





Pietro Barilla:
“Everything is done
for the future,
forge ahead
with courage.”

EDITED BY

**Francesco
Alberoni**

THE BIOGRAPHY OF AN EXTRAORDINARY
ITALIAN ENTREPRENEUR

Rizzoli



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For my friend Pietro.
Francesco Alberoni



INTRODUCTION

I first met Pietro Barilla in the 1970s, worked as his consultant throughout his life, and was with him during his final days. When his children Guido, Luca, Paolo and Emanuela asked me to write their father's biography, I thought it over for a long time. A biography is usually the work of a historian, someone who tells the story of a famous person's life by rebuilding it as precisely as possible, making the subject seem as close as possible, present in such a way that whoever reads the biography feels like a participant in his or her life.

I tried to do exactly this, but I felt like I was pushing Pietro further away, tying him down to the past and, in certain points, too far in the past. I could feel something wasn't right.

Visiting the Barilla company I saw, right by the entrance, the sculpture created by Giuliano Vangi to represent a man and woman in love, running towards life: and every time I passed that statue I had the impression that Pietro had it put there in order to remind us not to look towards the past, but into the future.

Then, as soon as I went inside, the first thing I would see was his smiling photograph, followed by Francesco Messina's *Grande danzatrice*, visible as soon as you turned to the right. You could feel

he put that here too: it seems like it was just yesterday. Upstairs in his office – modern, intact and filled with his furniture, his Picasso, Umberto Boccioni's *Il romanzo di una cucitrice* – I always had the impression that he'd only just stepped out and could come back any moment...

Every time I visited, walking around the factory, stopping by the cafeteria, talking with managers, technicians, laborers, I got the sense that he was still there for them as well. There was always someone willing to talk about him with me, to share a few anecdotes, to tell me how he accomplished this or that, to repeat things he'd said. It seemed like he'd only just left...

Pietro had put so much of himself into his company that it seemed like he was always there. Realizing this, I knew what I had to do. I needed to let him talk. Since his presence could be felt everywhere, I need to let Pietro Barilla talk about his life, the things he'd accomplished, his personal values. This way, anyone who reads this book would be able to see him the same way everyone who had ever met him did: elegant and smiling while asking questions, informing others and making suggestions. It occurred to me that perhaps I could bring him alive in a biography the way I would have liked to have done in a movie. Instead of film, I would use sheets of paper; and there would be no actor playing his part, just Pietro talking about Pietro. It would bring him even closer, make him even more real.

I knew it would be extremely difficult, but I believed the goal was worth it. There is an entire historical archive dedicated to Barilla and Pietro, but while plenty of fragments made it out of the archive, what I wanted was to create a concrete image of the man, as if he were still alive, present among us; as if he could feel the affection we still feel for him.

And so, for three years I continued to “speak” with Pietro. Only in my imagination, you might say, and that's true. But with

surprising solidity, because almost all the words published in this book are really his. I heard them directly from his mouth, or from his children and his wife; I heard them in interviews he gave, in the many films he participated in over the years; and in the stories I was told by his closest collaborators and friends.

Along the way, I discovered that everyone remembered clearly and perfectly the things he'd said, right down to the most striking details.

Pietro Barilla had a gift for making an impression; his words, thoughts and values stuck in the hearts and minds of his interlocutors. And where his voice couldn't reach, he sent letters. Pietro wrote constantly and profusely: to family members, friends, collaborators and artists. The letters are extraordinary from a literary point of view as well, full of careful prose and feelings. They are intense letters, words that instill courage and which each of us who have received them hold dear as precious talismans.

And so I've worked to make sure that all this would continue to live on...

Francesco Alberoni



I

LIFTOFF

I'm happy the kids asked you to write my biography. You were really young when you joined us. That was back in 1957, and you worked more closely with Gianni than you did with me. Gianni was talented, not just an entrepreneur, but also an excellent technician and inventor. Did you know he was the one, together with engineer Manfredi⁻¹, who designed the world's first continuous production line for long pasta, and had it built by Braibanti⁻² in 1953? Back then I basically took care of sales and marketing. We split up the work in a natural, spontaneous way.

– Yes, but if I remember correctly, in 1953 you went to Stuttgart yourself, together with Manfredi, in order to finish the machines.

That's right, I did. But only because those were machines for packaging. The time had come to abandon fresh pasta, the stuff shopkeepers kept in the big drawers under the kneading trough, and move on to pasta placed in elegant boxes that displayed a clear brand name. That's what I was creating. We went by train, arriving at night, then we dropped our suitcases off at the ho-

tel and went out to see the city. We were stunned! The city was empty, with no one out on the streets. It seemed dead! At the time, we didn't know what was going on. Then the doorman explained everything to us. During the bombings the city's civilian population had all moved out into the countryside. When peacetime came, the government and entrepreneurs had decided to rebuild factories first, then homes. It was a really courageous decision to make, both for the government and for the population. But people had stayed put in the places they'd fled to. There was destruction all around us – ruined houses, enormous holes in the ground and deserted streets, save for a few wandering drunkards. The only thing you could see in the sky was an illuminated Mercedes Benz insignia. That image made a deep impression on me. In it, I saw Germany's desire to return to its rightful place in global industry, in the modern world. Through that illuminated sign, Mercedes was expressing pride, faith and the conviction that it would go back to being number one. I've always believed that if you have to make a choice, you can't go wrong choosing the very best, the number one. With that in mind, I was more certain than ever before that we had to purchase our equipment in Germany, from Hesser, because it had been and would surely go back to being the best in the world. We were supposed to buy three machines, but when I visited the factory in Stuttgart, I realized that Europe's economic development was already underway, and that it would soon extend to Italy as well. If I waited, we ran the risk of coming in behind our competitors, of losing the opportunity we now had. I asked myself: why just three machines? If people start buying packaged pasta the way they were in other countries, we would have to produce a heck of a lot of pasta. So instead of three machines, I commissioned seven. Manfredi's eyes were popping out of his head, but when I explained my thinking to him he agreed.

– You were right. With economic recovery and development underway in Italy as well, packaged pasta became a success, and your seven machines provided enough production capacity to meet demand. You anticipated the future, and that wasn't the only time. You've always been the kind of person who pushes forward, who accelerates because you're expecting progressive consumer expansion and continuous technological progress.

I believe that the tendency to be optimistic or pessimistic is connected with the deepest part of our character. But there are also experiences that help us understand which way the world is headed, encouraging us not to be afraid of the future, to see opportunities as they arise. I was lucky in that respect. The first time I owe to my father, who was a very thoughtful and farsighted man. I wasn't doing well in school, and since he cared very deeply about my education and wanted very much that I be well prepared, he sent me to Germany to study business economy. That was 1929, and back then Germany was the most scientifically and technologically advanced country in the world. It represented the future. So at 16 I was suddenly given an extraordinary experience, a vision of where we needed to go. Basically, I saw the future! And I saw it again in 1950, when I was 37, when I traveled to the US. After the war was over the world's role model for economic development was no longer Germany, especially when it came to consumer goods. I got the chance when Alberti, who produced the *Strega* liquor, invited me to go to Hollywood to award the *Nastro d'argento* prize to Alida Valli for best actress of the year. It was an incredible experience. I found myself in the middle of the film world, together with the actress who had starred in the most important movie of the time – *The Third Man* – but the most important thing was what I saw on the streets, in the stores. I saw things

Italy didn't have yet, things that perhaps it couldn't even imagine: a society based on private consumption, on brands, on competition and advertising. Everything in the pasta sector was prepackaged. I felt discouraged. They were so incredibly far ahead of us, and we were still mired down in misery. But I also felt sure that we would grow, so I said to myself: "As soon as I go back I'll change everything." Back then I could only speak a few words of English, but I leafed through the newspapers; I studied the advertising and the large format photographs. Every day I tore two or three pages from *The New York Times* out and stuck them in my suitcase. I was fascinated by the way they seduced their readers, tempting them with indirect advertising that had nothing of the institutional and sober tones in our ads. They tried to appeal to the daily desires of normal people. This was the right path, and I planned on following it too. But back in Italy we were behind in everything. It wasn't just that we didn't have any money; we didn't even have the right paper to print that kind of advertising on! Most of all, we didn't have that spirit, those ideas. I struggled long and hard to come up with a way to make it happen.

– Where did you come up with the solution? Obviously you found one, and quickly, given the way Barilla developed...

I bet on culture!

– Culture?

That's right, culture. That's the thing that most entrepreneurs and even politicians overlook. They don't value it because it seems so far removed from their reality, from business and money. But as long as you know how to use it, to take advantage of it, to make an alliance with it, culture can be a decisive resource.

– How did you create this alliance?

Back then Parma was a refined city, a place where culture was held in high esteem, admired and respected much more than it is today. During the period following the war, with democracy, political debate and an opening up towards Europe and the rest of the world, young people had woken up. The most refined young people, the ones who were the most prepared, could put their skills and personalities to good use. Some of them would soon become famous. I'm talking about people like Attilio Bertolucci³, who taught at the "Romagnosi" classical studies high school, or Cesare Zavattini⁴, who taught at the "Maria Luigia" school. Parma wasn't some ignorant hick town. It was a city that welcomed, stimulated and recognized their value. You know, back then cultural life wasn't separate from daily life, and the point of contact was coffee. Today we go into a bar, order an espresso and then leave. But back then, bars were the places where cultured Italians met up and talked about things. Today we have hundreds of specialized locales for cultural exchange: universities, academies, cultural centers, museums, radio and television... but back then things were different. Cultured and refined people met in a coffee bar and talked things over there. That's where they planned and organized projects. These meetings took place all the time, maybe after work when people would plan to get together, or even when they ran into each other by chance. Most often, people met after dinner. There was a billiards table in the basement, in the game room, and a cultural meeting area on the other side. In Parma, intellectuals usually met in one of the cafés in the center of town. There were three or four in a row on the main piazza: there was the "Orientale" and the "Bar Orologio," which Otello Lottici ran, right behind the Garibaldi statue.

People had favorites and formed groups. For example you'd find Giovanni Drei⁵, the priest who ran the state archives and was

familiar with all the documents and city history, or maybe the painter Carlo Mattioli⁻⁶, who was from Modena but lived in Parma. You could find Erberto Carboni⁻⁷, a graphic artist from Parma who'd moved to Milan but who returned to Parma on Saturdays and Sundays, as did Pietrino Bianchi⁻⁸, Orio Vergani⁻⁹ and Ugo Betti⁻¹⁰.

That's how the magazine *Palatina* got started here in Parma, a publication that all the most important names of the day would eventually write for. These were people who hung out together, who organized festivals and nationally recognized conventions together. They did so with a naturalness that was derived from their reciprocal awareness of one another, their friendship and shared tastes, in a simple, spontaneous manner. That's how Antonio Marchi⁻¹¹, right after the Neorealism convention was held, opened "Cittadella Film," the movie company that created documentaries with scripts by Attilio Bertolucci. Those were really beautiful productions, like *In Puglia muore la storia* (History dies in Puglia), a twenty-minute documentary that filmed Romanesque monuments in Puglia. They were all things that were born within a simple context, among people who spent time together even when they worked outside Parma, in Milan or Rome: the "Parma colony" who felt connected to Parma no matter where they wound up.

So I didn't go to Milan to look for an advertising specialist. I talked with a friend of mine, the famous journalist Pietrino Bianchi, who was perhaps the best Italian film critic – I believe you've met him as well – and got put in touch with Erberto Carboni, and old friend of mine who had already worked with us back in 1922. He was a great artist and intellectual, an elegant man and essential graphic artist. He handled Bompiani's literary almanac, and was part of a group in Milan that got together in the Bagutta restaurant where the famous literary prize was established⁻¹². Some painters and great writers like Riccardo Bacchelli, Orio Vergani and Mario Soldati got together there. Some of them were from Parma, and I

knew them personally. Of course, this literary sphere was far removed from the world of pasta. But it was possible to bring the two closer together; it was possible to build a bridge between culture and business. I knew I needed intellectuals, artists and cultured people in order to get ideas, to ennoble our product's image and, most importantly, to establish our name and our brand among the thousands of anonymous pasta companies or established competitors. And I also knew that they – the writers, journalists and artists – needed us too. Italy was a poor country. The big publishing companies were only just starting to be reborn following World War Two. There was no television. The people who hung out at the Bagutta were famous, but they led modest lifestyles. They needed to work, to make money. If I were to ask them to give us a hand with our advertising, with our image, they had the skills to do it and maybe even the desire. So I bet on them.

– What did you do next?

I contacted Carboni right away. As I told you before, we knew each other well: we had established a wonderful working relationship in 1938, doing really interesting things. I shared my project with him and he was one hundred percent behind it. The idea was to create extremely modern packaging for our pasta, and at the same time launch an advertising campaign with an appropriate slogan. Carboni did a fantastic job: he created packaging and advertisements with extremely high quality graphic design, keeping it rigorous and essential. Two stuck out in particular for me. The first was a poster with a white spoon and fork set against a sky blue background, with just two sticks of spaghetti, one farfalle, a rigatone and two penne, nothing else. The second was a catalogue with three stylized bowls and a kitchen spoon bearing the Barilla logo on the cover. I'm telling you these just to give you an idea about the essential, Spartan

style. It communicated the image of a modern, avant-garde company, as well as rigorous hygiene and the idea of enjoying good, refined pasta. I wanted the packaging to add value to the pasta, to ennoble our product. Carboni pulled that off right from start.

We also needed a slogan that would be incisive and effective, one that would become a catchphrase that could enter into people's minds and last for a long time. That's not easy to come up with. Once again I turned to cultured minds. We found the solution we needed right here in Parma, sitting at a little table in the Otello's café, in the piazza. Carboni, Pietrino Bianchi, Orio Vergani and I sat together there and I told them about our problem. We began discussing it, and a number of different ideas and hypotheses arose. Then Pietrino Bianchi wrote something on a napkin and passed it to me. My curiosity was aroused and I read the phrase: "*Con pasta Barilla è sempre domenica!*" (With Barilla pasta, every day is Sunday!). I'm sure you remember it too: back then people worked hard and could only enjoy a real lunch on Sundays. It was a brilliant idea. Orio's mouth dropped open. Mine must have dropped open too, because Pietrino had to shove me to get an answer. "Well? What do you think?!" Carboni loved it. Thinking back on that experience today I still feel moved and shocked. It was an enormous success, and ad people appreciated it too, because Italy's national jury for advertising awards gave it a *Palma d'Oro* prize, noting: "For the most brilliant and effective ad campaign of 1952."

– Now I understand why you bought seven packaging machines in Stuttgart rather than three!

Yes, for this reason, but also because we had made great leaps forward in production under the leadership of my brother Gianni and Signor Manfredi.

– Yes, I’m aware of that because I just finished reading something by Manfredo Manfredi. In fact, I have a copy of it here with me. It’s called *A Fifty-Year April Fool’s Joke*. Here’s the part I’m talking about: “We finished work on a prototype for drying long pastas and then told Braibanti (which was Fava’s holding company): ‘We’ll give you back the first machine, and then we’ll buy four more once you’ve installed the modifications we’ve come up with together.’”¹³

They repeated what you did in Stuttgart.

That’s what I’m talking about. It was one of those magical moments in which you pull off everything you attempt to do, and the protagonists do the best job possible.

– I’m thinking about people like Carboni and Munari¹⁴ and, more generally, about the rise of Italian graphic design during the 1950s. It would never have been possible if there hadn’t been strong industrial development happening at the same time.

There was all the freshness, creativity and simplicity of youth present in the 1950s. Industrial design, packaging and advertising were all born together. You see, I can still remember clearly what graphic design was like in the 1920s and 1930s. I’m thinking of great poster artists like Marcello Dudovich¹⁵ and Achille Luciano Mauzan¹⁶. These people were artists who created posters based on their own inspiration, the same way Tamara De Lempicka¹⁷ created her paintings. They did what they enjoyed doing for an audience that thought and felt the same way they did. The same thing was true in our stores: they were refined in the same way that the bourgeoisie who shopped there were refined. People with fewer means came in simply to admire the place, the same way you’d go visit an aris-

tocratic castle or palazzo. Those were the tastes of the dominant class, the aristocracy, and they were the same all over Europe, from Berlin to Parma.

But in the 1950s and 1960s Italian designers invented something considered new even from a social point of view. Munari and Carboni weren't designing for an aristocracy. They were designing something rational that "educated" everyone, business and consumer, bourgeoisie and laborer. Take Carboni for example. Between 1952 and 1955 he did just about everything for us: he designed the new brand for paper packaging, with the product clear against a blue background and "Barilla" written in red; he designed stands for fairs and conventions; he designed the logos on the company trucks; he designed packaging for all our products, as well as the catalogues and posters. He didn't present the product in a realistic manner, didn't show the consumer enjoying it, but represented perfectly the thing that was most important at the time: the company and its modernity, rigor and spirit.

– Didn't such rapid growth create problems?

Of course it did! The company grew extremely quickly. It was spectacular, but also disorganized and therefore dangerous. Lots of companies experienced crises connected with development that was too fast and anarchic. We had to create a rationalizing process for our management and marketing too. In 1955 we hired Pietro Gennaro e Associati, the top Italian consulting company for business organization.

– I knew them well. We lived in the same building in Milan, in Via Rossetti 17. They were upstairs and I lived down below. We were friends. They were all quite talented: Pietro Gennaro, Ottone Visconti, Pierleone Ottolenghi...

They used the Olivetti method: they created an actual organization manual, assigned responsibilities, described roles and job descriptions, as well as detailing our budget management mechanisms.

– It was well done. Was it useful?

It was really well done. But I have to confess that at first it seemed a little too rigid to me. It was necessary, however, and incredibly useful for establishing an absolutely rigorous, proper standard for us. We have always placed enormous emphasis on product quality, because we've always wanted to be number one, and a number one can't have any defects: if you find one, you correct it, you eliminate it. I wanted the same thing to happen in our administration as well. My motto has always been "in Barilla, no one should be embarrassed." The result was that by the end of the 1950s we had a company that was organized to perfection from a financial point of view as well.

– And it had grown?

Enormously. In 1950 we produced 800 quintals of pasta per day. In 1961 production had risen to 3,600 quintals. In 1950 we employed 800 people; in 1961 we employed 1,300 people and had sales totaling 1,830 billion lira, for a net profit of 310 million lira!

– Liftoff...

That's right. It was liftoff for us and for Italy at large. We were right in the middle of what people would later call the "Italian economic miracle"...



II

ORIGINS

Everything in my life has orbited two fixed points: family and work. I've always believed that a strong, united family is not only safer than any refuge, but represents an invincible force that can help you stay serene and deal with all kinds of difficult moments.

Today lots of people see the family as a source of stress: they don't get married, don't have kids, and act like eternal adolescents. But people without roots don't build anything and don't leave anything behind. I believe that the family is the foundation for both individual and social life, and more often than not for a solid, honest, long-lasting company that continues to thrive generation after generation. I've always worshipped my family, my grandfather, father, mother, wife and children. For me, they're the soul of the company, the substance that make a business a living entity. The relationship between fathers and children is a question of love, but also of faithfulness and loyalty. It is the invisible backbone of a company, one that extends to management and important employees, and takes shape in buildings and machines. From an economic and management point of view, the factory and the home have to be kept separate. They can't be confused with one another. But I have to remind you that they're made of the same

substance, and the machines are the arms of a family, of an entire community.

– When was Barilla born?

Barilla was born in 1877 when my grandfather Pietro opened a shop with an oven in the home of baker Isidoro Cobianchi¹. That's how we got started, with bread; pasta came later. After my grandfather came my father, then me and my brother, and now my children are here. Our family has always been a people's family, a poor family that pulled itself up through determination and hard work. In 1947 my father Riccardo created a sort of will in which he wrote:

“I was born of poor parents in Via Vittorio Emanuele on March 4, 1880. My mother had five children, three girls and two boys. I was the second born. My father provided for us with what he earned from a modest bread and pasta shop, and when I grew older I heard him complain that he didn't make enough to provide for his family. I remember that I went to school in Strada Nuovo, making it to fourth grade. I didn't want to study; I already wanted to go and help my Dear Parents... [You see? He wrote “Dear Parents” with capital letters!] ...and so I left school and started to work. I was 13 or 14 at the time. I remember my dear father used to send me in the wagon to Borgo delle Asse [a mill] to pick up some sacks of flour on credit, which our old brick oven later turned into bread. With the money we earned I went to pay my father's small debt and buy two more sacks of flour, but no more than that, because that's the most we could take on credit. We continued like that for a few years. My sisters and mother helped, working behind the counter, while I stayed in the bakery with my father (we worked

eighteen hours a day), and eventually we started to see results. Then he bought a little wood press to start making pasta and sell in his shop. We made about 50 kilos a day.”⁻²

Hard work. Indispensable work, and not just for us, but for the other families too: precious work. Work that was always too little when compared with our needs, and so we tried to spread it around, changing workers. When we looked back through the account books from the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s, we discovered that the workers who were the least specialized (for example the women who were paid to package the pasta) changed every week. You know, it was important that at least one person in the family had work, and that we reach as many families as possible. We lived above the factory, and my mother Virginia⁻³, a strong woman, hired people herself for the factory.

It was hard work. At the beginning of the century there was a lot of poverty in Italy and in Parma. Italy was a poor country, a backward country from an industrial and technological point of view. My father and my uncle Gualtiero heated up the oven with wood. There was a fountain opposite our house, in the courtyard of San Michele church on the other side of the street. There was no water in our little bakery, so we had to go over there and get water with buckets. We made bread at night, so we went to get the water at night, summer and winter. Later the company grew quickly, and was modernized. But for a long time my father kept his frugal habits and kept working early in the morning until late in the evening, watching over every aspect of the business, even the smallest details.

That makes me think of an anecdote. Back then, all Barilla's shipping took place by horse, and my father took special care of them. There were also some stall boys who handled the horses, feeding them and such, but sometimes my father would go down

in the middle of the night to make sure everything was okay. One time one of the stall boys – I don't remember his name – went to a fair in Colorno, about twenty kilometers outside Parma, and had a little too much to drink. He missed the train back into the city. So he started running like a madman, still half-drunk, back to Parma, and managed to make it to the stalls at five in the morning. He was gasping for breath, exhausted. But he was amazed to find my father was already there. He'd gotten up to give the horses their feed, and when he saw the stall boy he said: "Don't you know this is the time employees get up?"

– Where were you born?

I was born on the second floor above my grandparents' shop.

– Where was your grandfather's bakery?

In Via Vittorio Emanuele, which was later renamed Via della Repubblica. Their little shop is still there. We bought it back, and it still sells bread and pasta. Later my father and uncle Gualtiero built a factory outside Parma, in Viale Veneto, where my brother Gianni and I have offices, the ones where you came to visit. You know, our family's great fortune was that my father and uncle Gualtiero complemented each other perfectly, and got along really well. My father was generous, tenacious, and a tireless worker. But he was unimaginative. He wasn't creative like my uncle. Gualtiero was a human volcano, always erupting with new projects. He studied more than my father did, when they were at the seminary. In a poor family, having a son who's a priest amounted to a guarantee for everyone's future. Back then it was a privilege to go to high school, and thanks to his higher education, Gualtiero became the brains behind our business. He had grand ideas, and maybe he was a bit of a mega-

lomaniac. But when I think back on him now I'm convinced that a certain amount of megalomania is useful, because it makes you courageous and lets you take an optimistic outlook, to move quickly. So my dad and uncle complemented each other perfectly: one solid, careful, concrete; the other restless. Unfortunately my uncle died young, when he was 37, in 1919.

– It seems like you and Gianni were a little like Riccardo and Gualtiero. Gianni handled the factory and machinery. He was solid, concrete and prudent. You were imaginative and creative, always thinking about the future in broad strokes.

In some ways I was a bit of a megalomaniac too, though not as much as uncle Gualtiero. I was when it came to the company, but not in the rest of my life.

– When did the two brothers, your father Riccardo and Gualtiero, make their biggest contribution to Barilla?

It was just before the First World War, between 1909 and 1911. I have to admit that they were really audacious and talented. That's when they built the factory in Viale Veneto where we made both bread and pasta. It was a beautiful building with two lateral wings with "Pastificio G. & R. Flli Barilla" written on it. It was a chance to radically modernize production. As I mentioned earlier, back then we were still making bread in an almost artisanal way. But with the new factory, everything changed. New machines were installed, and the dough moved from those into an extremely modern continuous oven built by Werner & Pfleiderer in Stuttgart⁴. That let us produce up to twenty quintals of bread per day. The oven was a true technological wonder, and the first of its kind in Italy. We experienced the same progress in our pasta-making: large pasta ma-

chines, then machine rooms with presses that extruded pasta so that it could be shaped into the various forms and, last but not least, a separate drying room. By the time the First World War broke out, Barilla was already an important industrial presence in Parma.

– What did your uncle Gualtiero die of?

Typhus. He traveled to Naples to set up some sales agreements with pasta factories in southern Italy for long pasta, which we were having a hard time producing, and there he got sick with typhus.

– Was your uncle's death difficult to overcome?

Extremely. His death put the entire weight of the company dead on my father's shoulders. I remember it clearly, you know? Every morning at six my father would say to my mother: "I'm heading down to the factory." He stayed down there until lunchtime, then went back until it was night. We lived in the small building above the factory. My mother cleaned the house, and around nine went down to help out in the factory.

– Where was your mother from?

My mother had to learn how to handle herself right when she was young. She grew up in a poor family. Her father sold milk from a cart. He sold it in the street: half liters, quarter liters, in little aluminum containers. You probably remember them too. She was already helping him when she was just a little girl. Then, when times were hard she worked as a laborer in Barilla too. When my father went into debt to pay off his sisters, whom he didn't get along with, they needed to earn more and so they invented a special package of gluten pasta. Back then, all pasta was sold loose, by measure.

Shops kept it in drawers, then served clients with big measuring ladles. There were no clear brand names. We were among the first to create packages of gluten pasta with our name on them. People had to ask for Barilla gluten pasta; it was a way of standing out and making sure we were remembered. My mother was part of the packaging team. We did everything by hand. They were working ten hours a day, all the way into evening.

– You’ve always admired workers, haven’t you? You’ve always been close to them...

Laborers have a hard life, and it was even harder back then. Do you know how hard it is to go into a 40-degree Celsius drying room and then go back out into the cold winter? People got sick, caught pneumonia, pleurisy. Their illnesses were a constant source of anxiety for us because we knew their families. Laborers – their hard work, their sacrifices – made Barilla what it is today. I’ve never forgotten that.

– Everyone has told me that your mother was a great woman...

Yes, she was an extremely courageous and well-balanced woman. After Gualtiero died her presence became fundamental. She stood alongside her husband and never abandoned him. She paid people’s salaries every Saturday. Back then people were paid the evening of the last day of the week. She put on gloves in order to count the money. She had beautiful hands. She had infallible intuition, and could understand everything with just a look. She hired people by looking them in the eyes, and she never made a mistake. Back then there were no psychologists and tests. Today there are a lot more employees, and so we have psychologists and consider them indispensable. But even today, in order to choose managers

and the closest collaborators there's nothing better than personal contact and an entrepreneur's intuition.

– A careless reader might mistake your words for saying Barilla was a dynamic company, but still a small, provincial reality.

From a distribution point of view, it was. We sold our products in Parma and a relatively restricted market. But both my father and my uncle were thinking far beyond the horizon: they were open to all kinds of new European technologies, and that extraordinary German bread oven I mentioned was a perfect example. But the same is true from a cultural point of view as well. With help from my mother, my father and uncle immediately impressed a sense of modernity and a refined approach on the company, orienting it on the future, the horizon. If you look at the advertising they selected, the pictures of our stores, you'll be struck by how beautiful and "modern" they seem.

– I understand. Your products were still being transported using horses, but technology was moving forward. You already enjoyed high-level communications, and most importantly you were oriented on the future.

My father – and maybe I understand this better today than I did at the time – had a great feel for communications, as well as refined tastes. Here's an example: in 1910 he and my uncle Gualtiero commissioned the sculptor Emilio Trombara⁶ to create a 40-centimeter-tall statue representing a boy, a young man who's pouring the contents of a giant egg into a kneading trough filled with flour. They needed the statue for an ad for egg pasta that was going to be placed in every store that sold our pasta. The image of that young man was also put on a large insignia, above a famous photograph of Barilla's

master chefs. Then it was used in catalogues, ad posters and billboards... Basically, it became the symbol of Barilla.

Once the First World War was over, along with the political turmoil that followed it in Parma, most people were pessimistic about the future. My father Riccardo and my mother, however, remained extremely optimistic and open. Rather than withdraw or shut himself off, my dad went out to locate and meet with lots of the artists who would play important roles in the company's history. Barilla's close relationship with artists didn't begin with me, but back then. The most important of these artists was Erberto Carboni who, I believe, oversaw the first calendar in 1922-7, filling it with refined symbolic figures. The 1923 calendar was created by an extremely talented painter from Bologna, Emma Bonazzi⁻⁸, who provided us with a splendid allegory for abundance, painted in Gustav Klimt's style. She painted a semi-naked goddess (Semele), and I can't tell you how popular, and also how heavily criticized, that painting was. In the end, it helped make us famous, and is still a noteworthy piece of art today. My dad was good at clearly articulating the message. He created calendars with Bonazzi's *L'allegoria dell'Abbondanza* (The allegory of abundance), but then made sure we also had posters with moms giving their kids snack. He also commissioned images that expressed the artistic currents of his day, especially Second Futurism in posters like *L'uovo cameriere* (The waiter egg) and *Il divoratore di spaghetti* (The spaghetti eater)⁻⁹. My dad chose these particular images for another reason too: he wanted to counter the pasta ad campaign that the Futurists, and especially Marinetti⁻¹⁰, had launched. In their headlong drive to modernize, the Futurists had attempted to paint over Italian culinary traditions, and they'd attacked the most typical Italian food, pasta, with particular vehemence. They created anti-Italian propaganda in a number of European countries, calling us "macaroni," and claiming that in order to avoid being called in this derogatory fashion, we need to move on

to more modern, “futurist” foods, in other words food that was sophisticated, exotic and chemical. My father was one hundred percent against this and he acted quickly. One of our counteroffensives can be seen in the 1931 calendar designed by Bolognese illustrator Adolfo Busi¹¹. It’s ironic, entertaining, filled with the beautiful little putti that are jumping over, playing with and living in various different pasta shapes. It was an intelligent response to that crazy campaign. You see, my dad already knew that pasta needed to be defended from its enemies and valued, protected as the queen of Italian cuisine.

