

There is a kind of magic that occurs when walking through the transition of light into the evening and seeing a sunset then continuing on while the moon completes its cycle and then seeing the sun rise again. Though a long haul like this may seem crazy it is the reason I take advantage of full moons that fall within a time I can go for long night walks. More often than not I go to the Monahans Sandhills State Park to do these walks where even the more than familiar scenes in sunlight can become extraordinary in a different light. With a more relaxed pace I have time to discover the next place to get my attention or familiar point to navigate to and stop for a bit leading to a looser pattern of wondering around, yet my mind can seem to be just as random as I'm thinking. It is a couple of these observations and pictures from my July 3rd through July 5th trip to the sand dune I want to share.

In painting there is a concept called abstraction where you simplify the scene by merging shapes and using fewer tones overall to reproduce the scene. As a photographer why do I know this? That quest to understand painting in order to emulate it is always on going so I came across this process; however, while walking in the sand dunes on one of my sessions I realized I was walking through this process. Even if not my first full moon walk my frame of reference is full sunlight I suppose in breaking down what I was seeing the connection was made. The quality of your light you are working with includes how bright or dim it is and factors in here as distinctive shapes merge, false holes become vegetation when closed in on, and even the overall range seems more limited. It isn't bleak but somehow more muted in appearance.

In photography there is the inverse-square law of light that could apply to a full moon as well. You can look this up online but basically the further you get from a light source the dimmer it gets yet more area is evenly covered by it. Even if the light is dim shadows are cast and contrast is created and I found I have to look for smaller areas that are usually closer up to compose by even if the images created are low key at best.

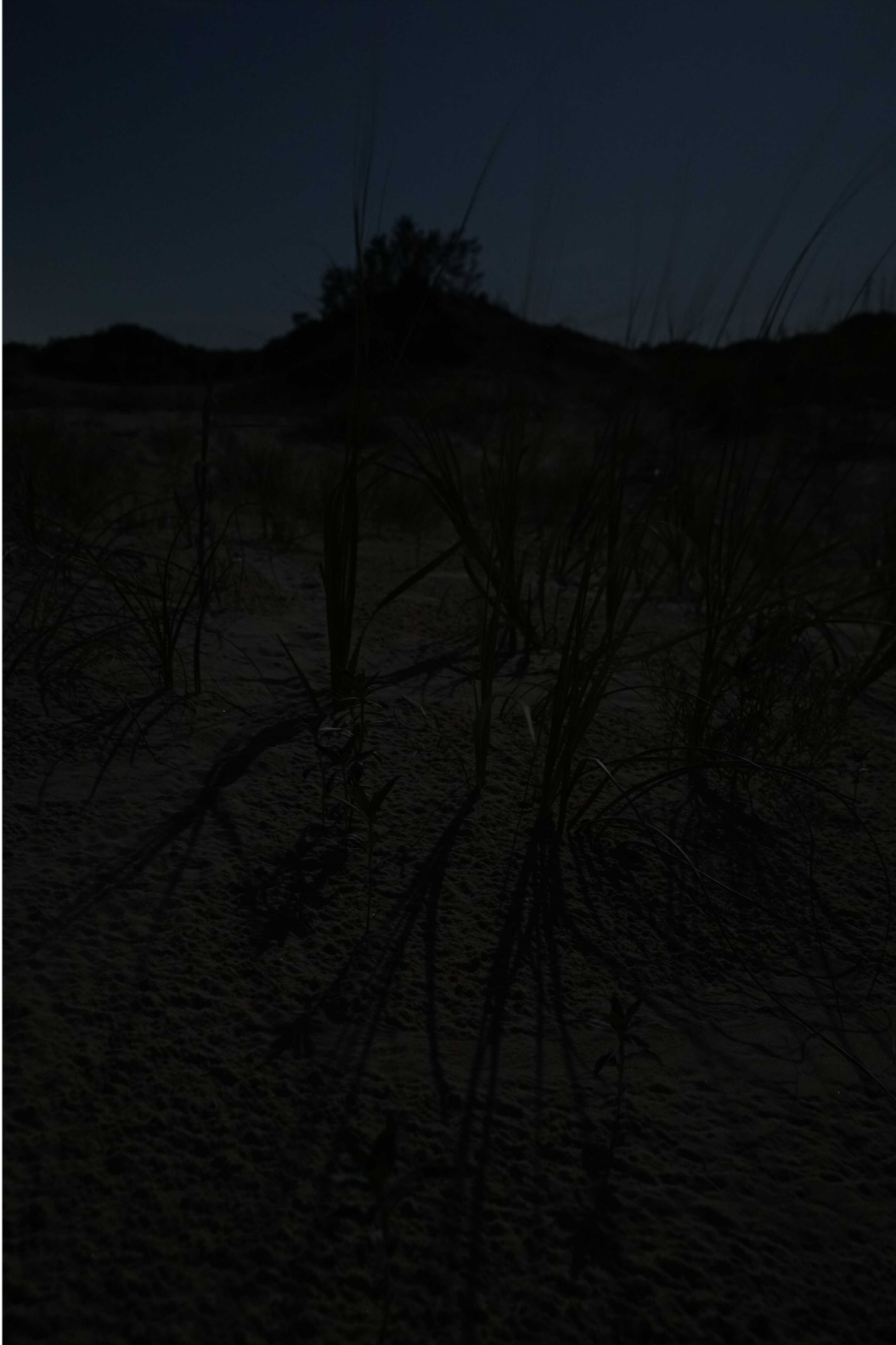
As I already stated these images are from the July full moon session but at its highest it reached 36 degrees meridian so stayed in range of my camera until it started to set around 1:00am a fact I appreciated greatly. Every session is unique so unknown and full of pleasant surprises to attempt to capture. Beyond the experience it is an opportunity to figure out what I did and why for future walks.



