

THE NATURE OF THE SPRING

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It has been a very messed-up spring, coming early-on with real summer heat (too soon it turns out), and then freezing, and now trying to balance it all out. Most of the lilacs froze early and will not bloom this year. Sad: a year without lilacs. And they are so lovely.

Everything is all backward. And there has been a lot of wind, which makes the kind of photography I do almost impossible. Enough of complaining.

I won't even mention the abscessed tooth I have had for three weeks or the many hours spent in the dentist chair. The only saving grace from all of this dental work is the incredible staff they have at Dental Health Care, where I go here in Big Rapids. Aside from all the Novocain and people putting their hands in my mouth, which I don't like, it is like a party whenever I go there. They are all so nice. Too bad they can't just have a party with no dental work. I would go.

And then floating in the background, still over a week out, is my trip to New Orleans to attend UAC, the United Astrology Conference, a chance to rub shoulders with some of the finest astrologers in the world. I have been practicing astrology for something like fifty years, so I know most of the players.

Originally, Margaret and I were going to take an overnight train (934 miles) called the "City of New Orleans" from Chicago. We even got one of those little sleeping cabins. I grew up with trains and traveling on them. I have memories as a child of riding in a Pullman car through the night, nose pressed to the cold double-pane glass, window shade raised a bit, and watching the flashing red-lights and waiting car headlights at small country crossings. It was like another world. The gentle motion of the train rocking back and forth, everyone asleep, except me.

I thought a train ride to New Orleans would bring all that back and that Margaret and I would love it. Well, it turns out she has to go to another event, which leaves me alone in the cabin with no one to share it with. I almost went with that, but then I realized how it would actually be and how long the whole trip would take, eating alone, etc. I would end up just waiting to get there.

So back to the real world. I cancelled it and am flying in a day early to set up our booth at the Marketplace. No, I don't like to fly, but it makes sense in this case. I hope to find someone with a car to visit some of the nature preserves like the Jean Lafitte National Park Barataria Preserve, where you can do a self-guided swamp tour, with 20,000 acres of bayous, swamps, marshes, and forests, just my kind of fun.

And there is the great food and music in New Orleans, although knowing me, I will spend most of my time in the hotel running our booth and talking it up. I will, no doubt, be in my element.