





Annamaria Farricelli

# THE ECHO OF SILENCE



***The Echo of Silence***

by Annamaria Farricelli

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[redazione@edizioni2000diciassette.com](mailto:redazione@edizioni2000diciassette.com)

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On the cover, the nude art by the artist Stefano Presutti.

ISBN:978-88-31243-85-8 The Echo of silence

*“Listen to the woman when  
she’s looking at you, instead  
than when she is speaking”*



# PREFACE

From an act of love quickly and stealthily consummed, ended on four briquettes of her family's home, will be born a great tragedy for Marianna, victim and then perpetrator, prey of a mocking destiny. A love betrayed by jealousy and pride, by pettiness and concealments. A never forgotten love, even if blasphemed, where the main character will have to raise from the ash more alive, strong and courages than before. From the pretty strong content, the novel: *"the echo of the silence"*, we recognize disturbing and corrosive frescoes, through which Annamaria Farricelli prunes, with very well chosen narrative time, the wrongdoing of the prejudices, where the woman is relegated to the subalterne role of the appearance. An intriguing continuity is shattered in the pain of the events, told through the filter of a gentle soul, but sharp as well toward that masculine cynicism, that emerges from the person of Francesco: rude husband, weak, prey of unsolved demons. The protagonist, Marianna, give back through a sanguine and vibrant dimension the main role payable to the women; disassemble and recomposes through a vibrant language, accomplishes even the lyrics in the text, the the canon of respect of the genre, which must be given to all, universally. The syntax it's

beating: it stuns, seduces, shakes and makes you confuse; enchants and conquers. The episodes rely slightly on the “*verismo*” canon, driving the reader into the abyss of the abjection of the human soul. The sharp desire for economic power exudes from Francesco’s character, opening glimpses and giving visions hard to put in a context, such as these absurd-looking propositions. The mixing between fantasy and reality complements each other in a story with electric edges, to get into with the exact awareness of being hit by it. A woman’s portrait leading to tormented and feverish lands, an excavation into the human’s restlessness, in the hypocrisy dressed for the feast, wandering forever between the research of love and the cries, in this feminine figure so fascinatingly dense as well as emptied in her “*being woman*”. “*The echo of the silence*” is a novel to read without interruption, because its fast pace and the enchantment would not allow you to do otherwise and you would have, so, to come back on the previous pages, again and again...

*Ivan Guidone*  
*Sociologist and journalist.*



# CHAPTER I

Do not pay attention to me.

Everyone wonder about the meaning of life. The only reply that we can give to ourselves, is that life is an endless change. This continue evolution amazes us. We are trying to understand, we investigate, we hold on small glimmers in order to understand the connection between the dark angles, with the sun who appear not to warms up. We find refuge, then, among proverbs, where the popular wisdom dwells. We could use many of them, for all of them is worthy to mention this one: "*the time heal any sufference*". How much sadness in these words! But the time can actually help people who suffered a lot throughout their lives? Surely, time doesn't cancel whatever has been but with it the wounds are coverted; the pain, the rage, the tears, the torment, the anguish... fade. Everything turns up into a "*nostalgic memory*". Then, a scent, a song, a dèjà vu and

so a “*whip*” hit the heart, directly, and suddenly that healed scar start bleeding again. That was the cognition of that sufference Marianna felt at anytime, any moment: a red wire covered sometimes by melancholy, or sometimes as a detached regret for her renounce. Marianna was a girl, attending the eight grade. A beautiful lady with a sinuous and immature body. She had a innate elegance in her posture, but because of her age this made her appear like she was haughty. She lived in a modest family, her father was a worker, her mother a housewife, but also a very decent one and with conservative mentality about moral values. Marianna grew up serene, she loved her peers, and she had some small love story also. Marianna was a simple girl, despite her talents, but she was ambitious as well and she dreamt to do great things. She was smart and aware of her beautiness that, together with the misterious strenght of the young age, allowed her to dream about the future without any fear: in her own dreams she used to take refuge when she had no permission to leave the house. She learnt the art of the silence in which she took refuge as well, and through her showdown she was playing with her own feelings, creating mutable realities, lovely and welcoming ones. It was her way to evade and to dream about what her peers were living. She liked to write and she became to transpose her dreams into verses. Her first poem releaved what her life would have been. She wrote “*detention of a student*”. It was her way to make order

