

Friday Evening Message – 5 June 2020



*Ash tree with invisible nightingale singing in it.
(I have the video with sound too!)*

There must be those in the Community, who like me, are contemplating their fourth month of lockdown. The NHS has issued a fiat on how to comport ourselves which ends: "The Government is currently advising people to shield until 30 June 2020 and is regularly monitoring this position." And I am forced to ask "If not now, Lord, then when?" Who knows how long it really might last?

Airing this view to Venetia (who, some of you may know, is my eldest daughter), she sympathised for a moment and then briskly told me to be positive. "Like Pollyanna!" Now those who, as children, have read that turn of the 20th century book, will probably remember that Pollyanna (who'd broken her back) was nauseatingly GOOD, she took her suffering lightly and by playing what she called the Glad Game, always looked on the

bright side of life. Despite my longheld aversion to this saintly child, I have given in and decided, in this latest lockdown period, to give her Glad Game a whirl and see if it can keep me going for the next 28 days.

Examples of my basic **Glads** are:

The NHS for being there to care for me.

The Internet and Zoom and Trickster Bridge, and the wide and varied forms of communication, all of which have kept me in touch with friends, family, children and grandchildren, community and familial "visits" from all over the world. I have participated in Shabbat services all over Europe as well as in our own and loved them.

On-line shopping.

The way local food and farm shops have re-invented themselves and actively interacted with the community. I hope people will continue to strongly support them after the Plague has gone.

Glad too for:

Our community-based village which has doubled up on caring for its residents.

My weekly food and other shopping done for Dermot and me by Venetia (and, I can assure you, she looks as hard at my spending as she looks at NLJC's).

And even more glad:

For this radiant Spring blending into early Summer. Abundant wildflowers, bright green young leaves on trees and hedges, and roses like I've never seen before.

And I so appreciate having a house with a lovely garden and broad variety of wildlife from pheasants calling over the hedge, and, on our side, Muntjacs admiring my new plants with a view to a quick nibble. There are moorhens and ducks in our little brook and a wide variety of birds in the hedgerows.



Best of all, on the other side of our hedge, there is a huge old ash tree, and in early May, every summer since we came to Norfolk, a nightingale or its descendants, have arrived to thrill us with their song. Nightingales are almost impossible to spot – tiny, nondescript looking brown birds, but what comes out of them is one of the most uplifting sounds for

me. It's a truly sublime sound and in this stressful time of great worldwide horror, makes one appreciate the great beauty that there also is in the world.

Shabbat shalom,

Joanna

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