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Postcard Aunt

by Stephanie E. Kyle

I heard the screen door creak open on its rusty hinges and then slam, as someone fumbled with the brass door knob. The door grated against the green shag carpeting. Then a khaki duffel bag was launched through the doorway, emitting a cloud of dust as it thudded against the sofa.

When she entered, the smell of tanned leather from her black, scuffed-up cowboy boots and leather bomber jacket, enveloped the room. Her jeans were faded at the knees and her jacket was worn at the elbows. Tufts of blonde hair poked out from underneath a dusty black baseball cap, that almost hid laughing blue eyes that wrinkled at the corners.

It was a strange and exhilarating experience to finally see my Aunt Sandy. To me she had always been a glossy picture postcard, received once every summer in the mail. Those postcards, with their brightly colored photographs depicting far away exotic land, allowed me to experience all of my aunt's adventures.

A view of a setting desert sun postmarked from Jerusalem helped my hands to feel the warm sand sift between her dry, cracked fingers. I could imagine the desert winds blowing like a furnace through the strands of her wiry, blonde hair.

In another, the Eiffel Tower, lit up like a birthday cake at night, on a small piece of serrated cardboard, conjured up the sweet smells of French pastries and the gentle sounds of a violin.

"Hey, kidd-o, what'cha been up to?" The light-hearted chuckle of my aunt's voice, and the resounding slap of her hand against my back, snapped me back into reality. "Not much," I replied. She winked with those laughing blue eyes, clicked her jaw, and gave me one more slap on the back before turning and walking away.

I smiled to myself as she moseyed into the next room, and wondered what new adventures she'd be embarking on next summer, for both of us.