



Elena Ferrante's New Book Hits Italian Shelves

Roberta Cutillo (November 06, 2019)



Following the international success of the Neapolitan Novels series, the mysterious author of “My Brilliant Friend” is back with a new novel, once again set in Naples but showing a different face of the city.

12 million copies sold in over 50 countries and [an acclaimed television series](#) [2] produced by HBO with Rai later, [Elena Ferrante](#) [3] - whose true identity remains unknown - is back with a new book, “The Lying Life of Adults” (“La vita bugiarda degli adulti”), set to hit Italian bookshelves on November 7.



The novel follows Giovanna, the only child of a well-to-do liberal intellectual family, whose pleasant sheltered life becomes unsettled as she begins to uncover the secrets and lies harbored by the adults in her life, particularly her father.

From the moment the young protagonist overhears a conversation during which her beloved father calls her “very ugly” - a scene supposedly inspired by a line in Flaubert’s [Madame Bovary](#) [4], in which upon looking at her daughter the protagonist Emma thinks “what an ugly child she is” - her world begins to crumble, revealing a completely different reality underneath it.

Giovanna learns that along with the upper middle class Naples of professors and intellectuals she has grown up in, there exists another desperate, vulgar and lively Naples and that the two are intertwined, even within her family history through the enigmatic figure of her aunt Vittoria.

The main story is set in the 90s, but in describing her parent’s youth Ferrante manages to also convey the atmosphere of the late 70s, its illusions and myths, with the remarkable clarity and sensibility for which she is known.

It’s a coming of age tale that spans Giovanna’s tumultuous teenage years, between the ages of 12 and 16, a time of inner and outer discovery, when convictions are challenged and myths debunked. Children learn that adults aren’t perfect, that they do bad things, they lie.

Once again the author creates a story that is both explicitly Neapolitan yet so universal that it resonates with millions worldwide.

English speakers will however have to wait seven more months for the US release with Europa Editions, scheduled for June 9, 2020.

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[1] <http://iitaly.org/files/coverlibropng>

[2] <https://www.hbo.com/my-brilliant-friend>

[3] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elena_Ferrante

[4] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madame_Bovary