

...a little fall back...

By: Leslie A. Davidson

I was homesick today. It was a glorious morning after a long winter and a miserable, chilly, rainy, sleety, dust of snowy yesterday. In spite of the beauty of the day or, perhaps, because of it, I walked a while with sadness, thinking of our old house and back yard. The house was ours but the garden was mine, happily shared, but selfishly, obsessively, egotistically MINE. So much changed in our lives but the garden, if I did the work, if I loved it hard enough, it always flourished. I tended that garden long after I had signed the agreement to sell. I tended it until the day new owners took possession. It was one thing, some days the only thing, that made any sense.

There is an ancient crabapple tree in our old backyard. Lincoln used to prune it flattish across the top and spreading wide, a gorgeous parasol of bud, blossom and leaf, an “Anne with an e” white-way-of-delight kind of tree. It bloomed only every other year, making it all the more special. I remember the hum of bees, so loud it could be heard in the kitchen if the windows were open. Orgasmically happy bees. And the scent of the blossoms...no wonder the bees went crazy.

Sarah and Jason were married under that tree. When Lincoln could no longer prune it, our neighbor picked up the shears and worked his magic. New owners will be enjoying their first spring in our old house and our neighbours have also moved away. It's none of my business but I wondered, as I walked, if anyone has pruned my tree.

I've longed for spring. I wonder if this self-pity riven sorrow is what you get when you rue the day and fail to notice the dust of snow. Truthfully, I noticed yesterday's dust of snow and had nasty things to say about it. Dear Robert Frost, you were right. I am wrong. I am sorry.

...a little spring forward...

Arlo is almost 4 years old. He and I, together we visit Grandpa Lincoln every Friday. I help Lincoln with his lunch while Arlo lines up all the tiny, perfect containers of healthy snacks that his mom has packed for him. He opens them carefully, one by one, picks and chooses and nibbles away while charming his granddad and the other dear, gentle man who shares Lincoln's table.

Today we took Grandpa out into the sunshine. Arlo pushed the reclined wheelchair until he got tired. Then he climbed into Grandpa's lap. I curled Grandpa's arms around him and he nestled back against Lincoln's chest. We strolled and chatted. When Arlo fell asleep, this child who never naps, all his big boy almost 4-ness went slip-sliding back into babyhood, into that innocent, relaxed abandon, one arm flung behind his head, his little legs flopped to the side, warm sun on his face, and loving arms his cradle. Grandpa slept, too. They both wore sunglasses—cool shades on my sleeping dudes. We made our way through the hallway back to the cottage, Grandpa and Arlo still sound asleep. Staff members, visitors and a few residents stopped to enjoy the moment. I am glad it was not just for me. It's okay if no one prunes the tree.