

#BabyLove: My Social Life**Corine Dehghanpisheh****Corine Dehghanpisheh, Illustrator****Paula Riley, Designer**

My Art to Inspire (Jul 9, 2015)

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Beneath the story of technological trendiness lies a more enduring portrait of nurture and joy.

In *#BabyLove: My Social Life*, Corine Dehghanpisheh encourages parents to smile at their own desire to document every moment of their children's lives. Narrated from a baby's perspective, this whimsical picture book presents an ordinary day for the selfie generation, with clean, computer-generated illustrations that explore the prevalence of digital distraction—"All day long, phones are out"—and the impulse to share each expression, gesture, and sound through social media.

The story begins, "As I awake, a recording begins with family love and many grins." The observation, photography, and filming builds toward a breaking point—"But all of this attention is taking a toll"—only to resume after a short nap and continue until bedtime. The slice-of-life approach provides an accurate, humorous look at modern habits. Serious issues that accompany a wired life—from privacy concerns to emotional effects—fall beyond the book's scope, but a few subtle, noteworthy remarks add provocative layers to an otherwise simple, sweet account of doting mothers and fathers.

A revealing scene features the parents pushing a stroller, without seeming to notice the beauty of their mountainous surroundings. In the baby's words, "The sun is setting, I am getting tired, leaving my family feeling uninspired." The moment implies a child-centered world that revolves around constant stimulus, but here, a Facebook- and Instagram-driven parenting style is presented as a straightforward reality that is neither worse nor better than others. The absence of judgment lightens the tone, allowing love to present itself in a form that asks to be shared.

Illustrations cleverly evoke a variety of sites without specifying them. The most effective includes miniature birds that suggest the Twitter icon while doubling as nursery room wallpaper. Scenes frequently depict the parents by means of a hand holding a phone—a disembodied perspective that suits the story's preoccupied, distanced mood in lines such as "Buzzing newsfeeds fill the day. Posting and texting are under way." Variety would lend the work greater appeal, along with different angles for the faces, which almost uniformly face forward; but taken together, the illustrations demonstrate a sharp sense for color combinations. An especially well-done panel features mother and child in a gray and slate blue living room, with a few brighter objects to draw the eye.

#BabyLove offers a hipster view of contemporary parenting. Beneath the story of technological trendiness, however, lies a more enduring portrait of nurture and joy.

KAREN RIGBY (August 6, 2015)

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