

Biography

Susan Squellati Florence, internationally acclaimed artist and poet, has been connecting people for over 30 years with her simple and profound words and original art. Susan's work has inspired readers worldwide, selling more than 60 million dollars in retail sales through greeting cards, stationery, gift books and gift items.



Since her early teens, Susan made her own greeting cards for family and friends and in college sold them as wall decor to boutiques, while earning her BA in Art from San Jose State University. In 1970, she and her husband moved to L.A. where they started a greeting card company. Using Jim's business expertise and Susan's art and verse, they created a company and sold a complete line of stationery products for Christmas and everyday.

In 1985, Susan and Jim sold People Productions to C.R. Gibson of Norwalk, Connecticut. Susan continued her greeting cards and stationery product lines and her trademark look became product lines of photo albums, ceramic mugs, paper tableware, Christmas and baby collections and a best selling series of gift books. Her work has been licensed and sold as stitchery kits, ceramic magnets, textile products and calendars.

In 1987, Susan created the first two of twelve books in a successful gift book line for C.R. Gibson, adding one book each year for ten years. Sold primarily through catalogs and gift stores, these books of simple wisdom and original art have sold close to 1.5 million copies. Five of these titles are still strong sellers in their translations of Spanish and Portuguese.

In 1997, C.R. Gibson was sold to Thomas Nelson, Inc. of Nashville, Tennessee. With no place in their Christian market for C.R. Gibson titles, Susan terminated her book contract in goodwill and began her journey of fulfilling a new dream.

Susan was inspired by personal, meaningful letters from people who were helped by her books. With a new desire to write deeper, more spiritually nourishing books, Susan began working on ideas for a new series. These books would find homes in retreat centers, recovery programs, counselor's offices, hospitals and hospices and in book and gift stores everywhere.

Susan began studying art again and found herself in love with painting soft, free, loose watercolors, especially outdoors in nature. Little did she know her newfound passion would lead her back into the marketplace.

In May of 2001, Susan met Helen Exley, a successful book publisher from the U.K, known worldwide for their gift books of beautiful art and thoughtful quotes. With Helen's editorial direction, Susan created *The Journeys Series*, a collection of books to help us all find meaning along the journey of our lives. With recent titles such as *The Gift of Now* and *Let Happiness Be Yours*, Susan is passionate about these books that she believes speak of today by offering connection, comfort and inspiration during the sometimes difficult journey through life. *The Journeys Series* has been translated into French, Portuguese, Norwegian, Finnish and Polish.

Susan lives with her husband Jim in Ojai California, where she finds inspiration for her work through the beauty of nature. They have two grown children Brent and Emily.

Email Susan at susan@susanflorence.com.

AUTHOR AND ARTIST INSPIRES THE WORLD THROUGH SOULFUL BOOKS

***The Journeys Series* Introduces Wise and Beautiful Giftbooks**

Ojai, CA - Author, artist, poet -- a spiritual soul. Her authentic work has inspired millions worldwide for over 30 years.

Susan Florence, artist extraordinaire, shares her vision of life's beauty and meaning in her international line of giftbooks, called *The Journeys Series*. Created with unique verse and original illustrations, the eight titles in this collection exemplify Florence's enduring desire to tap into the heart and soul of the human spirit.

"These giftbooks help us discover what is important, what is real for us," says Florence. "I am honored to have many readers write and tell me how the books put into words what they are feeling, but cannot say.

"Illustrated with soft, loose watercolors of nature, *The Journeys Series* encourages us to live life deeply and experience its beauty and meaning, even during difficult times. Messages of spending time alone, honoring our sadness, discovering the value of change and finding everyday happiness show that we can be present with our own true self. These small giftbooks (4 1/2 x 6 inches and 64 pages) are perfect presents for friends, family and our own self!

The best-selling giftbook in the series, *When You Lose Someone You Love*, journeys with the reader through the heart of grief and gives support and strength as healing comes. This thoughtful book offers a way for people to connect and comfort one another when many of us are at a loss for words.

"These books are for all who travel the essential inner voyage," says Florence. "The way into our own deep, rich life is through our own experiences and ultimately the realization of who we truly are."

