

The King, Virus, and the lost Crown

(Inglese)

Once upon a time there was a King without a crown.

The King was sad because nobody recognized or respected him without a crown.

The crown had been stolen some time beforehand by a funny, strange, little guy, who called himself Virus, but since he had stolen the King's crown everyone called him Corona Virus. He wore the red and white crown on his head all the time, and showed off as he entered shops and markets and, even people's homes, touching everyone and everything.

Every time he touched something he left a small fingerprint, a little red mark, like a thin layer of powder that stuck to things. The people who were touched turned red and slowly, gradually fell ill. But he was happy with what he was doing and the more he touched things the more he enjoyed himself seeing that the whole village slowly turned red in a few days.

The King was not amused.

Every day his secretaries and advisers told him that the little crown-stealing monster was changing his kingdom not only in colour but also in mood: they were increasingly sad and sick and they all started to hate the King more and more as if he had given the crown to Virus so he could vex the people. The King became increasingly angry and worried about what was going on, so one day he decided it was time to take action and get his crown back and stop this bad guy who was ruining the life of his people.

He began to think and study, and he called in his secretaries and advisers to hear their ideas so he could then make a decision. All day they talked it over trying to imagine how to stop Virus and get the crown back, but none of the solutions convinced the King. He went to bed that night very worried and disappointed.

But during the night, sleeping and dreaming, dreaming and sleeping, an idea came to him: to dress up as a road worker, like the ones who repair potholes, carrying a bucket full of a dense black glue to spread on the ground and that was so strong that anyone who stood on it would instantly be blocked in their tracks. In this disguise and with this equipment he thought he could go around the village the next day and hunt for Virus. Once he found the scoundrel he could call him to ask for information, then as he came forward quickly pour the glue in front of him and so block Virus where he stood and take back his crown while he struggled to free himself.

Happy with this idea next morning he called his private secretary and asked him to bring worker's overalls, heavy work boots, a helmet, gloves, a bucket and special really black glue used to fill in the holes in the bitumen.

Once everything had arrived, the King dressed up in the strange outfit and very happy, but also very nervous and determined, left his castle and, without anyone recognising him, walked towards the centre of the village hunting for the cursed Virus.

As soon as he caught a glimpse of him in one of the side streets, he prepared himself, moved close enough to be heard and asked him: "Mr Virus, could you please come over here, I want to ask you a favour?"

Virus thought this was a new opportunity to touch another villager, so he happily approached what seemed an ordinary worker. But as soon as he came close to the King, who in the meantime had poured a good amount of glue on the road, he felt that his feet were stuck to the ground, completely glued to it. He began to scream and shout, waving his arms about and trying to take off his shoes, and the Worker King grabbed the Crown from Virus's head and ran away!

Virus stood there, bareheaded and yelling with all his might, while many of the inhabitants of the street flocked to see what was going on. Finding Virus without the crown and glued to the ground, they began shouting with joy. Someone went to get a rope to tie him up, slip him out of his shoes and escort him to prison to finally stop the disastrous influence he'd had on the whole village with people falling ill and turning red.

The King returned to the Castle, changed into his king's robes, put his Crown back on his head and organised a procession to show everyone that he had become the good King once again, and the Village would be able to live in peace and, with all the sick healed and the cursed Virus in prison, life would become better and more just for all.

(Colleen McCann)