

GILLETTE’S MOST CROWDED PLACE

(seen by those who still wait)

“A clinic cures the patients. A caring community supports the people.”

I. The Most Crowded Place

What is the most crowded place in a healthcare facility?

Not the hall.

Not the clinics.

Not the waiting room.

Nor the corridors.

The most crowded place is the one that appears on no floor plan.

It is the future.

Everyone who enters carries a question with them.

The patients.

The families.

The doctors.

The nurses.

The directors.

Even the one who cleans the floors.

No one truly knows how it will end — or perhaps they pretend, out of fear.

And yet, everyone keeps making plans for the day after.

Nowhere else have I seen so many people live at once in the same present, and inhabit, with obstinacy, the same future.

This is why I believe the cemetery is the most crowded place I have ever known.

II. Epilogue

Many think that the opposite of life is death.

I am not so sure.

After spending time in rehabilitation facilities, hospitals, care homes and cemeteries, I have come to a different conclusion.

The opposite of life is not death.

It is oblivion.

And it is probably for this reason that the cemetery is one of the most crowded places I know.

Not of people.

Of memory.

All our lives we are afraid of the cemetery.

As children we are taught it is the place of the end.

As adults we learn to avoid it.

We go there out of duty, for anniversaries, out of respect.

We enter in silence and leave as soon as we can.

And yet, looking closely, I discovered that the cemetery is not the place of the dead. The dead are not there.

They are in the houses they inhabited.

In the words they left.

In the gestures we learned from them.

In the flaws we inherited.

In the absences that keep speaking to us.

The cemetery is the place of the living.

Of those who return.

Of those who remember.

Of those who still have something to say to someone who can no longer answer. And let me tell you, from one who has been there, but found no place.

III. Author Page

This work was not commissioned.

It was not sold.

It was not made for commercial purposes.

It was written to bear witness to the value of rehabilitation, of human dignity, and of the relationship between people.

The only fee requested is a symbolic dollar — not as payment for the work, but as a testament to a shared commitment to a culture of care, hope, and responsibility.

Ferdinando