Prior to *Journeys*, Florence and her husband created People Productions, a greeting card company that manufactured and sold her complete line of stationary. Her creative work continued when People Productions was sold to C.R. Gibson; and since then has generated more than 61 million dollars in retail sales through greeting cards, stationary, photo collections and licensed products including fashion pillows, ceramic magnets and mugs, kitchen textiles and calendars.

Published by Helen Exley Giftbooks of the US and UK, the *Journeys* books have been translated into Norwegian, French, Finnish, Portuguese and Polish.

Journeys can be found in select gift stores and online at www.amazon.com and www.bn.com. Visit www.susanflorence.com for more information about Susan, *The Journeys Series* and to view her art.

For interviews, contact Susan Florence at Susan@susanflorence.com or call 805-640-3666.

Quick Facts

Susan Squellati Florence...

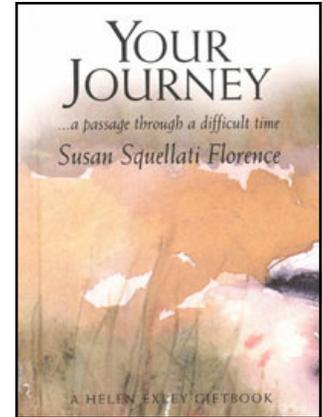
- ❖ ... was born and raised in Palo Alto, California.
- ❖ ... has been creating art and making greeting cards for family and friends since adolescence.
- ❖ ... was in the 7th grade when she fell in love with the poems of Edna St. Vincent Millay and began writing her own poetry.
- ❖ ... made by hand her own original art in college to earn ski money.
- ❖ ... marketed her art as wall décor to boutiques in San Jose and surrounding cities.
- ❖ ... earned her BA in Art from San Jose State University; and also studied creative writing, eastern religions, philosophy and poetry.
- ❖ ... started People Productions, a greeting card company, with her husband at the young age of 23.
- ❖ ... created a best-selling book series that sold close to 1.5 million copies.
- ❖ ... has books that are strong sellers in the international marketplace including Mexico, South America, France, Norway, Finland, Poland and Portugal.
- ❖ ... has had hundreds of products in the marketplace since 1971.
- ❖ ... has sold more than 61 million dollars in retails sales.
- ❖ ... has the distinction of creating a trademark look combining her own original verse with her own original art.
- ❖ ... finds inspiration for her work from the beauty of nature, especially in Ojai, California – her home.
- ❖ ... has a husband, Jim and two grown children, Brent and Emily.
- ❖ ... has a passion to share her life and connect with others through her art and words.
- ❖ ... recently created *The Journeys Series*, an eight-book series designed to help us as we travel the journey of our lives. (See *Journeys* “*Quick Facts.*”)



Quick Facts

The Journeys Series books...

- ❖ ... have sold over a quarter of a million titles worldwide since January 2003.
- ❖ ... are written and illustrated by Susan Florence, internationally acclaimed author and artist.
- ❖ ... are comprised of eight titles, each touching on the meaningful parts of our lives.
- ❖ ... include popular titles such as “When You Lose Someone You Love,” “Let Happiness Be Yours,” “Having Friends in Our Lives,” and “Your Journey: A Passage Through a Difficult Time.”
- ❖ ... are short, easy reads for anyone to understand.
- ❖ ... include simple, wise verse and original watercolor illustrations that offer encouragement and inspiration.
- ❖ ... offer comfort and connection during life’s transitions.
- ❖ ... invite us to pause and look deeply into our lives.
- ❖ ... promote a rich inner life.
- ❖ ... are the perfect gift for all the people you care about, especially yourself.
- ❖ ... can be read again and again for “instant inspiration.”
- ❖ ... are published by Helen Exley Giftbooks.
- ❖ ... are sold internationally and have been translated into French, Portuguese, Norwegian, Finnish and Polish.
- ❖ ... can be found at gift and book stores and online at www.susanflorence.com and www.amazon.com.



Cover art by Susan Florence

Testimonials

“Susan Florence’s wise and beautiful books have a quiet, healing power about them. What a gift she offers in encouraging us to slow down and deepen our connection to ourselves, our transitions, and our closest relationships.”

