

Autumn

Everything is in order. The sky is blue, the trees are tall. It's all perfect.

The emerald blades bask under the warmth of the golden sun, the morning dew gleaming like pearls. The beams of sunlight span on for eternity, engulfing the canopies and tainting the vast fields yellow.

The pup is small compared to the rest of the world-an insignificant speck in the entirety of the universe around him. Yet the pup is unfazed, he is content. He's watched these plains since he was an infant, leaving no stone unturned. He knows every corner, every crevice, every pit like the back of his hand.

The pup wanders through the prairie, venturing until he reaches a small clearing. He'd been here countless times before- the same spot, the same tree, the same view- and it was always exactly the same every time, just the way he liked it. But there on the ground, lying beneath the birch tree, is something completely foreign to him. A leaf, paper-thin, small and round in shape. Except this one, unlike any other leaf he'd seen before, was brown.

Surely this was a mistake. Leaves are *green*. At least, that was what he had always thought. Peering down at the strange object before him, the pup's mind races with questions. Had he been wrong? Could leaves truly be brown? Just like that, his whole world comes crashing down.

He won't stand for this. He refuses. It must be a coincidence, it has to be. The pup hurriedly takes the leaf to his mother to inspect it-she'll have an answer, she always does.

"Mother, what is this?"

"It is a leaf, my child, for autumn is arriving,"

Autumn? Impossible! He had never heard of such a thing. Disappointed, he decides to take matters into his own hands.

Taking the leaf, he paints it green, but try as he might, it just won't work. Paint dyes other things, that's all he knew. Another change-this won't do. The pup lifts his chin up to the blinding ball in the sky-this is the sun's fault, there is no other answer.

Attempting to reach the fiery star, all his anger and frustration can finally be taken out on the source of it all. However, his delight is short-lived when a voice calls out to him.

“The sun will not stop for you. It only knows how to burn,”
Looming over him is a wolf, black as the shadows around it.

“No! You are wrong. I will change the leaf back, and everything will return to normal,” he
lashes back, desperation evident in his voice,

“You are but a pup, you cannot do anything. Leaves will always fall,” the wolf responds,
his tone firm, “Accept what you must. Change is inevitable,”

And with that, the wolf trudges on, leaving the pup alone. As he stands there, flustered
and confused, another browning leaf cascades from the birch tree. And another. Then
another. Until at long last, he learns to accept autumn.