

The Seasons of Autumn

By

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Original Screenplay

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INTRO

EXT.-LAKE-NIGHT

Wide shot of lake with city-scape in background and trees in foreground. Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 8 in E-Flat Major (part II - closing scene from Goethe's "Faust") plays. Pan to right. Man sitting on bench with bike resting on left side. Man stands up and gets on bike. He rides off right side of screen.

ACT I - SPRING

EXT.-ROAD-NIGHT

Dolly shot taken from car directly behind man on bike in center of screen riding down street.

NARRATOR

If I were to send you a letter from my own private island, providing an authentic display of the events as they occur on this island, would my letter be met with approval or would you write it off? Would it appear to you as though I was suggesting that my dealings with life on this planet should be any better or worse than yours? I really hope that this letter would be well-received, my friend, as I know that I would only be seeking the therapy of sharing one's own perspective with another. While your island is sure to have faculties worth noting of it's own, I would like to currently focus on the bayside of blue, the inland of green, and the underbelly which remain colorless of MY island.

EXT.-SUNFLOWER FIELD-MORNING

Horizon of field of sunflowers and rising sun. Slow pedestal pan down to reveal over-shoulder of young boy staring at sun. Cut to river on sunflower fields.

(CONTINUED)

## NARRATOR

Dear Friend, the spring season of my island brings warmth and sunlight in abundance. The promise and potential felt during these days are uncanny and will be looked upon in later seasons with nostalgia and longing.

Cut to bird's eye shot directly above boy lying in field. Boy grabs flower and turns head to left to smell it.

## NARRATOR

On that note, smells, oddly enough, seem to be the most lasting memories, revisiting me at odd interludes of life, bringing with them vaguely recognizable visual reminders of this season.

Boy sits up. Cut to directly behind boy's head. Two tall adults with blank masks stand on either side of boy, facing him.

## NARRATOR

This is a time of spoon-fed happiness, digested without trial or doubt, in the healthy, bubbling stomach of a transparent child. Time stands before me in the similar towering manner as the men and women of other seasons; it is vast and unfathomable. A minute is an hour and an hour is a year.

Adults walk slowly off of each side of screen. Slow pedestal pan up/tilt down/zoom into back of boys head. His wiggling toes are seen on either side of head.

## NARRATOR

This hyperbolic existence allows plenty of wiggling room for the fantasy of imagination.

Fully zoomed into back of head so it takes up whole screen. Color lights appear in different sections of dark screen.

## NARRATOR

With the same indifferent shrug displayed on the shoulders of man before language, I touch each color that enters the door simply for its shape. Feelings are undefined and I am without inquiry of definition.

Black out

INT.-BEDROOM-NIGHT

Wide shot of boy in bed in center of dark room. Cut to boys point of view. Closed closet on left and shut door on right. Tall, skinny man carrying an infant comes out of closet and paces back and forth, staring at boy. Man moves to shadow on left side of room. Only his glowing eyes are visible.

NARRATOR

Amongst these feelings is fear,  
unlearned, yet familiar,  
manifesting itself occasionally in  
an insensitive bout of theatrics. A  
vague portrayal of darkness and  
light, expressing only the  
extremities on either side of the  
spectrum and nothing in between.

Glowing eyes close and door on right opens. Light pours in and a womanly silhouette stands in center.

NARRATOR

It is during these scenes that the  
character role of MOTHER is  
emboldened and underlined in the  
playbill, shining a beacon of  
merciful light onto the stage.

Woman walks in and sits on bedside, looking down at boy. She leans over and kisses boy on forehead. Woman stands up and leaves room. Light turns off.

NARRATOR

With a kiss, all demons are  
vanquished, all injuries are  
mended, and the anguish of  
unquenchable thirst for this love  
sets in.

EXT.-SUNFLOWER FIELD-DAY

Wide shot of two men taunting each other and fist-fighting. Boy emerges from behind the two men and walks to the right. Truck pan following boy, keeping him in center of screen.

NARRATOR

Though naive and somewhat innocent,  
disagreements will occur rather  
frequently and will almost always

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NARRATOR (cont'd)  
take place in the shadow of  
misunderstanding.

Walking past large woman, seated in grass and laughing at  
brawling men, boy eventually stops at bonfire.

NARRATOR  
It is during this season that the  
basic fundamentals of nature  
introduce themselves, usually done  
in the rudest of manners. Whether  
it be a a tightening handshake, a  
stern declaration, or a passive  
wave...

Boy lifts his left hand to touch fire. Cut to side of fire  
that is opposite boy. His hand appears to be over fire.

NARRATOR  
...the pieces to the game of which  
I must learn to play are set before  
me without question.

