

Chapter 1

The youth of two girls



Standing on a deserted pier in a marina near my house, throw a few pebbles into the water, with my eye that wanders through the cloudy sky of late summer and the flat sea beneath me, and my fantasy imagine the ripples that formed in the water at every my throw of stone, are in fact moving clouds in the air by sending subliminal messages. I am, as usual, disappointed and embittered about my day and I wonder about what tomorrow

will bring, and on which might happen or come true thing that can change my life, and finding no clear answer from the waves or clouds that are, and having no other source of inspiration that can be taken, unfortunately, I interrupt my stone throwing and I take from my backpack a novel that I bought two days ago and that I read in one breath. It is a novel that tells the story of two girls, two girls like many others, that, to be honest at first seemed trivial and even childish, but that at the end got me thinking how many errors we committed in our youth, through ignorance or just bad luck. Errors that can often ruin the whole life, and at best, to waste precious years of our own existence. But life is this: when you are older, if on one side we have accumulated a wealth of education and experience such as to discern what is right and what is wrong, what to do and what not to do in the life of every day, and especially we accumulate a lot, but a lot of patience, on the other side it is lost, or nearly so, the enthusiasm to try new sensations, new emotions and new adventures, and, most serious and sad, is lost forever the energy and strength that only a young body has ...

Anna and Lucia were born in Borneo 50 years ago and have always been good friends. From small they played with their dolls and the wild pets that were found in outskirts of the small farms of their parents. Anna was daughter of Paolo and Giulia while Lucia had only the father Antonio as the mother died putting her to the world. The small farms of the two children were contiguous to the margins of a beautiful and luxuriant tropical forest. The morning was aroused with the melodious song of birds, and after making a rich breakfast, they came back to play free and happy. Antonio had constructed an elementary

seesaw with which the two children passed their time joyfully. Moreover they had received in gift from parents two little domestic monkeys with which they amused a lot. They had learned to scramble up on the trees in their continuous search of emulation of their friends monkeys.



The village of *Burugo* was distant approximately 3 miles and was a small port of fishermen, but provided with all the necessary for the calm livability of its inhabitants. The population was ruled by a wise and just man named Buana and polygamy was rooted in the traditions and customs of the natives. In this regard, Buana was nicknamed Sor Chai, literally

mad, because he preferred as wives and lovers, the women of the village fattest and oldest. Many of the houses were wooden huts built on stilts planted on the shores of the Strait of Makassar, strait between Borneo and Indonesia which washes these shores.



The church was a small construction in wood encircled from a sober garden. Every Sunday the inhabitants assisted to the religious ceremony celebrated from a Christian missionary of middle age. Father Paul, this the name of the clergyman, had a fancy for the two children, taught them the Christian teachings, he fondled them as a second parent and some times he was also help from them during the course of the religious function as

small "altar girls". Paolo worked as carpenter and passed practically all the day to work for the community; Julia instead, remained to the small farm to supply to needs of the house and to cook lavish lunches for her beloveds. Antonio was a fisherman, than by day he thought to the small farm and to food, while in the afternoon he went to fish with his small boat until late night. The parents of the two children were both Italians of birth and had done a brave life choice when moving in Borneo, the poor and farthest land from the Italic coasts. I say brave, as they were left with little money, with the wives pregnant, and more knowing that they would be forced to invent a new job immediately in order to survive and in order to ensure a happy childhood to the two unborn. Just arrived in the town of Balikpapan in fact had spent days of genuine anguish. They had found an extreme poverty, enormous difficulties in communicating with people, warm and very humid, and concern, increasing hour by hour and day after day, for their survival and for that of the unborn. And just when they were bitterly repented of the courageous choice to take bags and move to Borneo, here they had the chance to meet Father Paul. The priest was forty, in turn, landed in Balikpapan and was about to set up a chariot drawn by two mules with his luggage, including the minimum necessary to ensure that a simple hut would turn into the church. He had been instructed by his congregation to settle in the small village of Burugo, about 250km to the east coast. And so Paul, Julia, Anthony, Anna and Lucia took their suitcases in the hovel where they had stayed in those distressing days, joined the priest. They had found hope, found a spiritual guide and a friend. The journey was long and tiring, lasted two days and two nights, and the road, the weather, had not a little impeded their path. During

the day, it was a sweltering hot and humid, and at night a dense and continuous rain, as indeed is the normal climate in those parts.

Burugo finally arrived, both Paolo and Antonio built their house in a short time, because they received the generous help of the locals, who rushed festive and hospitable to the arrival of Father Paul. The priest handing out smiles, shook hands, gave candy. The natives saw in him as a carrier of wisdom as a source of good advice to draw on all the time. But for them he was a modernizer, as coming from the civilized and advanced Western world, where, according to them, everything had been discovered, and where people lived rich and happy. Father Paul in the village, as well as having led the church, had also taken steps to set up a school to teach indigenous children all the basics that are normally teach in Italian schools. For anything suspicious, and indeed with great enthusiasm, the parents sent their children: Father Paul was helped by an Australian nun named Rose, who was also sent to assist the priest in *Burugo*. After the alphabet, numbers, verbs and how much children learn in elementary school. With each passing year, the students became more and more numerous, and consequently increased the classrooms as well, of course always outdoor, as the mild climate of the place. After two years, came a high school teacher named Sir Arthur, that thus allowed the villagers to be able to give a complete education to their children. The year was 1975 and Anna and Lucia had just turned 7 years old. Like all the other children went to church on Sunday, and had also begun to attend school. The two girls obviously had a basic education superior to their peers. They had educated parents, who were

able to inculcate them some basic education, as well as a sound education. The childhood years then passed through the games, the school and the beautiful nature surrounding Burugo.

