

October

by Brenda Bishop Blakey

October slides in on one foot, shirt tail out like Tom Cruise from the living room scene in *Risky Business*, head canted down, tapping a beat like Michael J in *Thriller*. It's all cool action, smooth and breezy.

The harvest is in and there's a cornucopia of caramel apples, candied corn, and pumpkin pie; everything is orange and black except the things which are gold and brown. You know which things. We let the lawn grow free and the leaves drop and spin in the fall winds which cough and gust. Strike up the fireplace and put on a sweater. Buy a cord of chopped wood and put some anti-freeze in the radiator. Wrap the exposed pipes and put sunflower seeds in the bird-feeder. Bring out those blankets ready for slumber and books worthy of rereading.

For thirty-one days we have a reprieve from severity, a time in between, a time of balance. Settle into the low hum of nature as she lies down, wilted from the summer show. Her flowers shrivel and fall; her mantle flakes and blows away. Only her wooden bones rattle around like a hollow hint of her magnificence.

Then it's All Hallows' Eve, souls of the dead beg for forgiveness. For each one wants to be in the All Saints' Day parade come November first. October lore gets packed up in orange totes with black lids. We anticipate the next couple of months punctuated by being thankful, cranberry sauce, and offer December presents of myrrh.

Just like that, October leaps off the other foot and is gone.

