**I see the color**

By Gerri Young

I was so tired. I tried to push myself to get things done and realized, for the first time; my heart just wasn’t in it anymore. Piles of papers moved from place to place and my mind went blank trying to remember everything I needed to consider to complete the task—the task that just didn’t seem important anymore. These feelings had been growing for many months. Resentment mounted upon resentment and filled my chest with tension. The tension had feet wrapped in combat boots. Boots that storm trooped over my body when I should have been sleeping. My patience was worn like old stone steps pounded by demanding feet; granite slickened by the history of too many passages, too many loads. These feelings wore me away with a deafening water drip that everyone heard but no one fixed.

Twice the dripping became a roaring down the canyon of my fragile self, breaking bones, pounding my body, my confidence, my sureness, leaving fear and pain and defeat in its path.

I promise to leave the river. To remove myself from this whirlpool, I marched steadfastly through a forest of paper, plans, boxes, people, trains, planes and automobiles in search of a new way. At the end of the march I do all that again in reverse, hoping, hoping, hoping the new way will be the right way, a way that will renew me and make the misery of the past months fade away like morning fog chased by brightness.

At the end of the march I awake thinking of paper, plans and people again, but now it is different. It is paper made plain and fancy all at once. It asks for no information, doesn’t care what my birth date is, doesn’t want my secret number, my address, the make of my car on the ocean, the list of damages. Which ones would it want? The ones inside the truck or the ones inside my soul?

This new paper asks only for water and color and brushes and pens and ink and my undivided creative energy and drive. No one tells me what to put upon the paper. I am the driver of my time. I have only to plan where the lines will go, what color they will be, will their spirits be joyful or sad. The people in my mind help me, inspire me, cheer me on. They are the people of my new way, just being with them often tells me what will go on the paper next, their own words and art kick start my creative energies and build me up.

The water has stopped dripping. The storm-trooping boots are silent. The new way is strewn with small pebbles and I see the color in them once again.