

# Troublesome Seasons

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## Stories for Children

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Date: November 16<sup>th</sup> 2010

It was snowing with big fairytale snowflakes, which were hitting the ice frosted window just as if they were asking permission to get in. Miruna was watching them delighted, trying to count them.

-One, three...I mean two! she whispered at the beginning. Then she got tired of counting them. It was quite hard for such a little girl to compute that kind of astronomical calculus. I mean, very difficult! Miruna was only three little years old. Too few for her to know how to properly count, but enough for asking a lot of questions. About what?... Well, about anything, we are talking about the age of the important questions, isn't it so? And Miruna wanted to know as much as she could about the world around her.

For instance now she wanted to know what was "the deal" with the seasons. So not long after her failed attempt of counting the snowflakes she asked her older sister, Oara:

-Is it winter?

Oara was trying to read a story, so she did not hear her at first. She was a bit older, she was eight. An age at which you were supposed to know the answer to these questions, thought little Miruna. That is why she asked her once more. Only this time, Miruna shouted as loud as she could. Just to be heard, not for another reason.

-Oa-ra! Is it winter?!

Oara thought for a second then she seriously approved her.

-Yes! It is winter because it is snowing!

-Why is it snowing? insisted Miruna, as usual.



-Because it's cold! Logically! Came Oara's quick answer.

But Miruna would not give up so easily. She had so much more to learn. So she continued asking. "But why is it cold? When is winter leaving? When is spring coming? How is it like in summer?" and so on, until Oara got tired of answering her.

That was when Theodora, their ten years old sister, intervened.

-Miruna shut up and go to bed, she shouted. And you Oara, stop that chattering!

-Why won't you let them talk? said their eldest sister, Irina with a conciliatory tone. They are so funny. They amuse me.

-You'd better read them a story, maybe they'll fall asleep! replied Theodora pouting. Then she turned back at the magazines she had been skimming through earlier.

Having heard Theodora, Miruna and Oara both asked Irina to read them a story about the seasons. Having no other way, Irina opened her reading manual.

But Irina's story was so boring. Miruna did not understand all the words and she was already ashamed to be always asking questions. So she stopped talking and fell immediately asleep.

She fell asleep and started dreaming...

All of a sudden, Miruna found herself in an incredibly big beautiful forest. All around her the trees were stretching out their branches crammed with green leaves, as if trying to caress her.

- This forest is so beautiful! thought the little girl and started strolling through it.



At her little feet, Miruna saw a multitude of snowdrops and violas. The violas smelled so nice! When the little girl raised her eyes towards the branches of the trees, she saw the birds. They were twittering happily while building their nests.

The birds were of so many different types! Miruna recognized immediately the sparrows, the swallows and the woodpecker. She had seen the sparrows once, on a walk through the park with her eldest sister, Irina. She had explained to her then that the sparrows stay with us even in winter. The sparrows were small and had brown feathers. They were not very pretty but were twittering a lot and they were very cheerful. However, the swallows were much more beautiful. They had their feathers coloured in black and white.

-They seem to be wearing tuxedos! said Miruna out loud, happy she had managed to recognize their breed.

She had found out, always from Irina that the swallows do not remain in our country during winter. They leave in the fall for the warmer climates and do not get back until the next spring.

“If the swallows are still here, it means that in this forest it must be spring or summer!” thought the little girl to herself. She was not sure with which season she was dealing, but she didn’t give in, she walked forward through the woods.

The woodpecker saw her off to a clearing. There Miruna was dumbfounded. Not because she was by any means dumb, but because she was standing in front of a ... fairy.

- I am Spring! said the fairy

- I am Miruna, nice to meet you! said the little girl. Is this your forest?

- This forest is my sisters’ and mine: Summer, Autumn and Winter! explained Spring graciously. I am the youngest of the sisters.

- I am the youngest too! said Miruna. I have three older sisters! Oara is eight years old, Theodora is ten and Irina is ... much older. She is the eldest! completed the little girl all in one breath.

- Figure what a perfect match! For us is the same, explained Spring. I am the youngest one and then come Summer, Autumn and Winter.

- Yeah, muttered Miruna. That’s easy to say! But how do I tell you apart?



- It's easy! You just have to think that I bring the good weather.
- I know! said Miruna. In spring there is beautiful weather and we can play outside all the time we want.
- The birds love me very much and they always twitter when I am with them.
- All the birds? asked curiously Miruna.
- All of them! Many of them come from far away just to be with me. For example...
- The swallows! I know, Irina told me, said the little girl feeling very important.
- Then I see you do know how to tell me apart! responded Spring amused.
- Yes, but the swallows stay in our country also in Summer. How can I tell if you are the one that is outside and not your sister, Summer?
- Easily! You can observe the flowers. I like snowdrops and violas. If you see them, you can be sure that is me. They do not bloom in another season!

Then Spring vanished, as mysteriously and suddenly as she had appeared.

But Miruna was not surprised anymore. The little girl had quickly figured out that she was in a fairytale forest. So she calmly continued reviewing the things she had already learned. "Sun, birds, snowdrops! Sun, snowdrops, birds!" she was so focused that she did not even notice when Summer showed up.

-Boo! tried Summer to scare her playfully.

But Miruna held on. She was a brave little girl! And Summer was an unspeakably beautiful fairy, not a Bad witch or any other wild beast.

-Why did Spring left? asked the little girl.