in that “*chaos*” of inner feelings that upset her. Marianna was always good studying italian language, she expressed herself with nostalgic and introspective notes. Maybe, inside of her soul, she knew what her future life would have been. Even her parents had great hopes about her and, as any other parent, they were waiting for the qualitative leap. They were hoping for a good man for her: a socially and culturally affirmed and wealthy person. Marianna, whilettime, was thinking about the alternation of the seasons, the meetings, the scents, the flowers announcing spring and alienated herself by thinking of bunch of flowers she used to get as gifts. Yes, because she was used to that, also. There was always a young boy who, in the morning, while waiting for the school bell, gave to her some shy, little rose. Simple gestures, very innocent and spontaneous, but they were filling her heart, in despite of the jeers of the other girls. They was envy of her, Marianna was considered to be the most beautiful girl of the school and the bodily beauty went together with harmonious movements. So, she was good had what it takes to dream and to make other people dream as well. But “*the life it’s like a pendulum, ranging without end between boredom and pain*” (A.S.).

Do not pay attention to me  
If you see me running toward the horizons  
... do not pay attention to me... !  
If i'm trying to eat the dew of the field,

To drink the drops of rain,  
To catch pieces of the stars  
... do not pay attention to me... !  
I come from another planet  
Where there is no gratitude,  
Where there is no love,  
Where the flowers do not grow up!

Do not pay attention to me  
If i smile, if i laugh, if i joke,  
every gesture it's a repressed tear,  
A bleeding wound,  
A closed door!

I dance a dance without music,  
I live a life without light!  
I learnt to express myself through verses  
In order to speak with my own silence!  
... do not pay attention to me... !

## CHAPTER II

Spy on the stars

*“Everything of essential happening in a human being takes place within  
the first twenty years of life”  
(V.W.).*

But the “*pendulum*” ranging on Marianna’s life who did not imagine that everything would have happened within the first twenty years of life. It was clear Virginia Wolf didn’t foresaw that the devil would have had a hand... !

Times goes on in the girl’s life. Whiletime she got the license of the middle school. Spring came! The sea color of the Sorrento Peninsula. Was mixed with the clear sky that seemed to embrace the dreams, the life, the beauty, the smile of the sweet girl. She was happy! Already thinking about the high school, “*le*

*magistrali*". She felt to be adult, important! She already was imagining herself as teacher, there, ready to love her pupils, telling them stories. She had an innate maternal instinct. Whilettime the summer, in her city, was always something magic. She loved to walk toward the most beautiful seafront who had nothing to envy to the exotic locations. But, it was granted to her only with mom Anna and dad, Paolo and this was making her sad. Then, summer lost its beauty, becoming too long; she liked more to go at the school: at least there sha had the freedom to go alone, engaging with her mates, You know, teenagers are in such a hurry to grow up and Marianna made no exception. Now she started to wish the yellowed leaves, breating the wet ground after the rain. She used to look with in religious silence the sunset of the sky and of the sea after twilight who came always before, but this was making her closer to the new school, to the new life, to the new classmates: she was bright.

*"The devil make the pots, not the lids... !"*

It was the end of september, a month before Marianna turned 14 years old and she was trembling with the desire to go at school, only few days were left before october. Yes, because back then the schools began 1st october. Everything was going on regularly, nothing foreshadowed that a "*dlin dlon*" of a ring bell would have cut off the dreams of the young girl. They were two men, one of them acquaintance with mom Anna. They entered, sat down and the dialogue began. The acquaint-

