time who found this cleft very interesting.) The punk thing was a simple rebellion against my middle-class upbringing. The preppie façade was an attempt to emulate the very rich kids I had briefly attended class with at Fort Worth Country Day School—kids that had socially rejected me. Oh, I was mess of unself-actualized fears, homophobia, class discordance, and sexual confusion. I was inauthentic.

And Matt saw right through all of that. I believe part of his gift was just an innate spirituality. But he had also just come back from a year in France and his perspective was simply much broader than anyone's I had met up to that point. His focus was tempered by having just experienced a foreign culture. And he was generous in sharing that worldly perspective with us middle-class students who had never left the continental United States, unless you count quick trips to Mexican border towns or a weekend on Vancouver Island. He did not make a big deal about it. He was not a snob about it. He was a gracious teacher of French culture. He introduced me to a world that was literally foreign to me. He forced me to be cognizant of cultures that existed outside of my provincial and suburban society. His tutoring was gentle, but he would not brook my comfortable inauthentic self (or selves, actually).

What Matt did for me was to firmly introduce me to a more authentic self. He showed me how I could still be the “prep” and the “punk,” but I had to be both at once—and I had to find a voice that was my own. That is what I am most grateful to Matthew for. He made me be authentic. [Though a close reading of *Hamlet* shows this is not really an apt metaphor,] I was Laertes to Matt's Polonius, and he instructed “to thine own self be true.”

But really I was Sal Paradise to Matt's Dean Moriarty in Kerouac's *On the Road*. He was cool. And girls loved him. I just followed his lead.

The memory I cherish most from that senior year in high school is so strange that for many years I doubted that it actually happened. I doubted its verity because it was both fantastic and because I was quite drunk. (I later sobered up in an anonymous program.) The memory is this:

There was some school function that involved a parade around the circumference of the campus. Matt and I arrived at school dressed as Arabs, and we joined the parade shouting some Arabic-sounding gibberish—much to the amusement of our fellow students and the faculty. I remember feeling exhilarated and joyous because I was with the boy I loved, doing something utterly crazed, and even the most staunchly conservative—boring—of our classmates were enjoying the escapade.

It was so much fun, that years later I began doubting whether it had actually occurred, or if I had just made it up. But this year, as Matt's friends were celebrating his life with happy memories, our classmate Jennifer Breaden emailed me a photograph she took of us that day. And there we are: two Arabs with sunglasses parading in Fort Worth, each holding highballs of vodka.



Matt and I went to two different colleges after high school. I stayed in Fort Worth to attend Texas Christian University, and Matthew went up to Sherman, Texas, to Austin College. One of Matt's girlfriends, Jennifer, also went to TCU with me and we would occasionally drive up to Sherman to visit because we both missed him so desperately. Usually these hour-and-a-half trips to Sherman would begin well after midnight, and on the spur of the moment. And there was no way to communicate that we were coming. (This is prior to the invention of the Internet or mobile phones.) We would just show up in the middle of the night, and leave a few hours later at dawn to get back in time for our own classes.

And sometimes Matt would just show up at my dorm room in Fort Worth, or at the little bookstore I worked at. Those were the best surprises because they truly were surprises. Just out of blue, there he was: sitting on my bed in my dorm room, or browsing the poetry section at the bookstore. I remember I broke down and cried once at the bookstore when he appeared.

As my freshman year at TCU came to a close, I made a decision to transfer to Austin College where Matt and some other friends were going to school. This decision was based on several factors, including the fact that I was attempting to control my drinking—and Sherman, Texas, was “dry” (you had to leave the county to purchase spirits); but Matt was also there.

As a young adult, the relationship with my family was becoming more and more strained. This was mainly due to my progressive alcoholism. My family had summered in Red River, New Mexico, since I was a child. But in the summer between my first year of college at TCU and the transfer to Austin College, my parents made it clear that I was not invited to spend the summer at the cabin. They suggested that I take a separate car—and a friend—and explore New Mexico, using the cabin in Red River as home base. I asked Matt if he would join me on this adventure.

And even though I was quite familiar with the culture and landscape of New Mexico from years of summers spent there on outings with my family, that summer with Matt was unlike any I had ever experienced. And the truth is that we probably only spent a couple of weeks bouncing around the desert and mountains—I'm pretty sure Matt had a summer job that he needed to get back to. But in my mind's eye, I remember a whole summer driving around in a fairly new—and pretty fancy—Pontiac Bonneville (which belonged to my parents) and sleeping under the stars on blankets. I had a guidebook of hot springs in New Mexico and we chartered our course to

find these hidden pools. On more than one occasion, I remember we were driving on a dirt road attempting to find a hot spring (this is before GPS was invented), and the road got narrower and narrower—and then we realized we had been driving in a dry creek bed, what is called an arroyo in the Southwest. And my parents' large, fully-equipped, fancy Bonneville had no choice but to back up the arroyo for possibly an eighth of a mile before there was room to turn around.

That summer in New Mexico was also a very spiritual time. Although Matt was sophisticated, worldly, and urbane, he was also deeply spiritually connected. Although I knew those deserts and mountains intimately because I had spent my childhood summers there, he made me aware of the natural beauty of the place in new way. He made me feel a part of it, not just a spectator.

I did transfer to Austin College for my sophomore year and I graduated from AC. I lived with Matt my first semester in Sherman. He was kind and introduced me to all the “right” people that I needed to know: Not “right” as in “well-connected,” or anything snobbish, but people that would share the values that we shared. Many of these people are still very important to me and I consider them my best friends to this day. Matt was very generous about making me feel welcome at Austin College. We shared a room in an old dormitory with beautiful wood floors and high ceilings.

But this is where my story with Matt ends. I loved Austin College and did well academically there. My social life was everything a young man could want. Austin College made me a scholar and took me to France and Italy. Austin College continued the worldly education that Matt had introduced me to—and I would not have had that experience if Matt had not shared Austin College with me and made me feel welcome. But something happened that severed our friendship.

I do not know what caused our relationship to sour and then end. I wish I did, so I could have made amends for my part. I do know that my alcoholism and drug use was spiraling out of control. And after that first semester we did not live together—and we were no longer friends.

I did quit drinking and using drugs during my senior year at Austin College, but by that time Matt had already graduated early and was pursuing a life outside of Sherman. In the twenty-six years since I sobered up, I have often wished I could travel back in time and fix whatever caused our rift. And now he is gone from this world entirely.

These are gifts Matt left me:

A multi-cultural perspective I had never imagined growing up in Fort Worth, Texas.

A glimpse of authenticity that allowed me to become a confident, content, mature man.

A passion for travel that continues to broaden my world.

The illustration on the back cover is a fragment from a doodle Matt made on a manila folder in 1983 while waiting for me in my dorm room at TCU. Somehow he had persuaded the residence director to unlock my door while I was out. His unannounced visit was a very pleasant surprise. And I have kept that manila file folder all these years as a memento.

