

Stefan Narrative

Collin Krapf P:3/8

The mattress is drenched. It causes me to shiver. It is early morning and it's just another day on my mattress near a vast field. I'm used to sleeping through storms during the night. Our family has no shelter, we live and sleep outside. We only have a couple blankets that we found on the side of the road. The mattress is half deflated and has many bad smells and holes. It smells of dead animals and smoke. The field nearby is full of little bugs that are always jumping on me and often give me little bites. The bugs get very annoying. I've actually found them on my face when I'm sleeping. There are also big rats that are as ugly as a woman with body hair and look very much what a woman with body hair would look like. My name is Stefan and I'm four years old. A day in my life is very much simple, sitting around and having imaginary thoughts. Let me tell you my story.

Our family first came from a country by the name of Romania. It was much like where we live now. The officers there were very strict and demanding about living on others' property. They kicked us off the land where we stayed because we didn't own the land. We eventually saved enough money to hop on a train to where we live now in Rome, Italy. The train was a fascinating experience. The train was crowded with tons of people and was super fast!

"This is awesome!" I would shout. Anyways, we arrived at our destination and set up our mattress. That is how we got here.

Our daily routine is very simple. We wake up and start looking for any food we can get. We look on the ground for scraps, look in trash cans, and ask others for food also. We

also ask others for money and sometimes there is someone generous who will give us a few euros. At stoplights we clean car windows for money too.

“Thank you so much,” my mom would say thankfully. During the time when I’m not doing anything I jump on our mattress and make up my own games. I also have no education, I cannot read or write and neither can my parents. Instead, these are just all my thoughts about my life and situation. The area we live in is very populated and busy. The weather here varies depending on the time of year. There has been a few inches of snow on certain days, and on other days there has been a temperature of 40°C. Some of the features around here are the Tiber River, which is where we get our water even though it’s filthy, and multiple hills where I like to run up and down in my free time.

My life is very different and much more difficult than others. Others have a house and friends and have no problem getting an education or a good health.

“We’ll come out on top one day,” my parents would like to say. I have always imagined what it would be like to have a comfortable life, but haven’t experienced it, yet, which is my goal for the future for my family and myself.