



Musing

December 2019 - "Winter"

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Wikipedia defines winter as "the coldest season of the year in polar and temperate zones. Some cultures define winter by dates and others define it based on the weather." Regardless, those of us that live in the north accept it as part of the changing seasons and many of us, myself included, embrace it. In fact, this New Year's Day I awoke to find the air crisp and cold, the ground covered with a blanket of snow and a red sunrise on the horizon. Clearly, this was a perfect time for an early morning walk in the woods!

My dog seemed to sense what I was thinking as she sat staring at me, cocking her head, and perking her ears. It was as if she was trying to convey that she voted YES, this is a great idea! She remained quietly waiting as I donned boots, coat, hat, scarf and mittens, then out the door we went.

It was very quiet as I walked, with the only sound being the crunch of my boots upon the snow. My dog frolicked ahead down the trail, suddenly diverted to chase a squirrel, (unsuccessfully as it scampered up a tree). As I continued our walk I noted the quiet being broken by the occasional crackling sound of a tree limb, the thump of snow falling from a pine tree, and the cheerful call of a chickadee. This caused me to wonder about all that I was overlooking and surmised that somewhere on our walk reclusive deer or fox were very likely quietly observing us from the surrounding forest, to say nothing of all the other "woodland residents" such as mice, voles, etc. seldom seen keeping warm under the snow.

Continuing my journey I reflected how many people speak of the joys of summer in the northland, and think of winter as something only to be endured, or avoided at all costs, moving to warmer climates for part or all of winter. However, this is not for me and as I completed our walk, I smiled, happy to be able to appreciate and enjoy a northern winter and all that it has to offer. To me experiencing the ebb and flow that the change of seasons brings, is a joy, and my life without the season of winter would diminish me.