

REAL PHOTOGRAPHS

Referenced in Beneath the Wide Silk Sky.

Sam's passion for photography and documentation is inspired by photographers who recorded the Japanese American incarceration, including some who did so despite real risks.

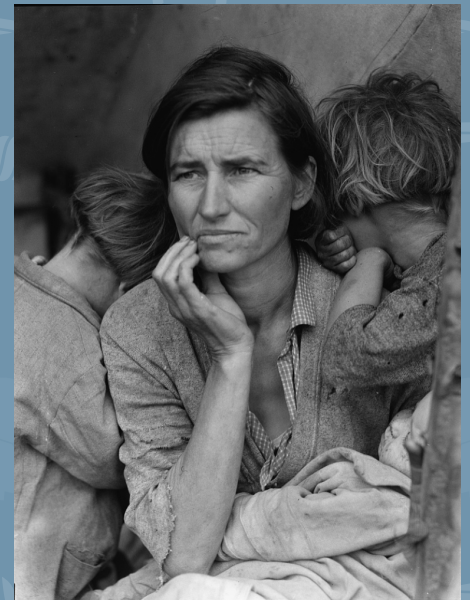
Two photos in the book are based on the real photos below. How would you describe these photos if you were writing about them? In what ways do photographs have power beyond words? Do words have any advantages over photos?

In his hand, Mr. Tanaka held the Dorothea Lange photo I'd described. I'd seen it before I started my journal, and I hadn't clipped it out, but the woman's chiseled face and haunted, somehow knowing eyes were as I remembered.

"It's a form of protest, that photo," Mr. Tanaka said simply. "A voice."

A form of protest. A voice. A puzzle piece clicked into place inside me, and I understood Mr. Tanaka and his boycott. He had to protest like I had to take photos. Both were ways to speak out--if only I could muster the courage.

BENEATH THE WIDE SILK SKY, P. 177



I still couldn't believe it--couldn't make my brain swallow it. Even after seeing the photo before, it made something inside me stop. Real ships. Real people. Gone. Disappeared into black, clotting swirls of smoke.

The entire hull of a huge battleship was invisible--sunk or burned, I couldn't tell. What must have been the deck was gone, too. Only a few broken beams and shards of board still floated, split from the rest of the wreckage. A tower was visible, swirled in dark foaming smoke. It leaned to its side, forty-five degrees, toppling. Caught mid-motion in the photo. But not in real life.

BENEATH THE WIDE SILK SKY, P. 79