He was intent on making Barilla a nationally-important company, one that could compete with the others, and therefore he insisted Barilla create excellent designs for its appearances at every show, convention and fair. We had magnificent stands. I can still remember clearly the one created in Turin in honor of Emanuele Filiberto and the victory of 1928. It was the prototype for a wall in one of our beautiful shops. Then we went to the fair in Milan. Dad could sense which way the wind was blowing and, in 1932, he had Barilla do a Futurist stand at Rome, Italy’s second most important grain fair. It was spectacular and extremely modern¹². These fairs were really important back then, because at the time pasta was sold by weight and indistinguishable to the end client. Individual shops could only keep a single brand in stock, and they displayed their choice all over the shop with signs and posters. For the company, winning over a shop was key. Our real “clients” at the time – I’m still talking about the period prior to World War Two – were the shopkeepers who went to these fairs. The fairs were a way to contact and convince new clients.

Everything changed in the 1950s, thanks to packaging. However, at least as far as Barilla was concerned, there was a certain intermediary period created by a brilliant invention by Carboni. This extraordinary artist had invented a little metal wire display case that

made it possible to exhibit our products in stores that sold other brands. In this manner he transformed, in one fell swoop, single-brand stores into multi-brand stores, making it possible for Barilla to be sold in a ton of new shops (and not only those that were selling Barilla exclusively). That was how we had such incredible development during the 1950s.

I should spend some time telling you about our shops, because they were true works of art. The first one was established in Via Farini in 1910, and designed in Liberty style. My mother completely renovated it in 1931. It was a square space, the walls covered with expensive ebony and rosewood paneling. The silos where the pastas were kept were attached to the walls. Then there was another shop in Via Vittorio Emanuele, opened in 1913. That one was rectangular, narrow and deep, with walls covered with wood shelving on which they kept crystal vases filled with different pastas. The vases were hand-blown by the Toso glassworks in Murano based on designs created by a famous architect, Mario Bacciocchi⁻¹³, and were incredibly beautiful. The storage drawers were beneath them. Then there were the shops in Via Saffi and Via Cavour, also designed by Bacciocchi. They had extremely refined mosaic flooring, furnishings made from ebony wood, and decorations painted directly on the walls: real, true crown jewels in terms of taste, architecture and interior design.

I grew up in this environment, in this psychological, artist, cultural and moral clime, and I soaked it up head to toe. That was where my tastes were shaped, where my love for art was born. As far as our stores were concerned, unfortunately my father had to sell them all in 1945 as a result of the financial difficulties Barilla was facing because of the war. It was a very painful thing for him to do, not just for him but for my mom and I too. But there was nothing else to be done. Sometimes, in order to survive, you have to sacrifice the most beautiful, the most precious things you own. Some

people are to invested in their objects, in their property, to pull it off. I've seen important families fall to ruin because they didn't have the courage to sell off their villas, to adjust to a more frugal lifestyle. Maybe it was because we grew up from nothing, because we had to work incredibly hard, to spend a ton of energy, that we knew we could do without a lot of these things. It's not that it doesn't hurt, but you do it all the same. You know how you grew up, and you can still distinguish the essential from the nonessential. My dad sold his shops – the most beautiful thing he had – and saved the company, the essential thing. Better yet, he *attempted* to save the company, because back then things weren't going so well and he wasn't sure he'd succeed. Watching him grow old, his heart failing, was an incredibly sad thing to experience. He saw his son in front of him and had to live with the fear that his beloved company was going to be lost. Old, generous men should be spared this kind of injustice. My poor dad died too young. He didn't get to see the moment when his two children, following in his footsteps, his example and heeding his will, brought his company back to success and to the highest levels.

III

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

– What was your experience in school like?

I should say terrible... But thinking about it now, I'd say the first part was awful, but the second part was excellent.

– Tell me about it.

When I was 10 or 12, the company started to do well and life at home became easier. My mom and dad were working fulltime in the company, and they wanted me to get a good education. They believed school was important, and they were right. But they couldn't follow my education personally because they were working and they didn't have very much education of their own. So they decided, quite rightly, to send me to private school. My father, who barely finished elementary school, wanted his kids to attend the best school possible. He wanted his kids to learn alongside the children of people who "knew the most." So he and my mother chose Maria Luigia, the most prestigious private school in Parma, where all the upper class kids went.

But I didn't like studying. I passed all my classes, but I didn't

like the school. Maybe it the atmosphere at Maria Luigia, so different from the world of the factory, the workers, the shops... Or maybe it was my restlessness, my natural curiosity. Either way, I butted heads with the teachers, with their monotonous and rigid methods. I wasn't attracted to the subjects we were studying, either. You have to remember that this was the 1920s, and teaching methods back then were truly old school. Things only changed with the Gentile reforms of 1923, and later when they introduced new teaching materials, and especially when experts instituted the different Italian high schools: classical and scientific high schools, as well as technical and professional institutes. That way each student could choose what he or she liked best. At the time, I simply said I didn't want to study. But now I wonder whether or not the traditional subject matter and teaching methods at Maria Luigia were simply the wrong kind for a restless, eternally curious kid like me. Gianni for example had a different personality, and he did well in school. He liked it, and in fact he almost earned a degree. The only thing that stopped him was the outbreak of World War Two.

But I didn't leave Maria Luigia for scholastic reasons. As I said earlier, I always passed my classes and I would have continued to do so right to the end. Instead, I left for health reasons. I came down with pleurisy and a famous local doctor, professor Angelo Braga⁻¹, who would later cure my father, advised my parents to send me somewhere near the sea. They transferred me to a Salesian school in Alassio. That was my first long voyage, practically and adventure: up and over the Apennines! I had to change trains three times. It seemed like I was traveling to Africa.

I enjoyed Alassio. The Salesian priests were good teachers. They weren't oppressive; they even played soccer with us! I think that if I'd stayed there, I would have made friends and adjusted to school. But my big sister Gianna was studying at the Mantellate in Florence, and my parents decided they wanted their kids together

in one place so that they could visit us more often without having to travel all over Italy. So they moved me to Scolopi in Florence. It was worse than Alassio and Maria Luigia! It was practically a military school, comparable to a prison. They locked us in our rooms at seven in the evening. Each student had a single room and a window with metal bars. We had to talk to each other through the windows, without being able to see each others' faces. I had always been a friendly, sociable kid, and there I grew incredibly lonely. I really hated it. I became dour, sad and irritable. In the end my parents realized how unhappy I was and they broke me out of that prison, sending me to another Scolopi school in Cornigliano. Back then my father was traveling to Genoa all the time, because that's where the grain was: the port, the enormous mill companies buying up raw grain. The Ravano family, owners of the mill that my dad got his flour from, told him: "Send your boy here, to Cornigliano." So I went there to study. But by then I was tired of school, tired of moving. I couldn't enjoy any one single school. I didn't have any companions, any friends. I was always being uprooted. So as soon as the first vacation came around I summoned my courage and said to my parents: "Dad, mom, please don't send me back to school! I want to stay here with you, in our company, in Parma. I tried working last summer, and I like it. Please let me work with you."

My parents weren't happy; in fact I'd say they were truly disappointed. But they understood that I couldn't keep going on like that. They were also still convinced that I had to study, to learn... My father was extremely clear with me: "There's no room for ignoramuses in the modern world. You have to get an education. I'll let you come work in the company, but first you have to go learn the things you'll need to run a modern company. You'll go study in Germany, the most advanced country in the world. You'll go and learn what a company for today and tomorrow needs." My father really admired Germany. He had ordered our first machinery, even

before we had factory, direct from Stuttgart. The equipment in our bakery was almost all German-built. Back then, going to study in Germany was like getting a masters in the US.

– How did he choose a school for you in Germany?

Technicians for the Werner & Pfleiderer² ovens used to come and visit us. He asked their advice, and they recommended the famous business school in Calw, in the Black Forest. He enrolled me there and I spent two years in that private school. I discovered it wasn't studying that I disliked, but the kind of schools I'd been attending in Italy! I have wonderful memories of the school in Calw. It was incredibly well organized, with three hundred foreign students, and we studied things I believed were important and essential, like modern business science and finance. I quickly learned how to speak German, and made friends. Everything was stimulating: I was living and breathing the culture of a country that at the time was the most avant-garde in the world. Germany taught me everything about how to plan, how to organize a company in a rational manner. And I had a freedom that I couldn't even dream of in Italy. No prison cells, no doors closed and locked from the outside! After school was over we were free to go down to the café or pub. Finally I had a chance to meet, touch, embrace girls. They were more modern too, freer in a way that was still unthinkable in Italy. I realized just how old, closed and backwards our country still was. Do you have any idea what all this meant for an eighteen-year-old boy? All of a sudden I was breathing in life, sexuality, modernity, progress... My father had made the right choice. He'd given me a fantastic gift! I came back home transformed, a strong young man full of joie de vivre and a desire to get things done.

Once I returned it was time to get to work. I started out with my butt glued to the backseat of the motorcycle of one of our two

representatives: the brothers Enrico and Luigi Buzzi. That was 1932, and I was 19.

Two thirds of our sales went to military supplies. I didn't like that. I wanted our company to survive on market earnings alone, but back then this was impossible. We didn't manage to make a complete shift until 1947, after the rations and provisions cards were abolished. That year Gianni and I decided to quit supplying the military for good... But let's go back to 1932 for a moment. We only had two representatives, and they led a hard life. You have to bear in mind that back then pasta was sold loose, by weight, and each shop only sold a single brand. In order to sell to them you had to convince the shopkeeper to choose your product over somebody else's. We visited one client at a time, often in tiny shops. One in Colorno, another in Mantua, two in Villafranca, three in Verona. Back then, going to Florence was like taking a trip to the moon. Rome was impossible, a dream. Naples, with its one hundred pasta companies, was a forbidden paradise. Our representatives gathered orders and brought them back home at the end of the week. We sent pasta out from the factory by train, packed in round baskets that we bought in Tuscany: the *corbelli*. The shopkeepers then had to send these baskets back to us. Imagine what a chore it was for accounting to keep track of them all! But I liked the work. I felt useful, alive. I have fantastic memories of the first trip I took on the back of Enrico Buzzi's motorcycle. I was shy, and I really admired the easy way Buzzi had with the shopkeepers. He knew everything about their lives, their families. After a quick hello and small talk – “How is your daughter? Your two grandchildren must be growing up now...” – he'd open his little suitcase filled with blue wrappers. Then he would take out his pasta samples: “I'd recommend this one, madam. It's all the rage right now. What about the *conchiglia* shells? That's all they're eating up in Milan...” I enjoyed his showmanship. He would also introduce me: “This is Pie-

tro. His father is the owner, signor Riccardo Barilla.” And I shook their hands. Then Buzzi would write down the order, give everyone a warm goodbye and hop back on the motorcycle. Do you know what I learned from those visits? The importance of human relationships: I’ve never forgotten it. That experience helped form me as an entrepreneur. First you need to know your client, then earn his trust. That was my education! Even once I found myself running a company with 8,000 employees, I still enjoyed going out to visit shops, though by now those had turned into supermarkets and mega-supermarkets. I was still curious to see the shelves for myself, to listen to people in the store talk about how the products were selling, what consumers were saying.

After this training out in the field, I had to take a forced break to do my military service. I realized that I wasn’t cut out for the barracks, because I’m a free spirit. I like to take the initiative. In the military world – as I’m sure you’re well aware – everything is rigid, bureaucratic, and often stupid.

– But you knew how to adapt, to be patient, to take advantage of the moment and try to learn something new from everything.

You’re right. Even military service proved useful. I figured out how things worked, and that was helpful later on when I had to negotiate agreements to supply the military. The private market didn’t exist yet, not the way we know it today. If Barilla wanted to expand, it had to obtain big orders, and the only big orders available came from the government. I didn’t like relying on the public sector, but at the time there were no other alternatives. Fortunately my father had excellent relationships with the government, and I learned to be patient and diplomatic.

– How did your career develop inside Barilla?

In 1936, when I was 23, I became the head of sales and shipping. I liked it. Barilla spread out all over northern Italy. We our representatives modern yellow “Topolino” cars and replaced our horse-drawn wagons with vans. We painted all our vehicles yellow because someone suggested it as a sunny, visible and happy color that reminded people of egg yolks. When they were all parked together our Topolinos made a big impression. They sparked peoples’ imaginations, and gave an immediate idea of a strong, solid, united, modern and young company. Even the trucks were painted the same recognizable style. People started recognizing the Barilla logo out in the streets as well. We were becoming a household brand name.

– Were you already handling some of the company’s advertising?

I started handling advertising immediately, and I could see right away just how important it is. As soon as I became director I began looking for a strong idea, something that might leave a lasting impression on the entire country. That’s how we wound up with the *Il Signor Bonaventura* picture cards, created together with other complementary brands by Cesare Ricciardi⁻³. Back then Signor Bonaventura, created by Sergio Tofano⁻⁴, was a protagonist of the *Corriere dei Piccoli*⁻⁵, which kids and adults loved. Signor Bonaventura had a little basset hound and an adversary, Barbariccia, over whom he always triumphed in the end and earned one million lira. Our competition was illustrated by Sergio Tofano too, and included characters like the *Cuoca di Bonaventura* (Bonaventura’s cook) and the *Marchesa Pastasciutta* (Marquise Pasta), which were connected with our products. It was a good launch for its day, with 30,000 albums, 16,000 posters and a lot presence on the radio and national and local newspapers. This was the first time the Barilla name literally engulfed Italy, coming into every home.

– Were there any other initiatives during that period?

During that same period we launched an interesting product, Fosfina, a pasta enriched with phosphorous and designed as a nutritional product for children, who were often malnourished during that period. Fosfina was the first pasta entirely packaged by Barilla. Nino Caimi⁶ handled it for us. This pasta marked the first time I had to deal directly with packaging problems that would become a crucial issue following the Second World War.

– So you were expanding rapidly, creating new products, organizing distribution and advertising...

Yes, that was a good period during which I worked hard for the company and saw some concrete results. In 1939 I got back in touch with Carboni, who had created that 1922 calendar for my father. By that year Barilla had become a relatively important company. We had 800 employees and were producing 700 quintals of pasta and 150 quintals of bread per day, which was quite a bit for the time. And we kept growing, coming up with new ideas. Then things in Europe got worse. We all hoped that people in Munich would avoid a war, but then in 1939 Germany invaded Poland. I was 26, and I didn't follow the political news on a daily basis. I was more interested in the company, in my business projects. But I remember that the atmosphere changed. People were excited. Lots of people thought that Germany would win immediately, with a lightning strike. I can still remember listening to Mussolini on the radio when, on June 10th, he declared war on Great Britain and France using a catchword – *Vincere!* – that immediately struck me with a sense of insecurity. What a disaster! For us, for everyone!

IV

THE WAR

Unfortunately, another war had begun. I don't know if you lived through the Fascist period. It was peacetime, but one way or another it still had a military feel. First you were always being reminded of the First World War. Fascism was established after that war, along with the monuments that were erected in piazzas all over Italy, with soldiers who'd fallen dead in the line of battle and long lists of the dead posted below. If you think about it, every single one of our piazzas was turned into a funeral monument. We were used to it, and didn't think much about it, but that's the way things were. And the words of the Fascist anthem, aside from *Giovinezza* (Youth), all referred to war: "*Del pugnale il fiero lampo, dello Schrapnel il fragor*" (A proud flash from the dagger, from shrapnel a great roar); or that other line that ran "*Duce, Duce, chi non vorrà morir?*" (Duce, Duce, who doesn't want to die?). Black, the color of Fascism, of black shirts, the Fascist uniforms and banners, is the color of death, of mourning. Then there was the war in Africa, then the war in Spain. Right from a young age, boys like me became *Balilla*, and then *Balilla moschettieri*, *Avanguardisti*, *Giovani facisti*... we marched in parades, did military exercise, and we always had a rifle in one hand. Yes, it was unquestionably a warlike

atmosphere. I was born in 1913, and can say that I spent my youth in uniform. When war broke out for real, there were few who truly realized what that meant. I had been to Germany, and I knew how backwards Italy was. But I hadn't been to the US yet and I wasn't familiar with that country's modernity, with its power. I wanted to go, because I knew that there was a grand private market there, along with cinemas and advertising. I was about to leave when the war broke out and my trip was postponed. I didn't get a chance to go until 1950. It's crazy, but despite all the Italians who emigrated to the US, those of us who stayed back in Italy didn't have any real idea what that country was. In reality nobody knew anything about America, not even Mussolini and many of the people in his hierarchy. They probably believed the war would be resolved in Europe too, just like the First World War. I had no idea about the inhumane tragedy we were heading for. The Germans had too many troops in motor vehicles and tanks. They swarmed around the Maginot line and conquered Paris in no time at all. That was the "Blitzkrieg" that everyone said would be over in an instant, just a quick march towards victory.

– When were you drafted?

In July 1940, right after we declared war. I was in Albenga, and I left immediately to join my regiment in Portogruaro. I was part of the 97th motorized unit.

– Did you make a clean break with the company, with your civilian life?

Not at all. I stayed in close contact with Parma, writing regularly to my secretary Giuseppina Rivola⁻¹. She kept me up to date on everything: the company, my father's health, my mom...

– I can see you're smiling...

Yes, because I kept doing things just as I would have if I'd stayed in Italy. I sent all my letters to Giuseppina Rivola, just like I did before, including instructions for the company. It was as if I was just away for a short while, do you know what I mean? She sent me all the information I asked for, and I kept running the company as if I was traveling for business. I also got a few military leaves, which made things easier. Then in the summer of 1941 this illusion, the idea that everything was going to end quickly, evaporated. We went to war against Russia, and I was part of the forward company that left for the Eastern front.

– Were you an officer?

They'd made me corporal! But this was a good thing, believe me, because it let me stay closer to the soldiers. You know, when you watch documentaries on the war it seems like all the soldiers were really young. But in reality, most of them were between twenty and thirty years old, already married with kids. Back then people got married quite young, and death tore them away from their wives and little children. I saw so many tragedies, so many dramatic moments. And there was so little I could do to help...

– How was morale? What did you all think of the war, of the way things were going?

We were brainwashed with propaganda. When we left, we were convinced that victory would be a walk in the park. When we reached Udine we thought we wouldn't get there fast enough to get into any real fighting. It was the same when we reached Warsaw; the German troops were running ahead of us towards Mos-

cow. We were driving the trucks that transported soldiers, and following behind the German forward units. We were surrounding the enemy. The German war machine seemed perfect, impenetrable. But things got so lonely in those cold, desolate lands! We anxiously awaited any news. But I have to admit that even this terrible experience was useful for me. It forged my character. At heart I was just a relatively rich and carefree young man. But now I found myself facing difficulties I'd never imagined, discovering what it meant to truly reciprocate, to form a brotherhood. From time to time I got food packages from home, and this made it possible for me to help some others. You can't imagine what it means to be that hungry and that cold and have the chance to slice up a salami and give some to your companions. Brotherhood is an incredibly valuable thing.

In the beginning I tried to keep up with the company, driving myself to keep running it from a distance. But once we reached Donetsk the mail started coming in randomly, and I couldn't do it anymore. But I gobbled up any news I could get on Barilla's new military supply contracts and the new machinery that Braibanti had sold us. At the same time I was continuously worrying about my father's health. He had heart trouble.

– Were you all still optimistic about victory?

Yes. We thought that the war would go on for just a few more months, then the Russians would surrender. We were sure we would be home for Christmas. We only realized that things were getting more difficult once winter started. I was lucky, because my unit was stationed near a mine, and we had all the coal we needed in order to stay warm. But I didn't tell my parents everything in the letters I sent home. If the food packages didn't arrive from Italy we didn't have hardly anything else to eat: a knot of bread made of who knows what, coffee that was nothing more than hot water, a few

tins of food... everything was difficult. I was driving a Lancia truck, with fat tires that bogged down in the mud, bringing the entire column to a stop. Russian planes would fly in and drop their bombs. Fortunately for us, they didn't carpet bomb, otherwise we'd have been wiped out. We drank water from the radiator in order to keep warm. We slept wrapped up in our winter coats, our faces covered in ski masks that were full of lice. Instead of side windows, the trucks had little plastic sheets that broke when they froze. I must have said "I can't take it anymore" to myself a million times. I expected to die. But I have to admit that even in the midst of this terrible situation, I was always very interested in what was happening in Italy, in our company's progress, in my father's delicate health, in Gianni and his wife Gabriella's newborn son. I hungrily read all the newspapers that made it all the way to us, and continued to request leave, though my pride prohibited me from requesting sick leave. I'd almost given up, but then in May a terrible battle broke out and was won by the Germans. We didn't know anything about it at the time, and I only found out later when I tried to figure out what happened. It was the second battle to retake the big Ukrainian city Kharkiv. The Russians, led by their marshal Timoshenko, began an offensive with 1,200 modern tanks. But the Germans managed to surround and destroy them. Thanks to this battle there was more freedom in the ranks, and I finally got my leave. It was a miracle! I really felt blessed, because that summer the German armies moved on Stalingrad, and that's where the disaster started. The following winter the terrible withdrawal started.

So after many months at war, I finally got to go back to Parma! I wanted to walk across town on foot. I didn't care what I was wearing or what I looked like. I wanted to see normal people going about their business in a normal place. It was drizzling, but it was warm and I was happy... I stayed on leave for six months, all the way into autumn. I was able to help my ailing father. But unfortu-

nately the leave finally ended and I had to go back. At that point, the disaster in Russia was about to begin.

I was in a bar in Udine, drinking alone and depressed at the thought of what I was headed towards: I was scheduled to leave the next day for the Russian front. At eleven at night I happened to run into a doctor from Colleferro, south of Rome, who I had transported in my truck along with his little military hospital during the advance into Russia, and to whom I had given a little of the food they sent me from home. This officer came into the bar and asked me "...What are you supposed to do?" I told him: "I have to go back to the front." He said: "Get them to send you to my hospital. Tell them you don't feel well. I'll wait for you there." At midnight I went to visit the colonel and put on a little show: "Ooooo, I don't feel so well... I'd like to get checked out..." The colonel believed me. He sent me to that hospital and that doctor saved my life. After my "recovery" I was sent back home: rotation and another three-month leave.

– Did you stay in Parma after that?

No, I was transferred to Rome. That was a real stroke of luck, because Rome is beautiful, and I loved it there. I was young, single, with a little money in my pocket and a city full of beautiful girls. Plus I was able to stay in touch with the commissariat for government supplies, and as I'm sure you know at that point the rationing and food cards meant that all food supplies were subject to strict government control. There was no free market left at all; everything depended on government distribution. I can tell you that even though things were going all right for us, and even though this sort of system was necessary in wartime, I hated it. A free market is the only real form of economy, of clean, honest distribution. Bureaucracy is inefficient or corrupt, or both at once. I had to wait a

long time before I could launch Barilla in the free market, in packaging and with advertising. A long time. Back then there was nothing else you could do.

– Then you went back to Parma...

After September 8, 1943 I returned to Parma by car together with Achille Invernizzi. Lots of things had changed with the war. My father had been sick for a long time with heart disease. I followed his progress from the front too, anxious for news. He was also a wounded man: “his” factory was no longer his; he was no longer an entrepreneur in the thick of things, using his creativity, inventing, planning, risking it all to win or lose. By now it was impossible to make any decisions. Everything depended on the bureaucratic government machine, on connections. Everything was decided and planned according to the rationing food card; it set production rhythms. They sent us a certain amount of raw ingredients in order to produce a certain number of quintals of pasta and bread to be distributed in areas predetermined in Rome. Things changed once the Republic of Salò was established, except that orders didn’t come from Rome anymore, but from an office in Bologna. There were no more visits to clients in order to establish a relationship, to get good orders, the way I’d learned to do from Enrico Buzzi and Felice Albera, our first representative in Piacenza.

– I went to elementary through high school with his son Glauco. He had some considerable handicaps, but still managed to live his life as if he didn’t have any. He was extremely intelligent, friendly, full of life...

I met him too, because he worked with us for a long time. It’s incredible what the human spirit, optimism and faith in oneself will

let you accomplish. Glauco Albera transformed his weakness into strength, his defects into virtues... But let's go back to Barilla and the war. Things weren't going well. The raw ingredients they sent us were terrible quality, because the mills were adding more bran than they were supposed to according to the government regulations, then selling the good flour on the black market. There was a large clandestine network for trading. People who had money had everything, but normal people, honest people, people who worked for a living, could only buy black pasta. Those people were our clients. It was shameful. And we couldn't do anything about it. We weren't earning anything either. In fact, we were struggling with significant financial problems. Before the war we'd managed to save some money, but then we had to bleed ourselves dry to keep the factory running. At a certain point, and I think I've told you this before, we even had to sell all our beautiful shops.

– But there were even harder times to come...

Parma was a divided city: half red, half black⁻². In order to keep working, an entrepreneur had to maintain the balance between these two factions. This meant walking a tightrope between two groups that were armed to the teeth and fought ferociously with one another. One morning the Gestapo arrived. They took us down to their offices, where they had gathered together a bunch of industrialists from around the city. They put us all in a room where a functionary from Himmler's police was seated behind a desk, waiting for us. They accused us of financing the partisans. I managed to defend myself because I knew German. They set me free, forcing me to sign a piece of paper that swore I wouldn't help the partisans fighting in the mountains, upon penalty of death. My father, however, remained their prisoner for three days. He was interrogated, threatened... They asked him to confess to imaginary crimes,

otherwise they said they'd send him to the concentration camps in Germany while he waited for a trial. Back then we didn't know they were exterminating Jews, gypsies and socialists, but the words "Germany" and "concentration camp" were enough to make even the most courageous man tremble.

My father, already very ill, came back a destroyed man. He was very anxious, and made a mistake. He went up to Langhirano to visit some relatives we didn't get along with. He believed they were the ones who had gotten the fascists worked up against us by telling a bunch of lies. But my dad was a well-known person, and his trip was immediately registered and reported in various circles, and he wound up trapped by the partisans. They took him to Tizzano, in the Apennine Mountains. They stuck him in a private home, fortunately with some people who knew us well. He didn't suffer any more traumas. But they made him write a message to me telling me that the partisans needed money, and if I wanted to see him free again I had to bring them some. It was a really mean thing to do. I had just finished signing a document that condemned me to death if I got caught helping them. They wanted money? Anybody could come down into town and pick it up. But instead I had to take it to them personally. So I went up into the mountains on my bicycle, with a bunch of money in a bag, and I gave it to them. Fortunately for me, the Germans never found out about it.

– What happened once the war was over?

Immediately after the Liberation I was warned that the city was being flooded with pamphlets calling for my arrest and that I be condemned for having collaborated with the fascists. The proof? The pamphlet displayed a copy of a note that I'd sent at Christmas to the German man in charge of food rationing for civilians. He was

from Stuttgart, the city where we'd always bought our machinery. He wasn't a Nazi, but our direct contact, the functionary we depended on for raw ingredients, tickets for gas, licenses to distribute bread and pasta. I had sent him the same gifts we always sent to the authorities on these occasions: some sparkling wine, some *torrone* and a Christmas card. But for them this was proof of collaboration, an extremely serious crime...

I understood immediately that I was in serious danger and it wasn't hard to imagine what might happen to me. So rather than wait for them to come and take me, I went straight to the partisan headquarters: "Here I am," I said. "I can explain everything." They put me in San Francesco prison. During those days I witnessed man's most evil side, the worst possible acts of human cowardice. The same people who had been cordial, almost servile to me when I was a free man and the company was doing well, pretended they didn't even know me. I understood the reactions of some of them. They were afraid of being accused simply because they said hello to a collaborator. But others were merely displaying their egoism, the shallowness of their souls, their base meanness. I'd already seen it on the Russian front: in trying times you can see the most profound qualities of a man; it takes very little to encourage a companion, and just as little to push him down into the darkest despair. On the front we were starving, we risked dying of thirst or blown up by enemy bombs. But we were also united, and you can accomplish a great deal when there's solidarity in your ranks. I tried to be generous with what little I had, and took great joy from what little good I was able to do. In prison, on the other hand, you find yourself among people who are divided against one another. You're unjustly accused, you feel hated, and you can't do anything for yourself or for anyone else. It's horrible.

