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Camorra is
an 8th grade subject
Shakubook

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Preface

This book began as a Christmas gift to my wife who wrote a story for herself and maybe for us, her family.

Checca is quite a character, an adventurer who has always taken a bite at life with interest and curiosity, travelling around the world as a young girl, doing a variety of different jobs with fun and passion. On average, she made a career change every nine years and this year she decided to write, and I hope she will write for at least the next nine years!

Had it been left up to her, the original work would have remained a simple file, but then she printed two copies of it for me and her father. As I read it, apart from the Christmas present, I immediately saw that it deserved the dignity of becoming a real book. I would be delighted if it were to be read, maybe even just by chance, by someone outside this family, because it carries the reader away into an honest and visionary projection of a future world – never disregarding the shocking limits to our current society - which entertained and moved me, and made me think, too.

Above all, it deserved to be published because this small book contains so much of my wife's character, which has so many *mosts* to it: she is the *most* generous person I have ever known, the *most* honest, the most candid, the *most* altruistic, the *most* tenacious, the *most* stubborn, and I could go on and on and on... Whether it was her Buddhist practice or something else, whatever happened to her in life, she turned into a wonderful adventure. Thank you.

Patrizio Rispo

*Dedicated to
Simona, Emilia, Loredana, Antonella
and to all the sisters who are fighting today,
but who will see, tomorrow, with me,
a new world.*

**BE REALISTIC,
PLAN FOR A MIRACLE**

Nancy Nicholson, Antigua

CHAPTER 1 – THE STORY

Kudoku – The Benefit

BAGNOLI, NAPOLI – JUNE 9, 2052

They left the three bicycles at the rack, unlocked. There was no longer a need to fasten them with those expensive chains Nicole used to buy for her bikes when she was young... there had been no theft for almost 20 years, not even a robbery. You didn't hear of any burglaries in apartments, nor bag-snatchings, nothing. Nicole was still surprised, and yet already 20 years had passed! She, who had turned 90, and, if you don't mind me saying so, was still riding a bicycle, or, rather, the other way round: she had turned 90 in good shape, because she had always used a bicycle since she was a girl. Anyway, she had spent more time in the violent, dirty and corrupt old world than in this one.

A new world, really. And even though she had always worked hard to make this happen, even in her own small way, without ever sparing herself, even if she had believed in it, or at least tried to, well, she still did not believe her

eyes, she couldn't believe she was witnessing the change of the human race and the destiny of the world.

They entered Bagnoli¹ park, with its well-tended gardens, its mighty trees, that marvellous scent of freshly cut grass which reminded her of those 10 years lived on the Caribbean island, which had left in her heart the strength of pristine nature and a deep relationship with it.

What a wonderful life I had, she thought, and it made her laugh.

Without knowing the reason, Dario laughed too, and took her hand. As a twelve and a half year-old, he lived his emotions and did not ask himself too many questions. He looked very much like his father, Tommaso, Nicole's second son, from whom he had inherited the almost oriental, piercing eyes, and that taste for science, combined with a strong sense of justice, which had made his father a neuroscientist, one of the more committed to the social aspects of their time. Yes, because,

¹ *Bagnoli is an ex industrial area in Naples, still unclaimed, sadly abandoned, and unfortunately located on one of the most beautiful beaches in the world, on the bay of Campi FLegrei.*

after a dazzling career start, Tommaso had decided to make his knowledge and his newest surgical technique, never used before and created by himself, available to the poorest communities. Today, he often travelled around the world, visiting and working in the most neglected suburbs of South America, Africa, Asia, but also in Italy and in Naples he never failed to make his contribution. He lived off the proceeds of the scientific books he published with his new discoveries, taking care of anyone who needed it for free. When a person finds his mission he becomes happy, and Tommy certainly had. Nicole smiled to herself, satisfied. She'd always known.

