

The

AUTUMN WALK



By Zoe Glick

An acorn fell on Meg's head as she picked up her phone, which had dropped on the leafy pavement. Just another thing to add to her awful day. She had already stepped in bird poop, sat on a freshly painted bench, spilled coffee down her new white shirt, missed the train, and got yelled at by her boss for being late.

Instead of staying at home afraid of something worse happening, Meg decided to cool off by taking a walk. There was nothing like taking a nice, long walk on a cool, windy autumn day. It was as if the wind was cheering on the leaves as they jumped off their branches, taking their long fall to the bushes below. The sky was blue with a hint of red as the sunset started warning the forest of the darkness that was soon to come. It seemed like nothing bad could happen on such a perfect day.

Meg started walking off the pavement and into the forest, covered by a thick canopy of tall trees surrounding her, protecting her from the mean world outside. Her shoulders started to relax, her breath slowed, and her heart stopped its marathon pace.

Suddenly, she heard a light footstep behind her along with the sound of a shrill, annoyingly loud, voice. It hit Meg like a brick. "Ya, I KNOW!! She was SO annoying. I told her to stop talking because she was annoying everyone in the restaurant, but she LITERALLY wouldn't listen to me. It was so embarrassing!" the woman asserted.

All Meg could think about was the woman's high-pitched squealing voice. She quickly grabbed her headphones out of her backpack, careful not to break this great feeling of peace. As she listened to her music, she kept pressing the volume up button in hopes that she could finally tune out the obnoxious woman's phone call until her headphones wouldn't get any louder. She could still hear the woman's voice over the screaming singer's voice in her ears. That was okay. She could tune people out easily. Look at the colorful leaves, Meg thought.

"I KNOW!!! I told her to text me back," the woman yelled.

The birds are so pretty!

"I told her to stop talking! She was too loud," the woman went on.

Everything was too loud. This is why Meg hated the city. These woods were supposed to be where she could release her anger, and yet it seemed like this lady was here to fill her up with even more. This had to stop here.

"Hello. Would you please stop talking so loudly? You know, it's not nice to constantly



judge other people like how you are judging that woman you went out to dinner with. For the sake of everyone, please stop talking," Meg said, trying to keep calm, but her voice couldn't help wavering, as she attempted to let her pent-up anger escape through her clenched teeth and fists.

The lady's eyes widened, and her mouth hung wide open with no words coming out, as if someone pressed a mute button. "I'll call you back later. This obnoxious lady is trying to tell me to stop talking, as if she can talk with that awful outfit on," the lady retaliated as she brought her phone from her ear and smashed the end call button, hard enough that the phone threatened to fall out of her clenched hand.

The birds started to gossip with each other and soon enough, the whole forest was quiet, closing in around Meg and the woman like a boxing ring with whispering fans listening to see who would win this battle.

"Well, maybe if you could mind your own business, you wouldn't need to know everything about everyone else's life. News flash, you don't know everything so turn around and keep walking," the lady yelled, somehow louder than when she was ranting to her friend on the phone earlier.

"How dare you call me obnoxious when you are the one disrupting everyone's day!" Meg shot back.

As Meg looked around while trying to calm herself down, she noticed that there was very

little noise other than light footsteps off in the distance. Just another person to add to her list of people who she didn't want to see right now. Honestly, Meg wasn't sure she wanted to see anyone other than her mom and sister, but they lived all the way in Connecticut, too many miles away from where she lived in the heart of New York City.



Meg got so caught up in her own world that she almost forgot that they now had company, someone ranting about how awful Meg was. She truly was usually that good at tuning people out.

"Would you please stop yelling? Some people are trying to have a good day," a man yelled. "Just because you are unhappy doesn't mean that everyone else has to be," he said before stomping away. He was wearing a black suit and tie and must have just come from work. His back was slouched, and if he stood up straighter, he probably would have looked around thirty-five instead of forty-five. He could have smiled more, but his face seemed to have permanent scowl lines etched like canyons dug out of a flat canvas.

The woman and Meg stopped talking immediately, looking at the man as he walked away, the leaves crunching under his clunking boots. They both whipped their heads toward each other, a smile breaking across their faces as they tried not to laugh. Their covers didn't last long, as a chuckle started breaking out of their jumping hearts and soon enough, they were bent over laughing as hard as they could. They could



hear the man grunting in the woods, mumbling about how annoying they were.

"I think we got off on the wrong foot. My name is Meg," Meg said in between laughs. Now that Meg looked more at the woman, she actually seemed really sweet, with a bright smile and glittering eyes.

"I'm Andrea. Nice to meet you!" Andrea replied with a big grin scattered across her face. Meg couldn't believe that she had been mad at her for yelling when in the end, she was the one yelling.

"I can't believe I started yelling about yelling. The tables really turned!" Meg announced, laughing in between words.

"It's okay! I probably could have kept it down a little bit," Andrea replied.

Andrea and Meg kept talking for a while until the leaves started rustling as if to remind them to go before it got too dark.

"Would you like to keep walking? I think we are headed in the same direction!" Meg asked.

"I would love that!" Andrea replied.

The forest couldn't help but laugh with the women. As they kept walking along the path, the forest brightened, and the birds sang as a celebration of their blossoming friendship.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Zoe Glick lives in Massachusetts with her brother, sister, mom, and dad, as well as her pets. She enjoys many activities outside of school like playing the piano, playing field hockey, and hanging out with her friends and family. Zoe has always enjoyed reading and writing since she was very little. She hopes you enjoy this short story!