Fortunately for me, there are people who are better than that

too. I met someone who knew me and my family well: father Paolino Beltrame Quattrocchi⁻³. He was an extremely educated Benedictine monk, capable of drawing in big crowds with his vibrant speeches. He was also a man of action, and an incredibly effective organizer. He had joined the resistance, and did a great deal to have me set free. We stayed in close contact for the rest of our lives. He married Marilena and I, baptized our children and helped us bring our family back together again. The workers at Barilla helped a great deal as well. I didn't know anything about it, because in prison I was stuck in a cell and cut off from everyone and everything. I was together with a few poor fascists who they later killed, unfortunate bureaucrats who were overwhelmed at the end of the regime, people who may even have been accused by others as a vendetta. But outside the prison, the Barilla workers got organized. I had friends in Biella, the heartland of our wool industry, and a while earlier I had convinced them to send me blankets and heavy clothing. I distributed those among the people who needed them most, and there were no few number of needy families. We also gave pasta to our workers, and to families we didn't know personally but whom other people had told us were in dire straights. The workers knew about these things. When they knew I'd been put in prison they organized on their own, collecting almost 600 signatures for my release. They went to the partisan headquarters to protest and testify to how the owners of Barilla had acted. So, one morning they came and got me out of my cell. They took me to an office, where six people were waiting for me. I was interrogated by a lawyer, Primo Savani⁻⁴, who was a partisan and longstanding socialist. "Tell me about your life over the past few months..." I told him everything. At a certain point one of the others, a man I didn't know, interrupted me. "It's true," he said. "He sent me some pasta too." So they let me go and I went back home.

– Did you have any more trouble?

The partisans showed up. A unit even came and set up shop inside Barilla, in the old offices where the management used to be. There they received various different political delegations. Once even Nilde Iotti¹ came there. They didn't ask for anything from us. They watched, and talked among themselves. There were terrible words being bruited about, especially for me father. Words like "requisitioning" and "collective farming."

I want to tell you a story about my mother. It shows just how courageous and upstanding she was. One day she met a judge who was a member of the National Liberation Committee standing outside her gate. "Signora," he said, "have you heard the news? All Italy's industries may be nationalized, but don't you worry about your children. I'm sure we'll be able to find them a place to work." My mother responded immediately: "If my children have the same blood in their veins as I do, my dear sir, they'll make sure to find a place for you!" But I have to admit that despite all their statements and their arrogance, I had the impression that in reality these people had no idea what to do. In the end they left, and we tried desperately to get things back to normal. The workers that the war had taken away from us came back from the front. In the meantime we had hired new workers, and we couldn't fire them. On the contrary: we were obligated by law to hire a certain number of war veterans and people who had been mutilated during the war. And all our machinery was out of date or in disrepair. It had been impossible to keep the machines tuned up during the war. We didn't have any spare parts. So we rolled up our sleeves, used our creativity and pushed forward.

– When did things really turn back to normal? In 1946?

No, for us it wasn't until later. The emergency and ration cards didn't end until 1947. Unfortunately, that's the year my father died. The poor man died convinced that he'd failed. The factory was teetering on the edge, and the political outlook appeared forbidding. I'm still bitter about it. I wish he could see Barilla today.

We got things underway again. We didn't start from zero, but we weren't far from it. The country was exhausted, and the transition to democracy was filled with uncertainties and enormous tension. We could easily have become a people's republic like the Soviet Union. Parma was a communist stronghold, and people never let you forget it. You have to be very optimistic in order to be an entrepreneur in that kind of atmosphere. Of course everything changed with the elections on April 18, 1948. Togliatti and Nenni⁶ held the reins on well-organized structures. The communist party had an extensive network of very efficient local organizations, and they made fantastic propaganda. Back then nobody had a television yet, newspapers weren't distributed very well, and radio was the only thing that worked. The committees were important, and they were very effective.

Lots of people thought that De Gasperi⁷ wouldn't be able to pull it off. There were plenty of entrepreneurs in Parma who went to Switzerland while the results were announced. I didn't go anywhere. We had always worked well with our people and our employees. My conscience was clear, and this gave me an intimate sense of security. And then De Gasperi won. It was a happy surprise for me. He won because people understood that he was an honest man. When I heard the results of the election, I realized that the country was truly changing. We could start working and planning again. We didn't have to be afraid anymore. Who knows, I wondered, maybe we'll start becoming more like America.

– But it wasn't America yet...

No. First we had to take that incredibly difficult first step: to take control of our company again and make some extremely important decisions. If we wanted to conquer the big markets, where should we concentrate our efforts?

V

STRATEGIC CHOICES

– Let's get back to the factory. This was 1948... What problems were you facing?

Well, as you know, we produced as much bread as we did pasta. Before the war we'd installed an enormous continuous oven, and our production covered demand for the entire city, the surrounding province and beyond. During the war, especially during the period running from 1943 to 1945, the bakery was occupied first by the Germans, and then by the Americans, who used it for their own troops. During this period a host of little private bakeries sprung up to meet demand from the local population. Once the American requisition was over, we could have started up production again in the postwar period. But this would have driven most of the little bakeries under. It was a major problem, and we talked it over at length in the prefect's offices. You should also bear in mind that, due to the military occupation, the personnel in the bakery had become mostly unionized. We had a long series of strikes and some sabotage. The bakery workers went on strike because we couldn't ramp production back up to where it was earlier, due to the high number of new local bakeries, and especially because

we were afraid of being shut down. All this created an extremely tense situation that spilled over into pasta production as well. Analyzing the problem I'd reached the conclusion that there was no real future in bread production. We couldn't go back to our prewar production levels because that would muscle out the little bakeries, creating irresolvable human and social problems. It was no use pretending otherwise. Furthermore, the union situation had gotten so poisonous throughout the company that I was afraid we would simply drag out the issue. Also, while pasta distribution wasn't limited to one geographical area – at least in theory, you could ship dry goods anywhere you wanted to – fresh bread has to be delivered the same day, meaning you can't ship far beyond your own local province.

Barilla couldn't expand nationally with bread, only with pasta. I thought about this problem for a long time, and in 1952 I decided to close the bakery and concentrate on pasta. But I had to dismantle the bakery without causing too much trouble, without firing people en masse. How could it be done? The only way was to transfer production and personnel to the other bakeries that had sprouted up in the meantime. In order to do that, I had to offer incentives to both. But first I wanted the strikes to stop, and the agitators to stop sabotaging the company. I acted with great determination: during the strikes I took away everyone's timecards and stuck them in a drawer. When the strike was over, I told them that they had to come pick up their timecards from me personally, and that I was going to look each individual in the eyes. And that's exactly what I did. Everyone came, I looked each person in the eyes, and one by one I let each person back into the company, especially those who had been the most active during the protests. As far as the bakery workers were concerned, I told them that I would help them all find new work, and convinced them to leave the company. I also made it possible for the most active and entrepreneurial em-

ployees to open their own bakeries. Finally, using incentives, I convinced Bigi and Begani, the two head workers in our bakery, to buy the large continuous oven we'd installed and set up on their own, hiring a number of our employees in exchange for the supplies and contracts we already had for bread production. In other words, I set up all the bakery workers in other companies, and not a single one was left unemployed. But the process taught me that, if I wanted to set up the pasta production process in a strong, healthy manner I needed to find a better way to hire people. First I set a condition that all future employees had to have attended a technical school or industrial institution, while all the managers had to have earned degrees. I asked our head of personnel, Erminio Barbuti⁻¹, to get in touch with all the principals of the local schools and have them point out the best students for us. This approach made some of the other entrepreneurs upset. "You're taking the best and leaving us the worst," they complained. So I decided that selection should take place using behavior tests overseen by a team of psychologists. I asked for help from the Catholic university of the sacred heart, and the rector, father Agostino Gemelli, sent me one of his former students, professor Assunto Quadrio⁻², who handled the selection of personnel from there on out in a much more careful and objective manner.

– In the meantime, if I'm not mistaken, you traveled to the United States. Did the visit make a big impression on you?

My trip to the US was the result of efforts to modernize the entire company. Before the war we'd maintained an assistance and loan fund that helped a lot of families experiencing difficulties. After my father died, we dedicated the fund to him, renaming it the "Fondo Aziendale Riccardo Barilla" (Riccardo Barilla Company Fund). I also expanded its activities. The fund was used to help families

not only when they were having tough times, but also for positive events like weddings, births and Christmas. At the same time, we set up a series of social activities that every modern company should have: a cafeteria, company store, financial aid, company doctor, suggestions box, a merit rating to measure retributions and productivity, a company CRAL (*Circolo Ricreativo Aziendale dei Lavoratori*, or company workers' recreation committee) and even sports activities and hobbies.

– There was also a change in the atmosphere, a new kind of relationship. In an interview Erminio Barbuti told me: “Signor Pietro encouraged all the bosses to be polite with employees, to address employees with the formal ‘lei,’ and call people by name and not surname. In the company I heard people calling ‘Canèta, Fumô and said to myself ‘Who are these people?’ Signor Pietro told me, ‘That can’t happen anymore! You have to call people by their proper names!’”

That was just a way to give people a rigorous sign, a sign of respect for individuals and modernity. A company in which everyone refers to each other by nicknames reminded me of a country tavern. At that time, once the strikes were over and the political environment had settled down, I felt it was necessary to get the employees more involved, to make them feel like they were participants in the company's development. Therefore, during Christmas of 1952, I brought everyone together and shared the company business plan with them: why I'd chosen to concentrate on pasta, our market development forecasts and so forth. I told them that they had to have faith in Barilla, because together we would create a better life for everyone. I also took advantage of that occasion to inaugurate the Christmas gift package program for all Barilla employees.

– Barbuti told me that those Christmas packages contained kitchen products like pots, plates, silverware, napkins and so forth because you wanted the packages to improve not only the lives of each individual employees, but their families' lives as well. He also told me that you said: "Then they'll have to have plates, silverware and all the other things I have on my table!" He also added that they could choose, by foregoing the gift package for one or two years, to have a refrigerator, a gas stove and other things for the house. "One day," he said, "Signor Pietro came to us and said, 'Let's set things up so that if someone wants to, he can put together the value of different packages and receive a Lambretta or Vespa instead. Today it's extremely important to be able to get around, and a Vespa give a person freedom, lets him go where he wants whenever he wants to.' This was how he thought about employees. He wanted them to be able to grow, to feel fulfilled, to improve and become somebody. Most of all he wanted to see them feel free and happy. Back then, driving a motorino meant having freedom."

Yes, it's true. Barbuti gave you all the details, even my own words! I wanted our employees and workers to enjoy full, less exhausting lives. For example, I wanted them to be able to come to work without having to take a difficult bike ride, or wait for buses that forced them to honor a strict timetable. Lots of our truck drivers lived out in the country, and had to make long trips back and forth. We also had to address living conditions, and at a certain point this issue spurred me to create a specific housing plan. I started by asking our social assistance group to conduct a survey in order to find out where people lived and what their living conditions were like. I discovered that many of them were living in hovels on the other side of the river or in the area around the prison. So I asked Signor

Medioli⁻³, a member of our management, and the lawyer Signor Avanzini⁻⁴ to draw up a housing plan. As a result, we created the *Cooperativa Edilizia Dipendenti Barilla* (Barilla Employees Housing Cooperative). I entrusted the plan to the engineer Vitali Mazza, and called on the architect Luigi Vietti⁻⁵, the same architect who did my house in Fraore, to design it. We built four apartment buildings, each of which had eight apartments. Then I established financial guarantees for a maximum of six million lira each, with interest charged to the company, for any other employees with families who wanted to build or buy a home. You know, owning your own home gives you an enormous sense of security, and I wanted everyone to be able to work in the best state of mind possible. The six million figure was appropriate, because back then you could buy an apartment with nine million lira.

VI

CONSUMER SOCIETY

Italy's transformation took place between 1960 and 1968. There was a radical change in mentality and behavior. That's when Italy moved closer to the US, a transformation I'd seen ten years earlier, and when our consumer society was born. The advent of television played a decisive role. It showed us a different world, taught us that we could *be* different. It created new desires, new needs, supplied new models. It told everyone something that would have been considered incredible just a short while earlier: that we could live well. It made us all feel better too, though some more than others. It forced us to change. I'm talking about myself as well: it forced me to change the aesthetic values I'd introduced into the company a decade earlier with a specific graphic design style, the packaging and Carboni's advertising. If you think about it, modernization, the consumer society – which represented an enormous step forward, a goal I'd been pursuing for a long time – was really nothing more than aesthetic progress.

– Are you referring to the marvelous, turn of the century Barilla shops with their glass vases and mahogany paneling?

That too. Back then we were addressing an elite segment of society. Now we were talking to the masses. At heart, we continued to talk to an elite segment even with the Carboni packaging. But the times had changed, and they required a necessary and painful transformation.

– I sense a note of discomfort...

Over the following years we lost a certain elegance, a kind of refined style. Carboni, his packaging, posters and style gave Barilla a sober, essential soul. They gave the company a sort of calm rigor, a noble simplicity, words that marketing experts no longer know how to use, or don't know at all, or perhaps consider outmoded and ridiculous. Perhaps they've lost the concept. We managed to achieve the same aesthetic level, or a comparable level, halfway through the 1960s with the advertising we created with Mina, this time thanks to the genius of film directors, set designers and costume artists like Valerio Zurlini and Piero Gherardi. Then there was a period I'd call "decadent," during the Grace era and the one that immediately followed it: we only got back to where we needed to be halfway through the 1980s, with Gavino Sanna.

– But you're still a little nostalgic for Carboni...

Not nostalgic, but I'm cognizant of his sense of rigor, of his clean, clear and formal design. Carboni is a member of the same artistic universe as Giorgio Morandi, Giacomo Manzù and Francesco Messina.

– So at a certain point, and not without a little regret, you left Carboni and turned to an important advertising agency in Milan – CPV – that was considered the best in its day... I have

fond memories of the agency's director Ray Tomson and its highly skilled ad experts Mario Belli, Giancarlo Livraghi and Gianni Cottardo. Mario Belli created that famous slogan for the Shell campaign: "*Un sentimento di sicurezza*" (A sense of safety) and another for you: "*C'è una gran cuoca in voi, e Barilla la rivela*" (Release your inner chef with Barilla). CPV came up with the idea for "*Vita con Bettina*," a sort of housewife soap opera that always ended with Barilla pasta front and center.

I didn't like it. Don't get me wrong, I thought it was appropriate, and I approved it. I could see that we needed to address millions of women out in the countryside, living in difficult conditions, who would be happy to have a refrigerator, a modern kitchen and gas stove, a washing machine and waxed floors. Those were the women we had to convince, to make them feel proud to serve Barilla pasta. We need to remind them that pasta is incredibly important, a fundamental part of Italian cooking; that pasta could help the appear and become great cooks. We had excellent results with the campaign. But for me, Pietro Barilla, that simple, even elementary ad – that woman completely devoid of attractiveness and poetry – was no good. In part out of nostalgia for the refined world I was talking about earlier, in part because it didn't have the elegance or refined nature that I considered appropriate for our company. But especially because it didn't add enough value to the pasta itself. It didn't heighten our product to an ideal, and I wanted it to be ideal. I wasn't satisfied with the housewife image, with the everyday woman. That might be enough for an ad agent or for a marketing exec, both of whom had to think in terms of sales. But it wasn't enough for me. It wasn't enough for the task, the goals that the Barilla family had set for itself. I wanted our pasta to become the queen of the kitchen, the queen of the table. Most of all, I wanted Barilla to become legendary. I needed a symbol, a testimonial who would place

Barilla at the highest level imaginable. And back then, who represented the highest level of Italian woman in the collective imagination? Certainly not that modest Bettina from the CPV ads. That kind of woman could be found in film and music divas, and I wanted the biggest star of all, the most famous. Therefore I studied the most beautiful and famous film star – Sophia Loren – and the reigning queen of Italian music: Mina.

For a while we couldn't decide between these two stars from the Italian firmament. Loren was more famous internationally, but also quite busy making films. Besides, she was Neapolitan. Does that make you smile? Of course she'd make a perfect spokesperson for Voiello pasta, which was made in Naples, but she wasn't so good for Barilla, which is from Parma. Mina, on the other hand, was from Cremona, in other words from our neck of the woods, and she was arguably even more popular than Loren in Italy. There's no doubt her music and songs were more present in Italian popular culture than Loren was. She was very beautiful, tall, elegant and sensuous. She was refined; and would be a perfect representative for Barilla. I really wanted her, and I worked hard to make sure she became our spokesperson⁻¹.

I oversaw the direction because I need to the show to be perfect. First I hired Valerio Zurlini⁻² to direct, then Piero Gherardi⁻³, and later Antonello Falqui⁻⁴, Paolo Limiti⁻⁵, then Duccio Tessari⁻⁶ and finally Zurlini again. They created some extraordinary sets. Set design is a close cousin of art, and sometimes real artwork itself. Even Michelangelo and Leonardo Da Vinci created set designs for the Pope or Ludovico Il Moro. Some of our set designs were unquestionably works of art, like the wood silhouettes created by Mario Ceroli⁻⁷ (his large horse, created in wood and then cast in bronze, stands out on the lawn out front), and were burned for the scenes. There's no doubt that as far as advertising goes, we did something that no one else had done before us, and

no one has done since. We invented a scene that was wilder than my wildest imaginations. Yes, I'll admit that as far as communications were concerned, I was quite satisfied when, from 1965 to 1970, Mina, that queen of Italian song, was also the sublime, unsurpassed spokesperson for Barilla pasta. Thanks to the ads starring Mina, pasta went back to being the centerpiece of Italian cuisine. She helped it become the epicenter of the Mediterranean diet, and Barilla became the most famous, the most loved Italian company, a status it continues to maintain today.

Then, during the same years, we had new problems, disagreements, the "Hot Autumn..."

– When these clouds appeared on the horizon, did you ever consider differentiating your product?

Of course. I wanted very much to add new products alongside pasta. A company that produces only a single product is too vulnerable. We stopped producing bread in 1952. There were a lot of reasons, first and foremost because bread is a fresh product that can't be distributed beyond the local market, as well as for the union problems I mentioned earlier. But I was unhappy about the decision; you could definitely say I suffered because of it. After having concentrated on pasta, I hadn't forgotten that there were lots of other long-lasting oven-baked products we could make, like dried bread and *grissini* (breadsticks). Dried, sliced bread was a French product, and we started producing it in France, at *Biscottes de France*. We produced the *grissini* together with Mario Maghenzani's⁸ company in Prati Bocchi, in Parma. In 1965 we opened a factory of our own in Rubbiano di Solignano, in the hills outside Parma near the highway. So you can see that at the same time as we were running the ad campaign with Mina, we also built a factory dedicated entirely to producing dried bread and grissini. It was big

and technologically advanced, so much so that when we presented it to stores we used the slogan “the longest oven in the world.” I spent endless hours following its design and construction; it was my baby and I felt like I was being given a glimpse of the future!

– Meanwhile, pasta was still being produced in the factory in Viale Veneto...

Yes, but it was an expensive endeavor! Production and sales had increased significantly. By now our old factory was chock full of machinery. We kept it running seven days a week, including Sundays. In 1966 there were no fewer than 42 different production lines in there! When the law banning the sale of loose pasta arrived in 1968 (incredibly late!), our sales jumped to 300,000 quintals per year. We were about to explode and lose our market share. “Be careful!” our technicians warned us, “Any investment you make in the old factory will be money wasted. You are prisoners of its 70,000 sqm area. You need different buildings and different spaces.” We needed to move.

– So you decided to build in Pedrignano...

Pedrignano presented an extraordinary opportunity. Il Cottolengo from Turin had inherited three parcels of land. All three were being sold together by a single owner: 1,200,000 square meters in a single purchase! Gianni was worried about it, but I wasn't.

We bought it in 1964 and paid cash. I believed that we needed to build as quickly as possible, and even prepared a financial plan and marketing strategy. But there were continuous delays. Then finally, in 1966, we called on two professors from the Harvard Business School – Buzzell and Hunt – so that they could verify our financial plans and marketing strategy. They told us everything looked good. Finally we could start work in Pedrignano.

It was an enormous leap to make. We were creating a major company. Final investments would total more than 20 billion lira, and this was the 1960s! Building a brand new factory was an important design endeavor, and a major challenge for our company's technical sector. Work began in 1967, and in 1970 the largest, most technologically advanced pasta factory in the world went on line. Gianni deserves a fair portion of the credit for having insisted on created production lines that could produce one thousand quintals per day. The lines in Viale Veneto couldn't produce more than 200. In order to have an idea of the leap forward we were making, just consider this: we moved from 42 production lines in the old factory that produced 6,000 quintals per day to 11 lines in the new factory that could produce 10,000 quintals per day.

– It was a new liftoff for Barilla.

Yes, although we weren't the only company changing. All Italian companies were changing, and the world along with them. In ten years Italy had become industrialized, there was a large working class, the number of students attending universities had increased dramatically, earnings had risen and along with them opportunities, but people's expectations had risen as well. At the time I had a vague sense that there was a real revolution underway. You could sense it from the news that reached us about what was happening in the US, the country that led the way for the rest of us. There was a war in Vietnam, rock music and student rebellions. The 1960s were years of economic well being, but we may have already crossed the border into excess. That included our private lives, and certainly mine. The moment in which we were expanding the most was also a moment of social, family and union crises. Italy's famous "Hot Autumn" was arriving...



VII

DIEBA

– Before we talk about Italy’s “Hot Autumn” and the consequences it had for Barilla, I’d like to take a step back for a moment and talk about your experience with DieBa.

Certainly! DieBa, or Dietetici Barilla (Barilla Dietary products) was an initiative that we developed from 1959 to 1963. Looking back today, having seen the way food consumption developed in Italy, I realize just how complex a path a food company has to follow. There are so many gray areas, so many problems to resolve. In 1960 we rationalized both production and organization. We were producing 4,000 quintals of pasta per day, more than Buitoni, up until that point the market leader and our main competitor. We had managed to achieve this level with the help of great experts and consultants: the nutritionist Manlio Rinetti; pediatrician Silvio Scarabicchi; and professor Carlo Taddei. We talked all the time with them and others about the future of nutrition, and by extension of the food industry at large. Everyone could sense that there was a trend towards change. But in what direction? I think I can say that there was pressure from three directions, three trends and not just one. The world never evolves in a simple, linear fash-

ion. Sometimes it's complex and contradictory, just like the human soul.

– What were these three trends?

One was a tendency to use richer foods in every sense: richer in sugars, fats, and especially in protein. Having gotten a taste of well being, now people were no longer satisfied with a simple bowl of rice or pasta and ragu in the north, or a plate of pasta, tomato and olive oil in the south. They wanted something more substantial, more nutritious. Above all, they wanted things that used to be the sole province of the upper classes. We weren't at lobster and caviar just yet, but foods that had been considered luxurious and therefore more delicious. Italians were used to eating meat from chickens, turkeys, rabbits and other domestic animals, though not in any substantial portions. Beef and especially veal were highly prized. Now Italians wanted to give their kids slices of beef, or even rich, satisfying dishes like the "fiorentina" steak. Italian believed those were the dishes being eaten by Scandinavians, Americans and the British, all people who came from countries more advanced than Italy. Italians felt inferior to them in everything, therefore in cuisine as well. After all, hadn't the Germans coined "macaronis," or pasta-eaters, as a derogatory way of referring to the Italians? I already told you how, in the 1930s, the futurists had attacked pasta as a sign of cultural and nutritional backwardness, proposing instead eccentric, chemical dishes that we'd pushed back against through our ad campaigns. But the pressure to achieve a richer, superior alimentation was so strong that Buitoni, our strongest competitor and the company that exported the most (especially in the US), came out with a new line of pasta, Minusamid, that boasted more protein and less starch.

That brings us to the second trend, which I'll call "healthy."

People have always tried to eat right. My grandmother and my mother, along with all Italian grandmas and mammas, knew full well what foods were best for little children, the things that were most appropriate for their development, what they needed to eat when they were sick. Back then medicine was still lagging, there were no antibiotics or diagnostics or modern surgical practices, and therefore the diet was an incredibly important instrument. In the 1950s and 1960s, medicine made advances thanks to economic development as well. That was when Bovet⁻¹ and then Natta⁻² both won Nobel Prizes for example, and when Domenico Marotta⁻³ was running the Istituto Superiore di Sanità. Italian science was on the front page, and everybody was listening to scientists. They were the ones you had to turn to figure out what was needed, what you should produce and most importantly, what people would need in the future. We put together a group of top-notch dietary experts in order to help us come up with new nutritional solutions. Carlo Taddei in particular was a brilliant individual who managed to intuit market trends and monitor what was taking place in more advanced countries, dreaming up products that would be successful in the future. He came up with products like Soiamin, a pasta made with soy beans that was rich in protein and was a good competitor with Buitoni's Minusamid. Once the consumption of animal protein became widespread, we no longer needed this kind of enriched pasta. Another thing Taddei created that lasted longer in the market was Bon's, a cookie enriched with amino acids and vitamins and designed for infants that was a forerunner of things that would appear many years later. Parboiled rice was another successful innovation⁻⁴. There were two key components to this healthy trend: the first was a rational use of science to improve the product; the second was the idea that science was supposed to decide what it was best for us to eat.

– What people began to call an “alimentary pseudo-science...”

I like that expression, “alimentary pseudo-science.” Scientists and dieticians used that expression as a pretext to decide what the food industry had to produce. This meant only new foods that were enriched with proteins and vitamins, that moved further and further away from traditional cuisine. You see, at heart the scientist and dietician both have in mind a cuisine that is yes rich in proteins and mineral salts, full of all the right components, yet devoid of flavors, tasteless. Nowadays people don’t want to forego flavors, abandon the pleasure of traditional cuisine. They want to enrich it, to try the tastiest dishes from each individual region of the world. I’m thinking of the expansion of both regional Italian foods and foreign cuisines – Chinese, Japanese and so forth... Taddei’s path wasn’t wrong, but it wasn’t supposed to replace traditional cuisine. Taken too far you risk driving people away from the great popular flavors. I didn’t want flour and precooked foods to triumph; I wanted the keep pasta in its position as the queen of Italian cuisine.

– So you were doubtful about this whole trend...

For a little while I was fascinated with the possibility of progress these trends offered, so we made an agreement with Galbani, one of Italy’s biggest milk and cheese companies, together with CIBA, one of Europe’s most important pharmaceutical companies. DieBa became a joint-stock company in which each of us – Barilla, CIBA and Galbani – owned a 33% share. But as time went by and I saw the number of DieBa products grow, I started to worry that in concentrating too much on them we might wind up neglecting Barilla products, which were designed for taste. I have to admit when given the choice between the brilliant Soiamin, rich in proteins and soy, and a plateful of egg pasta, I would choose the second any day

of the week and twice on Sunday. Basically, I was less and less a believer in what you've called an "alimentary pseudo-science."

– I understand. But you mentioned three trends earlier. What was the third?

Wellbeing meant that people ate more, and therefore they started to become fatter. I happened to see a documentary shot at the end of the war and I realized that all the people in it – men, women and children – were all thin! They were really, really thin, because they didn't have much to eat. In a country in which no one has very much to eat and everyone's thin, being fat becomes beautiful. Do you remember Primo Levi's autobiographical book *Christ Stopped at Eboli*? When the women see the book's protagonist, they think he's beautiful and say he's "beautifully fat." Even fat children were considered healthy and beautiful. Then, in the 1960s, people were getting plenty to eat and some people, especially women, were starting to experience weight problems like obesity and cellulite. The problem continued to get worse, and women resorted to all sorts of solutions. But it was the first time a problem like this had ever arisen in Italy. That's when a special nutritional candy bar invented by C. Joseph Genster of the Mead Johnson & Company first appeared. Ads for the bar promised women that they would get a complete, balanced nutritional meal that contained very few calories, making it possible to lose weight quickly: the Metrecal bar. It was an incredible success! Lots of people thought that the way we eat would be changed forever. Taddei was enthralled, and he immediately set up production of an analogous product that we called Dietecal. But we weren't sure if it was a "trendy" product, one that women would use for a few months to get their weight under control and then abandon, or something that would become a permanent part of people's diets.

– I remember a specific incident that occurred around this point. One day you sent for me from CIBA. I remember that you, your brother and the president of CIBA were there. You brought me into a room and asked me a single question: “Do you think Metrecal is a trendy product, something that’s popular now but will eventually die down again, or do you think people will continue to eat it because it’s become a fixed part of the female diet?” I told you what I thought: “Food consumption is very stable and traditional. Of course people can always introduce new things, like when the Americans began eating Italian pizza, even though they were used to eating sandwiches. We eat hamburgers, but we’ve had ground beef for a long time. But Metrecal is a little candy bar that’s supposed to substitute an entire meal. That’s too radical a change for people. So I think it’s a trend, a fad connected with summertime. It’s something women have started using to get into shape for the summer months, and by Christmas and the winter it will already be in decline. It might come back next summer, of course, but nobody knows.” I have no idea how important my words were for you, but clearly they confirmed what you already thought. Maybe they were bits of straw that broke the camel’s back...

I remember that day too, and you were right. But the camel was already tottering on its own. The mistake that management at DieBa made was to try and create a completely autonomous company, one that didn’t take advantage of any of the skills its partner companies had already perfected. Barilla had already worked with Galbani during the 1930s, taking advantage of Galbani’s sales network in eastern Africa. But Taddei didn’t want to use Barilla’s sales network. Instead he created an entirely new network and new fleet of company vehicles. Then he insisted on building an expensive

new headquarters, driving costs up enormously. Metrecal is just the last example in a framework of bad overall administration. DieBa didn't have any management controls. They didn't even know which products were earning money and which were losing. Manfredo Manfredi was the one who realized that things weren't working the way they were supposed to, and predicted a financial catastrophe. He put us on guard and even resigned from the board of administration. For this reason the three partners – myself first and foremost – decided to take the large financial loss and put an immediate stop to the experiment.



VIII

FAMILY

– When did you get married?

In 1957, when I was 44.

– Why so late? Family was always important to you, and I think you'd always wanted children.