ance introduced the other “*guy*” as a first hand tenured teacher from another region, looking for a rented room in my family house. That was a catastrophe for Marianna! But she couldn’t have known it. The thing disliked to the girl, even because the house was small and, although big, it had just two rooms and the presence of a stranger was source of discomfort for her. The damage was done! The little one could nothing against her parents’ decision. Francesco, that’s the name of the teacher (*a 28 years old man*) at his very first work as tenured teacher, had the destiny throwing him right in that home. He was a cute boy, but in his behavior there was something weird that mom Anna and father Paolo didn’t noticed but that disturbed the girl, too young naive and without experience to understand. School started and Marianna, between her mates, forgot the tension she felt at home with that stranger. Almost two years passed, Marianna was 15 years old, by now; whiletime the “*cares*” of Francesco was becoming more and more insistent. The girl was afraid to speak with her parents about it, she was considered to be too lively and this scared her. She never had kissed a boy, she just walked with some friend through the short street that, from school, led to her house. She used still to dress the socks, the black apron at the middle school and the uniform in the high school: a skirt, strictly pleated and of blue color, with a blue shirt, but she was nice and elegant with that shapeless uniform. Mah... ”only the fool pass through the life’s

journey without to pay attention at the Creation's beauty", and Marianna was a Creation's beauty! That's way, in a sad afternoon of may, "*the fool*" was alone at home with her. He grabbed her, kissed her, he blew her skirt up, but without to deflower her; he had a superficial, rough, rapid approach with the girl. Marianna, stunned, naive as she was, thought that Francesco pissed on himself: she had no knowledge about masculine ejaculation. It was the beginning of the end! She wasn't thinking about the consequences; she kissed him, and, even if she thought that kiss could have made her pregnant, she was used to give to the questions her own answers. She thought about the kisses in the movies, and so she calmed down, convincing herself it was not possible to procreate because of a kiss. She was still unaware about how a sexual intercourse take place: these topics were tabù! Whiletime, may passed, then june and something was not right. In august she would have turned 16. She spoke with Francesco. With a ruse, Marianna said to mom Anna that she was going to study with a friend. She was in the 2nd year of high school. So, Francesco brought her to a doctor able to solicit her menstrual cycle. Scared, discouraged, disoriented, shocked, Marianna, like a puppy dog, went under all the abuses. That doctor, she never came to know who he was, made 9 injections to her: 3 plus 3 plus 3, within 1 hour. But the time didn't gave the hoped results. Whiletime, as a responsible man as he proved to be, in june, when the school



ended, Francesco went back to his small village, leaving the child alone with her serious problems. Marianna, in July, wrote to him a letter, informing him about the confirmation of the suspect she carried with her since 3 months. She was slender, well built, her body still hadn't undergone the metamorphosis. Whiletime, she signed to the third year of high school, her only thought, and... she dreamed!

Spying the stars  
I look at the waves that  
tip over the little beach.  
The sea is at a short distance.  
The sun at the horizon.  
A sudden peace, the silence,  
The ruins of the countryside.  
Who am I? What am I doing in this  
Bright heat in the luminous  
And strong colors of the afternoon?  
I've no more past, no future,  
Neither i share of nothing of what it is today.  
Waiting for the shadows to spy the stars  
Through slots, at night, without moon,  
With the ember eyes of a soul  
That do not give up.  
I go ahead blindly in the dusty darkness  
Cut off by a diagonal of light  
Coming down from a slot  
And i grab it, to be able to dream.

# CHAPTER III

He who was

*“Wife and oxes of your Country...”*

That’s another proverb that should push us to think. Why? Because focusing on thinking, we how many components, socio-psychological-philantropic are inside of it; basically, any finding of the “*human being*”, often hard to mix, intersect, share and embrace wiith the other ones. If, then, the “*components*” are made of different times, places, evolutions, that’s when the relations become complex. Who was Francesco? From where did he came? These are the first points signing, despite to the waves of the life, parallel paths who will never meet with each other. Francesco came from a small village of the Agrigento’s

