



Donato De Simone WORLD WAR II EVENTS NARRATED FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE CHILDREN CAUGHT IN THE WEB OF ADULT INSANITY A young boy . . . a beautiful town . . . stalked by the Nazis bombed by the Allies . . . hiding Jewish refugees Abruzzos mini-holocaust . . . meeting Padre Pio escape to a new life in America Growing up in the tranquility of the Abruzzo region of Italy, Donato De Simone, Danny to his friends, was abruptly plunged into the violence of war as the Germans and Allies contested for the Sangro River in a major World War II battle. Now, after decades of pondering the meaning of these events, Danny recalls the drama of his times. Mixing humorous touches with his graphic descriptions, he creates for his readers a vivid picture of life in wartime: the nomadic journeys trying to escape the Nazis; the drama of a downed British airman sheltered by his grandfather in a barn; the little-known story of Jewish refugees hidden from the exterminators by sympathetic Italians; watching Allied bombers shot down by German antiaircraft batteries and sent crashing into the Adriatic Sea; finally finding his home destroyed. These are the circumstances under which Danny grew up. His shrewd mothers planning enabling her family to escape German terror, the familys hardships as they slept in a hastily-constructed air raid shelter, titanic efforts to avoid stepping on personnel or anti-car mines, praying that bombs from both sides would miss themall are created anew by this masterful story-teller. The normal educational patterns having been disrupted by war, Danny struggled to learn in makeshift classrooms. After finally succeeding in rejoining his father to America, Danny faced further challenges trying to adjust to a new life, a new culture and a new language. Finally returning to Italy, he married Anna Maria, his childhood sweetheart and fellow war survivor. Returning to America at the urging of Anna Marias father, former U.S. Army private Ernesto Fantini, Danny sailed the Andrea Doria the trip before she sank! Danny and Anna Maria raised their family in Norristown, Pa., and on June 2, 2006, they celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary. We must have done something wrong, Danny quips. In fifty years we never even had a serious argument! Danny met Padre Pio da Pietrelcina, now Saint Pio, twice as a teenager before coming to America, and once in 1956 together with Anna Maria on their honeymoon. It was an unforgettable experience for both to go to confession and receive Holy Communion from the sainted man who bore on his body the signs of the crucifixion. De Simone does a superb job personalizing the historical record, for his account teaches us what it means to suffer the concrete effects of the abstract decisions made by the generals and dictators and kings - what it means to be the family member whose home is bombed, to be the farmer whose field is mined, to be the child who has seen too much death. Prof. Millicent Marcus Yale University His narrative is most

interesting and disturbing at the same time as we realize that so many innocent people, especially the children, were caught in the middle of such insane violence. This is a book for all to read, especially the young. Most Rev. Louis A. De Simone, D. D. Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus Archdiocese of Philadelphia . . . fascinatingly human, fast-reading, well-written. Prof. James T. McDonough St. Josephs University Philadelphia

Amoresano è cresciuto a Bagnoli con i nonni, una famiglia semplice con una vita fatta di piccoli gesti, bestemmie senza cattiveria e una saggezza popolare che tocca il cuore delle cose. Ora Amoresano vive con i genitori a Soccavo, va all'università. Osserva tutti e parla poco, la storia con la fidanzata non va, il suo rifugio è la lettura, le frasi che annota sono la sua ribellione silenziosa. Suona la chitarra e, a volte, sogna quasi di fare un disco con l'amico Angelo, che freme per fuggire a Londra. Nel mondo di Amoresano, sui treni che prende girando attorno a Napoli e ai suoi desideri, il pensiero torna sempre a quella nonna che l'ha cresciuto e che gli pare più avanti di tutti, che preferisce i murales ai muri abbandonati, che sa scegliere il momento migliore per arrabbiarsi, che insegna a voler bene alle persone giuste. Come cambia la nostra vita quando dobbiamo fare a meno di ciò a cui teniamo di più? Amoresano rincorre la sua risposta nei passi fino alla tabaccheria di Maria Rosaria, nella traiettoria di quello sguardo diverso eppure uguale, dentro le notti di un'estate calda e possibile, a scambiarsi libri e film come domande, millimetri di pelle come tentativi. Una ricerca confusa e inquieta che rimbalza sul terrazzo di Anna, in un'isola fuori stagione, a bordo di motorini lanciati nei viali della città a improvvisare fughe, a scrivere ritirate. Nuotando nella memoria, il suo bene più urgente, osando e rifiutando bellezza, che pure non basta quando pensiamo di non meritarsela, inseguendo un dolore inevitabile per vedere fin dove ne arrivano le diramazioni, Amoresano scopre il prezzo rovente dell'amore che abbiamo ricevuto e di quello che non sappiamo dare. Alessio Forgione, dopo Napoli mon amour e Giovanissimi (candidato al premio Strega 2020), torna con un folgorante romanzo di fallimenti e conquiste, un nuovo, impetuoso lessico familiare del nostro tempo.

English translation (1561) of the 1528 text which portrays Renaissance court society in Italy

This volume examines the history of a complex and varied body of ideas over a period of more than a thousand years.

Ever since 1759, when Voltaire wrote "Candide" in ridicule of the notion that this is the best of all possible worlds, this world has been a gayer place for readers. Voltaire wrote it in three days, and five or six generations have found that its laughter does not grow old. "Candide" has not aged. Yet how different the book would have looked if Voltaire had written it a hundred and fifty years later than 1759. It would have been, among other things, a book of sights and sounds. A modern

writer would have tried to catch and fix in words some of those Atlantic changes which broke the Atlantic monotony of that voyage from Cadiz to Buenos Ayres. When Martin and Candide were sailing the length of the Mediterranean we should have had a contrast between naked scarped Balearic cliffs and headlands of Calabria in their mists. We should have had quarter distances, far horizons, the altering silhouettes of an Ionian island. Colored birds would have filled Paraguay with their silver or acid cries. Dr. Pangloss, to prove the existence of design in the universe, says that noses were made to carry spectacles, and so we have spectacles. A modern satirist would not try to paint with Voltaire's quick brush the doctrine that he wanted to expose. And he would choose a more complicated doctrine than Dr. Pangloss's optimism, would study it more closely, feel his destructive way about it with a more learned and caressing malice. His attack, stealthier, more flexible and more patient than Voltaire's, would call upon us, especially when his learning got a little out of control, to be more than patient. Now and then he would bore us. "Candide" never bored anybody except William Wordsworth. Voltaire's men and women point his case against optimism by starting high and falling low. A modern could not go about it after this fashion. He would not plunge his people into an unfamiliar misery. He would just keep them in the misery they were born to.

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