-It was getting too warm for her! answered arrogantly Summer. If you want you can take a swim in the lake over there. The Sun has more strength now.

Miruna noticed it was so hot now that she was beginning to sweat.



-Look around you! Summer urged her. Do you see how beautiful my flowers are? They are much more colourful than those Spring has! boasted about Summer.

Miruna watched carefully around her and saw how the clearing had filled with flowers of all forms and colours. The little girl noticed the poppies, as red as fire, then the roses and the gladiolas. The last ones she recognized in a blink of an eye because she knew them from their garden.

The clearing was indeed very beautiful!

Then Miruna saw some flying flowers...

-What kind of flowers are those? asked her.

-They are not flowers, they are insects! answered Summer. They are called butterflies. They appear only in summer time. Because they only love me!

-Butterflies...murmured delighted Miruna.

But she did not have the chance to admire for long the beauties of Summer, because she disappeared in an instant.

After the parting of the second season, it got a little colder, and the first withered leaves began falling from the trees.

-Stop showing off! You are not that great! shouted after Summer her older sister, Autumn.

Miruna noticed that Autumn also looked like a fairy. But she didn't seem to be a friendly one. She was a little like her sister, Theodora.

-Why did you chase away your sister Summer? asked Miruna. How troublesome can you the seasons be! Do you always fight like that?

-I never fight! raged Autumn. It is just that I cannot stand those arrogant sisters of mine...

In that moment, all of a sudden it started raining and the wind began to blow. Miruna was really cold and she took shelter under a tree.



-Does it always get so cold when you appear? asked Miruna to Autumn.

-Yes! I don't like heat! Now the sun is not so strong anymore.

-That is too bad, said Miruna shivering.

-I love the wind and the rain! confessed Autumn. Because of them the leaves from the trees wither and fall. Look what a wonderful blanket I have laid at your feet.

-Your blanket of leaves is very beautiful, no argument here. But...I see you have neither birds, nor butterflies...

-That is true! admitted Autumn. But I too have things to boast about you know! I bring the ripped fruits and vegetables. Don't you like apples, prunes or grapes? Asked Autumn.

- I do! said Miruna staring at her. Do you have those things?

- Of course I do! I am the richest of all the seasons! It is a shame that we are not in an orchard or in a garden. In those places I am the most beautiful of all sisters! said Autumn proudly.

After which she disappeared as suddenly as her other sisters. And not before long, after Autumn's departure in the forest was getting even colder. So cold that at one point it started snowing.

In a short while all the trees were covered with a thick layer of snow. Autumn's colourful leaves blanket had magically vanished, leaving his place to another blanket, a white one, incomparably beautiful.

Miruna felt as though she had entered a fairytale. There was only thing that bothered her: it was very, very cold.

Not much after that Winter showed up. She had a gentle voice, which resembled very much that of her sister's Irina.

- Come next to me, Miruna, said Winter to the little girl. There you go! Now you will not be so cold anymore...

The little girl approached her and asked her timidly:

-Who are you?



-I am Winter, the eldest of the sisters.

- You are very beautiful, whispered Miruna with a dreamy voice, but it's very, very cold out here! The forest looks great, so white, as if coming from a fairytale, but it's too cold. Much too cold, sighed the little girl, rubbing her little hands together.

-I am sorry you are not wearing warmer clothes, answered Winter. If you had had a coat, you could have gone to play with the children.

-Play? shouted Miruna.

-Yes! Right there on the sleigh road! said Winter. The children are ridding their sleighs and building snowmen. The little ones always enjoy my arrival because they love snow.

-But I like snow too! completed Miruna, as if apologizing.

-Very well! That means that at our next encounter you will be dressed properly. Remember that when it snows, I have arrived! said Winter. Then she also disappeared.

"I bring children's joy! Remember that Miruna!" echoed Winter's voice like coming from a dream.

-Wait! Don't go please! shouted the little girl. I want to play with the children too. I am not that cold...

But Miruna was shouting in vain. Winter had gone, and the fairytale forest had vanished with her...

Miruna was awake. She was in their room again, but now it was dark, and the other sisters were sleeping quietly in their beds. Only Irina came next to her. It seemed she was trying to tuck her in.

-You woke up because you were cold, explained Irina. You fell asleep while I was reading and I barely managed to put your pyjama on, she said smiling.

-I did not fall asleep! said Miruna seriously. I have been talking to the seasons! You know, they are very beautiful, just like fairies. Spring looked a little like me and she had snowdrops and violas and birds. Summer was beautiful, but arrogant, just like our Oara and she had more flowers than I, I mean than Spring. She also had birds and butterflies...Did you know that they only fly in summer?



-Now that you told me, I will try to remember it! said Irina smiling.

-After Summer left, I also met their sister, Autumn! continued Miruna. She was wicked like Theodora, but she was not ugly either. It is true that birds flew away from her, all the way to warmer climates, but she had many delicious fruits. Too bad she did not take me into an orchard. I could have eaten some...But wait, neither did Winter let me play with the children! She said I wasn't dressed properly.

-That's alright! The next time you dream, you have to wear warmer clothes! chuckled Irina.

-Yeah, muttered Miruna and began yawning. That is what she told me... Hmm...she looked so much like you, Irinico. She loved children very much, just like you love me, said the little girl. I wonder if I really talked to some fairies. Or to the seasons? Or maybe with you...my sisters?

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