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## Autumn Trees

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### **Author Bio**

“Riley Gryc was here.”

# Autumn Trees

## Riley Park

A sighing exultation dimmed auburn  
By ripened harvest eve. Chaste Summer ends!  
The jealous greens of sun-dressed nymphs at play  
Are calmed to August ease. The curtained Night,  
Endowed with warming charm, entices soft  
To oak-enchanted maids: "Sleep not, my doves,  
But be with me in earthen fondness sweet—  
A titian thirst no spring will ever quench."  
With trembling blush, the sylvan maids let fall  
Their vernal gowns. In flushed expectancy  
They seem to float upon the earth. No rush  
Does force the doffing faster. Merciful  
And tender in their bare beatific form  
The wooded sylphs gaze out with ardency.  
A whisper, long and urged by sight's delight,  
Runs airy hands across now star-strewn skins  
That shudder at the twilight touch. Firm arms,  
As strong and fair as Modron's kiss, stretch out  
In dusk-spiced pleasure towards the firmament.  
So caught were they in saccharine embrace  
That seasons slowed to watch the unveiled dance  
Of theirs, this whist moaned song of passions dark.

Let drift at hungered touch fly just-worn clothes  
Upon the ground, as snow sent soft from sky,  
And still do drop with many colored grace  
In warmly envied sheets. A blanket made  
Of earthly woven garments lies about;  
A patterned floor of once adorning cloth,  
Quick-shed in hushed impassioned play, rests lush  
Around my feet. In dawn dressed ember grey  
The tired carpet hardly stirs at breaths  
Of these deciduous youths now spent, asleep.  
I step out on this sea—a watcher on  
The honeyed waves dispersing into dusk—  
And there amongst the scattered cloth of Fall

I find I have been lost. That skin-born scent  
Of lingered lusts since softened by the stars  
Intoxicates my sense of self and leaves  
All spread, as in an open field, quite bare.  
Out from the folds of gentle sleepers' minds,  
Set dreaming long of chills that swift will come  
And overtake the staying Summer's grace,  
Cool airs sound silence taken deep from those  
Who wait for Winter's cloaking comfort here.

A time of seasoned, dancing change has come  
And gone upon the wind: a thing, a joy,  
A beauty now for ever which I hold  
As dear to me as Memory or Love.  
Cannot a man in earnest gain such calm  
As those who dream tonight in shy embrace?  
They lie as ash when laughing fire's left  
To find its way back to the Sun. What a scene  
They make! What secret they must share to gain  
Such soothing respite from the frenzied throes  
Of Life's adversities? What must I do  
To join in this romantic play and ease?  
Despite—or though, perhaps in spite of—dawn  
These faery courtesans seem not to stir  
Or break from this great envied spell of Night.  
While Helios cracks stiff his brightened whip  
Across the backs of the horizon's steeds  
And all the Anemoi begin their waltz  
Of winds, the Fae but simper and do stand  
With shivers not of cold. They sigh and sing  
For Night's return, when after work of Day  
They turn to whispered passion play again.

The lonely blinks of Moon keep company  
With me in this, this passing time. In all  
The moments spent observing, I do not  
Believe my heart will ever truly leave  
This treasured, hallowed place. What once was me  
Is gone: 'twas carried off with Night's first charm  
And left still dancing in the dark. This mind  
Is like a hand I have not shook, but warms  
As if it were a friend's. These sentiments,

These aches of soul, are foreign-made to me  
As if an unshaped spirit placed them in.  
A burning, raw, and barely understood  
New longing passes into me. I am  
Of wood: with water flowing strong within,  
With branches spread to shadowed heights at dark  
And curling lips to drink the light's relief.  
And there you stand as beauty, and I know—  
But never can with words quite capture whole—  
That in your painted red and evergreen,  
With smiles only sylphs could know to make,  
You truly stand apart from all the rest.  
I am now tailor-made: an autumn leaf.