At the age of 16 years, they began to study physics, mathematics, biology, chemistry, philosophy, and also the art, all materials very well taught by Sir Arthur. The two friends got excited so much to these studies, which soon in their spare time, instead of playing with dolls, they found themselves to quibble among the works of Leonardo, Michelangelo, Masaccio, to discuss about Kant and Marx, to talk about Einstein and of relativity, talking of DNA, virus or perhaps the periodic table of the elements of Mendeleev. The periodic table is a tabular arrangement of the chemical elements, organized on the basis of their atomic number (number of protons in the nucleus), electron configurations, and recurring chemical properties.

Periodic Table of the Elements																	
IA 1	IIA 2											IIIA 13	IVA 14	VA 15	VIA 16	VIIA 17	VIIIA 18
1 H												5 B	6 C	7 N	8 O	9 F	10 Ne
3 Li	4 Be											11 Na	12 Mg				
19 K	20 Ca	21 Sc	22 Ti	23 V	24 Cr	25 Mn	26 Fe	27 Co	28 Ni	29 Cu	30 Zn	31 Ga	32 Ge	33 As	34 Se	35 Br	36 Kr
37 Rb	38 Sr	39 Y	40 Zr	41 Nb	42 Mo	43 Tc	44 Ru	45 Rh	46 Pd	47 Ag	48 Cd	49 In	50 Sn	51 Sb	52 Te	53 I	54 Xe
55 Cs	56 Ba	57 La	58 Ce	59 Pr	60 Nd	61 Pm	62 Sm	63 Eu	64 Gd	65 Tb	66 Dy	67 Ho	68 Er	69 Tm	70 Yb	71 Lu	
87 Fr	88 Ra	89 Ac	90 Th	91 Pa	92 U	93 Np	94 Pu	95 Am	96 Cm	97 Bk	98 Cf	99 Es	100 Fm	101 Md	102 No	103 Lr	

One evening, meeting at the home of Antonio for dinner, they discussed the reasons that led to the decision to leave Italy forever. They talked about it for the first time in the presence of Anna Lucia and only then, as it was estimated that the two girls now sixteen years old, had every right and duty to know why seemingly crazy that drove their parents to that decision so dangerous . Antonio, addressing the two girls said: "In Italy the 60s were years of profound changes. There was an economic boom with its building expansion and spread of deferred payment, the bill, which allowed a huge sale of goods, houses, cars and appliances. The structures of the public school and university designed by Gentile their cracks due to the weight of

an overflowing humanity in search of education and culture against authoritarianism and dogmatism. It was the time when Mary Quant invented the mini-skirt and young people discovered the sexual freedom and became hippies, loved rock music, and especially the transgression. In Italy increased interest in the international situation, while it had something to do with all the contradictions of a country in economic and social growth that clashed against the institutions, ideologies, and especially with the mentality remained the provincial and backward, fascist and pre-fascist period. Meanwhile, the world of young people looked around in search of myths and models from which to draw inspiration, declining progressively the whole vision of the world of the fathers and adults in general, and triggering a generational conflict liberating and beneficial, which led to a surge of truth on relationships and ties encrusted with hypocrisy and empty rhetoric. There was a harsh ideological battle that led to a new labor agreement and a new Workers' Statute which saw the students take the field at the side of the proletariat. We managed to have the referendum on divorce and abortion. The student revolution has strongly supported the rugged path of women's emancipation, earning some merit also in the many constructive and fruitful controversy with the feminist movement and has spread a feeling of revulsion against imperialism, racism and fascism. But unfortunately, especially during student demonstrations in the square, there was a harsh crackdown by security forces which in turn led to real terrorist attacks. Me, my wife Clara, Paolo and Giulia meanwhile worked in a food factory in Vercelli and we were passionate about the music of the Beatles, sharing the dreams and ideals of young hippies because we are peaceful

people and we could not get involved nor those with extreme disputes, nor with the ruthless repression that followed. During yet another occupation of the factory where we worked, made by the protesters, there was a crackdown by the police; several people were injured on both sides, even our colleagues who had nothing to do with those protest movements. It was for this reason that we, though the pregnant women, we decided to get away from the ruckus and leave in a wild place at the other end of the world. " - " We have been always active and capable people and we never lacked confidence in ourselves, and in fact in a very short time we have managed to build a new life here, unfortunately without Clara ... " - Said Julia. "What kind of woman was my mother? " - Asked Lucia - " Your mother was a very sweet and loving woman and her death has left a huge void in my heart, my dear daughter, "- said Antonio moving away to go get something to drink, and not to speak of lost his beloved wife in childbirth. From that night on that topic not talked about it more, and not even more talked about Anna and Lucia together.