hinterland, one of the most poor, backward and criminal of Sicily. The same Leonardo Sciascia analyze it in detail in his *"il giorno della civetta"*. There, women dressed still and ever the black clothes, with the handkerchief on their heads when Marianna, in the 70', few more than a teenager, knew about its existence. Water didn't reach houses, it did just once any 15-20 days and people were standing up all night to collect it, waiting for the next delivery. Life in that village looked to be still, unmovable. Francesco's family made no exception; it was a very large one: 8 children. The father, the man of the house, has never been used to work although he was calling himself a *"farmer"*. Everything was counted, ever the water's drops, this condition had consequences even on the family hygienic conditions, There was a kind of conflict, either of confidence and of consume. Same for the lectric energy. A lifestyle that was confirmed even when the family moved to the sicilian capital, looking for fortune. The mother, an energetic and resolute woman, stumbled through to bring the numerous family to study. Respect toward the parents was the only, incontestable value. The *"vossia"* was the pronoun, speaking with them. Nephews' names were kept as a sacred law, doesn't matter if 8 nephews and 8 nieces would have had the same names: they would have been numbered, like in the concentration camps. Same was happening between brothers, males and females with the same names; mother and daughter with the same name:

objections are forbidden! Time was passing between inaction, silence, sacrifices. Everything was looking to lead at that irremovability that we breathe in the “*Malavoglia*”, everything was incorporated in the concept of the “*roba*”, the possession. Everything was reasonably thought, everything was about convenience. Even the choice of “*Marianna*” was analyzed and thought by Francesco. She, almost, was still a child, without experience, unaware of the World’s life, protected by her parents, then, easy to be “*shaped*”, as Francesco himself said, as if she were a clay pot to be shaped. A typical Verga’s character, Francesco was a private man of few words. While talking he used to move the glance somewhere else. He didn’t approve social life, he hung with nobody, he had no friends, stingy either in feelings and in his relation with the money. Often Marianna noticed lies in his speech. But she didn’t understand, she was feeling discomfort, she felt guilty not being able to satisfy that man, such older than her to consider himself an “*expert man*”.

That’s how the dripping that led Marianna to think about herself as out of place, undesirable, unable, irresponsible, ignorant... Marianna became “*the woman of nobody!*”.

He who was  
A he who was...  
Cold, calculating sort of person, selfish,  
He stole the smile, he hurt the feeling  
He offended the to be a woman.  
Indifferent in love, he wallowed  
In a self-centered narcissism!  
And i lost myself in a long,  
Calm night and without dreams,  
Cold night, where not even the echo  
Of an althought cold  
And rainy spring never  
Succeed to be heard!  
No scent of violet and jasmine  
Gave relief to that heart, by now  
Worn and disappointed  
Asking for sincerity,  
Obtaining nothing else than lies!  
He who was...  
He masked with intelligence and eloquence  
The cowardice and the greedness,  
His true nature,  
And even more cowardly,  
He disappeared without a word!  
A him that was not...  
Nothing he was, nothing is left.

## CHAPTER IV

My doll.

The cry is child's strenght.

Marianna was a child. She turned 16 years old on august. She was alone with her own burden! She was the child of nobody! As child, she cried a lot! To her letter, Francesco replied he would come back in september, as expected. The months was going on. Whilettime mom Anna started to notice changes in Marianna's body and she broached the subject. The tears didn't delay to run out like a river, like a lake, like ocean. Contrasting feelings like: love for that little being who started to grow up un her unripe womb: shame, culpability, betrayal... she wished just not to live. She didn't belong to this World. She didn't think about Francesco but about the pain, the disappointment she was given to her parents, about the gossip to whom she would have been subjected, the prejudices to fight, the unknown of

her life, her broken dreams, her split adolescence, about the school she wanted to continue, that role as teacher she saw as made just for her.

Now she wasn't alone to cry: Mom Anna and dad Paolo cried, as well, something shall be done.

But what?

Marianna just wanted to go at school, to smile with her mates, to realize her targets. That's why the mother managed to organize a visit to the gynecologist. Marianna never knew his name, she didn't care, she only wanted to cancel everything. But that was impossible. The sentence came, the ultrasound didn't exist at the time: *"Mrs, I cannot visit your daughter: she is still a virgin! But, by the seize of the child, should be the 5th month of pregnancy, althought the child it's still very small"*.

