

And this week...

Last week I waxed euphoric about the spring fauna and flora of the Cape. This week, I am a bit disenchanted by it. I have had a close encounter with Tennyson's "Nature, red in tooth and claw."

My neighbor appeared at my door yesterday morning while I was still puttering around in my bathrobe. "Have you seen your turkey?" she queried. Since I know that she loathes them because they root out all her bulbs and have watched her chase an entire flock out of her garden and down the road with a broom, I was a little nonplussed at her conversational gambit. I mentioned that I had not and, since it was obvious that she wasn't leaving until she showed me the turkey, there was nothing for it but for me to slip on my gardening boots and follow her down the garden path towards the portion of my front garden that is overgrown with ivy and where a huge holly hides the house from the road. She gestured dramatically: "look!"

There was quite a tableau waiting for me, feathers everywhere and a badly mauled and quite dead turkey hen splayed dramatically in the ivy, one broken wing pointing skyward. Closer observation indicated that a coyote had had an excellent dinner. "Better call that kid who helps you with the garden to come clean this up" my neighbor mentioned as she headed towards her own house.

I returned to mine. The kid did not answer his phone, nor a text. Internet research showed that, in the state of Massachusetts anyway, anything that dies on your property is your responsibility not that of the local Animal Control and Protection, which is only open Monday through Friday from 8 to 4 anyway. I called my mother for moral support (which I got even though, despite her best efforts, I could tell that she was thrilled to be over 200 miles away from the mess), got dressed, and had a cup of tea hoping that the kid would call back. Eventually had no more excuses to avoid becoming an avian crime scene bioremediation specialist.

My neighbor came back with a shovel and a kind offer to help but, just as I was opening my mouth to say yes, a thousand times yes, she was called away by the hospice worker who helps her with her bed ridden aunt. I was on my own for this one.

It was a very windy day and my trash bags kept on whipping around me as I determined how best to handle the situation. Ever practical, I decided to deal with the feathers before facing the main event. I already knew that the neighbor's shovel would serve no purpose unless I was planning to dig the turkey a grave so, eventually, I just put one foot on the flapping Hefty bag, donned my garden gloves, girded my loins and manhandled the carcass into the bag by one limp foot and the exposed neck bone which was unfortunately the only purchase I could get. Considering the floppy wingspan of the bird, I was curiously proud at having managed this in one go. I double-bagged the remains, throwing my gardening gloves in the second one before closing it up tightly.

I couldn't quite identify how I felt about all this, beyond immediately wanting and taking a shower, until I mentioned the incident to a friend later in the day and she laughingly referred to me as a frontier woman. Is it pathetic that I did feel a very strange and unjustified sense of pride at having taken care of this unsqueamishly and in a matter of fact manner on my own?

The turkey will go to her final resting place at the dump tomorrow. I am already planning a vegan Thanksgiving.

Interestingly, all of last week's posted recipes happen to be predominantly vegetable based ones. Maybe I'm a psychic frontier woman...

[Acorn Squash, Red Onion and Sage Frittata](#)

[Roasted Broccoli and Feta Salad with Date-Tomatillo Dressing](#)

[Spaghetti with Roasted Eggplant, Tomatoes and Linguica](#)

[Grilled Cheese for Grown-ups](#)

[My Go-To Dinner Veggie Bowl](#)

[Coriander Dip](#)