Pedestal pan down to reveal flower in front of fire. Cut to  
several alternating shots of flower field.

NARRATOR  
The springtime of my island  
reassures me that growth is  
inevitable, blossoming happens  
naturally, and the dictation of  
either is unnecessary...so it  
maintains.

ACT II - SUMMER

EXT.-DESERT-DAY

Wide alternating shots of desert horizon.

NARRATOR  
Dear Friend, the heat of summer is  
born within the underbelly of my  
island. Twenty feet underneath the  
surface the cool complacency of  
springtime sod is no longer  
appealing to the residents of my  
island. Whether it be through some  
form of telekinetic energy by said  
residents or by natural course, the  
(MORE)

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NARRATOR (cont'd)  
dirt that lies 6.67 meters  
underground begins to heat up in a  
quickenning manner and any amount of  
water from any source turns into  
steam. Vertical rivers of hot,  
nonlethal gas shoot upward, forming  
distributaries along the way and  
spring from ground to converge in  
one unanimous community.

Far in the distance, the figure of a shirtless man walks  
wearily through the sand, fumbling occasionally and trying  
to fully stand.

NARRATOR  
I am hot and thirsty, afflicted  
with the desire for a drink from  
any other island in the universe,  
just as long as it isn't mine.

EXT.-CITY-DAY

Wide shot of city and horizon

NARRATOR  
I've had a taste of other islands  
through photographs and letters and  
have decided that my own requires  
great renovation in both interior  
and exterior design. The sweltering  
heat of summer places a  
sight-altering drop of sweat in my  
eye, and with my new convex,  
viewing aperture everything in the  
world is perceived as being grand.

Alternating dramatic angles of city.

NARRATOR  
What I don't know is that style is  
far more apparent to me than  
substance. How am I supposed to  
know this during summer?

INT-SHINE SHED-NIGHT

Dark room with stars and planets. Man sits in center of room  
with tall, white, wet towel wrapped around his head. Light  
ebbs and flows over him. Slow zoom to closeup.

(CONTINUED)

## NARRATOR

To keep composure of mind during these high temperatures one must convince oneself that he or she is all-knowing, open-minded, omnipotent even. An ADULT.

Cut to man's perception. Circular source of light in center of screen surrounded by complete darkness. Gel's of different colors alternate over the source. Zoom into light.

## NARRATOR

Summer is the season of ambition. It is the extension of promise and potential felt during spring, though more realistic and precise and, therefore less frequent or whimsical.

## INT-ROOM-DAY

Worm's eye shot of ceiling covered in indiscernible writing and Mathematic equation. Man in goggles stands on ladder and points with long stick to some of the equations, while staring at screen.

## NARRATOR

On the inland, drawing boards are full of strategy. Maps are displayed and lead to goals that the men and women of other seasons...

Cut to wide shot of room. The floor is completely filled with men and women sitting in chairs, facing all different directions. The man on the ladder talks to these people, but is not heard.

## NARRATOR

...are either inspired by or criticize. A mission of great importance is conceived and there is absolutely no Plan B.

## EXT.-SHINE SHED-DAY

Fields. Closeup of footprint in mud filled with liquid. Occasional drops fall in.

(CONTINUED)

NARRATOR

Old principles that flourished in the verdant fields of the previous season now lie dead in puddles of perspiration; footprints on forgotten soil, filled to the smallest toe with heat-inspired human fluid that had once emerged from the millions of tiny pours...

INT-SHINE SHED-DAY

Skin colored wall covers screen. Tiny holes emitting blue light cover it as well as alternating body parts. An arm, a leg, two legs, finally the head of a man facing the cam.

NARRATOR

...that cover my perceived being.

Zoom out and spin around man to over shoulder as he walks forward. Room completely covered in red with small red chair sitting on right side. Beautiful, naked woman with long hair walks to chair and sits in it. She plays with her hair. Cut back to closeup of man. The skin colored wall in background is still seen.

EXT.-DESERT-DAY

NARRATOR

My dry body learns lust at last.  
Lust, in every sense of the word.  
Hourly relay races are held by  
blood cells. Top to bottom and back  
again.

The skin colored background is removed to reveal a desert road that extends and pinpoints in the center of the horizon.

NARRATOR

I'm dizzy, despondent, and  
delusional as I stare into the  
mirage of fall.

Man turns to face road. Cam moves over shoulder and zooms to horizon. Man disappears off screen.

NARRATOR

The waving bows of heat dance above  
the black, asphalt road that lies  
before me. As though it were the

(MORE)

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NARRATOR (cont'd)  
sun's only victim in the sky, my  
island absorbs the fires of the  
summer season. Boil, boil my  
motivated soul, and aspire to  
perspire.

