

SONGS OF THE WIND

by Gerry Biram

Robert Louis Stevenson, beloved children's poet, penned this poem about the wind which I quote in part.

I saw you toss the kites on high
And blow the birds across the sky
And all around I heard you pass
Like ladies skirts across the grass.
Oh wind a-blowing all day long
Oh wind that sings so loud a song!

It is about those songs of the wind that I choose to write. Who among us has not sat on a summer evening in the yard surrounded by a canopy of trees and has felt the soft caress of the gentle breeze upon a cheek. The wind softly caresses each leaf on each tree around us moving them to create a lulling lullaby that we hear in the form of a rustle. It also rocks the nests where baby robins chirp sleepily as they hear the melodious call of the male robin who sings to protect his family from any intrusion.

This same wind sings many other songs as well. There are days in which the gentle breeze turns into a powerful blast of air sweeping down fireplace chimneys with a mournful moan or sucking the air from the exhaust that carries cooking odors from the kitchen. One can hear the whining, shrieking pull of the wind as it violently sucks the air from the vent.

In winter those who live on the plains and in places where the wind gets a clean sweep across the land with no impediments, can be exposed to the full blast of icy air bringing a blizzard. The sound of this wind can only be described as a howl as the swirling maelstrom of fury races across the open prairies.

I have experienced a tornado exploding nearly directly over the place where our motor home was parked. The roar of the wind blended with the crashing of limbs as they were blown from trees was frightening and loud. I can only imagine how loud the sound a hurricane must impart as it charges over the land mass that it is devastating. The accompanying hail that usually comes with a wind storm enhances the noise and makes it seem more terrifying. The wind is a tremendous source of electric energy if properly harnessed. Windmills with turbines on the various farms about the country are filling to a greater and greater extent the generation of electricity. These cut down the need for coal driven polluting plants and makes for far better air quality. The sound of the turbines turning is more of a hum which comes from the turning blades rather than the wind. The old farm windmills that generated water for livestock emitted strange whining or screeching sounds also due primarily to the turning of blades. But these are examples of sounds the wind generated. Wind is one of Mother Nature's controls over climate and the way clouds are moved and storms are organized. Her songs are a nice fringe benefit.