They reached their favourite bench and sat in the hot June sun. No, I mean, they sat in the worm June sun. Not hot. Hot but not hot. Do you remember the sun in June when you were a child, you, 90 year-olds like me? (there shouldn't be many of us left, I guess...) In the 70s, 80s and even 90s, in June it was Fine. The weather was Fine, with a capital F, contentedly. It was the start of the summer, still immature. We were just shyly putting away our winter vests, *la maglia*, as they call them in Naples, and how, throughout all her childhood, Nicole

had read on a wall below her house: I PUT AWAY MY VEST! “*M’AGGIO LEVATO A MAGLIA!*”, illicit graffiti which, more than any advertising poster gleaming with lost islands and sparkling palms, provoked a feeling of relief and freedom and really made you think about summer. The *base layer under garment*, the *vest*, in short, also known as the health layer.

You went to the sea for the first time in months and if you put a foot in the water you froze. The water was damn cold, guys. At some point, however, at the beginning of the new millennium, the summers had started the habit of arriving all of a sudden. Two, three days to just start thinking if you could finally take it off, that vest, and *Bam*, mothers rushed to pull down the boxes with bathing suites and short-pants, sandals and flip-flops poking out of the shelves: it was already full summer. This strange phenomenon was due to climate change. Not that this needs to be made clear because everyone has heard about it at least once, even the very young who did not experience it directly. Yes, it’s true, deniers still exist, now as then, but those fools had to resign themselves to the turning point that the history of humanity had suddenly taken.

It was 2030, the year that all countries, or almost, in the world, had chosen as a reference point for a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and for a considerable increase in the use of renewable energies.

It was the year of keeping promises, those taken at numerous world climate summits. Scientists had been talking for years about how the Earth was experiencing the hottest weather in the history of civilization and that the dominant cause of the rise in temperature was precisely man and his impact on nature.

At one point they started saying that very little time was left to do anything about it. People understood this, even without scientists, as everybody would say “there are no more mid-seasons” or “Spring is gone”, so often that in the end such tragic statements became ridiculous and nobody would say them anymore, for fear of being mocked.

People, we, were too caught up in our busy lives, all concentrated on what to do today, but really absent-minded towards our real priorities, and were meanwhile running towards the ravine, picking up speed, too. While climate

change was behind migrations, wars, the great social and political upheavals of the planet of that era.

However, in New York in 2017, more than 150 Heads of State and Governments had approved the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Agenda was the first universal agreement and therefore its implementation required the intervention of all countries. The common awareness was that we had to hurry, that we needed a faster and more ambitious climate revolution.

Some tragic climatic events in those years were like slaps in the face to those who did not want to see, or just did not care. And in the end, as usual, it was people who really made a change. It was the change in the awareness of ordinary people that put an end to climate change.

Incredible hurricanes of unprecedented intensity and vastness, floods, glacial winters and droughts devastating entire countries - such as the United States in the '20s - when in 2015, due to global warming, the band of polar winds that circled the Arctic and kept the icy climate at the top of the world slackened and let the

freezing cold descend through Canada to reach the East Coast of the United States.² The East Coast was then beaten by Arctic temples that caused cities like New York to reach temperatures of minus 40°C, with predictable consequences. Even down in Florida the luxurious villas had to turn the heaters on. Hawaiian style shirts were increasingly covered by pullovers, sweatshirts and jackets. In Miami and Fort Lauderdale everyone had a cold and had lost their tan. While in the West, in the central plains and in the south-western American regions which supplied fruit and vegetables to the whole country, there was an unprecedented risk of drought, with California continuously in flames, including the most beautiful villas in Hollywood, victims of terrifying fires fuelled by very strong, hot winds that prevented even the water endlessly poured down from the

² *Strong circumpolar winds several tens of kilometers high in the atmosphere, known as the stratospheric polar vortex (<https://phys.org/news/2019-09-scientists-weather-event-extreme-cold.html>). A study of September 2017 from the Atmospheric and Environmental Research/Massachusetts Institute of Technology (US) showed that there's a shift towards more-persistent weak states of the polar vortex. This allows frigid air to break out of the Arctic and threaten also Russia and Europe with cold extremes. In stark contrast, the Arctic has been warming rapidly. Paradoxically, both phenomena are likely linked: when sea-ice North of Scandinavia and Russia melts, the uncovered ocean releases more warmth into the atmosphere and this can impact the atmosphere up to about 30 kilometres height in the stratosphere disturbing the polar vortex. Weak states of the high-altitude wind circling the Arctic then favour the occurrence of cold spells in the mid-latitudes.*

