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## (Late Autumn)

People sometimes complicate the simplest things. Life, which seems complex, suddenly reveals itself as very simple—and I wanted to show that in this film. There was something else, too. It is easy to show drama on film; the actors laugh or cry, but this is only explanation. A director can really show what he wants without resorting to an appeal to the emotions. I want to make people feel without resorting to drama . . . it is very difficult. Here, in *Late Autumn*, I think I was fairly successful, but still the results are far from perfect.

Yasujiro Ozu on  
*Late Autumn*

“I’m happy as I am”: you might not think that a radical sentence, but it’s the challenge hurled in Yasujiro Ozu’s marvelous *Late Autumn* by a young woman who’s just cheerfully announcing that she’s not ready for marriage. Her seniors respond with shocked determination and commit themselves to selecting a husband at once. This is a creature caught between the past and the present. Her modern self rejects the conception of marriage as a mere exercise in forbearance. She also devastates older listeners when she remarks that love and marriage don’t always go together. Yet, when facing the fact that her mother might embrace a new life, she’s horribly upset by the rift with old conventions.

Since Ozu concentrates so much on the interior consciousness, *Late Autumn* is closer to fiction than to film. As usual, Ozu uses a fairly stationary camera, which rests on the faces of those who are talking.

Love is hardly mentioned when the subject of marriage arises. But enormous affection between parents and children, and among old friends, is revealed as it rarely is on screen; often, it’s shown through the small jokes that intimates make at one another’s expense.

Finally, the daughter marries. The mother, asserting that she “can’t start from scratch all over again”, eludes the pressures from her well-wishers, and smiles at the solitude ahead of her. Beautifully acted throughout, especially by Setsuko Hara as the mother, and Yoko Tsukasa as the daughter, *Late Autumn* stresses that people can’t

forcibly control the lives of others, not even in the name of fond intentions.

Nora Sayre  
*The New York Times*

*Late Autumn*  
(*Akibiyori*)  
Written by Kogo Noda and  
Yasujiro Ozu  
With Setsuko Hara and Chishu Ryu  
1960, Color  
127 Minutes