That's true. But you have to bear in mind that we didn't get clear of the postwar turmoil until the 1950s, when I was 37. Before that I spent all my time either in uniform or struggling spasmodically to save and grow the company.

Then, well, I decided I wanted to enjoy a few years of fun and freedom! I'd never been an adolescent. All I'd experienced was work, war and responsibility. I only enjoyed being a teenager much later, from when I was 37 to my early forties. That was my adolescence, and only after I'd experienced that did I feel ready for love and matrimony.

– Where did you meet Marilena, your future wife?

In Cortina. I always vacationed there and Marilena, who is from the Veneto region, was there on vacation that year with a few members of her family. She was really young, just twenty⁻¹.

– Marilena told me that you were surrounded by the most beautiful women in Italy, rich, famous and important women, and that she felt insignificant when compared to them. She said she was always amazed that you chose her even though you were surrounded by all those beauties. And you were determined to have her, too, because less than a year later you were married.

Marilena never understood the powerful attraction of the freshness, candor and pride a man feels by loving and being loved by a younger, pure woman who stares at him, enchanted. It was also the pleasure of teaching her so many things, of being in some way her maestro. It was the pleasure of starting life all over again.

– What about the other beautiful, captivating and famous women? Weren't you attracted to them?

Well of course I was, but I didn't want to marry a woman who had already had love affairs and adventures. I could enjoy a fling, enjoy her company in Rome or Cortina, but I would never have been able to put my life in her hands, to make her my wife. Your wife is a person you trust completely, someone you can tell anything, who brings your children into the world, educates them along with you. She's the person with whom you share all your key values, all your responsibilities. I felt that Marilena, even though she was much younger, was the person that lady luck had put on my path. I had reached 44 without any great loves, without any serious relationships, without any real desire to join my life to one woman, have

children and keep “building” Barilla. The idea of matrimony as the beginning of a family, as the continuation of a dynasty, had been growing in me for some time. But I kept putting it off because I was absorbed with the war and reconstruction. During the 1950s Barilla finally became modern. It was ready to face the market and I felt ready to make my private more stable and secure. So I decided to build the house in Fraore and, when I met the right woman, to get married. Then everything picked up speed once I met Marilena: I was thunderstruck, and I made my decision almost immediately. Without love I would never have gotten married. Our family is characterized by the love that exists between its various members. Fathers, mothers and children have all loved one another passionately, exaggeratedly, sometimes to the point of doing one another harm. All our difficulties have come from an excess of love, intolerant and total. Now that I’m older I understand more clearly that I loved Guido⁻², Luca⁻³, Paolo⁻⁴ and Emanuela⁻⁵ more than anything else, more than the company. And I loved my wife in the same manner. Yes, I’ve loved them all viscerally, just as they’ve loved me.

– You had three boys right away...

We were truly fortunate, because we really, really wanted to have children, and especially boys, through whom the Barilla tradition – I’d even go so far as to say the Barilla dynasty – could continue. And in just a few years we had Guido, Luca and Paolo. Our dream came true in no time at all!

Guido was born in 1958. I still remember the day clearly. One night Marilena woke me up saying, “Pietro, I don’t feel very good. I think I’m about to have the baby!” We left right away, driving in a Ferrari from Parma to Milan at two in the morning at a ridiculous speed. Back then the highway hadn’t been built yet. I loved fast cars then, and I was a good driver. Guido was born just a few hours later.

– Did you spend a lot of time with your children?

A fair amount. Of course when they were young they spent more time with their mother. I was either at work or traveling. But I adored them, and I really enjoyed playing with them and telling them stories. I used to tell one about a ragdoll, a sort of marionette that we called “Pucci Pucci.” They loved the story and laughed a lot. Another character we played with together was named “the big monkey.” I was the big monkey, and I pulled my hair down in front of my face, stuck my tongue behind my lower lip so that I looked really monkey-like, then grunted and howled like a big ape and ran around chasing them. In the end it became a sort of wrestling match, an affectionate tug of war where I grabbed them, they escaped and then I’d fall down on the ground and they’d jump all over me.

– Guido told me that you liked playing games with them where you could grab them, hug them, kiss them and hold them close... You liked have a strong physical contact with them, a physical relationship.

He’s right. I loved to hugging and holding them, kissing them.

– Did you always live at Fraore?

Yes. There the kids had their own room and bathroom, which they shared for a long time. They played together a lot, and they didn’t fight much, despite the fact that they were three boys of almost the same age!

– Did they eat alone or together with you?

When they were still young, we gave them dinner first. They went to be early and had to get up very early for school. But they began having lunch with us right from a young age. And as soon as they were a little older, I made sure they could eat with us at the big table even when we had dinner guests. I wanted them to have a chance to meet important people they could always learn from.

– Did you oversee their education?

Very much so, though obviously less when they were still young children. Back then our relationship was based on playing together.

– Guido told me: “My father wasn’t around much when we were very young, but I can still remember playing together, having fun, taking trips and going out into the countryside, as well as car racing. He loved fast cars and brought us to school almost every morning. We left our house at 7:15 in the morning and stopped to buy a sandwich for snack in the pastry shop on Via Repubblica. Then he dropped us off at the school, and often he came to pick us up when we got out.”

The boys loved to go fast too. During this short ride – it lasted maybe fifteen, twenty minutes – I pretended we were in a car race, to give them a little thrill and have some fun. Of course we weren’t really going that fast, it wasn’t dangerous, but I made the engine roar, accelerated and made it feel like we were racing in Formula One. I would pass out other cars and the boys would cheer. We loved passing first one, then two cars... They always wanted me to pass one more! Every once in a while I pretended to talk to the car, as if it had a mind of its own, as if it drove on autopilot. Then I’d caress the dashboard and say, “slow down, slow down!” and the boys would laugh like crazy.

– Your children told me that you were always their accomplice, a father-friend who had fun with them and, at the same time, gave them their first life lessons. That you always talked with them about everything: life, values, work, the factory, family, solidarity and even religion. I forget whether it was Guido or Luca who told me that you even explained politics to them, for example talking about Communism, explaining what it was about in a very elementary way but always with respect. You never offended anyone or said cruel things, even when you didn't agree with the concepts. And of course they have wonderful memories of their vacations.

That's because whenever I could I took long vacations, especially to Cortina, and they always came with me. We also went to Forte dei Marmi and Sardinia, but I never bought a real yacht, at least not until recently. In Cortina we spent almost all our time doing sports, out in the open, skiing in the winter and walking in the summer. It was time dedicated entirely to nature, to the mountains. I had been going to Cortina since the 1930s, together with my dad and my sister Gianna. My closest friends were in Cortina, the people I wanted to spend time talking to. One of these was Indro Montanelli⁶.

– At the end of the 1970s you and your wife separated. I know it's a very delicate topic, and if you'd prefer we don't have to talk about it at all.

No, I'd rather say the things I think are essential.

– You told me that when you got married, you and Marilena were deeply in love.

I loved Marilena and she loved me, but as happens with lots of couples, we were also two very different people. There was a big age difference; I was almost fifty and she was twenty-two years younger than me. Furthermore, I was an important industrialist, and had to work and travel constantly. Marilena was a young woman who had always lived at home: she was full of life, desires, dreams... She was imaginative and romantic, but she had three young boys right away who required a great deal of her time and energy. I loved her a great deal, but she may have wanted me to spend more time with her. Maybe it would have been better if, rather than have all our children at once, we had spent a year alone together, traveling around Italy or around the world like a pair of lovebirds. Of course that's the kind of thing you only say afterwards, because at the time we really wanted kids, and we were both happy. But looking back on that time today, I often wonder if Marilena didn't need a period of complete intimacy, a time when she could feel cradled and protected.

– The same is true today, believe me. Women still need to hear words of love, receive love letters, flowers, caresses and continuous courtship...

Another source of incomprehension or division may well have been the fact that I considered myself the leader of a company and a guide for everyone. She may have had the impression that I didn't consider her to be my life companion, but rather treated her somewhat like a teacher treats a favorite student, or a father treats his oldest daughter.

– Do you know what Marilena said to me? That the thing she desired the most was to have a chance to spend time alone with you, to be intimate: “But I couldn't do it because I'm shy,

closed off, introverted, and I was a little bit intimidated by him, by his strong, irrepressible personality. Pietro is an extrovert and he loves people. He talks to everyone, is curious and interested in everything. He draws you in through the courage and enthusiasm with which he'll approach anything. You can see him tasting delicacies in the most important restaurant in the world, but he's just as happy to eat a bread and cheese sandwich while sitting on the steps of the house. He was attracted to human beings, he understood them and knew instinctively how to communicate with them. He would stop to talk in a bar and could remember the bartender's name. You know how, in the past, in the US there were always attendants in the elevators who opened and closed the door for you. Whenever you visited a skyscraper you would spend a couple of minutes together with whoever was working in the elevator that day. Pietro would always talk with this person, and by the time we reached the ground floor he'd know the man's name, the name of his wife and maybe even the names of his children. It was the same with the taxi drivers; by the time we reached our destination he'd know everything about them. And he was so generous that if the day was going well he'd pay the taxi driver double the fare. Wherever he went he always created positive relationships. I would have preferred, especially at the beginning of our marriage, to have him all for myself! But instead we always wound up with company. Once we were supposed to fly to Paris, but at the last minute the plane couldn't fly so we had to go by train. I was happy because we were traveling from Milan to Paris alone, just the two of us, with nobody around to bother us. I thought to myself: 'It will be fantastic! Finally we can just chat, talk, read the paper, just the two of us!' We got onboard and who did we find? A good friend of Pietro's, an entrepreneur if I remember cor-

rectly, who was traveling all the way to Paris too. All of a sudden we were back in someone's company!"

When Marilena left, did the boys stay with you?

Yes, although of course we visited her, and soon she started coming back to visit in Parma. During the years we were separated I raised our sons. When they were younger I hadn't been around much and I let their mother do all the work. But now that we were separated and they were left alone with me, I started taking care of them every day. Maybe I was a little obsessive about it, as Guido has pointed out to me. I followed them daily, right down to the smallest details. I was omnipresent, took care of everything, accompanied them to school, always wanted to know where they were going, and checked to make sure they were doing their schoolwork. And I won't deny that I was afraid of other things too, because those were the "years of lead"⁷ in Italy, and there was a very real risk of kidnapping.



IX

DEFEAT

– By the 1970s, Barilla had become a famous company, and therefore an attractive purchase for big multinationals...

You can say that again. General Foods⁻¹ contacted us as early as 1961.

– Signor Manfredi told me that in 1969 Ted Levitt⁻² of the Harvard Business School held a seminar on this very case, claiming that you were the one who didn't want to sell...

No, I didn't want to sell. Our company was finally doing well, good news across the board. I can understand that different groups saw it as an attractive acquisition, but it was attractive for me, too! We had worked hard to make it an efficient, modern company, one that could deal with expanding markets, grow and realize my dreams, which were the same as those of my father and grandfather. Why should we sell now? The person who wanted to sell was my brother Gianni who, although he was an excellent entrepreneur and magnificent technician, had a financier's mentality. He'd developed a company, turned it into a polished gem, increased its value expo-

nentially and now he was ready to sell it in order to do the same thing with a new company. The mindset of a financier and that of an industrialist are miles apart. A financier does not identify with his company, doesn't feel like it's a part of him, and therefore he can sell it. But an industrialist like me feels as if the company is an extension of his own body, of his own family, and the idea of selling it off is painful merely to contemplate. It's hard to imagine it in someone else's hands. This was the difference between Gianni and I, a difference that became increasingly evident during the 1960s. To me, selling the company meant losing it and, at some basic level, losing myself in the process.

– Did other companies make offers after General Foods?

General Foods was just the first attempt. Of course the 1964 buy-out attempt was much more serious and dangerous, because that came from Unilever³, a company with infinite resources both financial and technical, and they almost pulled it off. Gianni had already decided, and he'd argued with me about it so often and so convincingly that he'd almost brought me over to his side. I was weak. I accepted to take part in the talks, and we'd reached the end. At heart I remained against the sale, but in the end I almost gave up, not because I was convinced it was the right thing to do, but because I was exhausted. So the talks kept going until we had a meeting in London that was supposed to be the final encounter. I went to London together with Gianni and our lawyer. When I walked into the room I'd already resigned myself to selling. Gianni had worked me over so completely that if they had stuck a piece of paper in front of me to sign without saying a word I'd have signed it and walked out in silence. But during the meeting, even though I thought everything was already concluded, the lawyer for Unilever made some additional requests. He pulled out a few quibbles

in that irritating manner that lawyers have when it's clear they're trying to please their client. As he was talking I felt my bile rising, and the more he continued on, petulant and insistent, the more my sense of irritation became a powerful anger. At a certain point I lost my patience. I stood up and said, "*Basta!* I'm not signing anything!" and I left. Gianni tried to stop me. You can imagine the looks on everyone else's faces. They just stared at one another, amazed. I walked out of the room and left them there.

– How did your brother react?

He was really hurt. But he could see how outraged and decided I was, so he chose to simply accept my decision. He didn't give up, though... And he got another chance in 1968. This time it was Grace⁻⁴, a conglomerate that wanted to establish a foothold in the food industry in Italy. They had already bought up Tanara⁻⁵, a company we were partners in, but they were aiming for Barilla. Gianni was frenetically involved, and he kept bringing Warren H. Heller, the president of Grace, to Forte dei Marmi. He did everything he could to pull the operation off successfully. But I wasn't interested: we were building Pedrignano; it seemed absurd to give up now. In the end I won. But it was tough, because I'd had a heart attack and serious family difficulties. In 1968 I was separating from Marilena. I was terribly anxious and upset. I've always been an emotional person, and that was one of the most difficult periods of my life. But as far as the company was concerned I stood fast once again.

– In the end, why did you sell?

In 1969 things got worse both at home and in the company. On a personal level I was dealing with the trauma of separation and surrounded by little ones who missed their mom. I was taken close care

of them, but I was always anxious and my health – after the heart attack of a few years earlier – was not what it used to be. These personal difficulties were made worse by serious economic and social problems. The Pedrignano facility cost 24 billion lira to build, six more than we had budgeted for. By 1969 the amortizations were eating up all our earnings. I want to use my notes to give you some more precise data (although Signor Manfredi would be better at this). In 1968 our EBITDA (which, once you take away amortizations gives you the EBIT, from which you can take away taxes in order to obtain your figure for net profit) was 3.2 billion lira. In 1969, however, that figure dropped to a mere 1.7 billion, because costs for the facility had rise from 12 to 20 billion and debt from 3.4 to 6.5.

– So you had to sell for financial reasons?

Not at all. The data I've given you was cause for worry, not a crisis. Pedrignano was a crown jewel, a promise for the future. Looked at objectively, these figures were cause for concern, for reflection. They told us we should move cautiously, but nothing more than that. The real reason we sold the company was something else entirely: a combination of my weakness, my brother's tenacity and the social rebellions of 1968 and 1969, which had frightened him. That year student protests sprung up all over Italy, filled with red flags, marches, protests against entrepreneurs. The students who took over the university in 1968 were led by professor Antonio Moroni⁻⁶ – among other things a friend of mine – who would later create a degree program for environmental sciences. They took over the Duomo too. There were portraits of Marx, Lenin, Mao Tse-Tung and Che Guevara everywhere: they seemed like the warning signs of the Communist revolution. They next year things got even worse. We had the Hot Autumn, the unions were ignored as the workers, especially the younger ones, egged on by students and

revolutionary intellectuals, became threatening. But the thing that really bothered me, and which scared Gianni, took place one morning when we came in to find the gates of our factory in Viale Veneto locked shut and the workers lined up against us. They wouldn't let us inside. They arrogantly demanded: "Who are you?" "I'm Pietro Barilla," I responded. "Who cares? You stay out!" "But I have to go to my office, it's my factory!" "Not today it isn't. Stay out!"

I have to point out that they weren't Barilla employees. They weren't the same people who we'd given every courtesy, kindness, attention, Christmas gift packages and houses. They were workers from Salvarani, which at the time had more employees than Barilla, around three thousand. The union, once it learned that our workers wouldn't participate in the protest, sent them over instead.

This experience was a real blow, especially for Gianni, who is a calm person and accustomed to working behind a desk. He was worried, and started to say: "We're all going to wind up in the Communists' hands here. They'll nationalize everything and we'll be ruined. Let's sell and take our money elsewhere."

– Were you afraid?

Not in the least. I wasn't afraid of the unions and protests. I'd seen war, and after the war I saw the communists and Nilde Iotti set up shop in our factory. I knew our workers and I didn't believe that these protestors were as strong as they thought they were. The iron curtain still existed. We were a key part of the Atlantic Pact led by the Americans. Besides, the communist party wasn't behind those protests. Of course it gave its support, it was happy to see the protest take place, but it wasn't directly involved. It was spurred on and led by fanatic intellectuals, a few extreme unionists, then the students and young workers excited by the myth of revolution. The older unionists had been bypassed, and were now trying to regain

control of the fanatics. I remember men like Trentin, Carniti and Benvenuto⁻⁷ among the machinists; they were tough unionists, but they weren't revolutionaries. I knew that the big players, the big unions and the Italian government, would win in the end. But I was weak for the reasons I've already shared with you, and there were issues between my brother and I.

– What issues?

Nothing important if taken on its own, but which became important when you add other factors. Gianni and I have always been very different. He is reserved and careful where I'm extroverted. That meant that I've always been the one who handled advertising, relationships with the press and television. I was the one who talked to journalists, who gave Barilla a public face. And there was another aspect I probably didn't see at the time. Gianni was an incredibly hard worker. He always arrived early in the morning, and he didn't do anything else. I was always traveling, had friendships in the world of cinema, had my pictures taken with famous actresses. Some people whispered that Gianni did all the work while I had all the fun. My brother didn't believe that, but he felt like he was playing second fiddle when it came to public relations, and it made his wife Gabriella⁻⁸ uncomfortable too, because she was also an entrepreneur, and an important figure in the agro-alimentary world.

– Did she encourage Gianni to sell?

No. But while my wife Marilena took no interest whatsoever in the company and our business, Gabriella owned an important agriculture company of her own. She raised milk cows and had brought strains of the most famous Canadian bulls over from Canada. Her company even won prizes. That made her authoritative, and she ex-

erted a strong, often positive influence over Gianni. For example, Gianni talked to her about the problems connected with growing durum wheat in northern Italy. Pasta is made with durum wheat, which we bought from the south. Albino Ganapini⁹ could tell you more about the genetic research we conducted based on proposals from Gianni in order to try and find a cold-resistant strain of wheat. We even set up some experimental fields in Emilia, and had some excellent successes, to the point where Gianni and I organized two big conventions on the topic in Salsomaggiore, where Gianni gave a wonderful speech.

– Then it wasn't a source of contention, of division...

Not at all. But despite all this, it probably bothered Gabriella to see that the person who became more famous, more prestigious in Barilla wasn't her husband Gianni, but her brother-in-law Pietro. I understand her point of view, you know? I was giving interviews, talking to the press, choosing Mina rather than Sofia Loren... Gianni and Gabriella were overshadowed. That may have been part of why Gianni became disenchanted with the company. He knew he'd given a great deal to Barilla, knew that he was as talented as I was. Please don't misunderstand: this wasn't a determining factor, but it was piled on with all the others, and it made him intransigent.

– Couldn't you have bought out your brother's share?

I would have loved to! But I didn't have anywhere near enough money to do it. So in the end I gave in. I was bitter, and it was painful. It wasn't as hard for him, because despite the fact that he was a talented industrialist, he had always had a financier's mentality. You see, from a financier's point of view, a factory isn't worth anything

on its own, but only for the money you can get by selling it to the highest bidder. What matters is its pure market value. But not for me. For me, the factory was my family, memories of my grandfather and father, a future for my children. It was my workers, my friends. It was my city and the high esteem people held me in.

– When did you finally sell?

In January 1971.

– Where did the signing take place?

In Basel, in Switzerland.

– Did you two go up to Basel alone?

Just the two of us and the lawyer. We didn't feel like talking. In fact I felt mostly like crying, and every once in a while I would accuse Gianni, "You made me sell!"

– When did you tell the rest of the company, the management, unions and workers?

We told the managers first, in secret, and we gave them everything they might expect. But I was ashamed because, given the tumultuous times, they may have thought we were escaping, taking the money and getting out while we left everyone else behind. I kept these feelings to myself for years, even when things got worse: the gas embargo, the Red Brigades, inflation... And I'd run away.

– What about your mother?

We only told her after the fact.

– What was her reaction?

My mother had a strong personality, a great strength of spirit. She was dignified, and proud of her family. We tried to explain to her the reasons why we sold – the difficulties, the dangers – but she wasn't convinced. She accepted because she loved us and she couldn't do otherwise, but she was deeply hurt. The next day she said to me, "I would never have done that..."



X

FOLLOW YOUR HEART

– You were losing your company, your wife Marilena was no longer in Parma, where you were living alone with your boys, and they missed their mother terribly... It must have been an awful period from an emotional point of view. Full of loneliness, doubt and regrets...

Yes, it was a terrible time all around. I even considered leaving Italy. But I didn't want to unless the boys agreed, and so I asked them. We held a special family meeting to talk about it. They gave me a perfectly logical response from a kid's point of view: "No dad! We want to stay here, this is our hometown, and we don't want to leave!" I understood that it wasn't right to uproot them, to take them away from their home and friends. They already had too many things to deal with, too many frustrations, and the move would only take them further from their mother. Separation is a dramatic choice. It always causes suffering and, as I mentioned earlier, my kids suffered because of it. I did everything I could to make up for their mother's absence, to minimize their suffering, but I was only partly successful.

– No, you did a great deal. The boys never stopped loving you, and they suffered differently depending on their age and personal affections. Luca said to me: “I was eight and a half and I don’t know how they decided that we had to stay in Parma with dad. In any case I’m really grateful to my parents for the decision, because Fraore was an important part of my life. It was Parma, my city, my school and my friends. I was a lucky child, because up until that point I’d lived a tranquil, happy life. When I was young we had a happy family. My parents were relaxed and affectionate with one another. The house in Fraore was where we lived, where we spent our time. My parents made my brothers and I feel as if we were the center of attention, protected and a part of everything. I have clear memories of our vacations, which began at the start of July when we left for the seaside, and ended towards the end of September, when we came back from the mountains. Our mother stayed with us the whole time and our dad caught up with us as soon as he could, and always tried to stay as long as possible. When our mother left we were all sad, but fortunately that didn’t last for long, given how things were evolving, and I was able to make peace with it.”

But for Guido, on the other hand, her departure was traumatic. He suffered a great deal from it, and I’m still upset about that.

– He told me: “My mom was fundamental for me from an emotional point of view, and she still is today. She was the most important presence in all my early childhood. I was deeply, even viscerally connected to her. I adored her. I’d always lived with her in total intimacy, from the day I was born until I was ten years old, and the day she left I missed her horribly... We went to visit our mom once a month in Madonna

di Campiglio. We left Saturday afternoon after school and arrived there Saturday night. Then, Sunday at noon, we left to go back home again. I would cry for hours. I remember one time we were headed back there was a soccer show on the radio, and I was so upset that I couldn't stand listening to people talk about soccer for the next twenty years! Even when I was in middle school I remember feeling incredibly sad because I missed her. Then I had a sort of reaction, a sort of sentimental survival instinct that drove me to put this painful state behind me. Sports played a big part in this. But I have to admit that my youth was the saddest period of my life. From the time I was ten until I was 17 or 18, I was never happy."

Yes, and I knew it. Guido was a constant problem for me and a source of no small amount of anxiety. He suffered enormously when his mother left, and at a certain point he decided to seek his own path in life, outside the home and outside the company. It hurt, but I still think it was the right choice: wise and courageous.

– Things were difficult for Paolo too...

Paolo had a talent for car racing, real racecar driving skills. I didn't understand at first and, at least in the beginning, I didn't want to accept it. Yet I was the one who had unknowingly set him on the path: talking with him about Enzo Ferrari and racecars, going to visit him at Maranello... It was inevitable that he'd share my love of fast cars.

– Like his brothers, Paolo has very clear memories of going to visit Signor Ferrari. He feels it was a key experience. One day he told me: "On Sundays dad often took us to visit Enzo Ferrari, the 'grand old man' as he called him. Ferrari knew that kids like us would quickly get bored listening to adults

talk, so he turned us over to Valerio, his assistant, who took us to visit the factory, and especially the racing department, where we could look at the racecars. For a little boy it was a dream come true to be able to sit down in the driver's seat. I've wanted to be a racecar driver ever since. I started racing with a go-kart that my mom gave me. Dad was always worried about me and this passion, because spending time with Ferrari made it possible for me to meet some famous drivers, like Lorenzo Bandini⁻¹ and Ignazio Giunti⁻², who died in crashes during their races. Even though he supported me and the choices I made, he was always afraid for my safety and health. I could tell he was afraid and didn't want me to race, and that hurt a lot."

Enzo Ferrari was a decisive influence on Paolo and his decision to become a racecar driver. He was an important part of the boy's childhood. He came across as a hard man, but in reality, in private, he was very sweet and tender. I remember clearly that he treated my boys as if they were his own sons, perhaps because he saw in them the boy he lost⁻³. Enzo and I had been friends for a long time, and whenever I got the chance I'd go visit him in Modena. Usually I suggested the trip and the boys accepted gladly, because to them it was like going to Disneyland. I usually stayed in the office, chatting with Enzo, while they went to visit the factory and caught up with us a couple of hours later so that we could all go eat lunch together at the famous restaurant Il Cavallino, where Ferrari had his own private dining room. Marilena only came with us a few times; she felt this area of life was more of a boy's thing.

– Pietro, I'm sure you're aware that you've had an enormous influence over the boys, on each one of them, though in different ways. In Paolo's case your preoccupations, your anxiety –

even though you tried to keep them to yourself – were an enormous source of guilt. Once he said to me: “I’ve raced in Japan, England, Germany and the US, but I never stayed for long, thinking of my dad and my home. After a little while I would always catch a flight and head home. I could sense dad’s fear, his anxiety and hostility. I understand that on an intimate, profound level he didn’t want me racing, and I never felt completely free and at peace.”

And to think I was so proud of his success at Le Mans^{-4!} It’s incredibly difficult to be a father. So easy to make a mistake...

The people who love you can read your soul, feel your fears. That’s why Paolo could perceive my anxieties and disapproval, and also my pride, a contradictory sentiment that certainly didn’t help him. I only realized that each person has to follow his or her own path little by little, and that a parent’s job is merely to share morals and values, not to put brakes on freedom. That’s why I always included my kids in my decision-making process. I’ve always talked my decisions over with them, respecting their tendencies and trying not to impose my choices on them. I tried to create conditions in which they could freely choose whether or not to stay with me, to work in the company. They had to be free. And in the end, despite some inevitable difficulties, it all ended for the best.

– Which of the boys has stayed the closest to you for the longest?

Undoubtedly Luca, who lived with Marilena and I until the beginning of 1993, because Paolo started racing go-karts at a very young age. He started when he was 14 and basically never stopped, to the point where when he was 18 he was basically a fulltime driver. He

moved out when he was 20 and by the time he was 30 he'd become an established professional. Guido dedicated himself to his studies and went to live on his own. Then he became engaged and got married. He still had a bedroom at home, but he didn't live with us anymore, so I stayed the longest with Luca. Even Emanuela, during the last years, moved to Milan to go to university.

– Tell me about Emanuela.

Emanuela was a wonderful little girl, energetic and intelligent. She was so delicate, with such an enchanting face and particular movements! I fell in love with her deeply and intensely.

– What role did the kids play in your professional life and the company?

I always involved my kids in the meetings I had with people who came to our house. I wanted them to gain experience from these encounters, experience that would be useful later on in their lives.

– Luca told me that he has extremely clear memories of some of the lunches you had with your artist friends, people like Pietro Cascella, Walter Chiari, Mina, Romolo Valli and Giorgio De Lullo. He also remembers a lot of painters, journalists, architects, writers, film directors, professionals and artisans. Guido has clear and affectionate memories of Valerio Zurlini, who was a close friend of yours.

Zurlini was an important figure for the boys, especially for Guido, and the two were very close during the separation. Luca loved hanging around with Walter Chiari. In reality, everybody loved Walter: he was extroverted, entertaining and very generous. He always talk-

ed with them, telling jokes and extremely interesting stories... Every time he came he'd bring along some little gift: a simple painting, a drawing... he liked doing these kinds of things.

– And when they grew a little older, during the period when you sold the company to Grace, what did you do with your kids?

I took them to school, talked with their teachers. We went to take our usual vacations in Cortina, and we took a lot of other trips as well. We went to the US a bunch of times. We went to museums, then sometimes I'd reserve a table in a prestigious restaurant, the kind of place where they had to wear a jacket and tie, which I always insisted they pack in their suitcases. We visited Paris, London and lots of Italian cities on weekends. If I was free and the weather was good, I'd call them in and say: "How do you feel about being a little naughty today? You know what I was thinking? Let's go over to Imola and watch a motorcycle Grand Prix." (Agostini's was racing that year.) "Or go visit Ferrari in Modena."

– You also sent them to study abroad...

Of course, in the US. I never forgot just how important the period studying in Germany was for me, and I wanted my kids to have the same experience – studying in a country that was more advanced than all the others – in the US.

– And once you returned, how did the kids find their place in the company?

Luca never left the company, while Paolo was quite involved with racing and Guido wanted to study philosophy.

– Can I share something with you that Guido told me about this period? It might surprise you...

What did he say?

