

## 7. The Tears of Things

Autumn is now here and it, too, is welcome. It has an important part to play in the turning of the seasons. While Spring touches our bodies with its new life, Autumn, I think, touches our hearts. This 'fall' of the year seems to cast a haunting spell over our lives. These days, at the feel of the mist on our cheeks as we leave for work, or at the drop of a leaf when we walk home, Autumn works a strange magic in the depths of our soul.

Around Yorkshire's famous Fountains Abbey, for instance, where I now live, the numinous quality of the fog and the winds, the smells and colours of woods and fields, the texture of the morning and evening skies, all carry some intimations of another home, another barely-glimpsed country. What is so heart-wrenching is our half-remembered sense of intimacy with a long-forgotten place inside us. It is though a part of us was once familiar with another world, and now something about the autumn stillness whispers life into those timeless, slumbering memories. . .

One still Autumn evening, when the light has a quality you never noticed before, echoes of eternity steal into your soul, bringing disturbing longings for what we cannot describe. It is also a melancholy moment, with tinges of loss and 'the tears of things' I sometimes think that of all the Autumns in our lives, there is one that is extra-special – the most poignant of all. It can happen to us at any age – as an open-hearted child, as a broken-hearted teenager, at the crisis of mid-life, or in our last, precious decades.

I'm writing about that one Autumn in our lives when the veil parts and we see, for one shining moment, into the beauty of God. This is a moment of disclosure – an aching, memory-laden moment. It is a time to take off your shoes. You are touching another world. You hold your breath. When this happens to you, you know, beyond all doubt, that death is not the end; that you are saved forever.

*Prism of Love pp59,60*