





Dear Reader,

Once upon a time, a beautiful Navajo teacher met the love of her life in a tiny community, whose population counted more pets than people. He had found his way here adventurously after spending his life in cities spanning from Washington D.C. to Seattle. By chance, they both began their teaching careers alongside a dusty river, with the hope that this place, that neither one called "Home" yet, would be the place they could make a difference. Over time, roots were set and family tree branches made- what was once two strangers in a new place became a family who will forever love this place as their Home.

It's hard to pinpoint when you become part of a place or when your soul actually becomes that place. Being Navajo and honoring many traditional teachings regarding Mother Earth, Shirley raised their children and grandchildren with the same deep reverence and devotion to the Earth as she was raised with. She was raised knowing the value of self preservation and reliance, growing a garden, hunting for meat, the preciousness of traditional herbs and the value of firewood when the summer sun bowed to the red skies of fall. Being an adventurer and having fallen in love with this wide open space where family values run deep and culture echoes much louder than city sirens, Al raised their children with a value for freedoms, and respect and necessity for both worlds. Where it seemed two opposites existed, there was now One.

And now, One becomes a Community. A family of thousands, fighting for the same thing we recognize as unique, beautiful, and precious. Pitted against what feels like Goliath, our small community is afraid, but not submissive. Hurting, but not surrendering. While outsiders threaten to make this place a playground and a spectator sight for travelers, the locals are fighting to protect the sacred nature of this place, the stillness and purity of the landscape, the All American values of family outings, hard work and respect for all those who are raised to protect what is precious and keep it safe and whole.

In contrast to the peace and purity of the land, the opposition uses methods of coercion. Using money and power to line the pockets and fuel the greed of groups who have spent little to no time in this place. Financed by famous names, who never blinked an eye at the indigenous people until he made a movie and gained millions off of conceptualizing them for Hollywood, and is now dropping guilt money into the hands of people who

intend to take this Home from the very people who have guarded it for centuries and generations.

In contrast to the honesty and unity of the small communities in San Juan County, the media chooses to honor the intimidation and misrepresentation by the Navajo Nation President, the arrogance and political agendas of government, all of whom are tearing at families and tribes. They have paid big money to create a modern day fight for territories – ignited by politics and greed of government, and not for the benefit of any tribe. Those tribal leaders participating with the agenda are simply the pawns of the Monument supporters and should remind themselves that tribes long ago abandoned these inter-tribal battles for the sake of peace; remembering that to lay stake and judgment on another's homeland is not part of peace and not honorable to Mother Earth.

The goal of the Obama Administration is a gluttonous effort to selfishly make a “legacy” at the expense of a nation. It is creating fatal wound in the heart of people and land for their own fame and fortunes. They choose to ignore the damage they have and will cause for the sake of this perceived “legacy.” What is crueller than abusing power to removing freedoms, limiting spiritual/cultural access, forcing a fix for something that is not broken, or imposing your personal agenda on an entire community believing you know more than they about how to love their Home? What reeks of more greed than using big money and an army of total strangers to devastate a community of hard working generations of families who love this place with all their hearts? All for the sake of forced presidential “legacy” and flagrant use of power.

Please, if you are listening the rhetoric of “Protection” and the chants of “use the Antiquities Act!” we beg of you to listen to those who know the heart of this place, whose souls reside in these mountains, plateaus, canyons and valleys. Please listen to those who are not seeking fame, power or fortune. Please listen to those whose dream is peace; not heartless land grabs and millions of strangers poking and prodding at this land as they trample thru it and leave it in their dust. Please listen to those who have cared for this place for generations and have welcomed and guided visitors with pride and kindness, while keeping the land sacred, pristine and valued as history intended. We wholeheartedly do NOT support this gross federal overreach and the plague of National Monuments that this presidential legacy is forcing on our Home, and on America.

Sincerely,

Evangelyn Clarke Workman