Taken 07/03/2020 at 10:03pm - F/3.5, 2 sec, iso-800



Taken 07/04/2020 at 12:31am - F/3.5, 4 sec, iso-800  
First picture in this set I used my headlamp in a fixed position during the exposure.

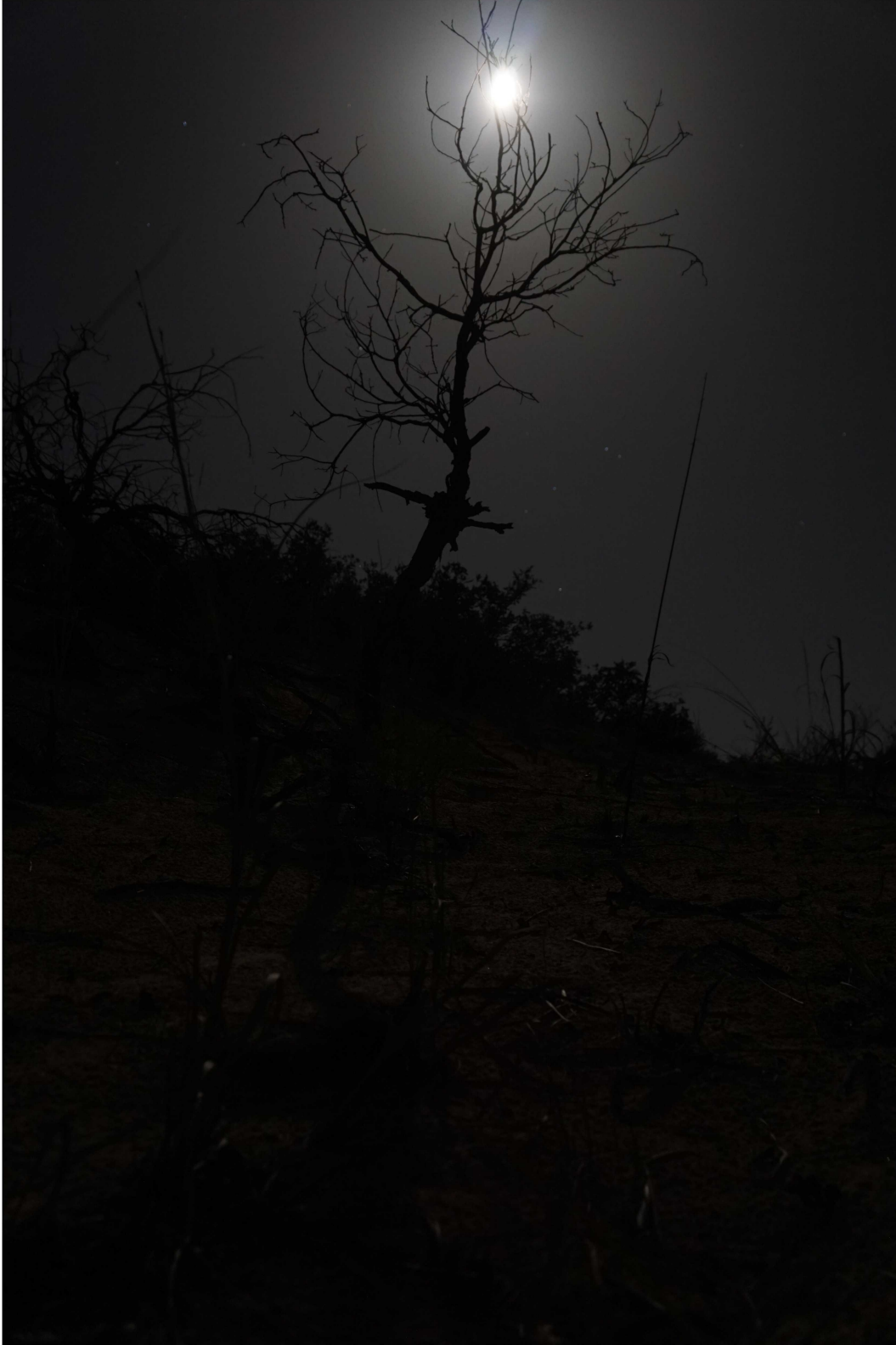


Taken 07/04/2020 at 12:54am - F/3.5, 2.5 sec, iso-800





Taken 07/04/2020 at 1:16am - F/3.5, 1/2 sec, iso-800



Taken 07/04/2020 at 1:24am - F/4, 1 sec, iso-800



Taken 07/04/2020 at 1:38am - F/3.5, 1 sec, iso-800



Taken 07/04/2020 at 1:48am - F/4, 5 sec, iso-800



Taken 07/04/2020 at 1:52am - F/3.5, 5 sec, iso-800





Taken 07/04/2020 at 2:08am - F/3.5, 10 sec, iso-800  
I used the headlamp to light up the tree to make it appear in the pool of water.





Taken 07/04/2020 at 2:25am - F/9, 15 sec, iso-800



Taken 07/04/2020 at 9:49pm - F/4, 2 sec, iso-800



Taken 07/04/2020 at 10:08pm - F/3.5, 2 sec, iso-800



Taken 07/04/2020 at 10:20pm - F/4, 4 sec, iso-800



Taken 07/04/2020 at 10:58pm - F/3.5, 2 sec, iso-800