William, their contemporary and classmate, pockmarked due to an acute form of acne vulgaris, often helped them to understand the abstruse mathematical formulas, the deep philosophical concepts, combinations of chemical elements, as well as the harsh laws of physics. He with the other boys was very grumpy and often irritating, preferring the company of the music low that he strummed with a long flute that he always carried in his backpack. Even Sir Arthur, while acknowledging his intelligence and preparation, stand him hard. But with Anna and Lucy, he turned, his eyes shining, his cheeks reddening and

his heart began to beat faster every time, the two girls spoke to him. They, perhaps because they affect how the rest of their companions judged William, approached him to ask him something only rarely, when just could not understand something explained by Sir Arthur, or when in need of assistance in carrying out a task in classroom. But as soon as came the time of the end of the lessons, they all did, except get closer to William. Over time, William seemed to be resigned to the indifference of the two girls and especially to that of Anna, who instead thank him whenever he helped her studies, had fun with the other kids to make fun of him. He, Australian, orphaned since childhood of the natural parents, he had been entrusted by the court in a couple of foster parents, but, due to violent disputes between them, were soon deprived of little William from surveillance authorities of adoptions and he was entrusted to a religious institute that after a short time sent him to Burugo following Sister Rose. He, however, continued to be in correspondence with the adoptive mother, who, perhaps to convince him to join her when he had come of age, and therefore free to decide his life, kept him informed of all the wonderful inventions and convenience that the civilized society enjoyed. Perhaps this was also the reason for his bad temper in that remote village ...

In March 1986, unfortunately there was a tragic event: Paul, sick for some months of malaria, he died in the arms of his wife Julia, and great was the pain and anguish of Anna for the loss of her beloved father. Lucia tried in every way to comfort her, but the always beaming little face of Anna, had lost its splendor: she had lost the enthusiasm, joy, love, stability and security for her

was her beloved father. He had just turned 18, and she felt the first great sorrow of life. The mother Julia, in addition to the grief over the loss of her husband, she found herself in a disastrous economic situation, unable to provide for herself nor to Anna. So it was that Antonio, trustworthy and generous friend, he took upon himself the economic burden for the needs of the two women left alone. Giulia and Anna then moved to the house of Antonio and Lucia, and put on sale their home. From wise householder, Antonio thought, given the attained age of majority of the girls, that it was time that they had the documents in order, but to do that he had to go in an Italian embassy, and the nearest one was in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia . Then faced a long journey of three days and three nights, first by bus, then by train and then by boat, and he went in the Malaysian capital with the two girls. They finally arrived in Kuala Lumpur, they went to the embassy, did the formalities required and they stayed in a small hotel waiting for the release, by the ambassador or whoever for him, of the documents of Italian citizenship, as to *Burugo* did not even exist a postal service that could deliver them to their home. In the two days of waiting, Anna and Lucia took the opportunity to visit this huge metropolis in continuous building expansion. But what impressed most was the visit to the bird park, where in a huge aviary, flutter hundreds and hundreds of colorful birds and of various sizes. Were able to return home only after eight days, but had succeeded in their aim: Anna and Lucia had their passports Italian!

The girls now eighteen had finished high school, and they were at an age where you feel the need to fall in love and maybe find a husband: they often went out to go to parties in the village,

or even just to visit friends, perhaps ex-classmates. Near their home had just moved along with his parents, a beautiful girl their own age, of Brazilian origin. Marta, eyes blacks and mulatto complexion, perfectly formed body and unscrupulous character, it soon became the center of attention of all the guys in *Burugo*. At parties she threw in sinuous provocative dancing, like this is the prerogative of many Brazilian girls, and handing out smiles to all the guys who could not help but admire her ecstatic. They were even a fight with each other just to get noticed and attract the favor of Marta. Anna and Lucia instead shy and awkward or rather not unscrupulous as her passed in second place in the preferences of the young men of the village. Soon they began to feel envy for that girl, who looked like a goddess when she danced, being so perfect and sinuous, the her movements. "Look at that slut as shows off her ass, she has no dignity!" said Anna, and Lucia added, "you'll see that this one will make a bad end, the Lord will punish her impudence."

It so happened, unfortunately, that a September evening dark and rainy, returning to their home earlier than expected, they found their parents in intimate attitude. Anna and Lucia had a burst of anger, felt like backstabbing! The charisma of their parents had vanished as if by magic! After the first few days of tears and insults against Giulia and Antonio, they thought that the best thing to do was to abandon forever their family. They decided to leave as soon as possible with the intention, in the days to follow, to put together a little money, and saving the pocket money they received, and doing chores for the church. In November of that same year, Anna and Lucia were able to embark. They decided to make the journey in reverse, to that

made in its time by their parents! They were headed for Italy! They took the first ship to Malaysia, and from the moment that there set foot, tried a sense of liberation from the disgust that from days made them feel bad. The disgust of their parents! They spent the whole time of the crossing, watching the sea, calm, fortunately, and to remember the carefree childhood years past. Anna, for example, thinking of the lush flowers growing in the garden of her house and her mother said to her: "Do you know what these petals are, my love? Each petal is a kiss that your mom sends you every day and that you always send in every moment of your life, baby. "And Lucia is reminded of when in one night by a clear sky, seeing a shooting star, his father said, "Make a wish and it will come true my sweet!" And she hugging his father said to him: "My greatest desire is to be with you always embraced my dear father!" Being educated young ladies, had kindly laid off from their parents, without any scene, but claiming that they had to find a job suited to their aspirations, and that in *Burugo* they certainly would not have been able to find it. They coldly, even with frost in their hearts, they planned precisely the best and least traumatic to leave.



They tried to remedy often going out of their cabin in the evening, and admiring the show that gives clear moon over the sea quietly imagined that there, where they would come, so far away from their land, they would find the prince charming that they would finally be made happy.



