

# Vignettes: The Change of Seasons

Leaves dance -- listless in the breeze,  
Snagged on golden blades of grass  
Or in the low branches of evergreens.

Do they know that soon enough,  
They too will be covered in snow?

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The bird song has changed  
-- Grown sparse --  
Leaving more time  
Between chirps and trills  
To be filled by the whistles  
Of thin fingers struck by the wind.

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There are no more lawnmowers now,  
For even the greener grasses  
Of the other side have browned;  
They, too, grow no more.

Matthew VanAlstyne

DURING the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country, and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher. I know not how it was—but with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit. I say insufferable; for the feeling was unrelieved by any of that half-pleasurable, because poetic, sentiment with which the mind usually receives even the sternest natural images of the desolate or terrible. I looked upon the scene before me—upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain—upon the bleak walls—upon the vacant eye-like windows—upon a few rank sedges—and upon a few white trunks of decayed trees—with an utter depression of soul which I can compare to no earthly sensation more properly than to the after-dream of the reverer of a column—the bitter lapse into every-day life—the hideous creeping off of the veil. There was an idleness, a sinking, a sickening of the heart—an unredeemed dreariness of thought which no goading of the imagination could torture into a sight of the sublime. What was it—I paused to think—what was it that so unnerved me in the contemplation of the House of Usher? It was a mystery all insoluble; nor could I grapple with the shadowy fancies that crowded upon me as I pondered. I was forced to fall back upon the unsatisfactory conclusion, that while, beyond doubt, there are combinations of very simple natural objects which have the power of thus affecting us, still the analysis of this power lies among considerations beyond our depth. It was possible, I reflected, that a mere different arrangement of the particulars of the scene, of the details of the picture, would be sufficient to modify, or perhaps to annihilate its capacity for sorrowful impression; and, acting upon this idea, I reined my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled lustre by the dwelling, and gazed down—but with a shudder even more thrilling than before—upon the remodelled and inverted images of the gray sedge, and the ghastly tree-stems, and the vacant and eye-like windows.

Poe

# Untold Folklore

Clinton Road, West Milford, NJ: scariest road in America.  
It is a 10 mile stretch of dark forest meandering through the trees;  
Witches' rituals whistling in the breeze;  
Tongue-tied teardrops dangling from the branches;  
And history lurking from beneath the asphalt.  
Darkness smothers everything under its cloak  
And swallows children whole, dipping their souls in pitch.  
Too often do we find ghosts living in our homes.  
They return to our shell-shocked bodies because they simply aren't  
done living yet.  
They got lost in the unspoken folklore;  
Too afraid they would become stories told around the campfire.

But maybe that would be better than being forgotten  
Rather than letting your campfire story die with you.

## *Le Bon Moment/The Right Time*

*Il n'y a jamais un bon moment pour le dire.  
Jamais une bonne façon  
De contourner la question.  
Toujours à la recherche avant, jamais en repensant  
Au moment où tout a changé.*

There is never a right time to say it.  
Never a right way  
To skirt the issue.  
Always looking forward, never thinking back  
To the moment when it all changed.

Sarah Jones