



## **Beneath the Turquoise Sky**

by Jeri Lyn Mourning Manzanares

New Mexico's beauty  
is a mystery the camera can never quite catch.  
A shimmer.  
A whisper.  
A spirit that refuses to be still.  
It is the pale moonscape of Alamogordo,  
where white sands drift between desert cactus,  
my birthplace etched in sunlight and silence.  
It is the weightless powder beneath my skis,  
where I glide soundlessly through the mountains of Santa Fe,  
of Taos,  
of Angel Fire  
each turn a quiet prayer to the snow.  
It is Las Vegas,  
with its quaint Victorian streets  
and my mother's home,  
where the scent of green chile lingers in the kitchen,  
a promise of comfort and memory.  
It is ancient Santa Fe  
adobe walls glowing red and turquoise beneath a vast sky,  
the plaza alive with color and song,  
and the taste of Christmas smothered huevos rancheros

warming both heart and soul.

It is the sacred rhythm of feast days,

where I stand humbly as a guest,

to dance, to share, to learn

from hands and hearts

that carry centuries of story.

It is picking capulín with my children

in the shadow of Hermit's Peak,

and soaking in the earth's warm eye at Ojo Caliente,

where the stars spill endlessly across the night,

each one a spark of those who came before.

New Mexico

is where my roots breathe.

Where my family and friends form the constellations of home.

It is the pulse beneath the desert wind

my heart,

my heritage,

New Mexico.