Anna said: "In the end, apart from the Italian, we speak fluent English and Malay, and this no doubt we will support in finding a job as soon as we arrive in Italy" - "Regarding English is possible that interest to someone, but the Malaysian, who want that interests? "- replied Lucia. Were interrupted by the shouting of a couple who had settled in to watch the sea not far from where they were. They realized that they were not the only ones to have existential problems, since they could hear what the two were saying. They were hit by a man's sentence when he said: "I have the balls to me crawl on the ground, I am disappointed by everything and everyone!" And the woman replied: "It 's because you've never had enough hair in the stomach ! You are destined

to suffer! " - And he - "You make me suffer nasty slut! Cursed be the day that I married you!" Anna Lucia and refused to continue to listen, and turned away toward the bow of the ship.

The ship's captain, who during the crossing had noted both for their beauty, but also for the fact that he had often seen them with tears in their eyes, approached and tried with the utmost diplomacy as possible and in a very polite, get an explanation and understand the reason of their sadness. Them, trying to compose themselves to protect their privacy, they answered evasively, that they had recently suffered a bereavement for the death of a dear friend. But the commander, old seaman and connoisseur of the human race, he told them: "Girls, if you want and if you like, I suggest you just landed, to go see a friend of mine who has a study of hypnosis, right next the harbor: he is a very well-known in Malaysia for his ability to succeed with a refined technique of hypnosis to make people happy, even the saddest. You can not even imagine how many women turn to him especially to find the courage to undergo some cosmetic surgery. Well .. you know .. the woman with the headscarf always wants to be able to offer to her husband the Garden of EdenGo in my name and he will help you for free. "Anna and Lucia, at that time, esteemed lightly the advice of that person so kind and caring, and confined themselves to thank, saying that if they had found the time would surely go to that doctor. Arrived in Malaysia, they found a ship that was leaving the next day for Sri Lanka, made the ticket and found accommodation in a hovel near the port of Kuching, this is the name of the Malaysian town where they landed. In the afternoon, they decided to take a walk to get to know the habits and customs of the people are Muslim:

remained stunned and shocked seeing a woman clothed with the *niqab*, a veil that is present in the Arabic tradition and Islam, which covers the entire woman's body, including the face, leaving only the eyes uncovered. Imagined just how much there should be sad the lives of women as prisoners of their own clothes.



Lucia said: "It 's still day and we do not have anything to do, why do not we pay a visit to a witch doctor, friend of the captain of the ship? May be that the women of this place so tanned, they are able with the hypnosis sessions not to commit suicide ... "Anna nodding led the way, and arrived at the address that he

had provided to them the commander, knocked at the door of the study. A well-dressed man in his forties and with the beard, he opened the door to them, introduced himself as Dr. Chung and asked them how he could be their help. Anna gave the name of the commander and the advice that had given them to undergo a session of hypnosis. They sat down in a living room and Doct.Chung explained to them that he could make a single session of hypnosis to both at the same time: he only demanded attention and belief in what he would have said to them. Then went into another room and lay down on two beds prepared for this purpose: the lights were off and remained only lit two candles. The doctor, after the first usual explanations to satisfy the curiosity of the girls, in which he argued that every living being or thing at the *submolecular* level is composed of *photons* and nothing else, and that he with the power of his mind was able to channel these *photons* in the desired direction, then began the session by saying with a persuasive voice: "Close your eyes and do not think about anything, you have nothing to think about, your brain wants to be clear, you want peace of mind, and I give you peace of mind: you know that your body takes energy and I give you energy: you want happiness, joy and I will give: never mind the gaze of others, but only to that of your self: what is good is in you, and what is good I give you. " With these and other phrases more or less similar and repeated for more than half an hour, Dr.. Chung was able to fall asleep them and they woke up after only two hours with a headache. The doctor reassured them that everything had gone well and that soon they would be fine for a long time. They thanked him and took their leave more confused than convinced, to reach their small hotel, and anxiously wait there the time to leave.

The crossing to get to Colombo, the capital of ancient Ceylon, was held in the utmost tranquility. The two friends talking among themselves about everything except about their parents. The subsequent journey from Colombo to Djibouti, was quite simple, secure, and trouble-free. After their arrival in this city of the Horn of Africa, had to wait four days before they embark for the Red Sea. Then had the opportunity to visit the beautiful Lake Assal, located 155 meters below sea level, enclosed in a basin and surmounted by barren mountains. The temperatures in this place that is the lowest of the African continent, exceeding fifty degrees Celsius and the water has a salt concentration that is ten times higher than that of the oceans. The lake is sparkling under the sun and its banks full of salt and engraved with fanciful designs from the erosion of the centuries, create strange mirages and violent flashes of light. The water is turquoise-blue color with hints of emerald green or yellow, and from it emerge some atolls of salt of immaculate whiteness. The ground is covered by a myriad of crystals and honey-colored chalk formations. Lake Assal is the largest deposit of salt of the earth.

Lucia, while entranced by the beautiful view, but dazzled by the light of the sun, closed her eyes and after a few minutes of reflection, he turned to Anna confiding: "We started from Borneo which is widely regarded as one of the places, if not the place, the wildest of the earth, now we are here, which is the lowest place of Africa: what we can expect in Italy now? " Anna thought for a moment, and embraced her friend replied, "Whatever we find and we will do, we must be able to fulfill ourselves, to become important people, and make sure that

everyone has respect for us. And then ... of course we will not have to worry about having to deal with situations such as those from which we fled..! "- Yes dear Anna you are right, we must have faith and be safe of ourselves! To us, it will never happen to live in another Sodom and Gomorrah!" -concluded Lucia getting ready to climb on the back of the camel that would lead them to the jeep they had rented to make this excursion.



Sailed from Djibouti then came to Sharm el Sheikh in Egypt, where they decided to spend a few days of vacation on those beautiful beaches, before tackling the last leg of their journey, which, after passing through the Suez Canal would bring them to

Catania in Italy.



