We were kindred souls to Hades and Persephone. Much like those ancient gods of Greek mythology, an academic subject I passionately taught until my recent retirement, we were separated by the seasons.

 Every year when the bleeding leaves of my backyard’s dying trees fell from their respective branches, I spent godless hours waiting in anticipation. If my errands and pawful of chores around the lonely lake house were finished, and I did not have any promised engagements with the few remaining family members I had, my mornings, afternoons and evening throughout September were spent watching the backyard from my back porch. Waiting for his lithe and younger yet mystical form to emerge from the fallen leaves like a majestic whale breaching the ocean surface. Only, he’d be an unageing vulpine with the appearance of twenty-five years.

 Daphnis described himself as the only male nymph in existence, a handsome spirit of the rural Midwest trees who dutifully guarded the woodlands until the leaves began to fall. His father and mother remained in Greece while he ventured west to the New World once word of it spread across the rest of the continents. After the perilous journey, Daphnis forged his way through the unknown forests until settling down on the farthest lakeshores of what ultimately became known as Lake Superior. He then spent hundreds of years, watching in awe as more settlers made his forests into a home for themselves.

 We encountered each other when I was an explorative teenage wolf, born and raised all my life up north, as I explored the woods of my family home. Much like today, the sun shined overhead behind a thin layer of clouds, reflecting off the bright colors signifying the end of summertime. I still remembered the taste of pecan pie, a delicious treat I loved eating come Fall.

 The day we met would always be the happiest time of my life, second only to our honeymoon. Against all odds, our fiery love for each other only hardened into strong obsidian as the years rolled by.

 This autumn, the fox nymph surprised me by arriving two weeks into the month, tapping a single paw on my window in the early hours of the morning, dressed in nothing but his leaf-patterned fur composed of multiple shades of yellow and red. The same color as those piercing ruby eyes that swayed me since my youth. I’d nearly fallen out of bed, until I saw him through the frosty windowpane and mirrored the exact same expression that he wore each year: adoring glee in its most potent form of love.

 I stumbled from my bedroom and opened the door, only for the immortal leaf spirit to press himself into my bathrobes and make me stagger backwards a few meters. Blissful laughter filled our lungs until the lad’s multicolor muzzle kissed mine, our lips smashing together in wafting paradise.

 The fox’s taste did not change a single day or decade. His breath still smelled of fresh pine, tongue drifting in lavender smells as his fur felt softer than silky grass. Though seemingly fragile like a leaf, his remaining youth and toned stature seemed strong enough to move an entire tree trunk from the ground. We kissed again and again as doubt returned to my mind; sometimes, I silently wondered how he could tolerate being in a long-distance relationship with an old, middle-aged, and graying canine like myself. Then, I recalled our long-ago conversations, and remembered why. He loved me. He greatly loved me. He loved me more than any mortal man who ever had the chance to come across him by accident in those dense trees.

 “Did you miss me, my love?” he whispered after our lips parted. His scent reminded me of pumpkin spice. “I know that I have.”

 “Always missing you, dear…” my throat trembled in synchrony with my happy paws. “I have always missed you…each time.”

 Without another word, happy tears forming in our eyes, I led Daphnis into my bedroom, the need for sleep already forgotten. Instead, my kneading paws owned a mind of their own. They caressed and pulled my husband close to my bare chest, and his leaf-patterned paws pulled my bathrobe aside as he in turn marveled at my body. He particularly enjoyed kissing each centimeter he missed over the previous six months spent physically apart. First my neck, then my bobbing Adam’s apple, the defenseless napes, followed by the shoulders and eventually the nipples hidden underneath grey furs. His cold nose and sensual tongue warmed each nipple, leaving my legs to buckle back onto the bed and cause me to pull him atop my torso. We giggled like carefree schoolboys exploring each other for the very first time.

 Daphnis’ blanketing, beautifully colorful tail swayed over my legs “You did that on purpose, Michael.”

 I couldn’t resist a playful grin. “So, what if I did? What will you do about it?”

 The youthful lad responded to my question by shifting upward and pecking me on the lips, his form resting a top mine as his pert rear brushed against the red shaft emerging from my bulbous and ashen-dyed sheath. He loved teasing me, as evidenced by the sly expression in his eyes, the suppressed moan I felt rumbling in his warm abdomen, his lower lip quivering down at me.

 We did plenty of other things together besides making love. Having been married for close to thirty years, we enjoyed a diverse range of hobbies. However, in that moment, all I cared for was showing the fox nymph how much I missed him; emotionally, physically, spiritually, and sexually.

 There was no time for further foreplay. we had more than enough time to slowly warm each other once winter arrived in late November. For now, we fucked. No, not fucked; made passionate and fierce love without looking away from the other’s hypnotic gaze. We always shivered in delight as my lubed member entered my mate, like we were virgins again. That beautiful morning became no different than any other.

 No matter how much I aged, no matter how much he remained in his prime, we never tired of our favorite hobby. I never grew bored of feeling my husband and I become one. He never asked for another lover to make him feel like the luckiest immortal living amongst nature. Most of all though, neither of us preferred one to be more dominant over the other. That night though, Daphnis let me hold him down on his back, lift his limber legs and stretch him wide in a calculated thrust.

 The next hour turned into a blissful series of kisses, hardened thrusts, shaking digits, followed by jubilant panting. It did not even take long for either of us to feel our momentums bubble to the surface and burst in hot release.

 I cried out in ecstatic joy, “I love you, Daphnis!”

 “I love you too, Michael!” he moaned to the same tune as my climax. “I love you so much, Michael! So…So much!”

 He smelled like a rare male nymph ought to smell, being held and sleeping in my arms. As dawn further broke over the tree line, I felt the exhaustion of an interrupted sleep pull me back to dreamland. I did not complain. After all, Daphnis and I had the rest of the upcoming day to spend together, following a nice, warm shower. Then, a planned brunch between the two of us once again, to commemorate yet another return of autumn.