– I'll have to paraphrase, but I think I can remember it pretty clearly: "When dad went back into the company in 1979, and up until he had his second heart attack in 1981, I didn't have anything to do with the company. In fact, I even told him 'Dad, I'm never going to come and work with you.' Then he had the heart attack, on Monday morning. He had come back from the US on Sunday, landing in Milan, where he stayed in a hotel and then went to see the Inter-Roma game, two teams that we were sponsoring at the time. He probably overexerted himself, got worked up or caught a little cold... In any case, that evening he had a serious heart attack. The morning after the doctors told us 'Let's wait a few days and see what happens. But the situation is very delicate.' Seven days went by and during that week my perception of the life I'd shared with him up until that point underwent a radical transformation. For the first time I truly understood that he might not be with us any longer. And for the first time in my life, our positions were completely turned around. Before we were the ones who depended on him, now he needed me, needed us. All three of us were there with him, for him, and then mom arrived too..."

I'm moved to hear that. Ever since then Guido has taken an active role in running the company. He and Luca spontaneously divided up the responsibilities. Luca concentrated on pasta, while Guido took Mulino Bianco. When I finally saw all three of them together I was truly happy. Ever since they were little boys, I'd always hammered into them the importance of staying united. I real-

ized that the boys were each very different from one another, and therefore were complementary. They could each help one another out in turn.

– Guido said, “Ever since we were little kids, in elementary school, our dad told us about the inherent force of staying united, together. Even back then he told us that each of us had very different characteristics than the others, and that precisely for this reason we had an opportunity to complete one another, to balance out our skills and defects. And in the end he was right, because the interaction between our three personalities gives us all strength. None of us would be the same without the other two.”

I could always count on them, and seeing how different they were from one another I counted on their differences, on their ability to form a group and continue Barilla’s destiny. I often talked to them about the company, saying: “You’ll work together in the company. You’ll do things, continuing what I, your grandfather and great-grandfather have done before you.”

– Do you know what Luca told me? “Dad didn’t talk about grandpa Riccardo very often, but there was one time when he really wanted to: the day we commemorate the dead, when we’d all go together to the cemetery to say prayers and remember our family history. We would go into the family chapel and gather together in silence in the small space, thinking about our family. Then dad would tell us some anecdote from grandpa’s life, telling us about his personality, about his work, about the sacrifices he made and things he did for the family. It was very important to him to tell us about our family history and the company, as well as the goal our grandparents

had set: to work hard to give people good bread and help out those in need who were worthy of being helped. I can remember clearly that at the end of those intense visits, dad would always say regretfully: 'Oh, if only my dad could be here to see how his company has grown, what it's become!' I think that our father never let go of the sad thought that grandpa Riccardo didn't live to see Barilla, after the destruction wrought by the Second World War, rise up again and become a big, solid and well-known company."

XI

EXILE

– After you sold Barilla what did you do? Where did you live, in Parma or Switzerland?

In Parma. I've always lived in Parma, in the house in Fraore, together with the boys. There was a moment – as I mentioned earlier – when I was considering leaving Italy. But I talked it over with the boys, they told me they wanted to stay in Parma, in their hometown, where they had school and friends...

– How did that make you feel?

This was the period I call “the great sadness.” For me, losing the company was a deep wound. It's as if I'd lost a part of myself. And I realized it immediately: I'd lost my social identity. In Parma, wherever I went and whoever I talked to, I was always Signor Pietro Barilla, the company in person. Now I was like a king who had lost his kingdom, an exile in his own land. It wasn't a defeat; it was annihilation. It was a situation I never managed to accept. When the boys and I decided to stay, I couldn't think about anything else save redemption, reconquering the company.

– You were also unlucky during this period...

A few months after the sale I had a run-in with the Italian financial police that really brought me down. The payment from Grace came partly in Italy, partly in Switzerland. I had made some investments in Switzerland, and I was returning to Italy with some documents relative to those operations in my briefcase. They were simple letters from a bank director, but they included numbers and amounts. When we reached Chiasso, the Italian financial police came on board, I assume because someone had tipped them off. They examined my briefcase and took my documents. I tried to tell them that these were private papers, and of no significance, but they took them anyways. This is another reason I was convinced there was foul play. In any case, from that moment forward things only got worse. I had sold my beloved company, my wife had left me and now I was under investigation by the financial police, which of course was published in bold lettering in every newspaper in the country.

– How did you react?

I hired a lawyer in Parma to handle everything. That's where I made my first mistake, because what I really needed was a skilled specialist who was familiar with the Rome courthouses. Worse yet, my lawyer didn't know how to handle things and he had a terrible personality: off-putting and jealous of the other professionals I called on for help. He eliminated them one by one in a genteel but entirely ruthless fashion. As a result we made a lot of errors, the worst of which was to refuse the deal the Italian tax authorities first offered. Instead, we decided to go to court. But you can never beat the Italian government in court. I traveled back and forth to Rome, but I was inexperienced and ingenuous. I humiliated myself by courting

people in Rome who made me promises they would never keep. Maybe that's the way it works in some fields, maybe they keep their promises when it's in their own best interest, when there's some advantage to be obtained. But I'm not a politician, I didn't have any favors to trade. I just wanted to find a way out of the thorn bush I'd gotten myself into, to pay for the mistake I'd made and come out clean. Rome is full of people who will point you in a certain direction, who will promise you something and then break their word. The truth is they never intended to honor their promises in the first place. So I decided to forge ahead in court. I won the first trial, but then I lost the second trial in Bologna and I had to pay all the fines the state was requesting.

– How much in total?

It was an enormous amount for me: more than one billion lira, to be paid over two years. Then they explained that the fight wasn't over, and told me to go pay a visit to a very powerful politician whose name I won't mention here. He guaranteed he would lend me his support, but then didn't do a single thing to help. I wanted to end the entire affair because the press was dragging my good name through the mud and ruining my public image. There was even a fiscal pardon, which I took advantage of in order to bring my capital back into Italy, but as a result the tax authorities condemned me to pay twice. That's right, my friend. I am one of the few Italians in the world to have paid a fine twice.

Economically, I was crushed. Did you know that this whole affair went on for seven years?

They were extremely sad and depressing times. My wife wasn't there, my kids were in the US. Even the house in Fraore was a problem: the help was excellent, but I was lonely and alone. Then there was my social life, or lack thereof. I felt like I was being laughed at,

publicly pointed out; I'd become a pariah, a castoff. Maybe it was all in my head, or maybe it was only partly true, but either way I felt like my fellow Parmigiani were criticizing me for having abandoned them, for having sold off the company for a few filthy coins. They considered Barilla, through our family, something they owned as well. They saw me all the time, knew me personally, and they could talk to me about things if they needed to. But not anymore. Who were these Americans, and who knew them? They were foreigners. I sold Barilla to foreign strangers. For all these reasons, I traveled by train and not by plane. I didn't want to be recognized. In order to go to the US and visit my kids, one in Boston and the other in Dallas, I didn't catch a flight in Rome or Milan. I went to Zurich or Geneva by train and flew from there. I even avoided the more famous restaurants, eating in simple trattorias or other innocuous places. It was incredibly sad... I'm a pretty strong guy. I've been through the war, been attacked by communists, so I didn't plunge into one of those terrible depressions where all you do is cry and sit alone. That didn't happen. But I was completely demoralized and ashamed.

– Besides the boys, who else stayed in touch with you during this period? Did you ever see your brother?

No, we only started seeing each other every once in a while. He moved to Geneva and concentrated his energies on finance. We met later on, but we've always lived in different cities.

– Luca told me that, despite this period, you never let on with them to what was happening. They never lacked for anything, and you never told them about how bad things were. I'll tell you what he said word for word: "At home dad never showed any signs of weakness. In fact, I always saw him full of life, full of energy, and he kept spending time with all the great person-

alities he was friends with and admired. We always had guests for lunch and dinner. My dad was hurt, but he didn't shut himself off from the world: he kept traveling, observing. He had a few problems in Parma, because in the eyes of some people he was no longer the same personality he'd been before. But he never had problems with life in general, with the world or the future. He even took us on trips, got us to play sports. I can assure you that he never accepted defeat. Soon he started thinking about ways to recapture his company, and making plans to see them through."



XII

RECAPTURE

– When did you first start thinking about taking back your company? And when did you first start believing such a thing might be possible?

For a long time all I did was regret the fact that I'd sold it, reproving myself for some of the mistakes I made during that period. I was facing all sorts of problems, including that unpleasant affair with the Italian tax authorities. No, I couldn't imagine buying the company back. I couldn't even dream of it. I started thinking about it seriously only once I had fewer problems, was more serene, and realized that Grace was starting to get fed up with the problems it was facing in Italy. In the wake of the 1973 oil crisis, the government put price controls on pasta. For a company that produced a high quality product, with a raw material – durum wheat – that's quite expensive, this meant a drop in profits. Some pasta makers reduced costs by mixing in common wheat. But we couldn't do that. Not Barilla. First of all because it was prohibited by law, but the real reason was because we didn't want to ruin Barilla's image. Signor Manfredi – and here it's important to recognize his extraordinary determination – stayed the course. He slashed the ad-

vertising budget to a bare minimum, but he wouldn't let anyone touch the product. This made it possible for the company to make a great leap ahead as soon as the price controls were lifted. But during that period profits took a nosedive, and Grace was unhappy. You have to bear in mind that Grace is a conglomerate, in other words a company made up of many different companies, from food to mining. So it wanted to diversify, but it didn't know how. Barilla's head of marketing, Gianni Maestri⁻¹, together with an informal work group created specifically for the purpose and a few brilliant consultants, had come up with Mulino Bianco, but the brand was still in its launch phase and wasn't yet making the kind of profits the Americans wanted to see. As a result they were unhappy, and ready to sell. So I realized that maybe I could buy it back from them. That was 1975, and I made an initial approach, but I had to give up immediately. I still owned a 1.1% share in the company, so I was still "inside," and as soon as the time felt right I had a lawyer I knew in New York, Morris Bergreen, request a meeting with Carl N. Graf, the executive vice president of Grace. Graf asked me for the same sum they'd spent to buy the company from us: 70 billion lira.

– But inflation had risen enormously in the meantime, so in reality it was much less...

That's true, but you have to bear in mind that when we sold our company, it was earning 6% on sales, while after the price controls went into effect Grace was earning just 1.5%. Furthermore, Grace wanted to be paid cash up front, while we had been paid over three years. But let's just say that the two amounts were equal.

– Did you have enough money?

Are you kidding? After the fiscal wringer I'd been through I wasn't exactly swimming in cash. Besides, when I'd sold the company I only owned 50%. My brother owned the other half. I had to find partners and financing.

– Who did you turn to?

To Mediobanca in Italy, and to two financial institutions in Switzerland. I went to talk personally with Enrico Cuccia, the president of Mediobanca, in order to ask him for the money necessary to buy back the company, but he said to me: "Signor Barilla, I've looked at the accounts and the numbers, and it's not worth the investment." I tried to convince him by telling him to come to Parma and take a look at the new factory himself. I remember saying to him, "it's simply extraordinary, unlike anything else in the world." I was thinking like an entrepreneur, a producer, someone who knows how to evaluate a company by looking at its structure. I thought that once he saw the actual factory, he would understand the enormous potential Barilla had. I knew that the factory we'd built in 1970 could last until 2050, that it could shoulder enormous production numbers, and that in ten years it would be amortized. After that, profits would be excellent. But he wasn't interested in all that, he didn't understand. He had a different point of view, that of a financier. He only saw the numbers. So he said no.

– So how did you manage to buy the company back?

Everything came down to a friend of mine from Zurich, the lady Hortense Bührle² who, together with her brother, owned Oerlikon, an important industrial group that made arms, as well as trains and many other things. If you visit Switzerland, when you

see a beautiful locomotive, you'll find "Oerlikon" written on the side. Mr. Bührle had put together an important collection of impressionist paintings. Hortense Bührle eventually married the great pianist Géza Anda⁻³. She was a very important lady, both in the financial world and in culture. In 1975 her husband Géza gave a concert in Parma, and I had organized a reception in his honor. They stayed as guests at my house. Mrs. Anda came together with Roberta, the daughter of her tailor, the clothing designer Biki⁻⁴. Everything went quite smoothly, they enjoyed the experience and invited me to visit them in Zurich. The Andas had a wonderful home there, rich but not ostentatious, tastefully decorated and filled with extraordinary works of art. We became very good friends, and later they returned to Parma for another concert. After that we saw one another in Milan, and I told her about my dream of buying back my family's company. She wanted to know more. We met again in Zurich and I showed her the numbers I needed, of which I had only a small amount. That's when the miracle happened: an invention of finance.

– A finance invention? What was it?

Back then it was something new, but today people do it all the time. You form a company in order to buy another company. Your partners let you run that company and, using the profits you earn from your share, you buy back their shares.

– So what did you do next?

Mrs. Anda and I, together with a Dutch bank, established a company: Finbarilla, which then bought Barilla back from Grace. I became president and made a commitment to buy back 51% of their shares.

– How were you going to pay for it?

Using the profits I would make, the profits I'd earn based on my share of the company.

– You'd have to be awfully sure you would make a profit...

I was. Fortunately, my partners believed in me too. Of course there was risk involved both for them and for me. Lots of people I knew, lots of friends, lots of experts were against the move. They didn't believe in it. Even the lawyer in Lausanne who I asked to contact my brother and talk about it advised me not to go through with the purchase. Gianni, for his part, wrote back that he didn't want to get involved. He wrote: "I'm begging you not to do this. It will be your ruin."

Yes, just about everybody thought that the risks were too great. They were afraid of how deeply I would have to go into debt, and they were influenced by the fact that in 1978 Fiat was billions of lira in debt and wasn't earning a thing. But I was sure I would make money.

– Guido, Luca and Paolo were grown up by now. Did you talk about it with them?

Of course. I brought them in because I wanted them to bear witness to my attempt to recapture the company our family had created. I talked about it with them all the time: they were convinced, proud that we were going to try. I brought them with me to New York and to Zurich, to all the most important meetings. They witnessed the recapture, our family's return to the company, in first person. I was proud of them.

– Once you got the money together, what did you do next?

I went to New York with the boys in order to meet with Grace's board of directors.

– And you closed the deal...

No, not yet. When I was standing before the board of directors, they announced that Antoine Riboud⁵, the head of Danon, had made them an offer that was ten million dollars higher than mine, roughly ten billion lira more. Let me tell you, Franco, that was a terrible moment. I fell to pieces. I started crying... So Carl Graf took me aside, brought me into his private office and said, "Signor Barilla, it's not over yet. We're not signing the papers today. There's still time! I'll wait for you. Get busy! Go find ten million more dollars."

– So you had to come up with another ten million dollars...

Yes. So I mortgaged my house. The Cassa di Risparmio di Parma bank gave me the rest. And Carl Graf kept his word. We signed the paperwork on July 27, 1979 at the Cassa di Risparmio di Parma. We'd been waiting there since the morning for all the money that was supposed to come in from abroad, from other banks as well as from me personally, and at five in the evening it still hadn't arrived! Then, finally, the nightmare came to an end: the money came in and we signed at 6 pm. What a relief! Signor Sabelli, a lawyer from Rome, was there with me. He was an international expert who had helped me a great deal. His counterpart was Giovanni Verusio, also a lawyer from Rome. That was a Friday and Graf was in a hurry. He wanted to take off and fly back to America. I was a wreck. I couldn't take it any more. The past year had been terrible. It's in-

credible I didn't have another heart attack, an act of God! But finally it was over!

– I asked Luca if he remembers this period of your lives. He remembers it clearly. Here's what he told me: "Cuccia refused to help my dad because he was convinced the affair would ruin him. His actual words were: 'My dear signor Barilla, I can't possibly contribute to your ruin!' But everyone was convinced, even the lawyers, even the various professionals who helped out with the operation, that it was completely crazy! Dad displayed incredible strength and courage, pushing ahead all the same even though all these respectable, authoritative people were warning him not to do it. I tried to put myself in his shoes more than once, and I have to admit that I probably would never have had the audacity to do what he did. Because he put everything, absolutely everything he owned on the line. The bank even wanted his house in Fraore as a guarantee in the event things went badly – as everyone was sure they would – and my dad would have lost everything. But he'd been a soldier, a fighter, and what he wanted at all costs was to recapture his history and his children's future. As long as this was the mission, and as long as the family was behind him, nothing in the world could stop him."

It's true: I risked everything. I had a single, absolute objective: to take back Barilla so that I could give it to my kids. I wanted to leave it to them the way my grandfather had left it to my father, and my father to me. I knew we would have to rebuild, just as much as we had after the Second World War. For me, the period during which the Americans ran the company had robbed Barilla of some of its peculiar characteristics: its national character, its joy of life, the importance of the pasta. All of this would have to be rebuilt, but I

knew we could do it and time proved me right. I had all the courage I needed to forge ahead, because I put the things most important to me on the scales: the force of our family; our strength and solidarity. You can imagine just how happy and proud I was to return to the company, and I wanted to share my joy with all my former managers.

– I talked with Albino Ivardi Ganapini about this. He said: “It was July 28th, 1979. I was on vacation in Marina di Massa, where I had a little apartment where I took my family and the children on holidays. I’d been down at the shore for about ten days when Gianfranco Virginio⁶, who had a house nearby in Viareggio, called me. ‘Ganapini, did you hear the news?’ he said. ‘They called me from Parma and told me that Pietro Barilla just bought the company back!’ You must be kidding Gianfranco, I said. ‘No, I’m not. Signor Pietro bought the company back. In fact today, this afternoon, he’s waiting for us all at five o’clock so that he can tell us personally. All the managers are expected back at Barilla, we’re all being called in for the official announcement!’ So I said, come pick me up. You’re in Viareggio, so drive by here and we’ll take the Cisa pass to Parma. And that’s what we did. When we got to Parma we could see that everyone was there, roughly thirty managers: Fausto Bertozzi, Luciano Armellini, Dino Fornari and a lot of others. All the old guard. Pietro Barilla was deeply moved. He hugged everyone: ‘It’s true! I’m back with you!’ I’ll skip over the rest of what he said, but you can imagine what it was like. There was so much enthusiasm, so many emotions... We had all felt the weight of his absence, the loss of a leader like Signor Pietro. We stayed with him for a few hours. He told us how much he’d suffered, the difficult times he’d been through, then how he’d managed to buy back the

company. Finally he said, ‘So I signed the paperwork together with Carl Graf at the Cassa di Risparmio, and I’ve recaptured the company!’”

It’s true, it’s true. I wanted to have my old group around me again, the people I’d worked with for so long. And after I finished telling them everything I’d done, I asked them if they had any plans for the evening. “NO!” they shouted, and so I invited everyone to dinner at Ceci in Collecchio, the most elegant restaurant in Parma. Then, a little while after that, they gave me a small sculpture by Arnaldo Pomodoro that was inscribed “To signor Pietro, for having brought us back together again.”

– What a beautiful story! Now that the company was back in your hands, what sort of goals did you set for yourself?

Obviously I wanted to make money. I wanted to earn the profits I needed in order to buy back the shares that would give me a 51% stake in the company. But I had another objective as well: I wanted to rebuild everything that had been destroyed, first and foremost the family. Marilena had come back, which gave me serenity. I stayed closer than ever before to the boys, and I wanted to make peace with everyone. I even reorganized the company management, bringing Ganapini into the president’s office and making Elide Marchini⁻⁷ my assistant for financial matters. On October 31, 1979 I sent everyone in the company this message:

“As you already know I have returned to the company for several weeks now, and I’ve used this time to familiarize myself all over again with the various production lines, our facilities and the markets where our products are sold, but especially in order to meet the people working in this com-

pany, since the people and their hard work are what determines a company's success.

My only regret is that I haven't been able to shake everyone's hand personally! And that's why I'm writing you today. I want to compliment all of you for the truly brilliant results we've achieved in every field, from the people working in the factory to our management and the people who bring our products out to the customers. I've rediscovered a company that's alive, up-to-date and efficient, and you deserve the credit, every single one of you. It has further convinced me of the choice I made, and I'm happy to be back among you, to work and shoulder the responsibilities that await me.

I intend to take an active, willing part in this company's progress at both the production and the human level, in line with the best of 'our traditions' that so many people have helped build here through years of hard work. I hope that my affectionate salutations reach your families as well, and I'll end by wishing all of you a future both serene and full of new satisfactions!"

– Well, I'm not surprised they were happy to have you back!

XIII

LETTERS AND FRIENDSHIPS

– Here I'll start by letting your kids talk, by letting your sons say a little bit about you. For example, Guido told me: "For my dad, the company was a family possession. Our grandmother lived in the factory, and we went to visit her there when we were little kids, and since her kitchen door opened directly onto the packaging department, we went straight from her kitchen into the factory. From our point of view, there was no separation between family and company. The entrepreneur lives in the factory and runs it like an extension of his family. His relationship with the people who work for him is not a mere paper contract, but a human relationship."

And here's something Luca told me: "For him, every day was an opportunity to have a new experience that he could translate into something useful for the company's business. Whether it was something he saw during a trip to the supermarket, or a thought he heard expressed by someone he met out on the street, a conversation with an artist or some other person – maybe you – or an image he noticed in the newspaper: everything was always a source of interest or inspiration for a product, an ad campaign, a service to offer

people or a strategy. Barilla was always in his thoughts, every single day.”

And from Paolo: “There are a great many things that lie behind the success of a great man, things that people may not see. People say someone is talented, but they can’t imagine how much ability, how many hidden details and how much suffering lie behind his ‘talented’ status. While I was racing I had a chance to see some extraordinary champions at work, and appreciate their remarkable skills in managing the various components of their cars, from electric systems that control the motor to the gearshift, the differential housing, brakes, aerodynamics and more. They were able to direct the work of a team of engineers and mechanics, both in terms of technological development and creating an atmosphere of motivation and expectation in the pursuit of victory. The same was true of my dad. People would say, ‘He’s talented. Good for him. He’s good at what he does.’ But I know what my father did, I can still remember how carefully he marshaled his strength so that he could be both concentrated and relaxed. Living an ordered life was a subject he tried to share with us in lots of different ways: he’d seen friends and acquaintances have things fall apart around them all too often precisely because they didn’t organize their talents and passions around precise life rules.”

Last but not least, a comment from Emanuela: “Dad was oriented on the future, but at the same time he harbored enormous respect and thanks for the past. He called this past the factory’s ‘pioneer period,’ which coincided with the life and activities of his grandfather and father. He told us about the sheer physical effort, sweat, water brought in by the bucketful, the winter cold and summer heat... He talked about all these things with enormous respect. He drew strength from

thinking about what things had been like before, the strength and will he needed to move forward without weakness or fear. He admired and appreciated progress. One thing I remember, something I always love thinking about was when he said: ‘I was there when Lindbergh flew across the Atlantic⁻¹ Ocean. That was something you kids will never understand, because for you it’s perfectly natural to go to the moon. You don’t realize the value inherent in certain undertakings.’”

Would you like me to say something about my children now?

– No. You belong to a generation that didn’t use computers, that didn’t have cell phones or write SMSs. You wrote letters, which are still here and remain the most precise and accurate expression of your soul. They are reliable testimony of what you thought and felt, the relationships you had with your wife, children and friends. I still have a wonderful letter you wrote me, and I guard it jealously. All of your friends have at least one. I think the best way to let you say what you thought about and felt for your children is to read a few of these letters together. They betray an enormous and intense love, which I think is the best thing to frame and conserve as keepsake.

The first was written to Guido when his grandmother died in 1976:

“My dearest Guido,
Your September 9th letter reached me today, the one in which you described the incredibly sad times that followed grandma’s death. Your memories, the deep affection you felt for her, the feelings you expressed with give you strength for the future and help you overcome this painful

present. As I've already told you in the past, you need to keep your chin up and keep your eyes fixed on the horizon and the path you're to follow. Not so that you can give up on feelings and memories, but to demonstrate through your dedication to your goals something akin to a declaration of intent for the entire family. I have great faith in my sons! I think I know you all well enough to have a clear picture of the qualities each of you possesses, the strength of spirit and a solid set of moral values. You've also been born with the skills of a grand leader, which you won't forget and will be of service to you along your path. I haven't made clear plans to come visit yet. The dates don't depend on me, but on the way the events you're already familiar with develop. As soon as I can I'll tell you everything, don't worry. I'm sending you an enormous hug, filled with encouragement for a safe and serene path ahead; fulfill your duties, smile with your friends and the people who take care of you, to your school and the skies above Boston which have already been good friends in the past.

A tender and gigantic hug from your dad."

The second letter I'm including is a brief note written to Luca that caught my attention because it is a work of poetry and possesses great strength of spirit:

"Parma – the evening of October 29, 1989. In my office, surrounded by the marvelous silence of seven o'clock in the evening.

– Among the endless paperwork that surrounds me, how better to lift my thoughts toward my family, toward my dearest Luca? With you Luca this silence blends into such a profound sentiment, so completely united in blood and

time, that it will never cease, and within ‘marvelous silences’ like this one it comes alive and says now and forever: ‘Be strong Luca, forge ahead, follow your path, our path.’ The timeless mark of this thought is symbolically represented by this artwork by Paul de Lamerie, a French goldsmith who worked in London in the 1700s. May it live forever in your house and forever bring you – in the midst of difficult times – the words and tender embrace of your Father Friend Pietro.”

And here’s a letter sent to Paolo while he was in the US in 1979:

“My dear Paolo,
I’m convinced that this year will make a lasting impression on you, not just for the English, but for everything you’ve had a chance to see in the country of 220 million people, thirty races, thirty religions, color, customs, history... You’ll find the solutions you need to resolve all your dilemmas, and they’ll adapt to the country you choose to live in, which I hope will be Italy. Last night I spent two and a half hours watching the 50th Academy Awards. A big, beautiful and dignified celebration with almost all the ‘old guard’ present and Bob Hope hosting – he lives in Palm Springs, seventy years old and full of energy! – but most of all I was struck by the arrival of new, young minds, people between 35 and 40 years old, with new, extraordinary and successful ideas. They won awards and recognition, were incredibly happy and moved, even as they maintained their splendid and dignified public personalities. I thought of you boys then, especially when I saw Mastroianni take the stage. He doesn’t speak English very well and said so! Any self-respecting ac-

tor who takes the global stage has to know English, speak it with a certain accent and certain ease! So English, first and foremost! You've got two marvelous, calm months: good weather and long days, time to reap your harvest!!! Spend your days well. Read newspapers and magazines like *Time* and *Newsweek* every week, leaf through the things that interest you and try to understand what President Carter is doing, how this marvelous population lives, with all their problems, with its incredibly open and incredibly dangerous democracy (the Russians spy on them, the Japanese copy and improve everything, then sell their own ideas back to them, stolen and improved). Don't waste these two months. You'll never find another two like them, this calm, this fresh, with dreams coming true all around you, just like the Ferrari victory!!!

...So, my dear Paolo, I'll close by telling you and reminding you just how much I love you, how infinite our love is for you! I'm sending you tender embraces, so is your mother and so are your brothers. You'll have my assistance during these years of study and limitless training! So you'll never be alone! A gigantic, heartfelt hug!"

And what about Emanuela?

Emanuela was much younger, and I sent her loads of postcards with kisses and a little man with a hat that I always drew on them for her. Like this one:



– In fact, Emanuela said to me: “If I had to draw a man I would draw it as a simple outline. But my dad always drew him with this hat. It was his signature. Yet he rarely wore a hat, he had a nicely shaped head! I have a portrait of him that Ceroli made, his profile cut into wood. It’s beautiful, and I keep it at home, all for myself.”

What did you write to your brother Gianni? Your wife Marilena told me: “One day Pietro said to me, ‘Listen Marilena I absolutely have to patch things up with Gianni so that our feelings for each other are set at least a little bit right.’ So he made plans with Gianni and the two of us and the boys went to Geneva to have a meal with Gianni. It was a little formal, but given the situation I’d say it was sweet... We spent time together and talked things over in a friendly way. When it was time to go you could see, I could see in his eyes and in his words, that Pietro wanted to stay on a bit with his brother, to see him again and spend more time with him. And in fact he said, ‘Gianni, now it’s your turn. Come down to Fraore with the whole family. We’ll be expecting you!’ Gianni didn’t answer and we left. But over the next days Pietro said to me, ‘I really hope Gianni calls me, that he comes, we have to have a good meal together here at home with our kids and his kids. We have to do everything we can to make it happen, to have an even better time together, so that we can make sure it happens again in the future.’ But unfortunately this didn’t happen. Pietro really wanted to make it happen, and wanted it again at their sister Gianna’s funeral. Gianni and Gabriella came down from Geneva and we met at the cemetery. Everyone was really upset and we hugged for a long time.”

Yes, that’s true. Then I wrote a letter to Gianni. This is it, dated March 6, 1993:

“My dear Gianni,
Tuesday morning at 9 a.m. we’ll attend a holy mass dedicated to our dear sister Gianna. Travel conflicts and absences kept us from holding it earlier, but I’m sure this hasn’t diminished in the least our memories of and nostalgia for our beloved sister. While it’s true that – for many reasons – she wasn’t able to spend more time with us, nevertheless over the past few years she’s had ample opportunity to express just how close she’s felt to the family in the sweetest and most sincere ways. She has of course felt connected to the life we shared when we were young, in the schools, in studies and all the various experiences we’ve all had together. There’s no doubt that by remembering her life, coherent in its simplicity and humility, we should all meditate at length on many human tendencies in order to view these years more objectively and offer our families and future generations the best our strengths and maturity have to give. I deeply appreciated the content of the letter you sent me. It truly made me feel even more your brother and more deeply connected in this history we share, which only you and I are deeply familiar with and which we relive through all our memories and the recognition of all our parents have given us. I sincerely hope that over the next few months we’ll have a good opportunity to see one another again. That way we could share our past and wish each other well even better than we can through letters. I send you all my, our, affectionate thoughts and a big hug. Pietro.”