many firefighting planes – I mean, Americans like it big by definition - to control and finally extinguish them. Those fires lasted days, sometimes weeks. Facing all of this, entire islands disappearing into the Pacific and other oceans³, the magnificence of Venice, heritage of art and history for the whole of humanity, which began to lose part of its buildings and squares, together with other wonderful cities like Amsterdam and Alexandria in Egypt, which, in the mid-20s, had already lost entire neighbourhoods of their territorial surface, here, finally, and fatally, something clicked in people's consciousness.

In 2030 people arrived at that world climate summit with enormous expectations of change, exasperated by those countries that had not yet honoured their commitments.

³ *The first inhabited island (10,000 people) to disappear was Lohachara, in the Indian region of Sundarbans in 2006, as The Independent titled: **The disappearing world (...)** As the seas continue to rise, they will swallow entire island nations, from the Maldives to the Marshall Islands, will flood large areas of countries such as Bangladesh and Egypt, and will submerge part of a host of coastal cities. (...) **The human cost of global warming: seas raising will make hundreds of thousands of homeless.** Also recently, in May 2016, five islands belonging to the Solomon Islands archipelago, in the Pacific Ocean, were completely submerged by water due to an increase in sea levels. Some of these were not inhabited, but others were, and two villages were destroyed. Scientists say that this sea level rising tendency is not over, on the contrary, it seems to be increasing.*

The conference lasted a week. In the first two or three days of meetings, things were getting really bad: it was verified that the expected results had not been achieved and above all that there was still no global political will to do so.

People began to see red. Very many of them inundated the site of the summit with emails, and this time newspapers supported them, giving them prominence. Some were so convincing and peremptory, perhaps written by an anonymous Sussex employee, to be signed by great and well-known intellectuals, people from show business, high finance managers, politicians. The spread of this world indignation, thanks to the web, was immediate and effective. The great powers and all the countries taking part in the summit could no longer ignore public opinion, and the summit went through a turning point.

From that moment on we began to talk about *epochal* changes, and no longer *climate* changes.

Stock market shares of polluting industries collapsed. The big energy multinationals had to completely abandon the use of fossil fuels, from one day to the next. And everything was focused on renewables.

Institutions invested in urban infrastructures: ample space was given to bicycles and they invented and built the *mechanical pavements* that exploited the movement of people and geothermal energy.

These became the most widely used means of transport in a very short time. It was so pleasant and easy to use them, with their comfort, for example every 100 meters a recycled plastic bench was placed (there was plenty of it, since the oceans had just been cleaned, but I'll tell you about this later), sheltered and heated, with the possibility of recharging mobile phones or electric bikes, and free wi-fi, all of which immediately became part of people's lives, like natural events, as if they had always been there.

And then, the greatest thing was that people began to meet each other and talk to each other much more than when they were shut up in their cars cursing anyone passing in front of them. Dozens and dozens of neighbours who had never met before, finally bumped into each other in every neighbourhood where the mechanical pavements were installed. Nicole remembered so many beautiful stories, stories of friendships, loves and even business, born walking together towards their des-

tinations on the speeding rollers, or maybe sitting comfortably for a rest stop at one of the benches.

People who had lightly touched each other in garages for years, but hardly ever met in person, thanks to mechanical pavements, were meeting now.

Loneliness became a choice. Depression, which had been a scourge during the '10s and '20s, almost totally disappeared, just the same way it had appeared, from many people's lives.

People discovered the taste for movement and the endorphins, together with the serotonin, reappeared in those poor bodies exhausted by a sedentary lifestyle, weighed down by big bellies, drained by the stress, restraining panic attacks and various anxieties. The few vehicles that remained in circulation, ambulances, taxis, buses, were all powered by renewable energy.

In the cities people started to breathe clean air again and tumours decreased by 88%.

The mid-seasons and spring finally came back.