

**Amy Millican**  
**Legacy Magazine Feature**



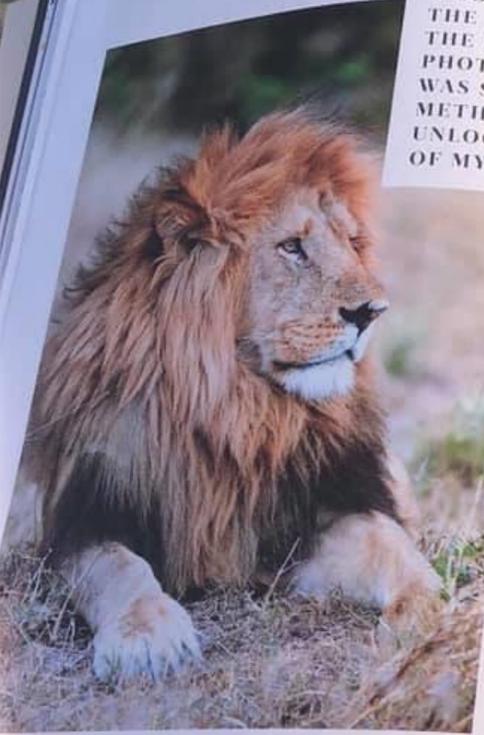
*highlighting the families and communities that serve our nation*



Fast-forward to spring 2018 when Dane read an article from MOAA (Military Officers Association of America) about a service member spouse named Amy Millican who helps clients plan the African safari trips of their dreams through her company Flyga Twiga. She has built her company at the intersection of sustainable tourism and a passion for sharing the country she called home for years. Right away, he forwarded me the piece with a short note that read, "Africa?" I didn't respond to him, but immediately began researching flights from Baltimore for the fall since we would be there anyhow for my best friend's wedding. Honolulu to Nairobi seemed intimidating, but flights from the East Coast made it seem manageable. On a whim, I also contacted Amy, told her a little bit about our background, and the next thing I knew, she was FaceTiming me from her husband's duty station in Seoul. Two weeks later, our trip was booked.



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and would be slower to get back to my room. There's pressure and perspective. It's like such a gift.

It took a long time and a lot of sleep to get the notes of the story together and when we encountered during our trip, getting to know people was so the story passed, knowing about their history, families, and their lives. It's not to say that I have never encountered kinder or more hospitable people than I did in Kenya, people who always seem to be willing to welcome us into their fold and share their stories.

When professionally, I missed a sense of genuine connection overall by simply being. We spent many days sitting in a tent, doing our work, but the night would be so ideal to me eventually, but one I would not get any of my notes. Mindless wandering of social media was replaced with heartfelt conversation and quiet moments of reflection and I felt a part inside myself come alive that I didn't realize existed.

The trip stopped being about a good vacation, getting a good story, or the capturing of the perfect photograph. It was slowly and methodically unlocking a piece of my heart. I remember lying in bed on our last night of the trip, stars streaming down my cheeks, saying to Thom, "I got it now."

"When we got home, a friend of mine said, 'Kait, I want to know all about your trip, but I just have to tell you, I've never seen you and I have look so peaceful before. It was like being there felt so natural to you.'"

She was right. The truth is, I had never previously been to a place where people were so genuinely happy with so much less than what we have and that awareness brought me to my knees. It is the best experience I have ever been able to bring home.

There is a popular saying in Africa that states, "Once you drink from the Nile, you are destined to return." I have never known something to be more true, because when I boarded that plane at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport on a flight destined for Oslo, I left part of myself there. I see it in the photos I took, I read it in the emails I've exchanged with friends we met there, and I feel it in my soul when I look at the world around me. I feel fortunate beyond measure to have left only my heart and been given so much in return.



Amy Millican

Mobile\_ +82-(0)10-9697-1778

flygatwiga amyamillican flygatwiga

e-mail\_ flygatwiga@gmail.com Homepage\_ www.flygatwiga.com