Chapter 2

Approach with the Sicily



Catania, the Italian city of about 300,000 inhabitants, is located on the east coast of Sicily, halfway between the cities of Messina and Syracuse. To the north is crowned by Mount Etna, which in the past has caused death and destruction with its eruptions. There are various civilizations that have conquered this city over time, *Ostrogoths*, *Byzantines*, Muslims, *Normans*, *Swabians*, *Angevins* and Spaniards.

Anna was a beautiful girl, platinum blonde hair, blue eyes, lovely little face. With its feet seven inches, its stature was higher than the average of local women. Lucia, who upon landing rejoiced to have arrived in Italy with a flag that had bought at a market stall on the pier, brown hair and green eyes, yet she was very pretty and was 1 meter and sixty centimeters. The two girls as they walked down the street, were admired by all men, but look with envy from other women. After finding accommodation in a small hotel in the suburbs, immediately thought of the need to find a job. The janitor of the small hotel, to help them, gave them the address of the Lords Conti, who lived nearby, on the ground that they just need a maid and a nanny for their son. Mrs. Conti was a distinguished lady, very kind and affable, that greeted friendly by offering them a salary of 600,000 *lire* each for 9 hours of work a day. So, they converged in serving in an ancient aristocratic house in the city center, it consists of 4 bedrooms, including a very large master. There was also a large living room furnished with large sofas in damask fabric, huge paintings of Flemish era on the walls, a large sideboard with beautiful body double in walnut with three wooden doors at the bottom and three glass at the top, where stood out, in the latter, the precious Sèvres porcelain kept inside. The panels of the lower doors were made of ebony, that stood out more clearly the polychrome floral inlays typical of cabinet Dutch. The kitchen was huge and worked there permanently two cooks. There were also three bathrooms, two of which were very large and with all the amenities you could think of for the bosses, and one more little one for the servants. So, Anna became maid in that big house, while Lucy took care of the little Giovan Battista, the only son of the wealthy family. The two

girls met each other frequently during the working hours, and also found the time to chat. At the end of the day were always inseparable. Mrs. Conti often talked with them, and given their young age, she tried to give them wise counsel to help them cope with the difficulties of life. The interest of the two girls, while earning enough to live on, was turned towards a safer situation for their future, and also a more dignified job, it focused on the possibility, suggested to them by Mrs. Conti, to find a job as employed to the municipality. In fact, the lady knew some important people with whom she was in contact, which could help the two girls to enter and so find a permanent job. During a reception at the home Conti to celebrate the birthday of the lady, were presented by the celebrated to the Minister of Defence of the Italian State and to the mayor of Catania. The lady asked the two to help the girls, and they, once admired for the beauty and kindness of the two girls, they promised their help.

Six months passed, and in January 1987 the two girls achieved their intentions. They found a steady job as employed, receiving a monthly salary of 1.2 million *lire* for thirteen months every year! Their job was to archive old practices, that all their older colleagues, taking advantage of their "apprenticeship", piling up every day in their desks. But what was more heavy to bear was that smile, ironic and hateful, with which they presented to them to take advantage. Anna and Lucia doing force each other, looking at each other on the sly, being careful not to be seen by the bureau chief nor by senior colleagues. "Girls, you have to sweat the money you earn!" As he called them the head office, a man fifty fat and sweaty, who spent most of his working time to play cards with senior colleagues. And these authentic

"torturers", as considered them Anna and Lucia, were amused to see them suffer, while they were trying to carry out the enormous amount of work that they found every day in their desks. "If you did not finish all, you can not go out," said cruelly, "and if you go away before you finish, I give you fired!", They added. The two poor girls were forced to work every day at least 2 hours more than normal, and this made them nervous and anxious. And more they saw them suffer, the more they mocked them. Sometimes on Sundays, the two friends decided to do some hike. Once went on Etna, another time to Caltagirone, another one to Syracuse. Often spoke together of men, and each of them dreamed of meeting one day, a prince who took her away from that hell of work, and give her a peaceful and dignified existence. But later they realized that they worked all week until late, and very tired, they were not able to go out at night to seek to know someone. Therefore remained free Sundays only, the day when normally went to church in the morning to attend the Holy Mass, doing a little cleaning in the apartment they had rented, and then went out in the afternoon to visit the beautiful city of Catania.

At Syracuse visited the archaeological site of Neapolis, where there is the greek theater, with an excellent acoustics and venue of artistic representations of ancient Greek tragedies.



Then visited the shrine of Our Lady of Tears, where they began to pray like children, crying and imploring the Virgin to help them.



For Easter decided to visit Palermo, capital of Sicily, located about 230 km from Catania. They went by bus and the trip took two hours and a half, since the two cities connected by an excellent highway. Arrived in Palermo, visited the palace of the Normans, the cathedral, the cloister of Monreale, a hill overlooking Palermo, where they could admire the beautiful mosaics.



Then visited the beautiful beach of Mondello, where they walked for a long time on the shore listening to the sea and breathing fresh air. In those days of April, the weather was good, but there was not yet an ideal temperature for bathing.



While were walking Anna asked, "how do you think Lucia will be called your husband? When you're married, how long you will have a son? And how you will want to to call him? "The same questions Lucy did to her, and everything was resolved with laughter from both. "What you would do to Mr. Voluti?" - Anna asked her friend. Lucia said, "to the hateful and nasty and cruel boss, I will tear all the teeth and then I'd swallow them to him, so he takes a well indigestion." What carelessness in those quiet moments on the beach, which serenity, gave them a view of the infinite expanse of blue water! Went so far to take handfuls of sand and pull upon each other like children, laughing and joking. Sometimes thought to Mr. Voluti, and once again

armed themselves of sand and threw upon to themselves with anger, imagining pull it against him.

