

Alexandra Truelove
Prof. Colletta
ENG 208
03/25/2020

A Simple World

Anna is seven years old, or she will be in a few months; but she felt she deserved to be seven by now. She searches through her room for her Italian flag, leaving a trail of clothes and toys behind her. “Mama! I think Ale stole it again!”.

“It’s sitting in the jar by the door where it goes, Anna.” Her mom replies from another room.

Mama had been home for more than a week now and she insisted on cleaning every day now. Anna couldn’t wait to go back to school, they didn’t make her clean there. Why do beds have to be made if we just go back into them again? It seemed odd but then again, she noticed adults have problems with logic.

“Eccolo!” She squeals. Waving the flag in her Mama’s face she asks, “Why don’t we invite Nana to come see the singing? She would love it. And then she could see my dances on the balcony.” She sings the last few words; dancing, wiggling, and hopping over the line of toys strewn across living room to her bedroom. She pirouettes around her little brother Ale, who’s struggling to crawl from one end to the other of the shaggy carpet.

“Nana needs to stay home because of the virus. We all should stay home to stay healthy.” Mama cautions, picking Anna up and giving her a loud kiss on her cheek. “But don’t worry Nana will be with us soon.” Anna lands back on the floor with a small thud.

“She’ll be here for my birthday, right? Nana always comes to my birthday, and she always brings a present!” Anna shoots her arms up and gives her mama an open half-toothless smile.

“Yes, we’ll see. If the virus stops.”

Anna tiptoes her way to the balcony with her arms stretched out on either side, a royal ballerina entering the stage. The strong breeze tangles her hair, but even with the sun setting she feels warm.

“There can’t be a bad virus Mama, look the sky is beautiful! Quick! Tell Nana to come before the singing starts.”

“You can’t see a virus *fragolina*, but it’s still there.”

Anna continues dancing and waving her flag above her head. “What time is it?”

Mama hesitates and says, “Ten past six.”

“But there was no singing. No music. Why aren’t people singing?” Anna’s eyebrows push together and her flag lays still at her side.

“Maybe people are tired. Everyone has been sad.”

“But you said we need to sing to keep everyone happy”

Her mama looks out at all the balconies. Here and there bright flags hang down. On the other side of the street a dull colored cardboard sign has been washed out from the rain, but it still shows a scribbled “Andrà Tutto BENE!”

“I know but sometimes people get tired. It’s ok. We can sing and dance together.” She holds out her hands, but Anna just sits on the floor crossing her arms and legs.

“Maybe if Nana would come, we can sing and dance with her.”

“Or you can dance for Ale” Mama half sings while pulling Anna up.

“Or *we* can go see *Nana*!”

“It doesn’t work like that. We need to stay home.”

Anna’s cheeks start turning red “But why!”

“Because it’s safer at home”

Anna pushes her mama’s arms away, runs to the living room, and lays next to Ale. The sounds of clinking pots and pans from the kitchen lets her know mama has given up dancing and started to cook.

“Adults have no sense, Ale”

All she gets is a gurgle for a reply as Ale tries to fit his toes in his mouth.