

SUGAR AND SPICE

by Bill Smiley



Sign Of Spring

Ah, Spring,
 You glorious thing,
 You make me want to sing
 Of marriages
 And baby carriages;
 And make me want to laugh
 At a new calf;
 And make me yearn for a bout
 With a trout;
 And make me joy in squirrels;
 And envy girls
 Their poise
 With boys
 When the blood runs
 And the sun suns,
 And the fairways beckon
 And the flowers reckon
 It's time they put their dopey
 heads
 Out of the mangey flower beds.

Well, that's about enough of that. Hope none of my students read it. In my day, I've written some pretty nasty pieces about spring, but she's bounced back every year. That bit of doggerel may finish her off for good.

And what a pity that would be. Winter puts the iron in our souls. But the slanting yellow rays of heat, the joyous chuckle of freed water, the voluptuous stench of rotten earth emerging from the shrouds of death turn that iron, by some magic, into pure gold.

I can be as grouchy as a hat-check girl about spring. But today I wandered about the estate and felt the tiny, glimmering coal of my spirit fanned into something approaching a blaze.

There was the picnic table, bloody but unbowed, after six months under the snow. There was the barbecue outfit, in three scattered pieces, succulent beckoner to the charred red steaks of July. There was the lawnmowers, reminder of days when you wear nothing but shorts, sweat gloriously, and stop for a beer every 15 minutes.

Perhaps I should put them away in the fall. But when the ice age has left, and I go out

and see them there, it's like meeting old friends. Rusty and ravaged, but familiar and dear.

Signs of spring everywhere. Sixty black squirrels, moved out of my attic, seeking acorns they missed last fall. Lady next door, who has four little ones, hanging out washing with a fifth imminent.

Endless chant of kids skipping. Moose bellow of impatient steamers in the bay, waiting for break-up. Fire sirens saluting the annual epidemic of grass fires.

Bitter lines around mouths turning to smiles. Overcoats and boots hurled into closets. Paint pots broken out. Teen-agers standing on corners, bunting like young calves. Women's hats — goofy, exotic, irreverent, awful. Old ladies tippy-toeing about, first time out since November. Kids up to their ears in mud.

Anglers and golfers bragging, speculating about the great new season. Housewives, coatless, shouting nothings to neighbors. Teachers cursing as they mark Easter exams.

Perhaps you can, but I can't imagine living in a country where the cycle of the seasons is almost unnoticeable. I like to be where the action is. I like spring to come like a shot of adrenalin, not a lukewarm cup of tea.

It is little wonder that myth and legend, poetry and painting and music, not to mention religion, celebrate the theme of regeneration in the spring. If there is such a thing as the indomitable spirit of man, which I firmly believe, it would be impossible without spring.

Think of it. A year in which the days did not lengthen, the sun did not warm, the green did not appear, the soul did not expand. We would be lining up at the ends of docks, clambering for six-shooters, and packing the subway stations for hurling-under-trains-purposes, by the first of June.

STORK CLUB

Born to Mr. and Mrs. N. Vasilieu of Schreiber, a daughter, on April 6th.

Born to, Mr. and Mrs. D. Kenney of Terrace Bay, a son, on April 7th.

The Ted Brown family were in Kapuskasing to visit relatives during Easter weekend.

LADIES AUXILIARY MEETS

Highlight of the April 4th meeting was a program convened by Mrs. Charlotte Slomke. It included a tape recording on the racial struggle in Southern United States and was very interesting.

Colds and the flu kept many ladies away from the meeting but those present were warmly welcomed by president Stella Brown. Mrs. Dora Trach acted as secretary and also read the Ways & Means report for Mrs. Kurylo. Other reports were given by Betty Turner and Aggie Sinkins.

It was decided that a delegate should be sent to the Manitoba Conference later in the year.

Following the meeting attractive refreshments of tea, coffee and fancy cakes were served by Marg Simmer and her committee.

The annual meeting of the Catholic Women's League will be held Sunday, April 17th at 8:00 p.m. and will involve the installation of new officers.

Long-time residents of Terrace Bay (14 years), Alfred and Fran Gerow, are leaving Terrace Bay to make their home at the Lakehead.

On Sunday, April 10th, Al's fellow millwrights surprised him at home with a stag at which he was presented with a wallet.

At the home of Mr. and Mrs. R. Gavin a large number of friends gathered to wish Fran Godspeed. Co-hostesses were Win McKechnie - continued P.8

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