

He sits in his Deck Chair starring at the wheat field.

He holds pencil and pad for his art drawing at the ready. He grasps his camera for capturing the scenery. He seems to melt inside the chair with each breath he inhales and exhales. The hot sunshine burning his balding head while he soaks up the scenery was not a concern. His thoughts sway to wave after wave as the golden gleaming tall wheat beacon him to dance, too.

He is lost in the moment.

“Who is that man sitting in the wheat field,” asks my aunt Maisel. “My husband,” I reply. “He likes to watch the flow of the wheat and relax. He can think without distraction.” I add. She shakes her head in disbelief. She sees that scenery each Autumn before and during Wheat Harvest Season. It’s nothing she thinks is special after 70 or more years.

My husband and I had just arrived in the far, far away small town in Eastern Montana where the summers were hot and the winters were not. Snow drifts with below zero-degree days and nights had forever sent me to warmer lands long ago. We were visiting. A visit once every 20 years is not often enough, though. This visit was when we both were 20 years younger. It is time to follow the wheat, again. The wheat, though, is the only sure thing there.

The Aunts and Uncles are no longer there wondering why anyone would sit in the hot sunshine gazing out into the swaying wheat field, work for them while sitting in the tractor. Their children and grandchildren are now at the helm planting, checking, hoping for good crops, harvesting.

The Montana Wheat Fields in my birth place are a beginning of my quilting days. It may be a stretch, but the row after row of grain shows an order of how life can be and is if we, but only, work for it. Quilting is an order, of sorts, placing bits and pieces on top, besides, underneath and stitching in proper thread lines. Quilting is planting a crop, Quilting is tending to that crop, and Quilting is harvesting that crop and reaping the benefits from the end result.

Quilt after quilt I find that harvesting a new coverlet, a new wall hanging, a new art piece is rewarding. Sure, sometimes, the process is work. However, most times it is a process of growth, a process of love.

Quilting, with art work, begins with the starring into the distance and seeing the possibilities.

Lana Russ