

## 20. Our Woodyes



In my book *Memory of Amnesia* I write about a picture, "When I look at the photo, I always have the sensation of peering through a mysterious window through which one can see the past." So it is with the photo above. In it you see my family traveling through a western desert in 1955 on the way to Alaska in our woody.



We have had four woodyes, but here I will mention only the first two. There are lots of photos of the woody above, our second, and the car is seen in our

family films all the time; In fact I cut the three photos of it here from the movies.



My mom by our woody in Nova Scotia 1956

The photo below shows my father and sisters with our first woody in 1954.



I confess, dear reader, that I decided to include this chapter not only because I liked the pictures but also because I wanted to use the following one as the ending. I don't have any other photo that seems to be saying "good-bye" as clearly as this one does.

So long.



THE END

## 18. Granite Reef

I'd like to tell you a little bit about a red hill that I could always see in the distance as a child from the family home in Tempe, Arizona and for decades and decades afterwards through car windows, or while floating in an inner tube down the Verde River, or hiking in the desert. It's a small, dry red mountain with cliffs and ravines whose name is Granite Reef.

It's weird, but I can only remember a single time I've been there. I remember the ground being slippery with loose granite gravel: bits of feldspar and quartz and such. I was afraid I was going to fall down and tumble into a ravine.

Despite the scarcity of visits there, I have always liked Granite Reef. I like its color, its shape and of course even its name. Now, I've just looked up the meaning of "reef" and found the following: *a ridge of jagged rock, coral, or sand just above or below the surface of the sea.*

Naturally, that's what I *thought* it meant but I wanted to make sure because, of course, there's no sea in the desert here—but that's what makes the name unusual and interesting.

One day, I learned that there was a new housing settlement being built at the foot of Granite Reef. They had established Red Mountain Ranch and I thought it was the dumbest name I'd ever heard. They already had

the perfect name—Granite Reef! Red Mountain? Are you kidding? Give me a break!

In the last chapter of my book *Gone Are the Days/Y pasaron los días* I wrote a short chapter about our "woodies." I end the book with a picture of our car driving away through a pine forest towards the distant snowy mountains on a highway in the far west. Then, I write:

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So long.

Now I do the same but with this photo of me swimming in the Salt River in December 1994 with Granite Reef in the background and although I can no longer say, "I have no other

photo that seems to be saying 'goodbye' as clearly as this one does," I can still say as before, "So long!"



THE END