



Autumn or Fall?

By Musafir

I was minding my own business enjoying the fall season of Michigan feeling that crisp breeze in the air. The world seemed to turn into one big canvas with nature's paintbrush. Oh to see the canopy of enchanting red, gold, and orange leaves! It was the perfect time to start sipping hot apple cider, and light a fire in the fireplace. Fall creates a sense of comfort, warmth and reflection in me, all in one.

My tranquility was broken as soon as a friend of mine called me from England. He referred to the beautiful fall in Michigan as autumn. I casually mentioned to him that here in the US we called it fall not autumn. "Why fall? The rest of the world refers to this season as autumn."

"We call it fall because the leaves fall in this season."

"Why must Americans dumb everything down to their low level of intelligence? Why do you look at the worst side? Why don't you glorify the bright colors of autumn rather than reminding the world of parting leaves? After all the poets from generations have praised the beauty of autumn. None has lamented the fall of leaves."

"We in America believe in simplifying the English language."

"Is it so? Then why don't you call spring 'Grow or Rise?' Moreover, fall reminds of the American barbarism. Every time we hear "fall" we think "who fell or died?!" "American barbarism? That was our revolutionary war. And, by the way, we call it fall to remember the fall of the British Empire," I was on offensive.

"Autumn is much more romantic than fall. There are so many beautiful girls named autumn. I don't know any girl named Fall," my friend tried to temper the conversation. "That's romantic alright but it's only a figment of your imagination," I answered. "No, I don't think it is a figment. For example, I hear, "in his autumn years," but never, "in his fall years. We say autumnal, too. For example, it's the autumnal equinox, not fallal."

"No matter what you call this time of year just know that we Americans say fall because we are a bunch of pragmatic folks who think simply that leaves fall down. It may not sound as pretentious as autumn, but it is beautiful."

"OK, how about calling it the harvest season?" My friend wanted a truce.

Finally we decided to enjoy the season without worrying about the language. Call it autumn or call it fall or harvest, every leaf is a flower now. They speak bliss to us.

George Bernard Shaw aptly said, "England and America are two countries separated by the same language."