

2

Alexander Davis

The shutter clicks. The world around him stops. Everything has come down to this one precise moment, the sunset so low in the sky, the breeze and the seagulls zip by. It's **exactly** 8:36 pm and all he can think about is how grateful he is to have been given the life he lives. It goes deeper than that however, because he always has wondered where this energy comes from. It isn't everyday that he feels this way but when he does, you know it. The vibrance and life that pours out of his body is like the sun beaming down on the cool earth on a **gorgeous** spring afternoon. The photographer's job isn't just to take photos and make money, it's to capture moments and make memories. The photograph of the lighthouse sits all across the continental United States. Framed on the walls of people's home in LA, Rochester, and Cape Vincent. As the weather grows cooler, and the seasons begin to change, the photographer returns to his normal place down on the rocks by the water. It could be storming, snowing, or even 2 am in the morning and he is there, camera slung to his side. He isn't the only one there however, his clients have paid the premium to spend quality time in front of the lens on the grounds of the Tibbetts Point Lighthouse.

The chain on his old Cherokee road bike begins to rattle and scream as he flies down the old road that leads to the lighthouse. He remembers the feeling beneath the tires when the road had not yet been paved. There's something so strange about that 6 mile journey that keeps reeling him back in. Having biked that route over 84 times in the past year and a half 500 miles seems like nothing, each time the lighthouse grants him with a new sense of purpose and promise. Maybe there's a new scent, or smell to the air, or maybe the seagulls sing and flutter through the sky in a way that seems almost human. The way that the waves crash up against the rocks, or smoothly settle at the base of the shore brings color into his eyes. The light that leaks through the clouds and paints the soft snow, or gorgeous green grass brings a warm feeling to his body. He knows exactly how hard to pedal given the wind speed. Oftentimes if there's wind flying over the road close to the lighthouse around 13 mph NW then he'd have to buckle his head down and try his best to stay in a straight line. The lighthouse has taught him

persistence, determination, and the value of the human experience. When he's out on the bike pushing towards the lighthouse he feels free, open to the world, ready to go out and share his ideas with everyone willing to hear them. Sometimes however, it isn't so easy. The lighthouse road might have 3 inches of snow on it, which makes it awfully difficult to pedal through, the determination to reach the lighthouse motivates him to push on. Once in a while the wind will be so strong that he feels like even if he pedals with everything that he's worth he still won't make it there. The lighthouse has disciplined him to understand the value of persistence.

The lighthouse isn't just a historic monument, it's a symbol of light, promise, and potential. It's beauty is a beacon that attracts people from all across the Continental United States. The way in which the lighthouse stands strong throughout the years portrays and resembles the strong community built around it. The families, friends, and peers that take photos, go on bike rides , or run to the lighthouse understand this. Each night as the sun sinks below the horizon flocks of people flood to the lighthouse to embrace its beauty. Without the lighthouse there would be no photos, there wouldn't be the community that backs it's promise. The lighthouse has and will continue to shine through the wind, the rain, and snow for many years to come.