



A Walk in the Country

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Cherie Langlois

Wednesday, October 21, 2009

Photo by Cherie Langlois

You might think after two decades of walking these same country roads surrounding our farm that I'd be bored out of my skull, but it hasn't happened yet. Of course, it helps that I often walk with a friend, our conversations making the miles fly by. Yet even when I go it alone, boredom never threatens. You see, heading out my front door and down the gravel drive, I walk into a day and a world of new discoveries. Or at least discoveries waiting to be discovered, if only I keep my eyes and ears open and my mind uncluttered with to-do lists and worry.

It is truly different every time. Changing weather and shifting seasons transform the fields, trees and flowers. The day dishes up sunshine, or rain, or a sudden hailstorm (or all three within the span of an hour!). Mt. Rainier shows a brand-new face each morning, when it isn't playing hide and seek in the clouds. An array of animals domestic and wild appear, some who are regulars, others unexpected: glossy-coated horses nibbling hay and a trio of terriers yapping at our heels; elk grazing an emerald pasture and a shy bobcat – just a tawny blur – loping across the road; eagles soaring black against blue skies and swooping goldfinches so bright they dazzle your eyes. The other day, my friend and I came upon a clean-up crew of turkey vultures feasting on a road-kill opossum. The big birds, so ungainly and homely on the ground, lumbered into the trees, but when they took to the sky, we saw them become pure grace and beauty.

Photo by Cherie Langlois

Today on my walk, gifted with a perfect Indian summer October morning, all my senses registered fall: the fragrance of falling leaves, crispy-cool air, clear autumn light illuminating gold, orange and red vine maple leaves. Black and rust-bristled Woolly Bear caterpillars crawled the roads like they do every autumn (does anybody know why?). Suddenly, my walk had an exciting new purpose: rescue these hapless creatures from their squishy fate by scooping them up and tossing them on the other side of the road in the nice, soft vegetation.

I know. Given their probable disorientation from being picked up by a giant and thrown through space, most of them probably turned right around and crawled back in the road again, but it makes me feel good.

Hope your autumn is filled with lovely colors!

~ Cherie

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