

2nd May 1977

I was born in Palermo on a sultry May night and what I first saw and smelled were the excessive shades and scents of my city and my land, Palermo and Sicily.

There blew the sirocco and some blew into my head...

I grew up in a crazy family. Crazy, yes... since my parents decided to give birth to six children (three boys and three princesses), making my home a funny farm where each seemed to do something different from what the others were doing, but actually we were doing all the same thing, as it happens in Capra's movies.

My father is a dentist (that's why I'm not afraid of them) and my mum that kind of mother who remembers Greek and Latin perfectly and deals with education. I've learned 90% of what I needed to know about life just living in such a clan. At primary school I couldn't help chatting and playing tricks. At secondary school I got wiser and I grew on reading. (I had an ordinary boyhood except for my hair which inexplicably turned curly, even though there's someone among my relatives who spreads unverified rumours...).

1990

I attended grammar school where luckily I met some remarkable teachers. Among them I will never forget Father Puglisi, a priest killed by mafia, and my Italian teacher, Mario Franchina. I spent my spare time reading, doing sport and meeting my friends as much as I could.

1995

At the age of 18, after taking A-levels (in Italy students get a "maturity diploma" and I admit I was mature only on paper), I decided to move to Rome to study Greek and Latin at university. I studied passionately and once again I was so lucky to meet one or two outstanding teachers (Luigi Enrico Rossi e Domenico Musti).

2000

I graduated in Greek literature and I successfully applied for a PhD in anthropology of the classical world at the university of Siena, a sort of blissful oasis in the bleak Italian academia. I worked on a dissertation about the Homeric sirens and their relationship with the Muses (my PhD tutor was Maurizio Bettini).

Meanwhile, I began to teach at school, realizing what I've dreamed of all along. I taught at lower secondary school (11-13 pupils) where I learned almost all is required to teach:

explaining something to a 12-year-old kid is the challenge that all teachers should undertake to really see themselves fit to such career.

Thus, I took my teaching qualification after the scheduled training, during which I learned bunches of useless theories from people who had never set foot in a school and I well understood what a teacher shouldn't be.

Soon after I started to work as Greek and Latin teacher with great joy, at least as far as I was concerned, and perhaps as far my students were too. I set up a drama club with some of them and we also shot a short.

After two years, sure to earn my own living by then, I decided to throw myself into a new adventure which had been appealing to me since ever: to tell stories.

2006

Thus, after eleven wonderful years in Rome, I moved to Milan to attend a post-graduate course on screenwriting ("Screenwriting and filmmaking for TV and cinema"), a real shortcut to learn the story-telling techniques. After my course, I worked as screenwriter in different projects. I wrote some episodes of a Disney TV series and I won a prize for a film comedy of mine. I got back to work at school as Italian teacher.

Meanwhile, I focused on media education and I went on tour throughout Italy, from Palermo to Trieste, with a seminar-screenplay I wrote, an unusual journey to the heart of MTV's generation. It was successful and caught the attention of students, their families, and teachers. I could see the situation of different Italian schools with my eyes.

Meanwhile, I kept writing my first novel at night. Its first draft was submitted to friends and students who kindly advised me on how to edit it after their passionate reading. When at last I came to my final draft, I sent it off to Mondadori, where it was soon highly appreciated. My novel is now published in 19 countries. In November 2011 my latest novel was published: *Cose che nessuno sa*, which is being translated into ten

countries. On 6th December 2012 I was awarded *the International Padre Puglisi Prize* for my commitment to education through my works and seminars.

Present time

Now I'm teaching Italian and Latin in Milan to beautiful and difficult students. I'm a columnist for some national newspapers (*La Stampa, TuttoLibri, Avvenire, Repubblica Palermo*). I continue to study, read (whatever, from comics to Dostoevskij), write, do some exercise, watch films and series, and look after my blog. I devote all my spare time to

friends. You'll likely meet me in the streets, on my bike, a lovely black wreck, which is not only a bike but a way to live and watch reality. I've grown a beard to gain a more serious-looking face.

On 4th April 2013 it was released *Bianca come il latte, rossa come il sangue*, the film "drawn by my first novel, of which Fabio Bonifacci and I wrote the screenplay. Its DVD has been on sale since 26th September 2013 with very special features and extras. I'm currently working on my third novel dealing with high school students.

I don't aim to teach anything to anyone (except to my students, who must feel they are in conditions to learn, as I try to do, rather than they are being taught something...), but to prove that life always owns the best copyright.

Ps. 2.0 means to use the net creatively, not to undergo it, but to create in order to encourage to create. Teacher 2.0 is a challenging wish to realize not only a passive learning, but a creative workshop full of ideas where everyone is a student and a teacher at the same time.