**SU Book Club**

**FALL POEMS AND FAMILY TRADITIONS**

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**A PHOTOGRAPH**

*by Sudesh Mishra*

My suited and booted grandpa reminds me of a weighty door hewed from fired vesi or oak. If, upon turning the brass knob in his breast, you push against him, he’s swift to push against you, and for an instant you’re a doorman and he the mule of a man-door until the moment of letting go when he pulls you along after him into an open room where history reclines vacantly on an armchair.

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**AFTER APPLE-PICKING**

*by Robert Frost*

My long two-pointed ladder’s sticking through a tree Toward heaven still, And there’s a barrel that I didn’t fill Beside it, and there may be two or three Apples I didn’t pick upon some bough. But I am done with apple-picking now. Essence of winter sleep is on the night, The scent of apples: I am drowsing off. I cannot rub the strangeness from my sight I got from looking through a pane of glass I skimmed this morning from the drinking trough And held against the world of hoary grass. It melted, and I let it fall and break. But I was well Upon my way to sleep before it fell, And I could tell What form my dreaming was about to take. Magnified apples appear and disappear, Stem end and blossom end, And every fleck of russet showing clear. My instep arch not only keeps the ache, It keeps the pressure of a ladder-round. I feel the ladder sway as the boughs bend. And I keep hearing from the cellar bin The rumbling sound Of load on load of apples coming in. For I have had too much Of apple-picking: I am overtired Of the great harvest I myself desired. There were ten thousand thousand fruit to touch, Cherish in hand, lift down, and not let fall. For all That struck the earth, No matter if not bruised or spiked with stubble, Went surely to the cider-apple heap As of no worth. One can see what will trouble This sleep of mine, whatever sleep it is. Were he not gone, The woodchuck could say whether it’s like his Long sleep, as I describe its coming on, Or just some human sleep.

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**A FAMILY PRAYING**

*A gather of hands*  
*A feasting at dinnertime*  
*Hear the sounds of smiles*  

-Laura McKenzie

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**Home Sweet Home**

*children parents pets*  
*noise in and around the house*  
*lovely atmosphere*  

-Nikhileswari Swaminathan

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**Autumn**

*Fluttering of colors*  
*grey skies, warm clothes, softer smiles*  
*nostalgic musings.*  

-Srivalli Pavan Rekha
FIRST FALL
by Maggie Smith

I’m your guide here. In the evening-dark morning streets, I point and name. Look, the sycamores, their mottled, paint-by-number bark. Look, the leaves rustling and crisping at the edges. I walk through Schiller Park with you on my chest. Stars smolder well into daylight. Look, the pond, the ducks, the dogs paddling after their prized sticks. Fall is when the only things you know because I’ve named them begin to end. Soon I’ll have another season to offer you: frost soft on the window and a porthole sighed there, ice sleeving the bare gray branches. The first time you see something die, you won’t know it might come back. I’m desperate for you to love the world because I brought you here.

ALL HALLOWS
by Louise Gluck

Even now this landscape is assembling. The hills darken. The oxen sleep in their blue yoke, the fields having been picked clean, the sheaves bound evenly and piled at the roadside among cinquefoil, as the toothed moon rises:

This is the barrenness of harvest or pestilence. And the wife leaning out the window with her hand extended, as in payment, and the seeds distinct, gold, calling Come here Come here, little one And the soul creeps out of the tree.

UNDER THE HARVEST MOON
by Carl Sandburg

Under the harvest moon, When the soft silver Drips shimmering Over the garden nights, Death, the gray mocker, Comes and whispers to you As a beautiful friend Who remembers.

Under the summer roses When the flagrant crimson Lurks in the dusk Of the wild red leaves, Love, with little hands, Comes and touches you With a thousand memories, And asks you beautiful, unanswerable questions.

THEY SAY I HAVE
by Shel Silverstein

They say I have my father’s nose, My grandpa’s eyes, My mother’s hair. Could it be that my behind’s The only thing that’s really mine?

LEAVES
by Elsie N. Brady

How silently they tumble down And come to rest upon the ground To lay a carpet, rich and rare, Beneath the trees without a care, Content to sleep, their work well done, Colors gleaming in the sun. At other times, they wildly fly Until they nearly reach the sky. Twisting, turning through the air Till all the trees stand stark and bare. Exhausted, drop to earth below To wait, like children, for the snow.