



LaDisubbidienza
C o r a g g i o s a

Dreams fly beyond disability: the story of Sonia

I've never had anything beautiful in my life, so I would like to do something beautiful for me
– Sonia Sgaramella



Sonia is about my same age and her hair is red, just like mine. And it's because of our passion for henna that we got to know each other, or rather, I've got to know her story.

Sonia lives 400 kms away from my city. I'm in Rome, she's in Andria, near Barletta. Maybe I would have never met her if it weren't for the [facebook group](#) in which we both are, together with other 24.000 people.

And maybe, for once, these damn social networks will show their bright side, the one that unites people, not only to be polemic, but also to be empathic.

Sonia's biggest dream is to see the White Lies in live performance. You may think it's an ordinary dream, or maybe a simple one, wanting to see a band performing on a stage. To Sonia it means something more. It's going beyond a limit, the achievement of a moment of her own, the fulfilling of an old wish.

The only friends I've had are Music and the White Lies, a band I wish I could see live and meet. Their music saved me from a dark period in which my only wish was to disappear from the world. Their dark and melancholic sound made me feel less lonely.

What's the matter? You may ask. Sonia's problem lies in her disability, which prevents her from reaching her goal because of the lack of adequate means and supports. She has Osteogenesis Imperfecta, type III, a bone disease that forces her on a wheelchair.

My only friend was my brother Fabio, 22 years old, I could talk about music and other things with him. Unfortunately, he passed away on 22 July 2015, and I ended up being even lonelier.

Sonia's dream seemed close to fulfilment in 2016, but another problem occurred:

I was supposed to see them live on 16 November 2016 at the Orion in Rome. Unfortunately, I couldn't go there because I need my mother to go to cities far from Puglia and she wouldn't take me because she was – and she still is – very ill because of my brother's passing.

Unfortunately, in the city where I live disabled people still count less than zero, and the existing organizations do not work well. So, some disabled people are left alone. The organization I joined after my brother passed away is Unitalsi of Andria, which unfortunately doesn't own a coach with a platform, so they could never pick me up.

If the mountain won't come to Muhammad then Muhammad must go to the mountain, goes an old saying. And it's more or less the same thought that Sonia had when she realized that her chances to go see the White Lies in Rome or Milan were too far.

I didn't give up and I told myself: "They must come to Puglia then!". So, I started a petition addressed to Cesare Veronico, former president of Alta Murgia and administrator for Puglia's funds for music, in order to try to make them come here.

At the beginning, the petition didn't receive much attention. Then Sonia posts on the facebook page "Henna Passion" a picture of her while she dyes her hair (a common practice in this group). So, a girl in the group lands on her profile and she finds the link to [change.org](#).

In that moment, my Facebook page is full of comments to the post. I find out with pleasure the solidarity of these women who sign the petition to help Sonia in her challenge. Signs over signs everywhere.

So much that Mr. Veronico eventually tells Sonia that he got in touch with the manager of the band to make them come to Medimex of Bari on 8 June. The proposal was accepted at first, but then rejected because a member of the group had to be the best man for a wedding the day before.

A little step further which gives some hope.

This is the beginning sentence of the petition:

We are such stuff as dreams are made on; and our little life is rounded with a sleep.

This story ends with Shakespeare. It's nice to know that some dreams are boundless, that they can go where our frail human legs can't reach. And it's nice to know that someone can support us in spreading a hope even without knowing us.

I hope that someone really capable of helping Sonia will read these words, even just to acknowledge the abandonment to which some disabled people are left to from local administrations.

Please support this battle by signing the petition [here](#).

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