

Autumn – the devil's
not so black as he is
painted essay



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Slowly but surely, the days become shorter and evenings seem to be never-ending stream of black hours. The feeling of bracing, crisp air against face in the mornings. Drizzles and night frosts one day and lukewarm sunshine the other.

.. When the “ Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness” comes, there is no need to be attentive observer to sense it. It’s almost tangible.

Park paths and squares are emptying, little by little, and now, only the most steadfast walk lovers keep strolling around them. For one reason or another, autumn is not always considered as the most pleasant season. Regrettably, people, if they were to be asked about it, would rather choose summer or spring. Even winter, with its snow and Christmas time, is placed higher in the hierarchy of “ good” seasons. What a pity.

.. A trace of good will, negligible intention to comprehend things slightly deeper, not superficially – that’s all. Nothing more is needed to discover that autumn, especially this so called “ golden polish fall”, can be as charming as the other seasons or even more.

In the first place, autumn delights us with an abundance of perceptible diversity. Taking colours for instance, this metamorphosis is proceeding by degrees – leaves, from the most delicate tints, turn into the most vivid hues. Firstly, the omnipresent green gives way only in case of single trees, after that – clumps of them, and finally, all the gardens, parks and forests seem to burn in colourful flames. The sharp sun beams push their way through the prism of leaves and forms specific kinds of patterns, much the same as those on artistic stained glasses, however more attractive, as created by pure

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nature itself. How beautiful a park can be, even in November, apparently, by Thomas Hood, the month of “no”.

The spider’s webs are spotted with raindrops akin to pearls. Leaves, still stunning, although more faded and fragile now, are dancing with gusts of wind. Not to mention all of these specific scents of fall. However they cannot be unnoticed.

A unique aroma is given off by fallen leaves of beeches, oaks, poplars and maples. It brings back memories of old attic, filled with bouquets of dried flowers and herbs. The fragrance of freshly plowed lands when it rains, chestnuts, blossoming asters and heathers, even the smoke from the fire, though acrid in summer, now is a feast for a sense of smell. And not only for this in particular. Autumn is a wide spectrum of delightful sounds as well. Silence in the park, disturbed only by screeching of brightly-coloured jays and leaves rustling in the wind, can soothe shattered nerves.

Big drops of rain hitting and then rolling down the window can sound fantastic, mixed with cracking of logs burning in the fireplace. Gaggling of geese, flying away to warm climes, may seem like farewell, nevertheless, it could be also the promise of their return. To sum up, diverse autumn scenery can be treated as a gift from nature, a reward for summer heat waves and oncoming winter freezing weather. In that case, autumn is the season of preparation and garner, hectic time, especially in comparison with vacation laziness, nonetheless, it can be decidedly enjoyable too. Fall activities are mostly associated with stockpiling. Nicely coloured and delicious apples,

pears, plums and grapes are not only a tasty snack, but they can decorate our interior as well.

Houses smell of fried jam and drying chanterelles and boletuses, as it’s the time of mushroom picking too. And even if this walking through the woods is unsuccessful as long as mushrooms are concerned, it’s still an excellent form of fitness training. Besides, there are dozens of other forest treasures, which can be gathered instead of them. Nuts, acorns, chestnuts, and colourful leaves are cases in point. They evoke memories of childhood and our first artistic works, as various figures and inventions were made exactly of them. Not only humans, but also animals are remarkably attentive to their getting ready for winter.

Tree hollows and dens are filling with nuts and variety of other forest delicacies, which help them survive the cold days ahead. In contrast to all these “home-attached” animals, there are numerous birds, gathering in flocks and migrating to the countries, where there is no winter. If only someone chooses to put on a warm jacket, waterproof boots and take a trip to the woods or even to the park, he may spend quite an eventful time, observing all of these preparations through the prism of nature. Being in the countryside in fall, it’s always good to take a look at potato-lifting, which is not only an ordinary rural activity of this season, but also a kind of a custom, accompanied by bonfires and potato roasting.

Unfortunately, this and other specific elements of autumn country folklore, for instance feathers plucking or geese roasting, are less and less frequently encountered. Therefore, if we want to experience this unique ambience we

shouldn't wait and postpone it indefinitely. To conclude, it's not so difficult to discover the beauty of everyday autumn activities, even if they don't seem at first glance absorbing. However, it's inevitable that changing weather has an impact on everything around too. These, who are the most affected by the influence of autumn, are people themselves.

First of all, they are more likely to muse over existential problems and a broad range of important issues in general. On the one hand, they finally have enough time to focus on their plans, considering and perfecting every detail, but on the other hand, they can clear their minds and charge their vital batteries. Secondly, frequent rainfalls and winds outside lead people to spending more time indoor, talking and enjoying closeness with their relatives and friends. Moreover, fall is a season wholeheartedly associated with love. In that case, in contrary to staying home, huddled lovers wander through the picturesque park alleys, whispering their secrets and confessions.

Eventually, longer evenings are conducive to devoting time to our hobbies. We can finally read the book of our favourite author or do whatever, which has been postponed since spring on the pretext of multitude of more significant obligations. And if we have always dreamed about playing guitar for instance, autumn is probably the best possible time to start practicing, to be able to give a fairly decent performance of Christmas carols by the Christmas tree. Thus fall is a kind of a catalyst, essential to make a safe and smooth conversion of our senses and feelings from red-hot in summer to languorous in winter. All things considered, it's true to say that autumn, with all its multiplicity of contradictions, can be perceived differently as well.

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Precisely the same season is loved one day for rain, for temperature, for our duties, however, for the same reasons, it's detested in the other one.

Instead of cooling, energizing breeze one morning, we unexpectedly receive an icy wind the next. A lukewarm shower in the sunny afternoon can easily turn into an all-day downpour and so do our moods. Nevertheless, therein lies the charm and magic of autumn. This diversity embodies it in the way, that everyone can pick something for himself. Although we cannot change the fall itself and discard all of its inferior components, we can definitely alter our ways of thinking and perceiving the world around us.

And if we learn to recognize the beauty of this amazing season, covered slightly by trivial inconveniences, this particular beauty will fill up our lives, as a marvellous autumn reward.