*Mimi Rich Bell
Marriage and Family Therapist*



Art by Susan Florence

“Susan’s clear words and gentle images offer connection, comfort and inspiration to my clients struggling with deep personal issues. Her books are available in our waiting room and are well loved. Susan’s small books speak to the heart in a big way!”

Patty Van Dyke, M.A. ATR, MFT

“...You have captured in words the depth and authenticity of being fully human.”

*Virginia Andreas Larson
PhD, Psychotherapist*

“This little book is my bible for the times I need a reminder to come back to myself. The illustrations and the words are perfectly paired and express what most of us avoid or neglect to do, spending time alone and taking responsibility for tending our inner garden. A wonderful gift to give to oneself and a special offering to friends. This is one of many books written and illustrated by Susan Florence that bring a message of upliftment.”

*Amazon.com reader
About the book, “Time Alone.”*

“The part of an artist is to show the beauties of the world, of the life, of everything, of anybody -- whatever horrors exist. Thank you Susan, to be that pilgrim of hope and confidence.”

*Bernadette Thomas
éditrice des livres-cadeaux Helen Exley*

“I was given this book after my brother committed suicide and I remain grateful for it every day. It is a simple little book, but it is a great comfort. If you or someone you know is in mourning, this book will help show that there is a light at the end of this journey we travel when grieving.”

*Amazon.com reader
About the book, “When You Lose Someone You Love.”*

A quiet, powerful series

New, unique and compelling...

THE JOURNEYS SERIES

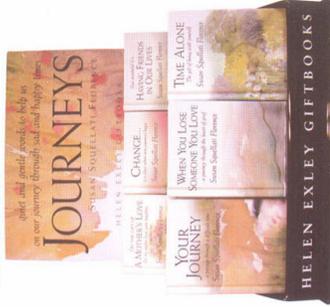
Susan Squellati Florence has created a very helpful and thoughtful new series — Superbly designed and enriched by her own sensitive watercolor paintings, these books are designed to be read quietly from start to finish and then revisited for strength and peace.

JOURNEYS PACK

ORDER #839P

Display holds 36 books as shown (6 copies of 6 titles)
Measures 330mm wide x 240mm deep x 250mm high
(13" x 9 1/2" x 10")

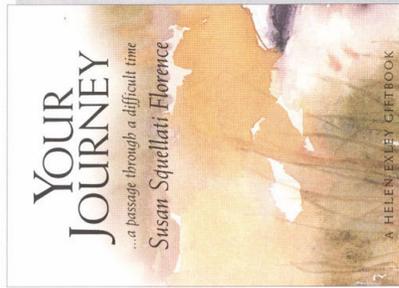
PACK PRICE \$162.00



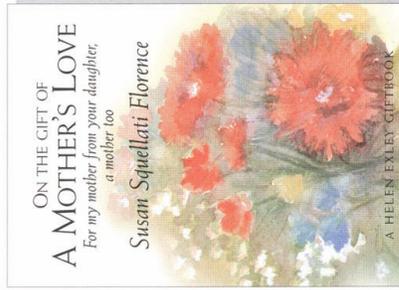
SUSAN SQUELLATI FLORENCE

The greeting cards of Susan Florence have sold hundreds of millions of copies in the last three decades.

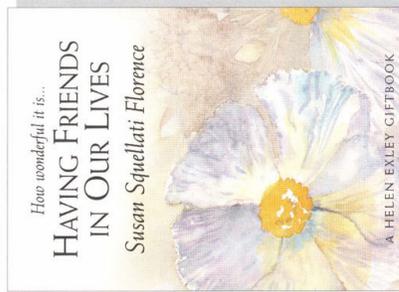
Her giftbooks have sold over one and a half million copies. Her words of gentle wisdom and original paintings brings a unique style to all her gift products. Her readers have written time and again to thank her and tell her how the books were a profound help to them. This completely new collection of giftbooks, THE JOURNEYS SERIES, invites the reader to pause and look deeply into their own life. They will help and strengthen all who read them.



