

Interpretation: "The Image Not Taken"

This collection of photographs from Nepal is a meditation on the different ways a traveler sees—and the profound difference between observing a place and consuming it. The series operates in two distinct emotional registers.

First, there is the **quiet, intimate gaze**. In the serene images from Pokhara, such as the portraits of your companion and the candid shot of a man on the lake, we see a photographer connecting with the environment on a personal level. These photos are about being *present*—capturing a quiet moment, the play of light, and a sense of peaceful immersion in the stunning landscape.

This gentle observation is violently interrupted by the second part of the narrative: the **conflicted, critical gaze** in Chitwan. The photograph of the elephant ride initially presents a classic tourist experience. However, your story reframes it as a scene of deep unease. The close-up of the elephant's eye and weathered skin is no longer just a detail shot; it becomes a portrait of a captive, a silent witness to the brutal reality behind the tourist attraction.

The entire project hinges on its climax: the moment the wild, untamed male elephant appears—a symbol of raw, authentic nature. And in that exact moment, the tool of observation, the camera, fails. The dead battery is not just a technical mishap; it's the central theme of the series. It suggests that the most profound, most "real" moments are the ones that resist capture. The most important image from your trip is the one that exists only in your memory. It forces a question: what is the true purpose of the camera? To capture the world, or to learn when to put it down and simply see?

Artist's Statement Draft

Nepal (2014) *Photo-reportage*

"In 2014, I spent twenty days traveling through Nepal, from the ancient cityscapes of the Kathmandu Valley to the serene lakeside of Pokhara. My initial goal was one of quiet observation, capturing the intimate moments and vast landscapes through my lens. The first part of my journey was defined by this connection—to the people I was with and the stunning, peaceful environment around us.

This changed when we reached Chitwan National Park. I participated in an elephant ride, a seemingly essential tourist experience, but was confronted with the brutal reality behind the spectacle. The gentle creature I was riding was controlled by a man wielding a spiked iron hook, a constant, sharp reminder of its domestication. The experience felt transactional and deeply unsettling.

The ride ended at a sanctuary, but the most profound moment occurred just beyond its boundaries. A wild male elephant—the 'king,' as he seemed—emerged from the wilderness. He was immense, powerful, and utterly free, his tusks untouched, a stark contrast to the subjugated animals we had just left. He was the embodiment of everything I had hoped to see.

As I raised my camera to capture this incredible sight, my battery died. In that moment of failure, I found the true theme of my journey. The most powerful, most authentic image of my entire trip was the one I was not allowed to take. It forced me to put down the camera and simply witness. This series is not just about what I saw in Nepal, but about that moment of realization—a reflection on the image not taken, and the difference between capturing a moment and truly living it."