The only thing that they were satisfied it was their studio. In fact paid a pittance for the rent, was on the second floor of a beautiful palace in the center of Catania, in the courtyard there was a garden full of flowers that smelled well cultivated surroundings. Furthermore, none of the owners gave them the slightest problem of condominium and their landlord, in fact, they had only asked for 100,000 lire per month for rent. The only odd thing they noticed, and that they understood the meaning until much later, was that in intercom, outside the palace, at the bell of two of their neighbors who had oddly placed in the plate only their first name there were two red lights. They noted also that many men of all ages, both well-dressed, that ragged, or nearly so, playing at all hours to those bells, and to enter visit to Tanina and Pinuccia. In their naivety they thought they were two social workers and two missionaries, even though they had noticed their vulgarity, and just asked a colleague at the office if he knew what kind of civil or religious organization is characterized by red lights. But the colleague who asked, did they lose the desire to make confidences, and even up to talk about this and that; He proved in fact an idiot, because, instead of giving them an answer, he laughed loudly and involved in his mocking laughter also many other colleagues.

Life went dull and sad for the two girls, who felt like prisoners of their work, such as with disabilities compared to other women of their age. And all the fault of that work, made unbearable by those odious colleagues. In the morning put the

alarm clock at 7:00, doing a frugal breakfast, doing small household chores and right away at work. The umpteenth joke that suffered, it was in December of the same year: Mr. Voluti, their bureau chief, seeing that despite his abuse to make them suffer, they were able to resist, because they could console each other, decided to separate them. He made sure to transfer Lucia to municipality of Caltagirone, giving as excuse that there in Catania, one of them was made redundant. This vile cruelty unfortunately got its effects, both physical and psychological. Materials, because Anna found herself having to do every day, twice the work, so her working day became of about 12 hours, always with unpaid overtime and always mocked by her colleagues, while Lucy had to get up every morning at 5 am to take the bus to Caltagirone, and in the evening could be home until 10 pm. Psychological, because the two pretty girls were destroyed, when they met at home crying bitterly every day. The world was collapsing on them! Unfortunately, trying to console themselves better, had sought refuge in alcohol, which, if it gives a momentary relief and dizziness, in the long run affects the psyche and health in a dangerous way. They often looked in the mirror naked and were proud of their beautiful body. One day Lucia fingering naked breast exclaimed: "Look Anna, I am beautiful, indeed beautiful, and you, you are as well more than me! Why is no one worthy of a look? What is this curse? Any other woman we meet, both at work and in the street, is very very worst of us, and yet ... she is happily married! Yuck! "Anna nodded and lowered his head in approval snapped:" Let them go all to hell! Bastards they are! "

They also tried to act like their peers, watching the shop,

looking for designer clothes, fashionable shoes, went to the hairdresser regularly, they doing the manicure, and whatever else needed to their coquetry of women. They really tried to be equal to other women! They were consuming the nervous system with that damn job, and they were weakening their physical with alcohol! Apart from Sunday, they had free on Saturday afternoon, where in fact, to turn over to shops, seeking also to attend the premises to search for friendship. At that time, unfortunately, it was unusual to see two women alone sitting in a public place, and therefore, it was often misunderstood by the people who they met. So everything was resolved into an excuse to continue drinking.



The city of *Caltagirone* in the Christmas season is famous for its collection of nativity scenes and people come from all over the world to admire them. Anna and Lucia, Sundays in December, went to look at those wonderful works of crafts, some dating back to the eighteenth century as the earthquake of 1693 destroyed all those manufacturing earlier.



That Friday, Christmas Day 1987, they passed indoors between a drink and another, with the interval of a little cake they had bought for the occasion. They were very bitter of life they led, trying to de-tune themselves and annihilate themselves with alcohol, not to think about the fact that they were alone, as

opposed to all the other people who celebrated happy with their families. They had a job that disgusted, they felt powerless and unable to face the grim reality of every day. That party so important that for all is a time of joy, relaxation and love, had become for them a source of anxiety. The December 31, then, after having worked regularly until 6 pm, Anna to Catania, and Lucia to Caltagirone, decided to go to the disco to celebrate the New Year's Eve. The "Comizio pub" of Via Etnea was packed, loud music and a lot of people in costume. Well even there, once again, they realized the difficulty to know people, the difficulty to fit into some group, the difficulty to have fun.

In this difficult psychological situation, they were trying desperately to be able to find a solution or at least a distraction that could distract them and that could make them less sad even for a short time. They wanted to try to spend a weekend in a seaside town, where, not expecting to be able to see on the streets in that winter time people which could distract them from their reflections, they could collect better ideas on what to do with their lives and how to act. They chose the town of Sciacca on the coast of the Strait of Sicily in the province of Agrigento.



But the town, with its natural collage of sun, sea and thermal baths is a popular destination for a holiday of relaxation. The mud baths and hot springs of Sidi Bou Said are among the most effective in the world and every year the number of tourists and doctors, attracted by their therapeutic efficacy, increases exponentially every year. Anna, while giving handfals in the air trying to chase away a bee that haunted her, and looking with envy at the many people who basked in the blissful thermal waters of the natural pool who were visiting, turning to her friend exclaimed: "Lucia we must do something to get out of this situation! Even at the cost of doing sluts! Can not go on like this! We deserve a little 'luck!" - "Yes Anna" - replied Lucia quickly -

"for a start, we will adhere to a dating agency! and so we will see if we are so bad and plague-stricken, so that no one wants us, and indeed despises us!" - "Ok"-said Anna-"now we pay the hotel bill and come back immediately to Catania, I am eager to being able to implement our attempt! "It was February of 1988 when they took to a marriage agency. With little savings they had managed to put aside, they did so this last attempt.