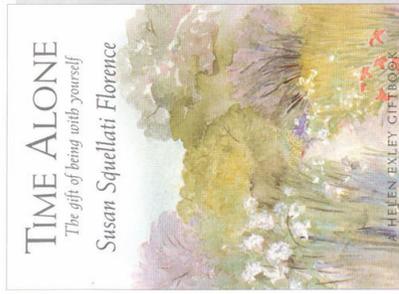
1 86187 4170



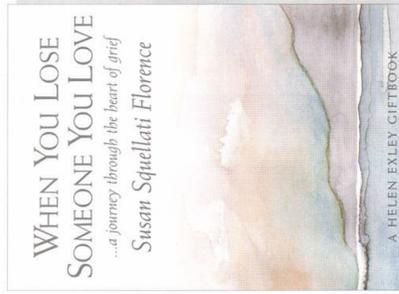
1 86187 4189



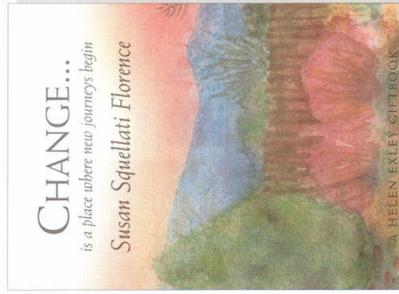
1 86187 4227



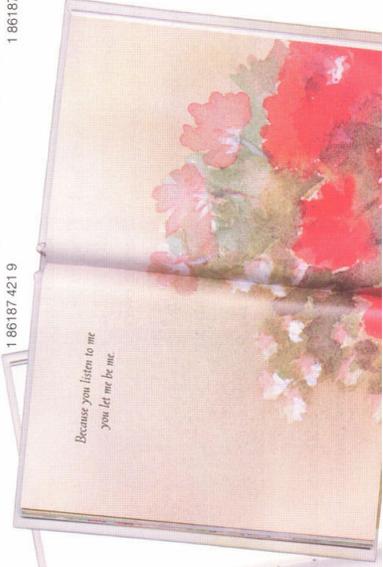
1 86187 4197



1 86187 4219



1 86187 4200



Left to Right, extracts from Susan Florence's *Having Friends in Our Lives*, *When You Lose Someone You Love*, and *A Mother's Love*.

FORMAT

Hardcover 48 pages
148mm high x 105mm wide
(6" x 4 1/4")
Written and illustrated by Susan Florence.
Edited by Helen Exley.
NET PRICE \$4.50

Pages of hope

Ojai artist/author unveils her series of inspirational books

From staff reports

When words fail, Susan Squellati Florence switches to her watercolors.

In special cases — like telling a friend how much she is valued or offering words of condolence — Florence uses both.

The results can be seen in *Journeys*, a new series of inspirational gift books that pair the Ojai artist's introspective writings and soft-focus paintings of flowers, trees and rolling landscapes.

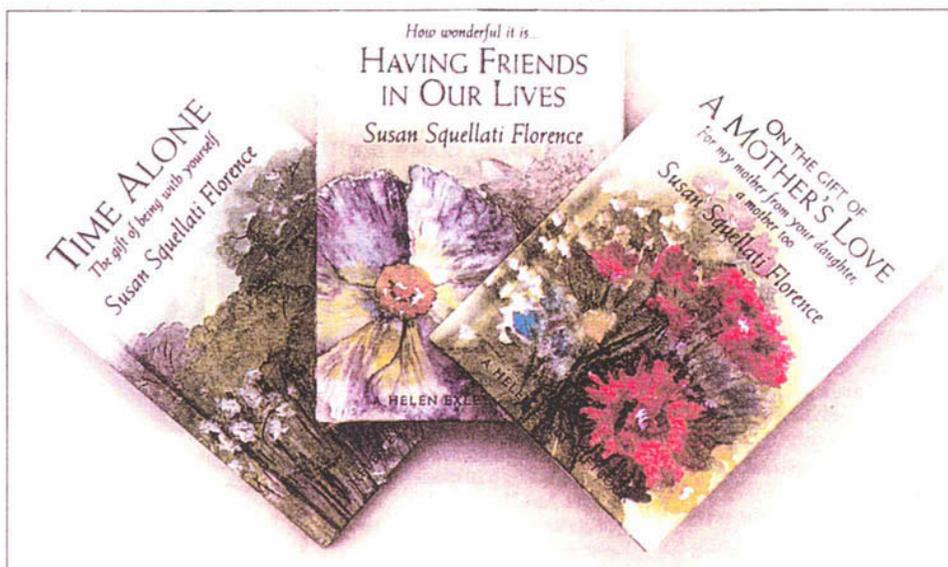
Printed by Exley Publications Ltd., in Great Britain, the small books (they measure about 6¹/₄ by 4³/₈ inches) were introduced at the Frankfurt Book Fair in October and in the United States in January. Florence will read from their pages during appearances on April 12 at the Barnes & Noble in Ventura and again on April 24 at Tottenham Court Tea Room in Ojai.

