

Endgame

The air is becoming crisp in the evenings and the mornings are greeting us with glistening dewy gems on everything. All the signs are here. We are in our final weeks of the season coming to fruition.

The crop this year is bountiful with the boughs bent heavy with their treasures. Daily, I go out to inspect my gifts to see if they are ready to be harvested. I feel like a coach on a team planning a strategy for the final minutes of a tied game. This game needs careful strategizing and great patience. I am more than willing to share, but their attitude is all or nothing.

This game has been going on for 13 seasons now and the score is 8 for them and 5 for me. Finally the treasures are at their peak and I have the weekend to collect. Up goes my ladder. My bag hangs loosely on my hip. I reach out with the picker and fill it, dump it in the bag, and refill until the strap of my bag is digging into my shoulder. I come down the ladder, carefully empty the bag and up I go again. Two full days of this and my legs are so sore I can barely walk, but all my apples are picked. To celebrate I scatter apples around my land, far from the trees. Yes, I am willing to share.

The final score - bears 8 seasons and me 6!

Astrid Koenig