Ms. Mariella, owner of the agency, treated them kindly, even to convince them to enrollment, promising them that they would soon find, beautiful as they were, a man of good social level!

Passed about 10 days and Anna met Augusto thirty year old man, beautiful body, aquiline nose and an excellent gab. Ms. Mariella had them set up an appointment on Monday at 21:30 at the bar Cristal of Via Garibaldi. Anna, just out of work, it hastened to pass in her small apartment, to wash her face tired by the usual grueling day of work, put on a little makeup and to wear a pink dress simple and elegant, that exalted even more her magnificent forms. Augusto was already seated at a table next to a window facing the street. He was wearing a pinstripe jacket with a red carnation in his buttonhole, the signal, which had been agreed with Mrs. Mariella for him to be recognized. Anna went timidly, and said, holding out her hand outstretched and trembling: "Nice, I am Anna" "and I Augusto. Ms. Mariella had told me that you were beautiful, but now that I see you, I think it is really reductive define you beautiful: you are wonderful! " An intense redness of the cheeks painted a young girl, at her first experience of courtship, and trembling, for the emotion that this compliment had aroused in her, she sat up. Soon passed the waiter to collect orders, and Anna, not little refraining from ordering a glass of cognac, she forced herself, and asked for a glass of coca-cola, while Augusto opted for a beer. Augusto to break the ice and in order not to further embarrass Anna, began to speak of himself: "My family originates in Catania and from an early age I found myself well in this city: friendly people and reliable, very warm and hospitable." And already to these words Anna, thinking about her bureau chief and her colleagues, as well as the indifference of the people when she tried to do some knowledge, she disturbed a little, but she forced herself and remained imperturbable and attentive. "I, since I finished high school" -Augusto continued -"I have been interested in politics,

and because I like it, and because I have been helped for the reason that my family has several important knowledge. For some years I managed to find a beautiful job, I do in fact the assistant to the regional councilor for cultural heritage. I often travel with him during the week for all Sicily, and sometimes accompanied him to Rome." Anna then really began to take an interest -and if it was the right man, the man I waited as the prince who could finally give me a dignified existence? At the bottom is also a nice guy, what do I want? -she thought to herself as she began to sip the coke. "My job is essentially to schedule appointments, filter requests for contact and help, that daily rain down on the desk councilor, and above all, accompany him with the car." "I, unfortunately," said Anna, "I'm too busy in my job as a clerk to municipality, to visit the beauties of Sicily. With my friend Lucia we only visited once Palermo and Syracuse, as well as the city of Catania, I know little." "Mrs. Mariella told me that you're Italian, and that you lived when you were a child in Borneo. How is Borneo? I've never been there. "-Asked Augusto. "Borneo is the third largest island in the world, is traversed by many rivers, has a hot and humid climate and is full of lush forests. Borneo is right on the equator and every day or almost all of the evening there are storms. There are over 15,000 species of flowering plants, 3,000 species of trees, 221 species of terrestrial mammals and 420 of birds.



Did you know that the orangutan lives only in Borneo? - Asked flirtatious Anna - "It must be a wonderful place! But sorry, why you're back in Italy?" Said Augusto. Anna far from the idea of telling him the truth about the facts which led her and Lucia's decision to leave that paradise, said briskly: "I think I have Italy in the DNA." And no more. Between a chat and the other was 11 p.m, and Anna watching her little clock said timidly, "Excuse Augusto but for me it's late. Tomorrow I expect another day of hard work and I need to sleep. "- "I leave you my phone number and that of my home office. However I am easier to find in the evening after 8 p.m, at home on working days, or even in the morning at the weekend, but ... I hope you will call

me before Saturday! For me it was a pleasure and an honor to meet you Anna! Bye and please, call me soon please! " - Ended Augusto. Anna got up from the table, held out her hand, that Augusto gallantly brushed with a kiss, and walked briskly to the exit.

Returned quickly for the late hour, she found Lucy that waiting, anxious to know every detail of the meeting of the friend. Anna spoke very highly of Augusto, calling it only "a little 'pompous'. She waited four more days before calling Augusto. She wanted to give of herself, an image as possible the most serious, and therefore wanted to avoid calling him in the evening.

She called then on Saturday lunchtime, when she had a small break from work, and agreed a meeting for that evening. Augusto asked her to go to dinner, and then to the cinema to the show of 10:30 p.m. They went to a fancy restaurant of Via Etnea where Anna ordered calamari, and Augusto a beef fillet: with a glass of wine and the other Augusto continued to talk about his work, confiding to her that the councilor was paying monthly 5,000.000 *lire*. He also told her that soon he would present her his employer. They saw a comedy, a genre specifically chosen by Augusto to break even more the ice, and then the man gallantly took her back home with a beautiful sports car. Anna found this time, Lucia asleep, because the fatigue and the late hour had prevailed on the curiosity of her friend to have the report of the appointment gallant. Anna before going to sleep, she had time to think: she did not feel in love nor felt a particular physical attraction to the young man, but she was glad to have at

