

SCOTT LAX



*And what is so rare as a day in June?
Then, if ever, come perfect days.*

— James Russell Lowell

In June, the world really is new in northeast Ohio. Gentle, too, save for the odd, sudden windstorm. One of those, in concert with an old, dead tree, took out my car two Junes ago. Although I was moments out of what became a totaled ragtop, I never held it

against the wind, the tree or June. How could I hold anything against June?

I can't. The opposite is true, for it's a month that can hardly do wrong. It seems the right month for just about everything good. Spring's unevenness and anxiety vanishes with the apple blossoms. The baseball season is young;



anything can happen. Every player, young or old, male or female, deserves to be hopeful. Every kid is a potential hero, every hit a possible game-winner in June. When sluggish, sopping July settles in, most players face their realities and batting averages. June, on the other hand, is possibility.

June makes me think of weddings, those living, breathing collaborative essays on optimism. "They're getting married." Is there a more life-affirming statement? Not in June, for the magnificent month mitigates the 50 percent chance of failure modern weddings portend. That dreadful statistic should not be taken to heart in June. With the sun arching toward solstice and the birds mad with lust, who but the most corroded soul would deny June her sanguine nuptials?

The garden is incomparable in June. Whether a hosta in the shade or climbing rose under the sun, things with

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leaves, thorns and blooms get it, somehow: It's time to celebrate, time to thrive, time to ignore the petals that will fall off soon enough. If we need to understand the expression "live in the moment," we need only walk through a wildflower meadow in June. Anarchists all, wildflowers are the innocent seductresses of June. Even their names are ripe with longing and eros: lady-slipper, forget-me-not, buttercup, black-eyed Susan.

June's ripening confidence encourages us to sit back and pay homage by doing exactly what she does not: nothing. June is a painting in progress, nearly complete. Who are we to intrude on the Artist? Sit back, June says, have a lemonade or chilled rosé, and relax. Watch, feel and listen, for the colors will never be brighter, the temperatures never more comfortable, the sounds never more sweet and alive.

Go outside in June. Lie on the grass under a tree, as you did as a child, without a cell phone, with nothing electrical attached but your brain, with big white clouds as your entertainment and birds as your soundtrack. Take what June gives you in her juicy overabundance, which otherwise goes to seed.

June offers us long days and languid sunsets. If you've never seen the sun set over Lake Erie in June, you are missing one of the most beautiful sights anywhere. I don't know if it's our latitude or longitude, the temperature of the water vis-à-vis the air, or luck, but when I lived on the lake for a dozen years I was astonished by those sunsets, particularly in June. They are prettier than sunsets I've seen in the mountains of Vermont, or the shores off the Gulf of Mexico or California. When reluctant sun finally dips into the lake, two celebrations occur before your eyes: one in the sky and one on the inland sea. The sky is pink and orange and blue and purple, the lake an alternately muted and inflamed reflection of those very colors.

Those sunsets, replicated in variety throughout our glaciated, river-cut terrain from Rocky River to Solon,

from Willoughby to Hinckley, or spread upon the few remaining pristine fields in Amherst and Bainbridge, are easy to access. Just step out your door, look up and out, and think only of June in her lavishness.

So it is too that June, the month of forgiveness and forgetting, suggests that all my meanderings may be dismissed. Should you think me off the mark on this month, if none of this celebration makes sense to you,

feel free to think of me as Shakespeare suggests:

*He was but as the cuckoo is in June,
Heard, not regarded* ■

You can read Scott Lax's "February Meditation," originally published in the February 2005 issue of *Live*, online at www.northernhololive.com. Send e-mails to Scott Lax's attention at editor@livepub.com, or visit www.scottlax.com.

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