

A Little Over Two

She was a little over two years old, and still used that swing-step motion, when walking, that toddlers have. She would go a little bit side-to-side when moving forward, particularly if she was excited and trying to run. And she was excited! She was so full of happiness! She was living in a real home with her mom, and her dad, too. It was an apartment, and they lived somewhere above the ground floor. The walkways outside the apartments were made of concrete, and they were warm in the sun.

She had a little coat on, but she wasn't bundled up, it wasn't the cold time of year. She walked fast, correcting her balance from side to side as she almost skipped along, looking down at the world below, the world as seen from an upper story. She had to get down to the ground floor, and in a hurry.

That meant negotiating the stairs.

The stairs were the kind that little children everywhere are slightly afraid of. They have steps, but no backing on the individual steps. You can look through the spaces between the steps as you go down, and the spaces show you that you are a long ways up in the air. What if you somehow slipped, or fell, or slid, or something, and ended up falling through the gap between the steps, and fell a long, long way down? Going down those steps was scary.

But! There was the saving grace of the handrail. If you reached up, you could just touch it, and if you kept your fingers on the handrail, you could keep your balance, even at such dizzying heights, and you would be safe! And then you could accomplish the stairs, and end up at the bottom all safe and sound, and hurry off to where you wanted to go.

So the stairs did not intimidate her overmuch, and she could afford to think about how happy she was, how bubbling with happiness, that life was so good now, because she lived right with her parents, in the same house, and stayed with them in the same place at night, and never had to go back to live with the silent people who took care of her, and dressed her and put food in front of her, the people she lived with when she spent all her time missing her mom.

She got to the bottom of the stairs and hurried off to join her mommy and daddy. She was almost giggling. Life was so good!

Cynthia Vautier - December 3, 2016