Any Bush Will Do
by Sandra Scott

I stood at my kitchen sink and felt a sudden stillness around me, followed by that familiar voice.

"Take a picture of the bush in your backyard." Protest rose up, but was suppressed.

"Really? The bush in my backyard?" I asked. Hearing it from my own mouth did not make it sound more sensible. The bush was within easy eyeshot, straight out my kitchen window. The branches swayed with the summer breeze. Cutting it back at the proper time birthed yellow and orange blossoms, full and thick. But this plant was common and could be seen on every other corner in my home city. Take a picture of that old thing?

My first trip to Maui had been a few weeks before. Vicki D, a new Christian friend, and former roommate at the CLASS Writer's Conference, invited me for a visit to her home. I was free to roam, rest, and write for twelve fantastic days. As an amateur photographer I returned home with hundreds of pictures.

The opportunity arose to enter a photography contest and submit a picture depicting Transformation. The winner would receive a full tuition for the writer's conference this year. I was confident at least one of the Maui photos would make a beautiful entry. I sorted through all the pictures once, then twice; gorgeous seascapes, breathtaking mountain vistas, brilliant exotic plants, lush bamboo forests, and more. To my frustration, not one picture satisfied the submission requirement. The deadline drew closer. I had no photograph.

The Lord was giving me an exercise in the transformation of my thinking. He invites us not to dig into the same old box of common reasoning and natural habits. We need to be open to the ordinary, willing to listen to His voice and obey.

I stepped into immediate action and starting snapping pictures of my ever-so-common, Mexican Bird of Paradise bush. God invited me to something off my own page, not to trust in my reasoning but His instruction. After about fifty shots with and without backgrounds. “Move on up higher,” He seemed to whisper. “Out of the predictable.” I settled on the one chosen as the cover winner.

God spoke to Moses through an ordinary desert shrub. I imagine Moses saw it in a different light after his experience with the Lord. As a preacher once said, “Any old bush will do.” God has the habit of changing what is common into something that is now full of meaning and power. On the other hand it’s not the bush that makes the event unique, but our response to God in obedience. Renewed thinking leads to transformation.

How exciting! God invites us to turn the page to see things in a new way and we are transformed in the process.

Sandra Scott is an RN, Bible teacher, writer, and amateur photographer residing in Tucson, AZ. She ministers to women and men seeking healing from the wounds of abortion, through Rachel’s Vineyard Ministry. Sandra has published devotions and children’s short stories. She can be contacted at sandratmc55@yahoo.com.