– There are also letters to friends: wonderful, sincere letters; letters that communicate your soul more than any spoken words. For example this letter you wrote to Enzo Ferrari:

“Parma, July 18, 1966

My dearest Enzo, I wanted to write a few lines to express all the joy I felt during our traditional meeting and meal together on the 10th at Maranello. For me, the ‘Ferrari’s’ return is not only a physical conquest, but something much more important, moral, that I care about deeply thanks to the deep connection I feel with you as a person and for your work. There’s no doubt that all your friends will join ranks in order to reinforce the prestige and recognition that all people in racing and automobile manufacture owe you and your marvelous group of collaborators. I spoke this morning with Dr. Vassallo to tell him the color and ask him a favor that may prove too difficult to realize: the sunken headlights like the ones I’ve seen in a photograph of the ‘Ferrari California.’ You’ll be the best judge of whether or not the request is too excessive for our friend Sergio Pininfarina. I wanted to tell you that I’ve already started working as a ‘Ferrari salesman,’ last Wednesday in Rome together with the sculptor Giacomo Manzù. He admires you and would love to come to Maranello on the afternoon of September 5, not only to meet you and see the forms and metals, but also to order a car for his young wife Inge, who is already enthusiastic about the idea. You’ll find him to be an extremely interesting man and it won’t be hard for you to see from his personality why he is considered today to be one of the world’s great sculptors. My dear Enzo, I’m working with a youthful passion to bring a great project to fruition together with my brother. I’ll tell you about it better in person. Remember that I’m always close to you and your work, and if you’d like for us to get together please feel free to call me. You’ll make me happy, Pietro.”

Here's another, extremely significant letter you wrote to Valerio Zurlini, a great artist with whom you shared a deep friendship:

"Parma, October 8, 1966

My dearest Valerio, I had to reread your latest letter more than once in order to grasp the mysterious spirit that drove you to write it. I haven't reached the end, but I wanted to write you back immediately to express my spirit and the simplest possible synthesis of all the thoughts rolling around inside. I'm sending back your checks. I order you to destroy them immediately and not to think of me as your creditor. I swear to you that I don't keep accounts on my friends, and believe me, not on you. You have given me a great deal, something much deeper and more important than money, something that cannot be forgotten and if I have condescended, like a poor mortal soul, to a few small criticisms of your relative disorder – something that belongs entirely to you – then I must tell you that by opening up my wings for a moment and rising up above terrestrial troubles I can do nothing more than send you an enormous embrace, beg your forgiveness for my weaknesses and affectionately wish merely that you might draw lessons for a better tomorrow from both your good and bad experiences. Let's not think about debts and credit, but rather about a grand friendship that has had to endure, we know not for what reasons nor who is to blame, some serious storms. But tomorrow we must both let ourselves feel reciprocally calm and serene, unforced, with brotherly comprehension and especially with an embrace at a time of human need. My dear Valerio, I know that Rome is a terrible city and that the countryside around Fraore brings peace and tran-

quility to my emotional life. Come to Fraore and you'll find myself, Marilena and the boys waiting here to welcome you with open arms. Pietro."

Then there are letters you wrote to artists you deeply appreciated and loved. In order to let people appreciate your style and tact, I'll include here one you wrote to Ennio Morlotti² on October 20, 1970; and another you sent to Alberto Burri³ on March 31, 1993:

"Dear Morlotti,

Your most recent visit made an impression as intense and brilliant as some of your paintings manage to be. Believe me, meeting an artist is an extremely important thing, especially when one is given the chance to appreciate a deep and profound personality like yours. I don't know how to write you a beautiful letter, but I can tell you that I appreciate even more your paintings now that I've had a chance to meet you personally. Therefore I hope we have another chance to meet again soon, and hopefully to come visit you in November with our friend Roberto Tassi⁴. I haven't forgotten the promise of two volumes on Japanese art. You will receive them soon. In June, for the first time ever, I had the good fortune to visit some parts of that country, and I'll admit it had a profound effect on me, and now I'm dreaming of another visit so that I can plunge deeper into some of that island's mysteries. I'm sending you my deepest admiration and the hopes that we will see one another again as soon as possible.

Be well and believe in the devoted friendship of your Pietro Barilla."

“Dear Burri,
I’m holding in my hands the marvelous volume featuring your artworks that you sent me on Christmas with an affectionate dedication. I’m bothered by the enormous doubt that I’ll fail to respond adequately to your kind gesture. In the days around last Christmas I was very tired and confused by a host of small and large commitments that unfortunately accompany that joyous holiday. Out of fear of sending a vague response, one devoid of any real sentiment, I set aside the letters I hold most dear, and so it was with ‘Burri’s Artworks’ as well. If I haven’t written back until now, I beg your forgiveness, my cheeks red with embarrassment. The publication is marvelous, and entirely appropriate for the life that a grand artist has offered up to time and history. I hope I will be able to come visit you in Città di Castello in the beginning of June whenever it would be convenient for you. I hope we will be able to visit along with our dear friends Alberto and Marielisa Zanmatti. With affection, Pietro Barilla.”

XIV

MULINO BIANCO

– Once you returned to Barilla, the grand adventure that is Mulino Bianco began...

In reality, I had nothing to do with the birth of Mulino Bianco. I believed in oven products, and in fact I had a bakery for dried bread slices built in Rubbiano di Solignano, in the hills outside Parma. And I'll admit that I was always a little nostalgic for the bread we'd first started with. It hurt me a lot to have to suspend bread production in 1952, but I needed to in order to concentrate on pasta. I'd given myself a clear goal: to keep pasta in its position as the crown jewel of Italian cuisine, which meant promoting it, ennobling it so that women would continue this tradition of ours. I accomplished this through Carboni's packaging; with CPV's advertisements – "There's a great cook in everyone, and Barilla brings him out"; I did it through Mina and her marvelous songs. Yes, we put pasta back where it belonged at the head of the table in Italian cuisine. I'm sharing all this with you in order to tell you that when I came back I hadn't changed my opinion at all concerning the importance of pasta. In fact I realized that Grace had lost this spirit, this mission. Grace had rationalized management in a marvelous

manner, but it neglected pasta. At the very least, it gave no special importance to pasta, removing it from the central position I'd given it. Grace didn't understand pasta; they didn't believe in it and therefore didn't invest in it. They were Americans; they had a different mentality and different tastes. But it was also a result of the price controls the Italian government had imposed after the inflation problems of 1973. The Americans don't understand the idea of price controls, they think it's an economic absurdity, heresy. You have to remember that Grace was a conglomerate that included countless different activities, and food wasn't among the most important. So they'd given Barilla's management the task of diversifying. Viewed in retrospect, one of these attempts at diversification was simply brilliant. The idea was to produce and distribute *frollini* (shortbread) on a broad scale within Italy. Shortbread cookies were well established in Anglosaxon countries, but had always been a niche product in Italy. The idea was good, but the time didn't seem right. This was a dark period for Italy: years of terrorism, our "years of lead." Inflation was running high and people were afraid.

But it's precisely during a time of crisis that you have to change, to invent something new...

Our brilliant idea came from Gianni Maestri and his work group for baking products. We started experimenting almost immediately. In 1973 Dr. Maria Luisa Solzi⁻¹ had already collected one hundred different kinds of cookies, mostly shortbread. Then they selected roughly thirty they considered to be the best and set them up for taste tests among the general public. I found these things out after I'd returned, and they demonstrate the quality and enterprising nature of Barilla's management and technicians. In order to create our first products they used small company that built rollers, the cylinders for the cookie shapes: the owner was a dental technician who worked with absolute precision. After the first consumer tests came back, Maestri and collaborators drew up the

Mulino Bianco project, drawing inspiration for the imagery from Pepperidge Farm, an American company founded in 1937. In reality, Mulino Bianco was much more original. If I remember correctly, you got involved at this point too...

– That’s true. That was 1975. I was living in Milan - San Felice, and Maestri and Manfredi came to visit me together with ad consultants Landò⁻² and Mambelli⁻³. They presented the project, we talked about it, and I recommended they concentrate on communications aimed at parents, not at children. After that I continued to follow the project. But Grace didn’t really believe in Mulino Bianco and didn’t invest enough in it, letting other companies produce the cookies without setting up facilities of their own.

I have to admit that in the beginning, I didn’t fully believe in it either, because I was entirely wrapped up my pasta projects... I wanted to restore pasta’s lost prestige, recapture territories – especially in southern Italy – that we’d lost. To be honest I even had some harsh words for the project when we talked about it, and Maestri may have been offended...

– Who convinced you it was worth seeing through?

Andrea Allodi⁻⁴, who was working together with Maestri on the project, showed me the figures. After that I said to him, “You know what Andrea? I’m wrong.” Then I finally understood the spirit of Mulino Bianco, its soul, that which would allow it to be successful. I understood what its creators were thinking: given that times were so violent, so sad, why not launch cookies accompanied by advertising that will let people forget the present and re-experience a golden age when “mills were white,” in other words when people were

honest, life was calm, food was genuine, kids were obedient and families happy? After 1968, with all the protests, sit-ins in factories and universities, terrorism and the rest, creating an ad campaign based on a calm, serene farming life, where people care about one another, about eating well and working hard, where children are obedient... Basically those “good old times when mills were white” was something revolutionary and brilliant. It was also something that corresponded to my way of thinking, to my values, so at a certain point I decided to invest what was necessary in it. Building our own facilities was the only way we could guarantee product quality.

I was also inspired by Luisa Solzi who, as head of our research department, under the direction of Dr. Armellini¹, had put together a host of successful Mulino Bianco recipes.

– Yes, I’m aware of this because Luisa herself told me about it: “Signor Pietro sent me to Canada to visit a company that produced small cookie lines so that we could buy a pilot machine that could do everything. It was extraordinary: it cost an arm and a leg, but he’d given me orders to choose the best money could buy. And so I went. I have to admit that it was a very important move, because we’d conducted a lot of tests on this line with products that were the same quality we were getting with industrial lines. This was an enormous step forward. Then, after the shortbread cookies, we moved on to little desserts and started diversifying in every direction. Later we went to visit Barzetti, who had created a beautiful, extremely rational facility in Castiglione delle Stiviere, in the Mantua region.”

That’s right: Luisa Solzi and I went together to visit the factory in Castiglione delle Stiviere. At first I was a little perplexed, but she showed me – very skillfully – just how appropriate and rational the facility was. So in the end we bought it. I remember that a year lat-

er we went back there together for a visit. That's when our big expansion began. And I've been back dozens of times since...

– Maybe some Sundays, when you and Allodi used to go visit various facilities together?

How did you know that?

– Allodi himself told me, and Luca confirmed it, saying to him: “But Andrea, you guys were together all week long. You need your rest, too. You've got kids at home, your airplane hobby... Go to the airport, tell my dad you've got other plans, or I'll tell him for you!” And he responded, “Luca, spending time with your father is a pleasure, so hanging around with him for two or three hours on a Sunday morning is like enjoying a little vacation!”

You know, as soon as I understood what it was about, I fell deeply in love with this new project. The year after I came back to the company, in 1980, I approved a new snack factory in Ascoli Piceno. But it wasn't well built, so I rebuilt it top to bottom. I asked Allodi and the engineer Dino Fornari⁶, the head of our technical offices, to buy another one hundred square meters of terrain around the facility because I always want to have large areas onto which I can expand later as I see fit. I never forgot just how problematic the lack of additional space was for us in the facilities in Viale Veneto.

– Let's go back to Mulino Bianco and the factory in Ascoli Piceno...

We intended to create a production line dedicated to pastries and marmalade snacks that were like little fruit pies, called *crostatine*, as

well as a line of sandwich bread. That was enough for the time, but if Mulino Bianco proved successful, if people began to put faith in our products, if they found them delicious, healthy and appropriate for their tables, then those products wouldn't be enough for long.

First I called Baker Perkins and asked them to design a production line that could produce twenty tons per year. They told me it couldn't be done. All you have to do is ask for something unusual and people will always tell you "it can't be done." If I'd listened to managers and technicians I'd never have accomplished any of the things I've accomplished.

So next I went to talk to Werner & Pfleiderer, the German company that had built the old bread ovens my father bought. They had never let me down before, so I asked them if they would build it. Allodi said: "But then where are we going to put all the stuff we bake? Are we going to simply toss it in the river?" I responded: "You'll see, Andrea. We'll sell every last box." It took a while to convince the managers, but in the end they built it. And would you believe it? It still wasn't enough to satisfy market demand^{-7...}

– What about the cookies?

For a little while we produced those at Pedrignano too, then we built the giant cookie factory in Castiglione delle Stiviere that I told you about earlier. Later we built another snack factory in Cremona and, later still, another in Melfi. Of course the Rubbiano facility for dried, sliced bread and grissini (breadsticks) was still up and running. As you can see, it amounted to a colossal investment in facilities, continuous innovation, and continuous improvements in product quality. This allowed us to establish a line of cookies and snacks that were progressively enriched and capable of meeting consumer demand.

– What can you tell me about the communications strategies for Mulino Bianco?

The Troost Agency handled communications, but Gianni Maestri and Andrea Allodi and their collaborators were involved on what I would say was practically a daily basis. Barilla never gave its ad consultants carte blanche. Dario Landò and Sergio Mambelli were very talented, but all their proposals were carefully examined, tested and – most importantly – had to result in a quick turnaround for sales.

– How would you monitor that aspect?

I'm sure you're aware that Mulino Bianco has lots of different kinds of cookies, each with its own packaging, name and specific qualities. There are Tarallucci, Macine, Galletti, Rigoli, Abbracci and so forth. The same is true for the snacks: the Crostatina, Saccottino, Flauti... Each of these products had its own specific advertising strategy, one that was different from the others, so when we ran a campaign we could see the growth percentage in an individual product line over the subsequent months. Do you see how it worked? If something was wrong with the advertising for a specific product, then the campaign was immediately suspended and changed. We had complete, immediate control. The constant, triumphant growth that Mulino Bianco enjoyed wasn't due merely to the original idea, but to a continuous and carefully designed series of well-targeted advertisements. Ferrero does the same thing with Nutella, its Kinder line and candies like Rocher...

– Weren't you competitors?

We were careful to avoid pointless wars with competitors. Ferrero was especially strong in chocolates, which we used only in the Pan

di Stelle cookies and as a cream filling in the Saccottino. Second of all: our snacks were primarily made from a dough that was distributed in mold and then baked. Ferrero products, on the other hand, are produced from sponge cake that is later filled or covered. The production techniques are completely different, with nothing in common. So we essentially split the market: we're the real "bakery," Ferrero has Nutella, the Kinder line and countertop products.

Of course there was immediate competition from other companies. They tried to imitate the form, taste and packaging of our products, but we won out thanks to our product quality, superior packaging and our production volume, which allowed us to offer fresh products all the time, as well as reach the market at a capillary level and through large distribution centers. Last but not least, we had brilliant advertising, which won over a large portion of the public right away. People saw us as genuine, authentic, while the others were mere imitations. Pavesi was able to win some market share with its "morning friends" line, but as I'm sure you know we later bought them out. The company that made the most aggressive attempt to break into our market, as well as Ferrero's market, was Calisto Tanzi's Parmalat, which launched Grisby: cookies filled with chocolate and other crème fillings. Some of our managers were worried and wanted to respond with cookies filled with different flavored crèmes, but we ran up against a problem with shelf life. In reality we gave up because we already had healthier products, foods that were more appropriate for families and children, as well as other novelties that were better for our times...

– For example?

Grancereale. We wanted to move away from the trend of using the same cereals that were then dominating the Anglosaxon market. I knew that in Italy we always wind up copying the Americans, and I

wanted to offer something that responded to this need but was still an Italian cookie. In England, McVitie's was producing a cookie rich in fats and sugars that had wonderful structure, and so Guido, who was a friend of the president of United Biscuits, asked if they'd be willing to produce for us. They did some tests, but the product didn't come out the way we wanted because they weren't able to do something Italian. So we created our own experimental product line and then went to England to mass-produce it. We started producing in Manchester, then moved to Hesby. I know that there were some technical problems, because at first when the product arrived it "*bottava*."

– What do you mean by "*bottava*"?

That the dough wasn't cooked well, in a homogenous manner, so the cookie broke too easily. In any case, our technicians went to England and resolved the issue.

– Would you mind if we went back to Mulino Bianco advertising for a moment? I know that there has been some criticism of those ads. They said that the "happy family" model was mawkish, too traditional...

Yes, that's right. I remember clearly the criticisms we received from some ad experts and journalists who tried to change our minds. But do you know what I told them? That I've always had a deep appreciation for the values that inspired Mulino Bianco: two parents who work, who love one another, who eat breakfast with their children every morning; a family unit based on love, harmony and joy. In a world chock full of separated couples, divorcees, parents who don't take care of their children; a world where there's delinquency, drugs, we may well have been the only ones

providing a positive, optimistic example of what good family life could be. And people followed us. Mulino Bianco became a symbol, a legend. When we shot our Mulino Bianco commercials in Chiusdino, in the Siena province, lots of people came to visit the town. Entire families showed up. That means they felt it was a real place where people could live simply, in harmony, where people were happy...

XV

PASTA

Pasta has always held a special place in my heart. Pasta is the soul of Italian cooking, the crown jewel of Italian cuisine. Modern thinkers like the futurists disparaged Italian cuisine, despised it, while others dismissed it as poor food for poor people, encouraging us to shift to a diet rich in proteins and fats. We won a battle which, together with my father, we'd been fighting since the 1930s. And just consider all the attacks we could have expected during the post-war period, when all our models of reference came from the US! Thanks to Carboni's elegant ads we were able to communicate our standards for hygiene and our modernity, but we weren't able to promote the role of pasta. Not even the ads we made with CPV were enough to give pasta the value, I'd even say the splendor, that I wanted it to have. That's why we chose Mina. But merely choosing Mina wasn't enough, we needed to release all Mina's extraordinary potential, and we could only do that through showmanship and extraordinary set design. That's why we needed great directors, great artists, great costume designers and even ad consultants who were capable of understanding every aspect of the problem. Our ad exec was Mario Belli⁻¹, a man of taste and great sensibilities. We went to meet Mina together. I have to tell you the meeting affected

me deeply. She was an extraordinarily attractive woman, with exquisite, natural ease. It was only logical that I ask Valerio Zurlini to be the director; they were close friends. Zurlini fulfilled my every expectation, because he created a series of extremely original *caroselli*² using mostly different lighting and black and white colors. I'm remembering the first *carosello*, in which Mina sang *Un bacio è troppo poco* and then a second song – I think it was *Ultima occasione* – while she was descending the stairs towards the audience. Mina is a woman in love, a passionate lover who is talking about love with her man, talking directly to him. The set design was always original. Zurlini was also the director for our last campaign starring Mina, in 1970. Those last *caroselli* featured the wood silhouettes created by sculptor Mario Ceroli that portrayed Mina with her hair blown back by the wind, as if she were a witch.

– After that first series with Zurlini you changed directors, calling in Gherardi...

That's right. Piero Gherardi was Federico Fellini's set and costume designer. They'd just finished shooting *Juliet of the Spirits* together, with an enchanted, fairytale, sparkling world that was suggestive and full of eroticism, and was nominated for Academy Awards precisely for its sets and costumes. With Gherardi's sets and costumes, Mina appeared otherworldly, unforgettable. You should watch those *caroselli* again in our archives. The one in which Mina sings *Se telefonando* is worth watching more than once. Gherardi dressed her all in black and made her up as if she was an ancient goddess of the serpents from Crete, like Medusa, with a thicket coils that fall down and wrap around her entire body. She zigzags back and forth between strange pyramids that appear as we see them from above, realizing that there are lots and lots of them. It has an incredible effect. Then there was another one – *Non illuderti* – in which Mina

also appears wearing a long black dress, but she has a “double” standing alongside her who is platinum blonde.

– Isn’t there another one with a horse?

Yes, the one for the song *Una casa in cima al mondo*. That one was shot in the EUR neighborhood on a set of stairs that descend from the building they call “the square coliseum,” and started with a shot of the statue of a large horse and yellow drape fluttering in the wind. In that one Mina looks tiny. Then we see her up close, dressed like a flower. Her body is closed inside a lily stem, her face appearing inside the white corolla. Each time there was something new, an invention, something stunning. In another *carosello* she’s wearing an outfit with two large wings; in another an incredibly long cape covered with bubbles. In yet another she moves around inside a whirlwind of little iridescent balloons, wearing a hat draped with long tufts of feathers that give her a magical, bewitched air.

I can tell you that sometimes I got the impression that Fellini’s spirit was in those *caroselli*. You know, later on I found out that all the locales used for the Barilla *caroselli* during that period were selected by Gherardi for a film that Fellini had written but never managed to produce: *Il viaggio di G. Mastorna*. Then the two had a fight, and the division between them proved irreparable. Fellini never shot that film and Gherardi used the locations, the ones he himself had selected, for our commercials. So it’s true that one way or another, Fellini’s spirit was there.

– Then you shot another series with Antonello Falqui, the director of RAI’s Saturday night programs.

Falqui turned Mina into a television personality, a diva out among people from TV, out among her audience. But I have to underline

something: Mina, although she appears to be magical, extraordinary, always shot the Barilla pasta commercials unreservedly. She was fully convinced by what we were doing. She appears in the middle of our products, shows viewers the pasta, caresses the package with extraordinary grace – better yet, runs her beautiful hands over them lightly, over piles of Barilla pasta packages. We always had a wonderful relationship with her, never a problem between us. I want to show you something really sweet, a card that Mina sent me just a few days ago. It made me so happy...

– Really? Can I read it?

Of course. Here it is:

“My dear friend Pietro. I don’t remember if I managed to tell you before or not. You would have been a true gentleman even without a penny to your name. But I think you’ve always known that. You took such care in the way you presented yourself, making sure you never came across as bossy or superior. You were always kind, well mannered, well spoken and thoughtful. With that rough voice I’ll never forget, asking questions in such a way that your interlocutor was never embarrassed, almost as if you wanted to suggest the answers. You were always happy and genuinely proud to tell me about your professional life, your family history. You would go on at length to describe the characteristics of the children you loved so much. Who better than me could understand you? You’ll never believe me but just yesterday, cleaning up a little around the house – which now looks more like a dump than a home! – I found a card you wrote to me stuck in the pocket of an old jacket. We still addressed each other with the formal Italian ‘*lei*’ back

then. I could have thrown it out, like I have a thousand other things, but instead I kept it. It's like the photograph of somebody special I've had the good fortune to meet along the way. Mina."³

– Then, when you sold the company, Grace abandoned Mina...

I didn't pay much attention to Grace's business strategies. I had plenty of problems of my own and was unhappy. But I could see right away that they didn't view pasta the way I did. But managers inside Barilla advised me to change our spokesperson and put a male singer and actor – Massimo Ranieri⁴ – onscreen instead of Mina back when I was still at Barilla. They wanted a slogan that referred to "trial by fire," in order to say that Barilla pasta could maintain its qualities when cooked. Later on they made the message even more precise, saying that Barilla pasta is always *al dente*. It's not a bad idea. Italians, especially in the south, eat pasta very much *al dente*, and we needed to expand our territory in the south.

– They did some regional advertising in the south as well.

Yes, but I've never believed in that kind of thing. If a product is good, then it's good everywhere.

– What agency did they use?

Young & Rubicam.

– What happened in the end?

Well, as I mentioned earlier, the government put price controls on pasta and the ads stopped immediately. The controls, in addition to

being enormously damaging for the company, drove Italian companies to lower costs by putting more common wheat in the pasta in the place of durum wheat, which meant that the pasta didn't stay al dente, but became limp and too soft. In 1967 we helped the Italian parliament pass a law that obligated companies to use only durum wheat in pasta. If we hadn't, we would have ruined the image of Italian pasta. I also have to say that in my absence Barilla, thanks to Signor Manfredi, continued to use durum wheat. If we'd given in to the temptation to use common wheat we could well have ruined our image forever. That was the period when we used the ad with two forks: one's holding penne that's al dente, while the other's holding sagging, soft penne. It's accompanied by a good slogan: "Barilla defends quality. Always al dente because it's made according to Italian tradition." Thank goodness!

Then, in 1979, there was an interesting coincidence. Marco Lombardi's, who handled Barilla advertising for Young & Rubicam, had proposed and created an advertisement in which a father and his son eat a plate of spaghetti together at the table. The headline read: "Barilla, always al dente: a tradition from father to son." Curiously enough, that ad came out on TV just as I was signing the paperwork to buy back Barilla. When I met with the Lombardi after the summer, I smiled and asked him: "How did you know?" In reality, he didn't know anything about the operation. But he'd created a perfect interpretation of the idea of our brand.

– Did you change advertising strategies for pasta upon your return?

I could tell that Grace wasn't really won over by pasta; that they weren't wowed by it. But in the beginning I accepted the strategies they proposed, even though I wasn't fully satisfied with the results.

I thought it was a good idea to insist on "always al dente." I

thought the images of the Barilla table created by Horst Blachian⁶ were quite beautiful, inviting, ennobling. He drew his inspiration from Flemish paintings, and some of our printed ads were fantastic. But in 1981 I decided it wasn't right to entrust Young & Rubicam with both the Mulino Bianco and the pasta ads. Seeing as I wasn't enthusiastic about the ad campaigns we were running, I decided to turn to TBWA. They proposed the slogan "Rediscover the flavor of a midday meal." Then I doubled our advertising budget from two to four percent of sales.

– But then didn't you have another slogan for a while – "Barilla makes you feel al dente all the time" – in which the expression "al dente all the time" was synonymous with feeling good, being full of energy?

That was another TBWA proposal, but I wasn't enthusiastic about it. We used a lot of different spokespeople: Pippo Baudo, Maurizio Costanzo, Maria Teresa Ruta...even soccer players like Roberto Falcao. But it was an abstract concept. It didn't celebrate the pasta. I felt we were wasting time. I wanted a real campaign, and we weren't there yet. After watching a terrible ad in which there's one tennis player with a good racket (which was therefore "al dente") and another with a broken racket that wasn't, I decided to break things off with the agency.

We started collaborating with Young & Rubicam again. In the meantime, they'd expanded, adding new creative talent. Their team designed a completely new launch for pasta, with new packaging and creative solutions. But it would take time, six months or a year. That was too long: we risked "disappearing" from public view. So Ganapini and I went to Rome to meet with Alberto Sordi⁷, who had been a personal friend of mine for some time. In the 1954 film *An American in Rome*, Sordi had played the character Nando Mori-

coni who, after having tossed away one dish of American food after another, devours a big plate of spaghetti. I had enjoyed the movie, and so I asked him if he would be willing to do something for us to promote pasta. He was as kind and considerate as always, saying “My dear Pietro, you’re a dear friend and I’d be happy to help, but I decided when I started working as an actor, for precise personal reasons, that I would never do any commercials. So I have to say ‘no,’ even though you’re the one asking me.” After that I called Federico Fellini⁸, who I had known for some time. We met at the Grand Hôtel di Roma and I explained my problem to him. At the time Gianfranco Virginio, a serious manager, was handling pasta. Fellini gave me eleven stories, many of which were inspired by mythology, that we still keep in our company archives. I liked the explosive character of one of these a great deal: it was called *Alta società* (High Society). The scene takes place in a luxurious restaurant filled with Murano mirrors and crystal, where everyone is dressed formally and Nino Rota’s music plays in the background. A refined maître d’ is describing the restaurant’s menu to a beautiful, sophisticated lady, running through a list of French-sounding dishes (none of which really existed; Fellini made them up!): “*Consommé d’Orléans, Potage soissonaise, Crêpe Berry, Bouché à la gauloise, Marmite Lyonnaise, Soupe Colbert, Gelé de bouillon, Bouillon royale, Crêpe Waleska à la sauce suprême...*” This beautiful woman, her big languid eyes fixed on her companion, who is wearing a tuxedo and sporting a monocle, turns to the maître d’ and orders in a surprisingly rocky voice: “*Rigatoni!*”

The word explodes with all its popular, sensual characteristics, wiping out that sophisticated world in just four syllables and making the viewer understand that, above and beyond her ethereal appearance, the beautiful woman’s tastes are carnal and plebeian.

The commercial had an extraordinary impact, a revolutionary effect on advertising, and people still list it as one of the most beau-

tiful commercials Barilla ever made. Intellectuals in particular appreciated and even idolized the commercial, despite the fact that they were generally quite critical of advertising. I loved it, but I understood that it worked as an isolated event, but not as something we could follow in the long term. You can play with or be ambiguous about pasta once, but it's dangerous to keep doing it. In order to add value to pasta, to make people love it, cement it in the hearts and minds of consumers, you need to anchor it in solid values. I had already stated clearly: "We sell food that is useful to society, not champagne. This feeling of usefulness gives us strength and animates us. In order to express it, our advertising has to offer familiar feelings, feelings that can be shared, that consolidate this guiding concept."

