From Autumn Equinox 2008 Ritual

It is autumn. The harvest moon breaks into view, bumt-orange light bathing the bold ridge from the east.

And the valley below is washed clean in its magical glow.

The acres of farm lands and orchards stand their watch across the newly irrigated fields, casting oblong shadows toward the farmhouse in the west.

Rows of corn stand conspicuously in the silence beside the stubble of that already cut and taken.

The last of the crop from the generous garden by the house is prepared for the long winter ahead.

And the foliage on the surrounding mountains begins to change imperceptibly, giving just a glimpse of the cascade of color soon to come.

There are deep feelings uncovered by the moon's glow.

The strong sense of purpose In the harvest, the safety we feel in honest preparation for the winter time ahead.

The predictability of another season brings affirmation of the worthiness of our lives passing in full color.

The harvests in our lives are rarely so well-defined in the rush of the days flying by.

But if we are to lay by for ourselves in anticipation of whatever the years will bring, we must come to that quietness that is our spiritual and emotional reserve.

And yet, where are the silos in your life?

Where do you find to store your strength against life's elements?

Look closely and you'll see where your silo stands.

It stands in the moment you share honestly that experience with your child, your friend or one you love.

Watch as you store that love for the day that they are away.

It stands in the time you find to touch the deepest part of you in quiet meditation, finding that reservoir of peace that builds in you as you finally let go and trust in ail that's good.

And the silo appears as you accept in yourself the imperfections that once frightened and discouraged you so, and that now the wholeness of your spirit claims and holds.

It stands highest in the acknowledgement of your affirmation of self- love, your trusting through all hardship, the basis of your personhood, your place at life's table.

Yes, your harvest is just as real as that washed in the glow of the moon and just as worthy.

It comes from the same beginnings, preparation, awareness, desire, faith, inspiration, and prayer.

And if you will be silent now and then, you'll see your silo tall, strong, and full of all you need for any winter your life encounters.

As your true colors emerge, like those on the mountain. Behold the harvest of your life.

Written by Leigh Sanders and adapted by Shannon