

BINDING ABUNDANCE

Story excerpt from

CHLORA'S LITTLE GOODY BOOK OF THE MONTH: *November*

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Photography by Rice R. Jackson, III

** indicates links in the online version, to be released soon on www.gingergeyer.com)*

.....Chlora is setting the table for Thanksgiving dinner at the farm, when she's sent outside to raid the pomegranate bush.....

PICKING POMEGRANATES



Pages of Pomegranates

2004, Ginger Henry Geyer

oil on panel with gold leaf, 12" x 32"

Collection of Helene Gordon, Ohai, CA

Chlora strategically placed the turkey shaped salt and pepper shakers, and the sacred cow butter dish, and the candles on the nice dining table.

Aunt Helen plopped a cornucopia basket full of fake fruit in the middle of the table, all the while denigrating herself that she had not fixed up a prettier centerpiece.

Then she exclaimed, where's that Yankee cranberry sauce?

*

Oh dear, did we forget it at the store?
We'll have to substitute something,
something red, how about strawberry jam?
Chlora knew that jam, it had flabby, seedy strawberries
in it, and she squirreled up her nose.

*recipe

Aunt Helen suddenly grabbed the cornucopia basket,
dumped out the fake fruit,
handed it to Chlora, and said Chlora, dear, go pick up
some pomegranates, they'll have to do.
She put her apron over Chlora's head, and sent her
out the screen door. Might as well fill this up, pick em all,
because could be an ice storm's coming
by the smell of the sky.

Chlora set off to the territory to be conquered,
like a spy infiltrating the Promised Land.
She would be an advance scout of hope,
and heroically return like Archie and Todd,
heavy laden with gigantic grapes,
figs and pomegranates, plus tall tales about giants.

*Num. 13:17-25 POP UP verse42

POP UP -Poussin

The land flowed with milk and honey
but the spies in the book of Joshua
didn't bring back any cows or bees.

Ex. 3:8, Num 14:8 POP UP verse43

*



Poussin, Autumn: Spies Returning from the Promised Land

She kicked through the leftovers of autumn in the yard,
a thick mass of colored leaves and grasses
that had resisted the rake.
Low-lying fruit is easy to collect and in no time she filled
the basket with a baker's dozen,

*

which was hard to count because some of
them came in double dares, like Siamese twins,
and triple threats, clusters so heavy they hung their heads
at the embarrassment of riches.

*

The bush was exceedingly abundant, and she wanted them all.
Chlora jumped for a big pomegranate way up high,
but to no avail. She tugged on the scrawny branches
but it was still out of reach.
There was no way to climb that skinny tree-bush,
so she stood on the cornucopia basket and managed to
get a hold of the big red prize.



*Detail of pomegranate, from **Binding Abundance***

Below her the basket groaned.
Then it snapped and sank, sending Chlora to the ground
on top of an array of fruit that burst open
like grenades of garnets.

POP UP cracking sound

If it wasn't so embarrassing, it would've been
like a resurrection, joy exploding from internal pressure,
shedding juice and seeds of the Promised Land. She knew

*

*

the basket was to be the Thanksgiving table centerpiece,
and in a family where centerpieces are important,
Chlora was a bit concerned about the wreckage.

Basket weaving made her a basket case,
and there was no hope for reshaping this one.
It was definitely squished.
If you can't fix a disaster you'd better at least disguise it.

She took off the apron and tied the strings around the
cornucopia and the pomegranates.
It was the laughable futility of binding up abundance,
like trying to hang onto Mother Nature's
apron strings in a storm, fully well knowing that you
cannot control the wind or contain the spill of love.
It was like forgiving seventy times seven,
this insane bounty, this belly of abundance that exceeded itself.

*

POP UP VERSE44

*Matt. 18:22

The basket's interior volume was lessened, but even so,
it was full inside. She kept dropping and retrieving
the pomegranates, and while she was at it,
she filled up her pocket with pecans.



Detail, Adaptation of Poussin's [Autumn: Spies Returning from the Promised Land](#)
from ***Binding Abundance***

After all, it was Thanksgiving, where less is not more.
It was like in Roman art, when they carved out
festoons of fruits of all seasons, even though back then

*

they couldn't get out of season produce.
Anyhow, we all know now it is better to eat local.

*

Chlora cradled the plentitude and headed for the house.

POP UP -Roman

45 POP UP Luke 6:45



41)Roman Sarcophagus



Pomegranates in Plentitude

1998, Ginger Henry Geyer

oil on canvas, with gold leaf, 26" x 26"

Collection of Joy Anderson, Austin, TX

She handed over four split pomegranates to be seeded
for a cranberry sauce substitute. Their crimson juice was
as drippy as a bloody nose.

*recipe



Iraqi Pomegranate

2004, Ginger Henry Geyer

oil on panel with gold leaf, installed 29" x 28"

Collection of Melba & Ted Whatley, Austin, TX

Then she tightened the apron strings
and proudly set the fruits of her labor in the middle
of the table. One pomegranate and a few pecans
rolled away from the set up, but she rationalized that
was just following the scripture about binding up
verses
the broken hearted and setting the captive free.

4:18

46POP UP

*Ps. 147:3, Is. 61:1,

Luke



Binding Abundance

2009, Ginger Henry Geyer

glazed porcelain with oil glaze, 2 parts, installed 10" x 18:" x 14 ½"

Her centerpiece looked mighty fine,
better than a bunch of cut flowers that was pretty
but short-lived, sort of like a lot of spirituality.

DINNER TIME

It was only 4:30, but dinnertime had its own schedule on Thanksgiving, which was fortunate since they had had no lunch to speak of. They finally all sat down and only then did the ladies notice the centerpiece.



Binding Abundance
Front view

This was the beginning of the end
of their Norman Rockwell Thanksgiving.

*POP UP -Rockwell



[Norman Rockwell, Thanksgiving](#)

What on earth happened to that cornucopia basket, Chlora, did you sit on it? Nuts and pomegranates were spilled out across the table, but thankfully, her little brother spilled his milk at that moment and all attention was again diverted.

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