

May May, But Then Again She May May Not

It's here at last, the month "that flaps her bright green leaves like wings." All through the long and unforgiving winter, I've dreamed almost daily, about celebrating my favorite time in all the year. For me, May is the month of new hopes heralded by harbingers of good times to come.

In May the warblers return to sing among the new buds and blossoms of the fruit trees. The fish in the river also catch the spirit and every rivulet and run invites some egg-laden visitor looking for a place to rub fins and share caresses.

May *is* "full of promises" but also of caprice. And just when you think your tomatoes are safe. Shakespeare's sonnet, as usual, proves true: "Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May." And as I write this, the gales are pushing 30 mph. Those are rough winds.

That brings to mind a column in the Forum by my favorite writer and fellow nature lover, Jessie Veeder. I had just finished enjoying her May 5th column about spring rituals like checking for prairie wildflowers on her ranch out near Watford City, N. D.

Then I began surfing TV channels and chanced upon a strikingly beautiful lady with a terrific voice, singing a song she had written called "Boom Town." It was likely about Watford City's sudden growth spurred on by the oil boom that came on fast and now struggles.

My hearing is shot, so I find most voices hard to appreciate, especially if the accompaniment is loud enough to muddle good music into noise. My curse, of course, but what struck me in hearing "Boom Town," was how clear and pure and understandable that voice was. It reminded me of Chrystal Gale or Jennifer Warnes. So I was drawn not just to that lovely face, but to the great music coming out of that little three piece combo. They were playing music I could understand and love. When you're 86 and going deaf, that's a rare blessing.

Then, suddenly, it began to dawn on me. That face seemed awfully familiar; “why she looks like, hey, that’s Jessie Veeder,” but without that cowboy hat she has on in her column’s picture. And since much of the TV coverage of her was close up, her great, wholesome good looks were beautifully captured.

I told myself, “If Elvis’s promoter, Col Tom Parker were still alive, he could set Jessie up with enough gigs and recordings to rival Tanya Tucker. She’s just as pretty, and lacks that tarnished angel look a lot of country singers have. Jessie is a pure, wholesome, down home rancher’s wife and mother, and I’ll guarantee you her hubby is proud to be “Jessies’ guy.”

Well, Jessie’s concert ended much too soon for me, I think it was a promotion by Prairie Public TV. Sadly I didn’t heed many of the details. But I came away certain, that in Jessie Veeder, North Dakota has a multi-talented star who could easily shine in the constellation of such great performers as Peggy Lee, Lawrance Welk, and Jaques Deschanel.

True, May might not keep all her promises, but sometimes her surprises can be a true delight. Here’s wishing Jessie the brightest of futures.

Gene Pinkney Daily News 24-05-07-