last been able to know a man who was more handsome, and had a good job and salary. Even during the weeks of job that followed, she could better bear her colleagues and the huge amount of daily practices that filled her desk. Two months passed before Augusto declared: "Anna, I do not know how to say this, but I'm in love with you," he said in a trembling voice, gently taking the girl's hand with his own. Anna blushed immediately, and put her pretty face to the man and the two exchanged their first kiss in the mouth. During those months of courtship, Anna had refrained from talking about how things really were in the workplace: she had said to Augusto, that worked hard, as in the offices of the municipality of Catania there was a lot to do. She began to confide to Augusto only some time later, when she realized that he was really in love with her. Anna, despite having lived in Burugo, had received from her parents a Christian education and morally irreproachable, and even though she felt strong sexual urges, and impatience to know the pleasures of love, never, never would have coupled with a man before marriage. And even Augusto, good Sicilian, would have been very glad to marry a virgin. And for these reasons the two, every time they went out together, exchanged affectionate, romantic and even passionate kisses, but never went beyond. It was in July of that year that Anna was invited by Augusto to meet his parents, making to promise by her, however, that for no reason, she would have told them that they had met with the help of a marriage agency.

Mr. and Mrs. Renzi formed a nice pair of sixty, highly respected in the city, very serious, friendly and warm. They lived just outside the city center in a beautiful house. Ms. Rosalia,

mother of Augusto, did the honors, proving immediately very cordial and friendly towards Anna. She offered her a coffee, pastries, and presented her husband, Mr. Peppino: grizzled hair, proud, and aquiline nose, he characterized the appearance. He too was very friendly with the girlfriend of his son, and was entranced by her beauty bright. "We are an old-fashioned family"-he said-"and we are very happy that our son has chosen a good girl with a good head on his shoulders and has a secure and stable job." He added. "Come, I'll show you Anna the photographs of Augusto when he was little."- said Mrs. Rosalia - " Our son was a beautiful child and now is an elite head man. "-continued proudly. "Mom please do not embarrass me with Anna," said Augusto smiling. "So guys"-interjected Mr. Peppino-"when's the wedding?" Anna winced why taken aback, but basically, this was just what she wanted. She too, though not deeply in love, felt attraction and affection for that boy so caring and affectionate towards her, and also because, remembered last Christmas time spent at home with Lucia among tears and despair mutual. Then replied without hesitation: "Of a date yet we have not discussed, but if for Augusto is fine, I would like to get married in December, so we can spend the Christmas holidays on honeymoon" "Yes my love, in December is fine! How about the 23, so we spend Christmas Day with the family as usual, and then we leave for Italy until January 10th?" Replied Augusto-enthusiastic" Yes love, is fine for December 23. Certainly have to think to book the church, I have to be able to get vacation time, etc.. but in one way or another, 23 December, God willing, we will be husband and wife. "Anna after saying these words, immediately thought of the real difficulties and ostracism that would have found in the office at the time the

request for holidays, but did force to herself and she drove the thought from the mind. "Guys how nice! We have to celebrate," said Mrs. Rosalia rushing to go and get a bottle of rosolio liqueur and the glasses. Returned home, after a long and passionate outpourings in the car with Augusto Anna was at last satisfied with herself. 'I did it, at last I did it, I can have a normal life like any other, she thought. She told everything to Lucia who was waiting anxiously, and the evening ended with a colossal drunkenness of the two friends.

As soon as she returned to the office, she hastened submit a request for marriage holidays, however, guaranteed by law, for the period fixed with Augusto and then from December 22 to January 10. Mr. Voluti, as soon as received the request of Anna, said aloud: "And so Miss Anna married! Colleagues, coworkers, make her wishes! "And all the seniors, while maintaining an air of superiority, pretended to be happy for her, but really meditating some further mischief. In fact met privately with Mr. Voluti, tried to find any situation to hinder her. The evil head office had already planned a sneaky idea and explained it in these terms: "I'll tell her that her request for holidays has been accepted, but tomorrow I'll call the mayor, and I will report that the absence of Anna in those days , certainly will cause severe damage to the municipal treasury, as there are very important procedures to fulfill in those days, and that only Anna can do so. The mayor will be forced not to grant her the holidays for reasons of force major. Not only that, but I will communicate decision to revoke from the mayor, only on December 21, when the two pigeons have already spent a lot of money to book the church, wedding dress, reception, honeymoon and more. A loud

guffaw followed by a loud applause, put an end to that ignoble meeting.

In the days and months that followed, the behavior of colleagues seemed totally different: they were the cronies, the cuddled, even gave the impression that love her, and even passed her less practical than usual to be completed, so as to give her the opportunity to get out on time and to be able to think of all the wedding preparations. Anna therefore had a free afternoon starting at 5 p.m, she could finally turn to stores, which until now had only been able to do on a Saturday afternoon. She had many things to buy, had to choose wedding favors, and above all she had to find a wedding dress that was simple, but at the same time very elegant, and possibly not cost much. She had glimpsed one that she liked very much. A marriage in accordance with the rules that the tradition requires, require compliance with a number of precepts concerning dress, and she, who had chosen the winter season for the wedding, had to opt for a stole in fur or in fine wool, enriched maybe with rhinestones, all strictly white. And it was also important that she thought to her hair, as the hairstyle fact, with the veil, gloves and bouquet, must be in perfect harmony and give an image of proportion. She liked a model in wool Empire, made with fabric *Georgette*, given that seemed effective in slim the figure. The bodice was stopped just below the bust with the help of a staple, while the skirt, reaching to the feet, opened in multiple aftermaths.