Since Young & Rubicam had followed this philosophy for Mulino Bianco, they designed a new campaign for pasta that expressed the same concepts. We had a meeting in Barilla, during which I met Gavino Sanna⁻⁹ for the first time. I already knew the other people present – Ugo Castellano⁻¹⁰, Dario Landò and Marco Lombardi – because they'd been handling Mulino Bianco for some time already. My sons Guido and Luca were also at that meeting, as well as the head of our pasta division, Riccardo Carelli⁻¹¹. When the meeting was over I took Gavino Sanna by the arm and led him into my office. I showed him our brand logo and said, "You see? This isn't the Barilla logo, it's my family's name!" I wanted him to see that he didn't need to create an ad campaign merely to sell some pasta; he needed to find a bigger idea, to present values that no one had talked about yet: home and family as the epicenter of our lives; the place we all start from and to which we inevitably return. If you don't return home you're lost, you're set adrift. Even after I'd lost Barilla I hadn't lost Parma, my house, my kids, my family memories. I stayed there so that I could rebuild. That might be precisely what I shared with him: my exile, my return, the importance of

home, family, children and gathering together around the table as a foundation and intrinsic life value. This is the theme that Sanna recognized, interpreted and then developed.

Talking with him, Sanna told me that he started with an American ad in which, after spending a hard day at work, drinks a beer and heads back home. That gave him the idea that “heading back home” might be much better represented with pasta, with dinner, where the whole family gathers together. It had to be an ad that talked about the family, about affectionate feelings and a way of spending time together. It needed to express the pleasure of being at the table together, even the way a table should be set. Then, talking to his collaborators, at a certain point they came up with the slogan, *Dove c'è Barilla, c'è casa* (Where there's Barilla, there's home).

It was the right idea, the idea I'd been waiting for. Finally I had a commercial that communicated the ideal essence, the heart of Barilla, emphasizing the values the company was founded upon, which are the same as those of the family: affection, loyalty, union, love... They were new feelings, something you couldn't find in any advertising being produced at the time.

– Wasn't the first commercial the long one – a couple of minutes – like a *carosello* from earlier days, with a manager driving back home through the hills?

Yes, and I have to tell you that I wasn't entirely convinced. But Guido understood and immediately appreciated the commercial's revolutionary potential. He pulled Sanna aside and said, “During your presentation, I have to admit that I was moved!” Now I have to admit that when I watched it again later, I realized that it communicated our values. It was perfect, so much so that I felt I had to call Sanna up personally to thank him.

– Yes, Gavino said much the same thing. Here was his comment:

“It was nighttime, almost eleven o’clock. I was at home in Milan. The phone rang and a male voice told me that he was calling because president Barilla wanted to talk to me. I heard Signor Pietro’s unmistakable voice on the other end say: ‘My dear Sanna, I have to apologize to you. I was wrong. Your commercial is a masterpiece!’”

Yes, I knew it was late, but it seemed only right to tell him how much I appreciated it. We filmed and broadcast fourteen stories, each of which were beautiful, moving, unforgettable: they were small masterpieces of advertising and cinema. The first was that long trip home we were talking about, then came the one with the little girl in the yellow raincoat and the wet cat. Her parents are worried because the little girl hasn’t come home from school. She’s late. Finally she comes in, soaking wet because it’s raining and she missed the school bus. But on her way home she found an abandoned cat that she’s brought home with her, home to where it’s safe and warm. Then comes the slogan: “Where there’s Barilla, there’s home.” It presents home as a safe refuge, where there’s heart, affection, sweetness and serenity... all the values I believe in.

The third, if I remember correctly, was the one with the army cadets who are out on leave. One of them decides to bring invite his companions home and his mother serves them all a plate of pasta. There’s a little girl in this one too. She’s won over by one of the cadets. As you can see, the theme is always the same: friendship, love, warm welcomes... Where there’s Barilla, there’s home. The protagonists are normal people, not models. The cadet’s mom is a regular woman – in fact she had a big nose! In other words, she was a

real mom. They were designed to be stories that could happen to any one of us.

– Wasn't there one with an adopted child, a little Chinese girl?

That one was wonderful. Two girls, one Italian and the other Chinese girl who has just arrived by plane, are eating a plate of spaghetti together. But the Chinese girl doesn't know how to eat it. Then she finds a solution: she sucks up the individual strings, creating a funny, tender effect. Then there's another beautiful one with a father who's traveling and his little girl who goes with him to the airport and sticks a single fusilli in his pocket. Do you remember that one? When he reaches his destination, he finds the fusilli and remembers his little girl, his home... There's always "Where there's Barilla, there's home"!

– I asked Gavino about that commercial with the fusilli. He told me: "That's one we shot in Budapest with Vittorio Storaro⁻¹² on lights and Massimo Magrì⁻¹³ directing. The choice of music was really important too; even listening to the music alone gives you goose bumps! I wanted a melody that was sad, but very memorable. One of my collaborators brought me a cassette tape with a concert by the Greek musician Vangelis⁻¹⁴ and, buried in the middle of the tape, there was a piece called 'Inno' that we used for every one, creating different arrangements every time."

I also loved the commercial that was shot in Moscow by the director Nikita Mikhalkov⁻¹⁵. It was the story of an Italian newlywed couple who go to Moscow on their honeymoon. At the restaurant, everything is written in Cyrillic. They want a plate of spaghetti, and try to say so through a bunch of funny gestures, but they can't make

themselves understood. Then finally an old, refined-looking chef appears. He understands what they want, goes away and comes back with a box of Barilla spaghetti. We see the slogan “Where there’s Barilla, there’s home.” A masterpiece! I had to send Gavino a special letter of congratulations and a prize trophy!

The last one was with Paul Newman dressed up as Santa Claus. When they shot the film with Paul Newman I went to visit. I took advantage of the trip to the US to have my eyesight checked. We met up in Connecticut, then they went up to Canada to shoot the rest of the commercial. Paul Newman remembered that Paolo had won Le Mans. I told him about Paolo and Barilla. It was a warm and cordial encounter. The commercial is filled with breathtaking landscapes, and when Paul Newman shows up at the end as Santa Claus it’s a complete surprise. We had repeated the triumph we’d obtained in the past with Mina. Thanks to that commercial, Barilla made its way into the hearts and minds of all Italians, exactly the way I’d always wanted it to.



XVI

HOME

– Why did you build your house in Fraore?

I wanted to go live out in the countryside. Back then, in the 1950s, Parma was still quite small, and so you only needed to travel three minutes from downtown to reach open countryside. I'd been offered a really beautiful, historical house complete with a large park: Villa Tedeschi, where Valerio Zurlini shot the film *Girl with a Suitcase* starring Claudia Cardinale. Back then the villa was located outside the city, in the countryside. But I had already realized that Parma would expand quickly and, in the space of just a few years, it would surround the villa. If I bought it, I ran the risk of winding up surrounded by houses and streets full of noisy cars. That's not what I had in mind. I wanted nature all around me, not just wheat fields and tomato patches, but plants, green bushes and forest. There weren't any forests there, just carefully cultivated farmland. During the 1960s people still had stables, and every farmer had his own little house with a stable and cows. I wanted the Emilia countryside, with its silence, its people, its hard work and colors and all its timeless sounds: tractors, barking dogs, combine harvesters and crowing roosters. "Once I have kids," I thought, "they'll be able to go

out and look in the stable, see the cows, watch people milking.” Unfortunately, all these beautiful things no longer exist.

So in the end I turned my back on Villa Tedeschi and moved further into the countryside until I found this piece of land and its farmhouse. It was far away from the city, but just a kilometer away from Via Emilia, so it would be easy for me to go to work and take the kids to school.

– Was it a big piece of land?

At first it wasn’t that big, I’d say just a couple of hectares. There was a small country house that used to belong to the Linati family, which I renovated as a guesthouse, as well as a park with old-growth trees, a little lake and an old farmhouse. But there was a lot of free land around the property, so I decided to buy it. I already knew what I wanted, though my ideas were still in an embryonic phase. I wanted a large green lawn, a horizon that opened out onto our countryside. I called in the architect Luigi Vietti, one of the most important architects in Italy. He was specialized in building villas, and I commissioned him to design the house. We talked together at great length about the design before it was actually built.

The first thing we did was clear the entire property and create a great big lawn, bigger than a soccer field, with a small woods alongside it. Both of these were designed and created by a landscape architect, Pietro Porcinai¹. The house was built facing that lawn. It was low, with a partially-submerged level used for services, and then the main level on the ground floor that opened out onto the field: a central body and, on either side, two small wings. The wings were the two nighttime areas, while the central body was where people went during the day. I had an office on the right, while the dining room was located at the beginning of the left wing. There was an enormous living room in the central body with a large

glass window and sliding doors that let you walk out onto the beautiful lawn, giving you a sense of nature coming into the house, or of a house that's one with nature. Nature and home are not two mutually exclusive bodies, but one whole entity, one thing blending together...

– What did you need the office for? To receive guests?

No, it was just for me. I almost never received people in my office. I met with guests in the living room, in the library. I rarely closed myself in the office with company. I just used it to write letters, to do private things, or to spend some time by myself.

Then, over the years – I'd say from 1960 through to at least the 1980s – I kept buying up little pieces of land in order to create an estate large enough to host a house for each member of the family, and in fact today Guido has a house at the far end of the estate, while Paolo has a house in the middle and then Marilena's and Emanuela's properties. Luca lives with us and will inherit this house. Basically, I created a large space where all the people I hold dearest can live, each with his or her own freedom, but all near one another.

– What does the word “home” mean for you?

Home is safety, the heart, feelings... It's the place I always wanted to return to in the evening after work or after traveling. If you can believe it, even when I was wrapping up a beautiful vacation somewhere I'd always feel a desire to go back home and walk through the entryway, the living room, to see my furniture, my paintings, my estate, the surrounding countryside and all its colors. I wanted to see my beloved ones, and even our house staff, especially Stefano and Irma, who took care of us faithfully for years. I felt protect-

ed in our house, knowing I was surrounded by things I held dear, and by my memories!

I've always believed memories are very important. Some people don't like to remember the past, but that's like being a traveler with no fixed destination. I've always wanted to remember what my father and mother were like, the difficult situations and battles I've had, my friends, my cherished things. For me, memories have always been a source of strength and even serenity. This is because I've lived life so intensely, and taken all sorts of lessons from it, wonderful experiences and happy moments that I've always made an effort to keep in mind. I always write the date on objects or photographs because I want to connect them with a period or an experience so that I don't forget.

– Do you know what Emanuela told me? She said, “Not only does dad remember everything, but whenever he bought something or gave something as a gift, whether it was a book, a spoon or a painting, he would attach a little handwritten card with the name of the person and the date. I have several paintings in my house with a card from him stuck to the back, for example: ‘To remember February 20th together with my friend Francesco Alberoni in Pedrignano’; or ‘For Emanuela, who’s leaving on March 2nd for New York. Dad.’ Whenever I look at an object, I always look for one of his little cards and try and remember what happened back then. I have a thermos at home with one of his little cards stuck to the bottom, and every time I wash it the card comes off and I have to stick it back on again. Every once in a while, when someone moves one of the paintings or some object, one of these marvelous little cards will fall out.”

I've always enjoyed remembering and reminding people to remember, because remembering makes our lives richer, fuller. I've also al-

ways enjoyed writing to others as a way of sharing feelings, of letting people I have a relationship with share in my life, to leave a message (positive, if possible!) of happiness, help or commiseration, and I've always anchored each note with a place and date.

I advised my kids to put dates on their documents or memorabilia, because dates help you keep your life in order, to delineate one moment from the next. Dates teach us respect.

Home is a place for memories, but also for physical renewal. Breathing in that atmosphere, the day's fatigue can magically evaporate and your mind can go back to appreciating the small things, those we always seem to overlook when we're hard at work and full of commitments.

I've always found myself at home, my history, my cherished things, my thoughts and reflections at night when I can't sleep. I've always found joy.

But I have to admit that home has always been a meeting place for me, and perhaps my most favorite meeting place of all.

I liked to meet new people and receive guests. When I first thought about the house in Fraore, halfway through the 1950s, I always imagined it as a beautiful place to raise a family, but also as a different, welcoming place where I could be a good host and provide new experiences to anyone who came to visit.

Every week I had at least one opportunity to invite someone over for lunch. Over the years, this rhythm has never changed. Lots of different people have come to visit, each one with an interesting story to tell.

I always wanted my kids to take part in these encounters, because I felt they were a unique kind of "schooling," special precisely because of the setting and the people who came to visit. Something special remained behind every time: a memory, an emotion, a small lesson... And more often than not, all this translated into inspiration.

We talked about anything and everything at the table, but most of all we listened to our guest who, encouraged by my questions, usually talked at length about his or her activities, experiences and the thinking behind his or her opinions.

Over the years I've had hundreds of guests for lunch, and I don't think I ever met a single one who wasn't good company.

I'm perfectly aware that there were probably some occasions, especially when they were much younger, when my kids would have preferred not to be at these lunches. But I believe it would have been a real shame to have denied them the chance to listen to someone who might just add something truly useful to their education. In the end, I think they're happy I insisted.

I'd like to add that nowadays it's increasingly difficult to meet cultured and refined people who have had great experiences. The generations that came after the war have had a much different, and in some respects much easier, life than mine. As a consequence they've had to make fewer sacrifices, and haven't had an ambition for conquest or sacrifice burning inside.

Education without sacrifice can't be called education, and in any case can be very dangerous for the future of the individual and society at large. Today, compared to the years of major development and innovation, it seems like we tend to overlook or assign less importance to effort and merit. There was a time when, even if you had only the most modest means at your disposal, people went at life with a different spirit, a strong desire to learn and grow, even at the cost of making enormous sacrifices. I've tried to offer my children anything and everything that might help them understand other human beings; to give them the opportunity to find the right stimuli. I believe, and I say this with just a touch of pride, that I've succeeded.

– You've never spoken to me about your health...

That's true. Maybe it's a subject I try to avoid because it's always been a source of concern. My father had heart problems. I had my first heart attack in 1963, when I was just fifty years old. I sought help, looked for the best doctor possible, the most appropriate cure, then I got my feet back beneath me and got back to work as quickly as I could. But when I returned to Barilla in 1979 I started to think that if I was going to take on more responsibilities, then I'd have to take better care of my health. So I called on Sergio, an old friend from Parma who'd been a professional masseuse, and I asked him if he'd like to go back to work on a continuous basis with me. Sergio had strong hands, agile arms and a ton of experience gathered over the years working alongside athletes like Francesco Moser. It was a fortunate connection, because after that and almost every evening Sergio would wait for me at home and give me an hour-long massage before dinner. It was a moment of true relaxation: I would lie down on the massage table, listen to his stories about everyday affairs in the city as seen from a local man's point of view: while I let myself relax I'd come into contact with Parma, getting to know the city's most intimate movements and thoughts.

Unfortunately my heart gave out again in 1981, and then I had a serious problem in an aorta in 1987. Later on, as I'm sure you're well aware, I suffered a great deal due to a major loss of vision caused by macular degeneration. But I don't want to talk about these sad things because I know full well I've led a fortunate life, a happy life, and I'd rather remember the beautiful things that providence has given me and which made me happy; the wonderful experiences I've had in this house.

You know, on weekends in the spring, in the evening before dinner, I enjoyed just going out in the garden. Sergio wasn't there on the weekends, and I liked to go out with my little pack of dogs, strays we picked up along the way, and walk quickly around the park. It was wonderful: a party with barking dogs as the soundtrack,

the hounds jumping all over me, excited to be let outside. I'd simply walk along in the middle of that strange company for an hour or so, immersed in an almost unreal atmosphere made up of green plants, the scents of nature coming back to life and that barking and yapping, a sound that might seem shrill, but which I loved. Those walks put oxygen in my body and mind; they helped order my thoughts. Then I'd make plans for the future...

XVII

FRIENDS AND VACATIONS

– You’ve had a lot of friends, and you’ve always considered friendship an important value...

Yes, that’s part of my character. I’ve always been cordial and extroverted by nature. I like meeting new people, talking to them, listening, understanding what they think. I’ve always had the impression that I might learn something new from them. I also like talking about myself, sharing my thoughts and feelings with others. With some I’ve built a special relationship, one that’s deeper, more emotional, based on intimacy and trust. These relationships grow stronger over time, becoming something long-lasting. Friendship is a beautiful thing because it can overcome social differences and work differences, putting people into contact simply as human beings. This is possible even if you already have a working relationship, if the other person is your lawyer or architect or a manager in your company. I’ve enjoyed deep feelings of friendship with some of my collaborators, with artists, with entrepreneurs and even with people in show business.

Among them I’d have to mention the relationship – based to some extent on admiration – I enjoyed with a friend of mine who

died many years ago: Romolo Valli⁻¹. Then there's my brotherly friendship with Valerio Zurlini, my chaotic friendship with Walter Chiari⁻², my enjoyable friendship with Alberto Sordi. Then a very special, deepfelt friendship with Enzo Ferrari⁻³. He was not an easy man, almost a grump, but incredibly affectionate with my boys and I. We spent many Sundays together at Maranello, talking and exchanging thoughts while the boys visited the factory and set down inside his amazing racecars. I'm sure Paolo's passion for car racing was born during those first visits in the 1960s: I could see he paid close attention to everything, and he fell instantly in love with the spare parts Ferrari would give him as gifts.

In 1976, during one of those visits, Enzo told me about an upcoming Ferrari model that would convince me to become his client again. I no longer felt comfortable driving a Ferrari; I wasn't the right age anymore. Plus those were difficult years, sad years, and I didn't really feel like "celebrating" with the purchase of what was practically a racecar. My kids listened carefully to his description of the car, and then started insisting that the model he was talking about had everything I could ask for, and how it was right that I honor our friendship by becoming Enzo's client again. I remember clearly: I made up my mind in just a couple of minutes. I'd order the car as a sign of affection for a friend, but also as a sort of reward for the whole family. In the end, I thought, buying a car that the whole family loves is like celebrating our unity, our complicity, a life that needed to be faced with faith in the future and enthusiasm for the present, no matter how hard those days might be. It was a way to hold everyone close and look optimistically toward the horizon. When the car finally arrived, around a year later, the entire family had a party.

After Enzo Ferrari, I'd like to mention Riccardo Muti⁻⁴, whom I met halfway through the 1980s. Despite the fact that he was only forty years old, he was already a very famous conduc-

tor. I was born and raised in an environment that was about as far from the theater and music as you could imagine, but I've always been fascinated by orchestra conductors. Without him, all those talented musicians who make up the orchestra wouldn't be able to produce the extraordinary effect that a full symphony can create. They would be unharmonious, unconnected. The conductor is the one who, through an intimate familiarity with the score, shows them the way through just a few simple gestures, bringing a musical miracle to life. Sometimes, when we had some meeting for work, with a bunch of different collaborators and consultants who had to agree upon a shared approach or result, I felt a little like an orchestra director who had to somehow draw the best out of each of them, point the way toward the objective. It's an experience I felt as early as the 1950s, when I had a chance to spend time and become friends with Guido Cantelli⁵, a young conductor who was Arturo Toscanini's favorite disciple and who was then directing the NBC Symphony Orchestra in New York. Maestro Cantelli was a few years younger (he was born in 1920), but nevertheless I was particularly drawn to him. I listened to his stories, followed his career with enthusiasm and felt extremely proud of this young Italian talent out there making a name for himself in the world. Unfortunately he died quite young in an airplane accident in Paris, in 1956. I was the one who went to identify the body in the morgue. My son Guido is named after him.

I relived some of the beautiful moments of friendship and admiration with Riccardo Muti that I'd enjoyed with Maestro Cantelli. I saw him conduct many times, and often felt quite moved. I even had the privilege of spending a lot of time with him on vacation, to relax and listen to his marvelous stories. He taught me a lot of things. We had fun together. I was older than him, and I like to think that maybe I left him something as well.

I don't know if you know this: when I turned eighty he came

all the way to Parma with the orchestra from La Scala in Milan and played a memorable concert at the Teatro Regio in Parma, with all my best friends and dearest acquaintances brought there together, dedicating the concert to me. I was the happiest man alive that evening. A deep, powerful sense of joy.

I'd also like to tell you about my encounter with Renzo Piano⁻⁶, a man whom I'd been following for years. I was fascinated by the extraordinary things he created. I was together with Marilena, on vacation in Sardinia one July towards the end of the 1980s, and I'd just learned that he'd anchored his sailboat in Porto Rotondo. Luca had come to join us that weekend, and he and I decided to take a walk along the pier and look for the architect's vessel in the hopes that we might find him onboard.

We wandered around for a while, reading the names written on the sterns of various yachts. Just when we started to think he'd already set sail, Luca saw him: there were two young men below deck, and the architect was standing out in the prow. Luca timidly asked me what I thought we should do. "It's simple," I said. "We'll go to the boat, I'll present myself and ask if I can say a quick hello to the architect."

That's precisely what we did. Renzo Piano was extremely courteous, and came straight out on the pier to shake my hand. We looked at one another, and we both felt an instant flash of empathy. I didn't waste any time and invited him straight out to join us for dinner that evening. He accepted just as quickly, and that was the start of a wonderful friendship he, Marilena and I have shared ever since.

Another example of friendship is my relationship with Giorgio Bulgari, an elegant, refined man who was the father of the more famous Bulgari brothers⁻⁷, now internationally renowned jewelers. I met Giorgio in Rome, shortly after the war, when I was just a simple client. When I traveled to Rome and had some free time, I liked

to walk along Via Condotti and stop to peer into the windows of the city's most important shops, and the one I liked the most was Bulgari's. I was fascinated by the store, but I always hung back and looked in through the windows. I never went inside. One time I finally worked up the courage and went inside. It was a very elegant atmosphere and I felt out of place. Giorgio Bulgari himself came over to me, making me feel entirely welcome. He put me completely at ease, and our encounter grew into a true friendship. Giorgio was the one who introduced me to the world of antique silver, helping me appreciate the incredibly refined work that British artisans of the 1700s were able to achieve, teaching me how to distinguish a masterpiece from what was simply "a nice piece."

I spent long hours with him, listening to him tell me about and show me extraordinary objects. Little by little, as time passed, I realized that I was "growing," that my personal tastes were evolving, becoming increasingly precise and personal. At that point I began to feel more autonomous in my choices (although I continued to listen to Giorgio's advice). Eventually I became a passionate collector. Today you can see pieces from that collection in Marilena's house and in my children's houses.

Silver pieces have been the objects that let me best express my friendship and affection for the people I hold especially dear. Silver has a strong personality: it's elegant, discreet and can easily be presented in various different forms. I've often relied on this metal when I've wanted to set a date for some special event with someone. For example, I gave my children several different pieces in order to remind them of occasions that were special to them. And I'll admit that sometimes I've given presents in silver for no better reason than the fact that I was particularly happy at the time, and I wanted someone else to share in my joy.

But when it comes to friendships, I don't want to limit myself to famous friends, because my life has been full of beautiful friend-

ships with less “well-known” people: men and women from Parma, artisans, shopkeepers, small entrepreneurs, people who perhaps weren’t given the same opportunities as others, but were nevertheless gifted with singular souls, important values, and have their own stories to tell and things to offer.

One period of my life that included the beginning of several important friendships was the time I spent as a soldier in Russia during the war: during those long, extremely difficult months I shared pain, hopes and fears together with other guys from Parma, all of whom were brave, loyal and generous. During that experience several of us created – though unaware we were doing so – friendships that would last for the rest of our lives. These men were Bais-trocchi, Tragni and Lavezzini.

I’d usually meet up with them without any set appointment, guided merely by a desire to spend a few minutes saying hello, to celebrate our lives in general. After the dramatic times we’d spent together, life itself acquired a positive valence all its own.

Once the war was over, Tragni opened a sports equipment store, and remained there until the end. It was a small shop, filled with wood paneling and lots of drawers stocked with things my kids wanted so badly. He was always there, waiting behind the counter to welcome his clients with a warm smile, and I loved going to visit him. Sometimes his store was the place my kids and I would agree to meet after school: I’d come from the office and find them there, rummaging around in the back. I’d chat with Giulio about the town for a while, then we’d say goodbye and it was time to head back home.

His store was a sort of crossroads where lots of people crossed paths. Some came to buy things, others just to meet. I was one of those people, and so was our mutual friend Lavezzini. On the other side of the street, right across from Giulio’s shop, stood Pietro Cavatorta’s⁻⁸ deli, the Salumeria Garibaldi. “Piero” (that’s the

name his friends used) was another marvelous son of Parma, an expert on our local gastronomic delights, and an exquisite individual. I loved stopping by his shop to see which products he'd selected to put on display, and to watch him work together with his collaborators in the middle of the crowded shop. He was extremely kind, but at the same time ran his shop with authority.

I'm quite certain I was his most important client, especially because I loved giving my friends spread out all over Italy food packages prepared by Pietro as gifts. He would always prepare a selection of specialties based on my requests: there was always some *culatello*, a deboned *prosciutto*, a giant wedge of Parmigiano Reggiano, dried porcini mushrooms and a couple of Felino salamis. Even though I was undoubtedly his most important client, he would of course make me wait in line just like everyone else whenever I came into the shop to pick things up.

That's one of the things I liked most about Piero Cavatorta: he paid every single client the same respect, from a retiree who was buying just a few slices of ham and a little wedge of cheese to someone like me who was there to order dozens and dozens of his extraordinary food baskets.

In their own ways, Tragni and Cavatorta were maestros of their professions, and whenever I stopped by to visit I would see or hear or learn something useful to add to my own experience.

Egisto Baistrocchi, on the other hand, was a mechanic. When the war was over I helped him open a garage, and then become a Volkswagen and Porsche dealer.

As you know, I've always had a thing for cars and driving. Every once in a while, on weekends, I liked to go visit Baistrocchi and look at his cars, maybe take one out for a test drive together with him. We'd talk about the market, mechanical innovations, materials, engine performance and then about the people who went to car shows and bought automobiles.

I often took my boys along. They loved listening to him talk about his trips to Germany to visit factories and the offices of these big car companies. Of course there were always stories about the war too, about the dangers we poor Parma soldiers had dodged or sidestepped. For my kids, going to visit Baistrocchi was like a little vacation, and thanks to his stories they had a chance to learn something too. Egisto was a true gentleman and an affectionate man; he treated my boys as if they were his own. For this reason I cared deeply about him, and the day an unpleasant illness took him away from us forever was an incredibly sad day for me.

Among my many friends, I'd also like to tell you about two people I met after the war, each different from the other but both very special to me: Carlo Bavagnoli⁹, who was a photographer from Piacenza; and Ubaldo Bertoli, a journalist from Parma.

Carlo was much younger than I. We met towards the end of the 1950s, when he started collaborating with an extraordinary American magazine: *Life*. His photo reportage, his ability to tell a story through images struck me so deeply that one day when I discovered he would be passing through Parma I asked him if he'd be willing to stop by our house and photograph Marilena and I together with the kids.

I was lucky to have met Carlo, because in addition to a friend, I'd found a top notch professional whose photos have captured the birth and growth of our family. I remember that Marilena and I spent hours playing with the kids out on the lawn in front of our house while Carlo, without interrupting that intimate, spontaneous atmosphere in any way, captured the most beautiful and intense moments of our relationships. We held photo shoots like that year after year, and the photos he created have helped build and cement our sense of family, a sentiment that has kept us united through the difficult times and helped us overcome adversity. Carlo doesn't know it, but I believe that those photos will help my grandchildren

and their descendants to be more familiar with the origins of their family and values: they're filled with affection, complicity, dialogue, joy and above all closeness; they contain our vision of life, positive energy, love and strength. Marilena and the kids keep lots of these photos on display in their houses, not only as reminders of special moments, but as signs of feelings and emotions that withstand the tests of time.

Ubaldo Bertoli¹⁰, on the other hand, was a completely different person. He was four years older than me and was a particularly rebellious individual. During the war this rebellious spirit led him to become "Gino," a commander among the partigiani freedom fighters. And he stayed rebellious that way throughout his life. I loved him because he was sincere and completely impervious to power games. In fact, he always fought to eliminate them. In his own way, he was a good, disinterested anarchist.

We often got together at home or out in Parma to take walks together, see art shows or visit our mutual friends the painters Carlo Mattioli and Mino Maccari. Baldo was a passionate art lover, and art was one of our favorite conversation topics. I always had fun with him, because since he worked as a journalist and spend long periods away from Parma, he always had interesting encounters and experiences to tell me about. Sometimes they were downright crazy, with incredible characters that only he could have uncovered. We had hundreds of conversations together, often about politics. Sometimes these were quite heated arguments, because we often thought quite differently about things. But I can tell you that since he was a very cultured person and intimately familiar with the history of our country, I always harbored enormous respect for his ideas.

I also liked the fact that he was very affectionate with Marilena and the kids. When the kids were younger, for a number of years he would dress up as Santa Claus and hand out presents. After the

“ceremony” was over he’d pretend to take off in a sleigh and disappear for a while, change clothes and come back to join us for our traditional Christmas dinner. Among my friends, I’d have to say Baldo was the one who spent the most time at our house and was the most present in our private family life. Everybody liked him because he always brought a gust of new, different thinking into our home.

I owe Baldo a great deal, because on more than one occasion he opened my eyes to situations that I wasn’t familiar with, and provided opinions that I invariably wound up thinking about for a long time, and which helped me gain a clearer understanding of the world.

– You’ve always taken long vacations...

That’s right. I consider vacations a reward, and seeing as I’ve always given myself body and soul to my work, whenever I’ve gone on vacation I’ve felt like a student at the end of a tough school year. I’d be happy I’d finished all my duties, among them – I want to emphasize – paying back all my debts. You should know that sometimes I didn’t have enough money readily available to pay back all the various business debts I’d accumulated. In those cases, there are only two solutions: borrow money from the bank or wait for company dividends to arrive. Sometimes I used one, sometimes the other. But I could never consider a vacation to be a real vacation unless I was leaving with all my accounts in order, without leaving any debts unpaid. A vacation has to be a private moment that I can dedicate entirely to myself, my family and my friends.