ACT III - FALL

EXT.-FOREST STREAM-DAY

Slow moving shallow stream in forest. Shot taken in stream looking downstream. Trees on either side. A man comes around corner, trudging through water slowly. Bodies emerge on either side of and float past cam. Cut to tracking shot high above and directly behind man walking through water. Bodies float past man.

NARRATOR  
Dear Friend, failure is a dirty,  
repulsive word. I see it drooling  
from the mouths of those island  
inhabitants around me on a daily  
basis.

EXT.-CITY-NIGHT

Cut to very similar looking tracking shot high above and directly behind man walking down city sidewalk. People walk past man. Cut to waist up reverse tracking shot of man walking and looking forward with a blank expression. Cut to POV of man. People walking past him. A homeless man with a towel in one hand and a bucket in the other can be seen.

NARRATOR  
Failure is a whispered word that  
hides and stalks as it approaches  
me, stealthily trained on my  
torturous anxiety, only to amplify  
itself at the very last moment and  
pounce in the most merciless of  
ways.

INT.-SHINE SHED-NIGHT

In a dark environment, a small mirror hanging on a rope swings back and forth, reflecting a man's face each time it swings past the center point. Red, yellow, orange, and brown leaves fall in the background and are out of focus.

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## NARRATOR

Fall is a season that was appropriately named for my island, dear Friend, as it certainly doesn't do anything in an upward motion, unless, of course, if you count the recent installment of the noose that sways gently above my head. I find it somewhat annoying to describe my autumn to you. Yes, there is yellow. Yes, there is orange, red, brown. Leaves only provide the blurry backdrop for the small mirror that never leaves my sight. A tragic concentration. A concentrated tragedy.

The mirror loses momentum and rests at the center point, reflecting the man's face.

## INT.-WAREHOUSE-DAY

Alternating shots of empty warehouse.

## NARRATOR

The air is stale and remains at a discomfoting medium. The declining temperature that departed from summer has come to a halt in some unfamiliar station. It is a purgatory; a waiting room with no estimated time of departure. The frustration of this standstill and the fear of the impending cold in the following season work together to drive me into an absolute state of delirium.

## INT-SHINE SHED-DAY

Red wall with blue couch in center. Man sits in chair with drink in hand. Rows of shelves with golden items line either side of man on wall. Man puts drink down on table with a disgusted look on his face.

## NARRATOR

The fantastic photograph that my summer-self had plastered to the inside of my mind's eyelid, the saving grace from all that I had abhorred, the idol that was placed

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NARRATOR (cont'd)  
on the highest mantel in my room of seemingly heightened awareness and starry-eyed wonder, is now the very epicenter of all abhorrence I experience.

EXT.-GRASS FIELD-DAY

Tree with green leaves.

NARRATOR  
All of my green dreams had once proliferated in a dense society of green dreams. And though the wind did shake them, they held strong to the core that was understood as they tousled against each other. Stability had long ago spread roots underground in order to grow with exponential prosperity in indiscriminate direction, excluding of course, the direction of the cold ground. That is not the case now. My core of stability turned sore with sterility and lost grasp of last leaf.

Leaves die and fall off tree.

INT.-BAR-NIGHT

Tracking shot through bar full of old people drinking and smoking. Fire Dream by Adrian Orange and Her Band plays until break in lyrics.

NARRATOR  
The fall season of my island is observed through a thick fog of cigarette smoke, pulsing with the multiple neon lights of the various bars that I'm obligated to frequent. I surround myself with the men and women of winter, who constantly induce me to vomit with their pathetic stories of spring and summer. There is drinking and smoking, followed by drinking and smoking, anything to appease the oral fixation that these men and women deny having. I dismiss it as winter's disease.

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Music ends and shot comes to stop in stage room of bar. A two-piece band (guitar/vox and drums) plays on stage but is not heard. A mustachioed man dressed nicely in a dark suit with a red rose in the breast pocket paces back and forth and speaks into a hand-held microphone.

## ANNOUNCER

You are glorious, Folks! Simply put, BEAUTIFUL! Really! I'm up here looking at you but it should be the other way around! What a wonderful evening! Stupendous, if I may so myself!

The announcer takes out a handkerchief and wipes his sweaty forehead.

## ANNOUNCER

I'm contractually required to tell you that tonight's musical supplement can not only be taken binaurally, but it can also be administered orally, intravenously, and anally. Check out their merch booth, People!

Continuous pan around room to reveal people in audience. The laughing woman from ACT I sits on the far left, one man faces the opposite direction, one man has his phone in his face, and one man plays an acoustic guitar but is not heard. Pan back to stage.