A complete disaster! Even auntie Rosa was there, sister of mom Anna, all overwhelmed by the storm! Now the tears streamed down the faces of mom Anna, of auntie Rosa, of Marianna, which had the only wish to go at school. Then, she became *"land of nobody"*. Everyone decided, everyone organized, everyone established. But she? Marianna knew just how to cry. She had no right to speak on that matter. Everyone knew what to do with her: a shotgun wedding! The verdict was given! The life of Marianna severed! From her parents' heads, like a *"box"*, she went into Francesco's hands. That empty *"box"* started its atonement! A marriage was celebrated between swal-



lowed tears and fake smiles. Marianna, in her wedding dress, was the lost little doll with the look lost and without light. The child savored that “*ugly thing*” given by that “*fake man*”. She understood, in that first night of marriage, that if the life as a couple was that, she didn’t like it, she didn’t belong to it. She felt offended, mortified, humiliated by it. She knew something was wrong, couldn’t be that way, but she didn’t know, she didn’t understand, she didn’t comprehend. She wanted to go to her mom, in that safe and quiet port and... so she spent the first night in that dark hotel of Naples, crying, sit on the bed, with a man that, like an object, in a sudden impulse without love, in a moment, without a trace, had her body several times. That night was the only sad, vapid night of their honeymoon. A month after, a wonderful girl was born. Marianna was admitted at the first lights of the day. At 8 am Francesco went at school, he didn’t caress Marianna, not even during the labor. As usual, Marianna was crying on her bed, that was the only thing she knew and was able to do. The chief of the hospital called her “*Our lady of the tears*”. When Francesco came back from the school, he found Marianna in the labor room: alone, as always... land of nobody!

My doll  
A precious doll with blue eyes!  
An unexpected gift,  
But loved since the first moment!  
I said goodbye to my youth  
To my broken dreams,  
To my lightheartedness,  
To my innocence!  
I faced my fears,  
The slander, the prejudices of the people.  
But, i loved you suddenly  
And, in the moments of discouragement,  
Your eyes, filled with life,  
Gave me strenght and sustained me  
Throughout the storm  
Of not always positive feelings!  
We played together, you grew up,  
And I with you!  
We exchanged our clothes,  
We cried, we laughed, we suffered together  
But accomplices in our growth!  
Together, we learnt to cross  
The ways of the life, filled with snares.  
In my innocent  
And lost gait,

I tried to preserve you  
From life's difficulties,  
To defend you from pain,  
To prevent the defeat.  
I was a woman's cocoon,  
You, my little butterfly  
Who struggled with all her strenght.  
Then, you learnt how to fly  
Touching lands, seas,  
Knowing unknown people and places.  
I was 16 and you was  
*"My blonde doll with blue eyes!"*



# CHAPTER V

Survivor.

*“I see horizons where you draw borders”  
(Frida Kablo)*

“*Our lady of the tears*” survived! She herself didn’t know in which dimension she was in. She was there, in that small bed, with a blonde swab who tenderly, unconsciously, she was holding on her heart with natural gesture.

There, in that room, once again, while mom Anna and uncle Rosa cried without to understand if that’s out of joy or out of shame. Francesco drove outside the staff, who came inside for the compilation of the information form. He didn’t want that the bystanders may hear those data, starting to make some

calculation. Marianna understood, she felt to be the only guilty one, the responsible for all the disaster, but an angel was there, in her arms, and she loved it tenderly; she always loved her from the very first day she felt her growing in her womb. She looked that swab with long and tapered fingers, caressing her face, almost as to say: *“Mommy, don’t worry, we will grow up together, don’t cry anymore!”* It was in that moment Marianna began to look forward, she wanted not to look back. She knew there was horizons to overcome, even if Francesco draft borders around her.

She interrupted the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the high school. Together with that little girl who presented herself always lively and curious, she decided to go on with the studies. She asked to mom Anna to have the child without to get married. She felt to be little, she wanted to go ahead with the school while growing up that little being, then the time would have offered the glimpse of life and decisions would have been taken. But the verdict was established, her wishes didn’t matter and Francesco looked a mile away. Marianna didn’t understand what was wrong with that man. She felt he was unsentimental, detached, selfish, stingy and she blamed herself because she was a little girl, immature as woman, inexperienced about sex and all of this gave her sufference. She waited warm, love, understanding, kind gestures from that man, so much older than her but that, anyway, gave her troubles. Early, life appeared made of