

When Spring Comes Will the Grass Grow by Itself?

by Linda Seccaspina

Lila looked at the garden that was void of anything that might scream the word Spring. It had been a long year. She had recently lost her job due to what was known in hushed tones as "age restructuring". In the short span of time that her notice and severance had been issued she was due to pay the closing fees on the new home she had just purchased. Had she known she was going to be out of a job the expensive acquisition would have been out of the question. As she looked at patches of snow melting under her feet, she wondered how she was going to make it financially.

Weeks passed and grief from the loss of her job began to set in. She began to wait until dark when the neighbours were asleep to groom on her back yard. Her constant worry was that the steep incline by the fence would cause her yard to flood once the heavy rains set in. Night after night she added fill to raise the yard and slept during the day only to wake when the birds had gone to bed. Her moods darkened, and the landscaping work became the sole focus of her life. Money was running out, but no one would hire a 65 year-old-woman, so all realities were shut out except the first signs of Spring.

No matter how hard she laboured, there seem to be no result from all her extensive knowledgeable work. Lila began to hear whispers coming from her home's air vents and quickly assumed people were watching her. Maybe that was why the yard was not progressing she thought. The unknowns talking to her through the

vents had control over everything she did. So Lila did what she thought was right. Even though it was the last thing she could afford, she paid \$54.99 for a Norton Anti-Virus program. Now there would be complete browser support for her and her garden's vulnerability protection. However, it did not seem to matter that Norton delivered up-to-the-minute protection with rapid pulse updates every 5 to 15 minutes. The voices continued and there was still no sign of Spring in her yard.

As time progressed Lila lost touch with the few friends she had. When a concerned neighbour called the police to check on her well-being, they found an emancipated woman who at first glance seemed to have no touch with reality. Lila knew she must put on the performance of her life in case they would take her away before Spring. She quickly and quietly told the voices in the vents to hush. Forcing a smile, she asked the police if they would like a cup of tea and quickly talked to them about the progress in her backyard. An hour later they left without Lila, confident they had made the right decision about her welfare.

Months down the road the monthly reports from Nortons displayed a complete report of the inner workings of Lila's computer. There were details of her PC's activities, threats caught, tune-up tasks performed and files backed up, but all the internet security in the world could not provide Lila's present whereabouts. A few months later her house went up for sale and each prospective buyer noticed the same thing. It didn't matter that it was the middle of May in sunny southern California, there was still no sign of Spring in Lila's yard because in cold dark places, you can only dream of Spring.

"Be kind; for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle."

