

Tribute

By Kalie

Anna always liked volunteering at the Apple center nursing home in beautiful downtown Toronto. She first met Lisa, a long-term care resident, in 2006. Lisa had never been the friendly type of person. In fact, she was about as rotten as an egg. But somehow, Anna could always find the best among people.

Anna did not like to talk about it much. Her family lived in a poor neighborhood just outside of Forcam, a small village with extreme poverty. Her family was one of the lucky ones. Her father worked at a lumber mill, with a pay of \$0.50 per hour. Which at that time was enough to put 2 meals on the table. Anna's mother did not approve of her volunteering at the Apple center nursing home. Her mother believed that Anna should go to college and get a good paying job. Anna agreed with her mother. However, Anna nor her parents had enough money to send her to college.

Anna was twenty years old; life was getting harder for her. After 2 years of working as a server in a restaurant, Anna still did not have nearly enough money to go to college. Lisa was getting to Anna. She was constantly complaining about how her tea was not strong enough, or that her toast was too burnt to eat. But somehow, Anna had managed to keep it together. She had never complained when Lisa told her what to do.

Lisa had just missed her daughter. Lisa's daughter had been in a car accident a few years ago and Lisa has not been the same since. Anna had understood what Lisa was going through. Anna's friend Jessie was in a car accident 4 years ago. Jessie had survived but her little brother had not. Jessie was depressed for quite some time, always blaming herself. But the truth was, deep down, Lisa had admired Anna. Lisa liked the way Anna did not get frustrated, she admired the way Anna was patient, but most of all, Anna reminded Lisa of her daughter.

For a few months now, Anna had come to the nursing home hungry, and disheveled. Lisa had not thought much of it. She knew that Anna had to come from a decent family. She always seemed like she was filled with joy and hope. *'How could she possibly come from a sad family?'* The truth was, Anna was sad. She just had a way of hiding it. The only person who knew how Anna had felt was her best friend Jessie.

As the months went on Anna became increasingly depressed. By this time almost everyone around her saw it and Anna knew that she did not have much of a future. As rotten as Lisa made herself out to be, she decided to talk to Anna about her life at home, and what was making her feel so sad. Anna had burst into tears when Lisa mentioned it, and told her everything. How her family lived in poverty, how her father only made \$0.50 a day, and finally how they couldn't afford Anna to go to college. Lisa felt so bad for treating her the way she had all of this time. "It must have been so hard for Anna to deal with this all

of this time and on top of it, I gave her a hard time every day,” Lisa thought to herself. Lisa felt so bad for Anna. She saw so much potential in her. She could not let that talent go to waste.

The next day Anna went to the nursing home, Anna could not find Lisa anywhere. When Anna checked in her room, all she found was an envelope that said “Anna” on it. Anna opened the envelope to find \$275,000 dollars in the envelope with a small card. The card read, “Good luck in college!”

Anna is now a highly successful doctor, who loves her job. Anna is 32 years old, and has a family of her own now. She managed to escape the poverty of Forcam, and now lives just outside of Toronto. Lisa died from a heart attack 2 years ago. Lisa lived the last years of her life to the fullest. Anna would often go to visit Lisa at the home, or take her out for lunch to talk about their day. Lisa will always be in Anna’s heart. To this day Anna still goes to Lisas' grave once a week to bring her flowers and to thank her for the future she has made for Anna.