

Springtime sprouts.

Sneezes play symphonies.

Weeds grow.

Quilters quilt.

As a lone robin perches on an apple tree branch surveying a yard yielding the next meal, she zeros in on lunch. She attacks the bugs surrounded by weeds of every height. Then she gracefully flies away to find dessert in the neighbor's domain.

She leaves the weeds allowing them to grow taller. Grown-up weeds can sometimes sprout cute little flowering buds on them. Our fine feathered friends bypass those tender morsels and go straight for the insect flavor, or the full meal deal: the worm.

Human decisions are put in a fight or flight pattern. Leave the weeds to help house the bugs that feed the flighty friends thereby allowing time to start a new quilt top. Quilters often forgo the urge to create an art piece. We "glove up" and "pull out" weed after weed. Rainy days are made for quilting. However, sunny days tug at us to test our strength showing those pesky weeds the back gate.

Many of quilters leave the weeds year after year. Each of us have a duty in the scheme of things. Some quilters weed and plant, weed and plant. Then there is irrigate, weed and plant, irrigate. Others, like me, think about it but put playtime ahead of playing in the dirt. Playtime is an out for us who cannot tell the difference between a delicate Sweet Pea flower bud and the weed taunting it as it reaches toward the blue sky.

I tend to do my gardening at farmers markets where a weekend of fun and friendly times awaits. Markets are for quilters who pick lovely yellow flowers (Dandelions) and then plop them in a canning jar bouquet for a table centerpiece. Weeds are our friends. They bring smiles to moms.

But so, too, do finished quilts.

However, the pull to garden yanks some of us outside to weed. The desire to smell the earth compels gardeners to pull out the gloves decorated with yellow and blue cockleshells. But not all. Some quilters are known to sneeze their way

down the garden path to pull just one more weed. We suffer in order to find solace in yanking a weed from the sweet-smelling earth.

Of course, we do return to playing in our yard of fabrics. Pulling this color, yanking these tones, choosing the long and the short of blues, reds, greens, yellows. We take a hold of this pattern. We grasp our need to pull fabric. This, too, soothes us. It is in our nature.

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Lana Russ