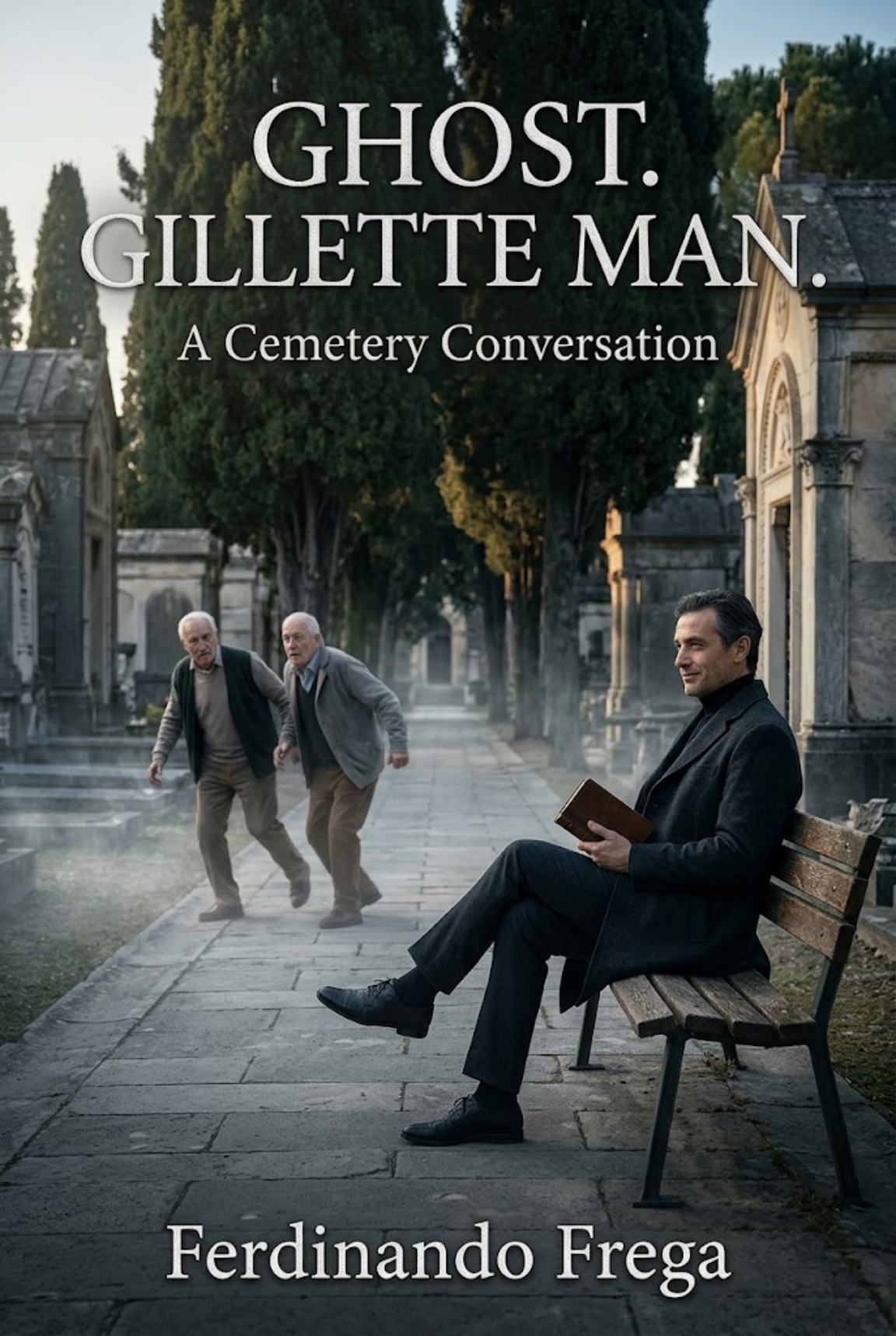

GHOST.
GILLETTE MAN.
A Cemetery Conversation
Ferdinando Frega

# GHOST. GILLETTE MAN.

*“I am only a ghost.”*

*The P&G Saga · 20*

I had walked to the cemetery that morning. It was the anniversary of Dad’s birthday, and after such a long way on foot I stopped for a moment to rest, and found a bench to sit on, partly taken by two elderly gentlemen.

I greeted them — an old rule left to us by my Galilean colleague, about strangers — and I was settling in to catch my breath when the two of them began to talk out loud, an open conversation that, by the look of it, was meant not to be secret at all, with me sitting right there.

The younger one asked the older one how he thought he would die, and whom he would want at his funeral. The other replied: “At my age, only 96, I have few requests left, and I don’t expect everyone who knows me to be there when I die, because I hope to go and say goodbye to them first, wherever they are.”

And in return, the old man asked the younger one: “And you, how do you want to die?”

“Well,” he said, “I’m 62, I’ve taken out almost 26 loans between banks and finance companies, plus a mortgage on a house I’ll never see, and these sons of bitches were all quick to have me sign insurance policies in case I die first — they covered their own asses. Meanwhile, once you’re dead, the State cancels all the tax bills and the fines. And as for an inheritance, I have nothing to leave. Whatever I had, I made sure to give to every woman I met in my life — but with the

rule of ‘a little at a time.’”

“Forgive the question and my curiosity, but what was this ‘a little at a time’? Money, maybe?”

“No, my friend. Only love — but the kind that doesn’t come back, just like life when they bring you into the world.”

The two of them burst out laughing, and I joined in too. Then they turned to me and asked what I thought.

“Thank you for sharing, and I’m glad you can both see me, because I am only a ghost. And if our eyes are meeting at this very moment, it means you are both on the right road, the one that leads to the Father’s house.”

They jumped up, grabbed their balls — the old Italian charm against bad luck — and ran off as fast as their legs could carry them.

I hadn’t even had time to finish my ironic little joke, and with nothing more than the “semantic preview” they had collapsed in fear. That is when I understood how strong words are.

I thought I should start being more careful, now and in the future, because I too might run the risk of meeting a ghost — and maybe he would ask me whether, to meet the people of the web, you need to pay for ADS and SEO, or do as I did: without.

Ferdinando