

## *Autumn's Debut*

Autumn, the showiest of the four sisters, arrives today at 12:30 p.m., and I greet her with open arms. Summer was carefree and adventurous, but her stormy personality smacked us around. I bid Summer goodbye with fondness and special memories. But I welcome the gifts that her sibling brings, and we begin our journey together with great expectation.

With Autumn, I look forward to ...

- Toasting marshmallows over a campfire, and swapping stories with friends as the firelight dances in the darkness.
- Admiring a full, golden harvest moon hanging low over the purple-robed Tennessee mountains.
- Thrilling to the soulful call of a faraway whippoorwill, deep in the woodlands.
- Witnessing the splendor of yellow-orange pumpkins, both large and small, lying in farmland fields and adorning lawns and porches as holidays approach.
- Gazing at shocks of corn, silent sentinels along a rural landscape.
- Marveling at clusters of red berries on a dogwood tree, recalling events from my boyhood when they supplied ammunition for popguns hollowed from cane.
- Watching with great anticipation the process of making molasses, and shooing away the yellow jackets that are attracted by it.
- Wandering through valleys and over mountains quilted by 250 varieties of hardwood trees splashed in reds, yellows, oranges, purples and greens in a panoply that stirs the heart.
- Listening to the crackling of wood burning in a fireplace, seeing the smoke curl up and out of the chimney and inhaling the aroma of fiery hickory logs.
- Tasting the first batch of apple cider, knowing that it will get even more flavorful as the fruit matures.
- Being mesmerized as layers of fog transform a crystal lake into a dreamer's canvas.

Hello, Autumn! I'm glad you're here. Let us savor the moments we shall share in the short time available to us.

--Beecher Hunter