## ANNOUNCER

Get yourself a CD, get yourself a vinyl, get yourself a sticker, get yourself a shirt, and get yourself outta here! No need to stay for the other bands tonight. What we have here is exactly what you've been looking for. This is the background sound you need in order to look the part that you want them to think you are. Play the album on the elevator! Play the album during a conversation! Play the album at a loud party! We don't interrupt you. We complement you. You have heard everything and you know everything. We're only here to remind you of that. We guarantee that you'll feel proud of yourself when you name the genres that you are familiar with

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ANNOUNCER (cont'd)  
and attribute them to this sound.  
Rest comfortably on a cloud of  
categorization, my friends! There  
is no confusion to be had here!

Band on stage begins packing equipment up.

ANNOUNCER  
Tip your bartender!

All three people on stage stop what they're doing and look  
up at camera.

NARRATOR  
The fire of my ambition has  
dwindled down to a small,  
smoldering ember; just enough for  
me to perform what is necessary in  
mechanical manner, yet not nearly  
enough to feel the sobering pain  
that a drenching douse of  
dream-extinguishing reality can  
cause, as I have come to learn...

ACT IV - WINTER

EXT.-SNOWFIELD-DAY

Man in worn winter clothing walks around in snow field  
amongst trees.

NARRATOR  
Dear Friend, I accept everything. I  
have let loose denial, and rid  
myself of the delusion of anything  
beyond myself. I am cold, and old,  
and accomplished by the standards  
of one with lesser standards than  
that of my previous self. Bitter  
snow and bitter self. If I had the  
energy to do it, I might regret  
having taken the colors of autumn  
for granted, as I now have none  
before me. But I have no energy, or  
caring, ambition, motivation, lust,  
regret. I am dead and I am hell.  
The carcass I pilot on a daily  
basis shifts and moves at a pace  
that is coveted only by the  
lifeless bodies that litter my  
floor.

(CONTINUED)

Man sees tree trunk.

NARRATOR

Winter is the season of content. My island's rate of productivity is at least 80% less than it once was, not that I really care. I find joy in the excitement of my next meal. I comment on the weather. I sometimes go to bed early. The only passionate surge of anger that enters my bones comes in the form of impatience. An agitation caused by trifling matters such as a malfunctioning television.

INT-SHINE SHED

Screen fuzz. Two white walls are seen meeting at a center point in middle of screen and extending diagonally away (like this: \/). On the left wall, colored lights are cast. On the right side, snow falls.

NARRATOR

The frost that permeates my skin acts as a filter, preventing any amount of sentimentalism to break the wall of my frigid identity.

INT-ROOM-DAY

Bird's eye of man in bed. He wraps himself in sheets in fetal position.

NARRATOR

Judging by my current desire for the complacency of spring, I must have gone full circle throughout this year. All anger and inspiration has turned to instinct for common necessity and comfort.

Zoom to shoulders up. Man removes sheet from head which is resting on one side. He stares off screen.

NARRATOR

The chip on my shoulder has frozen and shattered into a million pieces, though my stiff neck is incapable of turning my head far enough to acknowledge this.

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Pan to man's POV. A window is seen. Zoom to window and a small orange glow appears in far distance.

NARRATOR

The only fires I see during this season are the ones in the far distance that burn down the bridges to the islands in which I had once traveled. A small orange glow poised for a short second on an oversized white canvass.

Opaque image of sunflower appears over glow.

NARRATOR

For a brief moment I smell a memory that barely allows reminiscence.

Flower disappears and replaced by glow. Zoom out to reveal hallway. Glow remains at end of hallway in doorway.

NARRATOR

But, before that memory is tangible the smell vanishes and the object of my desire continues to appear in an instinctual form. A hot dinner lying in the doorway at the end of the narrow passage stretched out before me. Walls, musty and unadorned replace the peripherals I might have once had.

INT.-BAR-NIGHT

Man sits at bar. His back faces camera. He's drinking what looks like a whiskey on ice.

NARRATOR

I suppose what I find most strange about my winter is that it seems very different from the previous perception I had of winter as the men and women of this season would experience it. I have no desire to latch onto the warm-bodied persons of autumn, summer, or spring and regurgitate my legacy into their willing minds. The single bit of respect I strive for is that of dignity.

EXT.-SNOWFIELD-DAY

Shots of mountain horizon. Setting sun.

NARRATOR

The thick layer of snow that surrounds me is blinding. It suggests that winter will never end and spring will never come again. But, as you know, my friend, that is not true and if I possess the ability to last through this treacherous season once more, perhaps I'll be sending you another letter.

Full-bodied shot of man standing in snow, staring at camera.

NARRATOR

Born and burned and cracked and crumbled. My island is my own and mine alone. And of others there are none I have truly known.

Shot prolonged for a few seconds. Blackout.

THE END