Among the titles is "Your Journey ... A Passage Through a Difficult Time," which explores the issue of grief through paintings of rain-soaked mountains and of a sun-dappled arrangement of flowers on a kitchen table. "Peace may come with the early morning sunlight streaming in your window," reads the accompanying text.

Also in the series is "On the Gift of a Mother's Love," inspired by Florence's own experiences as mom to Brent and Emily.

"How Wonderful it is ... Having Friends in Our Lives" features a painting of a Matilija poppy on the cover.

Other visual clues to the artist's home in Ventura County can be seen throughout the slender, full-color books, which sell for \$9 each. "When You Lose



James Glover II / Star staff

"Peace may come with the early morning sunlight streaming in your window," reads a passage, on grief, accompanying the soft-focus paintings in Susan Squellati Florence's *Journeys* books.

Getting There

SUSAN SQUELLATI FLORENCE

The Ojai-based artist/author unveils her series of inspirational Helen Exley Giftbooks during an appearance at 2 p.m. April 12 at Barnes & Noble, 4820 Telephone Road, Ventura (339-0990), and during a wine, cheese and poetry gathering 7 p.m. April 24 at Tottenham Court Tea Room, 242 E. Ojai Ave., Ojai (646-2339).

Someone You Love" includes a seascape that looks very like one of the Channel Islands. Several books feature studies of hillsides that could pass for Ventura's Two Trees landmark.

Inspiration for the words, meanwhile, came from reader response to previous books and from personal experience,

Florence said.

"Writing these books ... has helped me understand more fully the value of love and acceptance in helping us through the difficult times," she said. "We all need more time to rediscover and reflect on what is meaningful and important in our own lives."

Florence is no newcomer to publishing her artwork. After moving to Ojai in the early 1970s, she and husband Jim Florence started a card company called People Productions. They sold the business to the scrapbooking and memory-keeping company CR Gibson in 1985, but Susan

stayed on to create cards, stationery, photo albums and other items; Gibson in turn was sold in 1998.

Since then, Florence has kept busy with her watercolor paintings and the inspirational books she writes and illustrates for publication in

Buenos Aires; copies of one of her Spanish-language books is presented to bilingual hospice volunteers at the Livingston Memorial Visiting Nurse Association, she said.

"These are books to help us through

deep times," Florence said. "They aren't just about pretty pictures."

"Writing these books ... has helped me understand more fully the value of love and acceptance in helping us through the difficult times."

Susan Squellati Florence, artist/author, regarding her inspirational *Journeys* book series, which she unveils locally this month

Media Questions

- ❖ You're an artist. What kind of art do you create?
- ❖ How old were you when you realized you had creative talent?
- ❖ As a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?
- ❖ What drives you in your work?
- ❖ How has your spiritual connection with nature fueled your work?
- ❖ How and when did you realize you could use your talent to help others?
- ❖ How has your work helped others?
- ❖ Tell us about *The Journeys Series*. How many books are in the series? What are the books about? When was the series released? In which countries and languages do the books sell?
- ❖ What inspired you to create *The Journey Series*?
- ❖ With the thousands of books in the marketplace, what makes *The Journey Series* unique?
- ❖ What is your goal with *Journeys*?
- ❖ One of the most popular books within *Journeys* is the book about dealing with the loss of someone. Tell us about it. Can you read an excerpt?
- ❖ You've received many letters from those who have been helped by your books. What have your readers shared with you? Did this change your purpose for your work?
- ❖ In the hectic world we live in, we are consumed by life – work, family, finances, friends. It seems almost impossible to keep our sanity. How will *Journeys* help even the busiest of people?
- ❖ Where can you find *Journeys*? Bookstores? Online? How much are they?
- ❖ Where can we view and purchase your art? What is your website?



Art by Susan Florence