The place where I spent the most time and put down roots is Cortina d’Ampezzo. I started going there when I was a very young man, in the 1930s, and I never stopped. There I got to know Italy’s “*bel mondo*” or, if you’d prefer, Italy’s elite. I met the people

who ran the economy, culture and Italian politics. I also met many beautiful women. For me, Cortina was a sort of initiation rite, and I would even go so far as to describe it as a school for life. Elite people from all walks of life – economics, politics, culture and even show business – go there, encounter one another, cross paths and form a community that has a permanent, central nucleus. Seeing as how I'd been going there all my life, I was part of that nucleus, and I wound up meeting everyone that counts, and they wound up meeting me, or at least seeing me. The fact that it was a community, a place I could catch up with people I knew, with friends, and return to the same habits, had a very relaxing, quieting effect on me.

I felt at home in Cortina, and I made friendships there that in some cases lasted a lifetime, like my friendship with Indro Montanelli, my companion on numerous mountain hikes over three decades. Those were very special moments, because usually he and I were up there alone and we could talk about all sorts of subjects. Mostly we talked about Italy and Italian politics: obviously Indro was an expert; he was intimately familiar with the subject because he'd met just about everybody over the course of his long career, and he also had an extraordinary gift for analyzing human behavior and situations. For me, listening to him talk about these things was like going to the theater and seeing a marvelous production. I realized that while we were walking together, hours slipped past and I never felt tired. Sometimes two or three guests would join our little "club," but only for a day, because in the end we mostly liked to be on our own and exchange ideas and thoughts in absolute privacy. When I passed away, Indro dedicated a section of his newspaper to me, telling the world about our conversations and our long-standing and deep friendship.

I also became friends with Enzo Biagi¹¹, and sometimes the three of us would take morning walks together.

In the evening I would either stay home, or go out with Marile-

na and a few friends, almost always in the company of someone worth getting to know.

Another reason I liked to go on vacation in Cortina was the town's host of art galleries. I liked to go visit the gallery owners, talk with them about the artworks they had on display or about interesting artists. I had time on my hands. I was relaxed and I could immerse myself in the enchanted world of art without having to think about anything else, without having to keep an eye on the clock or race off to a meeting. Whenever I found something I really like, something that aroused my curiosity, I could talk about it with experts and maybe buy it for the collection that I was little by little putting together with pieces I'd carefully thought about and chosen. The calm atmosphere in and around Cortina and my vacations there helped me make some good choices.

– What about the seaside?

For me the seaside meant Sardinia and Porto Rotondo. Before going to the mountains I would spend a little time in Sardinia, where I usually took long daily swims in order to keep myself in shape. Those were always pleasant moments, which I usually spent alone in the water. I needed them in order to take care of my health. You know, when I turned seventy I allowed myself a minor luxury: I bought a wonderful 65-foot yacht, a San Lorenzo. I didn't use it to take any long cruises, but it allowed me to take in some wonderful seascapes and relax and fall asleep rocked by the waves. You're laughing? You should know that I've always felt it was important to take a rest after lunch, around two or three in the afternoon. I would curl up in my cabin and rest. But the seaside meant swimming. I needed to swim for health reasons, but I've always enjoyed swimming enormously so I took very long swims. Often my sons, especially Luca, would worry about me because I'd stay in the wa-

ter for an hour without getting out. But I wasn't cold, I didn't get tired and swimming allowed me to stay in shape. When I turned sixty I stopped skiing; but I made up for that by continuing to swim. And I really enjoyed taking long swims on my own. And when I was in Sardinia in July, the kids would come join me on the weekends and we could spend intense, wonderful times together for days on end, especially in the morning, when we had breakfast together, or immediately after that when we read the newspapers and talked about the day's events. I can't deny that I took advantage of those moments to ask them for news about work as well.

– You traveled a lot...

I traveled a lot when I was young. Then I had my first heart attack and I realized that health is a fragile thing, and that it was extremely important to be regular and get plenty of rest. In the end, there were two places I liked to stay above all others: Cortina and Porto Rotondo. But I have to admit that every time, once the vacation was over, I was always quite happy to go home, to go back to work and meet back up with the friendly faces of the people I worked with.



XVIII

MY HOMETOWN

– You’ve always had a deep love of your city. Parma raised you, stimulated you and you’ve given a great deal back to her. There are some business realities, like Barilla, that seem impossible to imagine away from Parma...

Parma is a lively city, rich in culture and business enterprises. From the 1500s forward it has always been a capital, and in every capital there’s a court and nobility. The nobility in turn are surrounded by the artisans that serve them: tailors, hairdressers, farriers, blacksmiths, carpenters, furniture-makers, musicians, cooks, doctors, pharmacists and so forth. First the dukedom was ruled by the Farnese family, then by the Borbones and, during the last century, the duchess was Maria Luigia, daughter of the emperor, Napoleon’s ex-wife and the ex-French empress. Therefore you can imagine just how close relationships were with the courts in Vienna and Paris. Maria Luigia had an enormous influence on the city; she turned it into a point of reference for all of Europe. I went to school at Maria Luigia, which was once the school for nobility. Members of the Farnese and Borbone families have climbed its stairs. I wasn’t interested in what they

had to teach me, but I spent time there and it influenced me in some ways.

The court was important because it helped create and train a host of small artisan businesses. It helped impart taste, culture and education that helped favor industrial development later on. Once Italy was unified the dukedom disappeared, and all the people who worked for the court fell on hard times. Then they reacted, different people set up shop on their own or started working for the bourgeoisie, setting up small industries. The blacksmiths and coppersmiths started making machines for the food industry, cheese producers formed consortiums, salami producers industrialized their production processes. Parma prosciutto or Felino salami are perfect examples. Pharmacists created small pharmaceutical companies. Maria Luigia loved the Parma violet, a perfume extracted from the flower by Franciscan monks. Then Lodovico Borsari, a local barber, started producing and selling it⁻¹. And he wasn't alone. There are still a number of different perfume companies in Parma, and the glass bottles they use are made by the Bormioli glassworks, a family of French origin that took over the royal glass factory here and was already working for the court as early as the 1800s. Then there were the bakers, the pastry makers...

– In Barilla Historical Archives⁻² I read that during the 1500s, one of the members of the baker's guild was a certain Ovidius Barilla, *maestro d'Arte*⁻³. Evidently your grandfather followed in the footsteps of longstanding tradition when he first founded the company...

Although our family undoubtedly comes from the same line, we're not direct descendants. My grandfather Pietro didn't have his own family shop: he went to apprentice under his father-in-law, Vincenzo Lanati, who had a bakery in strada Santa Croce. Then he opened

up his own business. But his parents all had bread shops: his brother Ferdinando took over the Lanati bakery in strada Santa Croce; Bice Barilla, Ferdinando's son, specialized in baked desserts. But the fact that they all married the daughters of other bakers makes it clear that people in our family had been baking for centuries. My father Riccardo learned the trade from his father, just as I learned it from him.

– Barilla is a company with strong connections to agriculture...

Important agriculture, which modernized in part thanks to institutions like the *Cattedra Ambulante di Agricoltura* (Itinerant agricultural education department) and the regional agricultural consortium⁴. Parma wed itself to industry. At the end of the 1800s there were two options, two alternatives. Some people said: "Let's develop an agriculture that works for industry." For example, someone would build a sugar factor and everyone else could cultivate sugar beets. But little by little another line of thinking developed, and people said: "Let's make our own industries." For example, we'll cultivate tomatoes, and then we'll become entrepreneurs and turn those tomatoes into canned tomatoes and tomato paste. In the end this second trend won out, and Parma became an industrial city. But its industry was deeply connected with local territory and products. Just think about Parmigiano Reggiano cheese, Parma prosciutto, or the Parmalat company. Barilla is in this category: we make bread using grain grown on local lands. We make pasta using durum wheat, and eventually we had to range farther afield in order to get enough, first into southern Italy and later outside the country, once national production was no longer enough.

Another important patrimony of Parma has been culture in all its facets: architecture, for example La Pilotta, Farnese theater or the Palazzo Ducale⁵; painting, from Correggio to Parmigianino;

but also other, culturally important institutions. In the 1700s, the discovery of Veleia, a Roman city located in the Piacenza region but inside the dukedom, led to the creation of an archeological museum that competed to a certain extent with what the Neapolitan Barbone family were doing in Pompeii. Then there's the Accademia di Belle Arti and its galleria, today known as the Galleria Nazionale, or National Gallery. And our beautiful, historic university. I'm quite fond of the Ducal library, today called the Biblioteca Palatina, with Apollo, the god of arts and light, in its insignia. You've never seen it? It's an extraordinary place, filled with long galleries and splendid bookshelves made of carved walnut wood, all designed during the 1700s by court architect Petitot⁻⁶. You have to go see it... When Maria Luigia died in the nineteenth century, the duchess's private library was moved back to Austria. Then it was given to her heirs, but halfway through the 1980s a collection of almost two hundred books from that library, all wonderfully rebound, went up for auction. A merchant from Parma, Igino Consigli, bought them, then offered them to me. I bought them and then added them to a big exhibition on Maria Luigia that was held in the Palazzo Ducale in Colorno. Today they've been put back in the Biblioteca Palatina.

– Did the magazine *Palatina*, which you supported, take its name from that library?

Absolutely. The idea for *Palatina* came from Attilio Bertolucci. Roberto Tassi ran the magazine, and the editorial staff included Gian Carlo Artoni⁻⁷, Giorgio Cusatelli⁻⁸ and a group of intellectuals who usually met in Giorgio Belledi's⁻⁹ bookstore. It ran from 1957 to 1966⁻¹⁰, and featured writing by a number of important authors including Carlo Cassola, Carlo Emilio Gadda, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Carlo Bo, Alberto Bevilacqua, Italo Calvino and Alberto Moravia.

– I can see you're holding a photograph. What's that of?

It's a photo taken in the 1950s of the group of writers and people involved with the *Palatina*¹¹. There were so many of us that the photographer had to climb up on a wall to get the shot...

– Let's see the names... You're there too, along with Artoni, Pietrino Bianchi, Attilio Bertolucci, Alberto Bevilacqua, Ubaldo Bertoli, Carlo Mattioli... That's some company you kept!

It's true. I'm convinced that Barilla's growth is connected with the cultural humus that made it possible for culture and companies to come together spontaneously, as well as the fact that Parma is an integrated city – proof can be found there in the photo, where I'm standing in the middle of writers and artists. It's a city whose citizens are proud to be citizens, a city-community in which people can complete, but also help one another. Parma is a place where an entrepreneur is encouraged to do what he needs to do to succeed, but also to help the community at large, because he knows that by helping the community he'll also be helping himself. People know each other here. When I go to Milan to meet someone, I can't tell you if he's a gentleman. I might be able to say he's prepared, intelligent, a well-known professional. But I don't know if I can trust him, I don't know if I can say he's a gentleman. The Parma I grew up in is a city where you know who the gentlemen are, because everybody knows who they are.

– You've even dedicated a book to this city...

Bavagnoli, the photographer I told you about earlier, captured all sorts of images of the city during his career, beautiful, poetic images. Giorgio Cusatelli added a few splendid literary citations along-

side the photographs, and Pietrino Bianchi wrote an introduction that evoked Parma's artistic and literary beauty. The book was put together – this was in 1961 – in Virginio Marchi's house. Together with Attilio Bertolucci we selected the best of Bavagnoli's photographs, putting together as if in a metaphor beautiful details from sculptures and shots of local people; young women and the ancient, lined faces of boarders in the Collegio dei Nobili; elegant jewelry shops and artisan leatherworker's shops that unfortunately no longer exist. I asked Carboni to handle the graphic design, and Amilcare Pizzi, a master typographer from Milan whom I'd met before the war, to print them.

– But you haven't told me the title you picked out for the book! Listen to what Bertolucci told me about the choice:

“We needed to come up with a title. Everybody suggested one or another, and every suggestion was more or less inappropriate. Then Pietro Barilla gave it a shot. The result was *Cara Parma*¹², and we could tell right away that it was the right title. It was perfect for everything it suggested and, it must be said, for the sound, for that wealth of ‘a’ that produced such a happy, breathable and pleasurable sensation.”

It's true. It was like a declaration of love for my city. That book was tangible proof of just how attached I am to Parma, just how thankful I am to the city that nurtured the most authentic foundations upon which our work is built. That's why, once the original run was finished, in 1993 I decided to produce a new edition to coincide with my eightieth birthday. Thirty years later it remained a fresh, beautiful publication. Its meaning was intact and unaltered.

– You and your family have contributed to the development of Parma in a number of different ways. Did you ever get actively involved in local politics?

If you mean from an ideological point of view, in terms of political parties, the answer is no. Of course anyone who works as an entrepreneur, who is part of the development of a city, always has relationships with politicians and local politics. I already told you about the difficult relationships that we had during the Liberation, with the communist party that had essentially taken up arms against us. There were other tense moments as well, like when the city imposed an unbearable family tax. There was a point when we felt genuinely persecuted, and we thought seriously about leaving Parma. Then things got better. Parma's local government has always been a blend of socialist and communist, like Italy's Fronte Popolare party. But despite this the city has had excellent entrepreneurial development.

In 1948 both my brother and I were convinced that Fronte Popolare might well win the elections, and we breathed an enormous sigh of relief when they were defeated.

It's a sign that politics can't fully express the spirit of a country, nor can it compress a country's potential. I'm thinking of excellent entrepreneurs like Antonio Marchi, who founded Tanara, or the engineer Arturo Balestrieri¹³, or Rocco Bormioli¹⁴ and his marvelous glassworks. There were five major companies in Parma, perhaps more than in the rest of the Emilia region combined. Personally, although I'm religious and Catholic, I never joined the Democristiano party. But I always voted for them, eternally thankful to De Gasperi for having saved us from communism. I've always been more of a free spirit, a liberal, not so much because I'm a lay person as because I'm open-minded and respectful of freedom. I remember that I even gave Orlandini¹⁵ a hand, who as a young

man ran the liberal weekly *L'uomo libero*⁻¹⁶ before he became the director of Parma's industrial union.

– What was your relationship with the industrial union like?

I was extremely active in it. I was and remain convinced that the industrialists' association needs to deal with problems typical to this area of business, but can't limit itself to just those. It also has to deal with problems connected to the city's economic development as a whole, to provide directives and promote actions that will benefit everybody.

I'll give you an example. I was convinced that Parma, precisely thanks to its long tradition as a capital, had to have its own newspaper. The glorious *Gazzetta di Parma*, the oldest daily newspaper in Europe, had been a mouthpiece for the dukedom for centuries. Then it was bought by the Molossi family, but with the advent of fascism it became a government instrument. After the war was over it was put up for auction, and the industrial union bought a majority share (forty percent), while the SEEE (Società Emiliana Esercizi Elettrici) bought thirty percent. In 1962, when the SEEE was about to be nationalized following the national law on electric companies and the creation of ENEL, Arturo Balestrieri and I worked together to make sure that the SEEE's share in the newspaper be sold to Parma industrialists (I also bought a small share on my own). This guaranteed control – not to turn it into a mouthpiece for the “bosses,” but to make sure the paper focused its attention on the city's problems, which is exactly what happened from then on under the leadership of Baldassarre Molossi⁻¹⁷, a young, liberal director who led the paper to become the local newspaper with the widest distribution in all of Italy.

That reminds me of another extremely important private initiative: the Experimental Station for Food Preserves, which deals

with all the problems connected with the health and safety of preserved foods. It was created in 1922 by the chamber of commerce, local politicians and Parma's food industry. In 1939 the institution's first director, Francesco Emanuele¹⁸, had the idea to establish a food preserves show, basically a convention dedicated to all the machinery used to transform fresh food into preserves. The result was the creation of a small convention facility north of Ducale Park. After the war this convention, which was completely run by the president of the industrialists, proved quite successful and completely filled up its available space. At the start of the 1980s there was the possibility of expanding the convention facilities, now too restrictive and surrounded by houses, by transferring it to land along Italy's "sun" highway and using warehouses that had been abandoned by Salvarani. It seemed like what had happened to us twenty years earlier... It was an important investment, but there was a chance to work on it together with Federalimentare (Italy's national food organization) and develop the first international convention dedicated to food production, which required lots of space and modern infrastructures. Basically, Parma would become the headquarters not only for a convention dedicated to food technologies, but to an enormous food fair dedicated to products. The clock was ticking. Inside the industrial union, which would have to support the initiative alongside the municipality and the region, not everybody agreed with the idea. So I said: "If anyone should be against this thing, it should be me. All my competitors will come here and exhibit their products. But I'm not against it. I think we should do it because it will give Parma enormous advantages. I'm willing to take part in the initiative, even provide financial support."

The initiative went through, the convention facilities were moved, and today Parma is still the headquarters for Cibus, the most important Italian food fair and the third largest in the world, after Sial in Paris and Anuga in Cologne.

– Do you remember any other initiatives you supported for the good of Parma?

The European College⁻¹⁹. They told me that they couldn't find people to hire who were familiar with European legislation, who knew all the legal ins and outs. At the time there was a single course on this material taught at the University of Parma, but it was too abstract, and the students who took it didn't learn the things they really needed to learn. So we established a private institute called the "Collegio Europeo" (European College). It offered a biennial course to sixty students at a time, and today Parma has all the qualified personnel it needs.

– Then there was the airport, which Signor Orlandini told me all about. He said: "The airport is another reality that would never have been developed without Signor Pietro's help. We had inherited a small structure built prior to the war and then run by the Aeroclub. But it wasn't enough for any major airlines. Lots of people knew we needed an airport, but almost no one had the courage and desire to actually create one. When we went to talk it over with the assistant mayor at the time, he told us, 'They've already got an airport in Bologna. Why build one in Parma? There's no need!' We explained that Parma was a city with its own autonomy, its own local economy, and he said, 'Well we can set up a bus that leaves for Bologna every morning and put a check-in counter on board.' Basically, our thinking was worlds apart, and we realized that the only way we'd get an adequate civilian airport was if we built it ourselves. We needed to collect enough money to build it, buy the land and then build the service structures. Pietro Barilla didn't waste any time and joined the company immediately, contributing a few hundred million lira." And you also lent

your support to creating the Autocamionale della Cisa, a highway that connects Parma with Spezia. Then you made an enormous contribution to the engineering department at the University of Parma...

Well, as I'm sure you know the University of Parma has centuries-old traditions and is a very famous institution: it was already teaching students in the 1200s! But it only had a single two-year course for engineering, a department that's indispensable for an industrial city. So the decision was made to increase the number and nature of courses it offered. But in order to do this, the university needed new facilities, so I decided to lend a hand, and in 1987 I contributed four billion lira for its construction. The facility they built was both attractive and functional, so I decided to make it even more beautiful by placing a sculpture by Arnaldo Pomodoro⁻²⁰ out front. The entire department experienced major development, so much so that soon even this new facility was no longer big enough. Two years later the new chancellor, Nicola Occhicupo⁻²¹, came to see me and explained the problem. After that I donated another four billion, which the university used to double the existing facility with a new wing that was inaugurated in 1991.



XIX

SELECTING AND REWARDING

It's hard to choose the right collaborators. You have to be on the same wavelength, to get along with one another. If you don't establish reciprocal understanding, then there will always be incomprehension at one level or another. Then you have to figure out if the person is honest, loyal. It's not enough to be brilliant, talented and astute: in a company like Barilla, one based on seriousness, honesty and loyalty both inside and outside the company, you need people who already possess these qualities and appreciate them in others.

– What do you believe a business should be?

A business is a community formed by men and women united around a shared goal, a shared path and a shared sense of belonging. All too often we forget that any business or institution is made up of human beings, people who are strong when they feel united, when they share an objective. Everybody wants to feel like their work has meaning, like it has value. A business expands, grows, is successful when all its employees, from the president on down, are proud to be a part of it and to contribute to the company's growth. That's how I've always wanted Barilla to be. I've always sought out

managers who enjoyed their colleagues' esteem; managers that the employees would have chosen. A company prospers when everyone is reasonably certain that their activities are understood, appreciated and rewarded equally, fairly. When people at every level respect and value one another; when, rather than hating one another they collaborate and help each other; when people don't lie to one another and don't envy one another, that's when a company is successful. Words and declarations of principle aren't enough to motivate people, because they'll be the first to realize that those words don't result in concrete actions; that the company's managers pretend to be convinced, but in reality are false and hypocritical. I've never hired people like this, and when and if I have, I've pushed them as far away from the company as I could as quickly as possible.

– Lots of people feel that a company is merely an economic entity, a place where you work in order to have some advantage or earn money.

That's the definition that economists or financiers give a company, believing that a company should be summed up as the amount of money you can earn from it. But it's not that way in real life. No business can grow, prosper, I'd even say survive, if it doesn't possess a soul, ideals, feelings, dreams and values. One of the things I've learned in life, from when I was a little boy to today, is that a company is not merely "an economic entity," formed of interests. It is also a "moral community," rooted in its territory. When you break apart the moral community, the company is only held together by a search for power and profit, by a clock on the wall, by hypocrisy and trickery. At that point the die is cast: the company experiences slow decline, awash in mediocrity, and ultimately fails. Taken together, everyone's efforts are like lots of individual bricks that you can use to build and develop the company. But these bricks have to

be united, bound together, and enjoy a solid relationship with one another. People have to work together as a team...

– Do you always need the right bosses in the right place, at every level?

Yes, you do. The people you choose as bosses and managers are fundamental. You can't do everything yourself, you know. I remember a really delicate period from 1940 to 1950, when I closely monitored everyone in our group of drivers. They were fundamental: they brought Barilla products undamaged and on time to warehouses and stores all over Italy. In other periods I concentrated my attention on other problems, but ultimately I would always have to choose someone to take over and do the job for me, hopefully even better than I could. Just consider what Gianni Maestri accomplished at the beginning of the 1970s, when in complete silence, almost clandestinely, he created Mulino Bianco...

– When you had to choose a new manager, what criteria did you use to make your choice?

Generally speaking I would always try to find people who were honest and whom the employees could respect. Over the course of my life, first when I was working, then during the war and the difficult postwar period, I've had lots of chances to meet and get to know people. Spending time with them, letting them talk, even about unimportant things or things that had nothing to do with the company, I would form an impression that was part rational, part emotional. I believe that first impressions are important. Especially with someone you don't know and who doesn't know you. Neither one of you have had time to prepare, to organize a performance for the other. And since you don't know each other, you don't have an prej-

udices, whether positive or negative. You're like undeveloped film, ready to capture attitudes and behaviors that not even your interlocutor knows he or she possesses. And if you know human beings, if you have some experience, you can get an excellent idea of what kind of person is standing in front of you. But of course one simple interview isn't enough. If I felt like I'd found the right person, then I'd set up another interview. Most importantly, I'd put him or her to work in the company and keep an eye on them for quite some time in order to accurately evaluate performance and character.

Given the criteria we use today, my measuring stick might seem a little rigid. I've always put a lot of emphasis on the importance of proper behavior, seriousness, respect and discipline. I already told you about this when I was talking about my life experiences: I spent my youth in uniform and was an active participant in World War Two; I've been through dramatic personal experiences; I've seen the way men act in extreme situations; I've seen loyalty, generosity and sacrifice, but also cowardice, greed and betrayal. My kids tell me I divide people into two categories: gentlemen and those who aren't. It's true. For me, a gentleman is someone who is intimately straight and true, and this quality can be seen in his behavior as well.

– Your son Guido told me: “Discipline has always been important to our dad. He’s always felt that the way a person presents himself and behaves are extremely important. Education, good manners and respect were a substantial part of an individual’s qualities. He split people into two groups: gentlemen and non-gentlemen, and the fact of being a gentleman, regardless of intellectual capacity, was a crucial quality for him, even more important than somebody’s professional skills. ‘Of course skills are important,’ he liked to say, ‘but they’re useless alone.’”

What Guido says is true. I've taught my kids the same things, day after day and not in an abstract sense, but concretely, examining and evaluating people together, analyzing their behavior. I've shown them that even the decisions that seemed the most emotional and sudden were in reality the result of careful consideration, a long thinking process and a plan of development that I stuck to tenaciously. I've also tried to teach them that when you make a mistake, you have to have the courage not only to correct it, but to admit it.

– You've had to bring your kids into the company too, to make them your collaborators. Have you prepared them for this all their lives?

Yes, especially after I returned to the company. One of my main goals was to help my kids fall in love with the company. With Luca it was easy because he was always by my side; with Guido things were different, because he studied philosophy in Milan, hung around in a different environment and told me that he didn't want to work in the company. Then things changed. The change came after I had the heart attack. After that he dedicated himself to the company and did some amazing things. He organized our sponsorship of the Roma Calcio soccer team when Liedholm was coaching and Falcão was on the team, the year they won the scudetto⁻¹, Italy's Serie A championship trophy. Then he created the Barilla Boogie Band together with Renzo Arbore⁻². Both these things made a significant contribution to improving our market share. Paolo, on the other hand, was just starting out as a racecar driver and couldn't work in the company. But he joined later on and was a great help.

– You were demanding. You knew how to give orders, and you made sure people followed them. You knew how to be tough, too.

That's true. Sometimes I was tough, although I didn't realize how severe I could be, because I never exploded, never shouted, never insulted anybody. Despite that several people close to me told me on more than one occasion that when I criticized them, even if I said only a few words, I was capable of making them afraid. And to think I've always been kind, at times downright sweet with my management and collaborators.

You've reminded me of a very particular relationship I had with someone who worked alongside me for many years. I'm talking about Signora Natalia, whom my mother hired as a factory worker in 1949, and who continued to work for us, becoming the head of a series of services. She was so completely loyal and dedicated that she herself often shared her observations about my behavior directly with me, and more often than not I was happy to have her opinion.

– I think that might be the key. You were always warm-hearted with your collaborators, a friend and quick to smile. Then, when someone broke the rules, you suddenly turned into an inflexible taskmaster. All of a sudden they felt distant from you, and had the impression that they'd lost your esteem, lost your friendship; they felt like a chasm had opened up between you and them. They were afraid they'd lost your friendship forever, and that fear terrorized them. Only bosses who possess significant sense of authority and are well loved are capable of wielding this kind of power. Your children remember a few occasions when you came down with a hard hand.

Really? When?

– Paolo remembers once when you had a top manager who went to Rome a lot, but once he was there didn't dedicate his

energies to Barilla business quite as much as he was supposed to. You called him to the house in Fraore and fired him on the spot. In another case, Luca told me: “We had a manager who was a little argumentative. He didn’t help the team, in fact he broke up the team spirit that’s supposed to exist within a group of people who work together, but he believed he was extraordinarily talented, and that his talents weren’t fully appreciated inside the company. At one point he asked to meet with dad so that he could complain about the fact that the company wasn’t giving him more responsibilities and an increase in pay. He threatened to quit unless things changed. My dad heard him out, then said: ‘You’re complaining because the company isn’t treating you the way you deserve and you’re thinking about moving on. I’m telling you that you don’t need to worry whether to quit or not; we’re the ones who need to worry whether to keep you in the company or kick you out.’ After that the manager left my dad’s office in silence.”

It’s true. Every once in a while someone would go a little too far, and then they needed to be put in their place...

– But you were also careful to reward people who worked hard and did well. What criteria did you use in rewarding your collaborators?

I believe that you need a strong sense of justice to run a company. Justice reduces envy. In a company, you make money in proportion to the tasks and responsibilities you’re given; but you also have to reward commitment, dedication, loyalty and even successes that some people obtain and others don’t.

The success of a business depends on decisions, ideas, solutions and actions taken by certain individuals, and whenever I

realized that someone contributed more than others to work we were all involved in, I always felt obligated to reward that individual, maybe not financially, but with recognition or perhaps a personal gift. But I never wanted people to get the impression that I was giving one person preference over others, that I was privileging someone. Basically, the others needed to see that it was “the right thing to do,” too. They needed to see that this person had done well.

– What about your own rewards? What prizes or awards have you earned yourself?

My recognition has always been the success of the company. For example, when we managed to resolve the bread issue after the war, or succeed with pasta through the commercials with Mina, then our triumph with Mulino Bianco...

– Okay, but you’ve earned a host of official, personal and formal awards and recognitions too... For example, you were nominated *Cavaliere del Lavoro*³...

Let’s see... That was in 1968. We were building the new facility at Pedrignano. I was fifty-five, and that was an important acknowledgement, recognition for a company that had been completely renewed.

– Other awards?

Well, I won an Alcide De Gasperi award, given to me in Rome in 1986. I remember that Signor Manfredi came along with me, and Giulio Andreotti and filmmaker Michelangelo Antonioni⁴ were there too, as well as Federico Fellini and Giorgio Strehler⁵. The

following year I received a gold medal for the Sant'Ilario prize, given by the Parma municipality.

– Was there one prize that was more important to you than the others?

Yes, there's one that I hold especially dear. On September 26, 1987, as part of the university's 900th anniversary, the University of Bologna gave me an *ad honorem* degree in economics. Fabio Alberto Roversi Monaco (1938-) was the chancellor, and Giancarlo Barbiroli was head of the economic department. That was a truly special day for me, because I was honored with a degree that I'd never imagined I could get and, deep down inside, I considered it an important goal that I'd been forced to give up on years earlier.

I have to admit that I never used the title that came with that degree. I've never been one to flout his accomplishments; I feel it's somehow like putting a barrier between myself and others. But that degree was particularly important to me because on that same day Mother Theresa of Calcutta⁻⁶ was receiving an *ad honorem* degree in pharmaceutical science as recognition of everything she'd done for the sick and suffering. Knowing me, you can imagine how embarrassed I was and how inadequate I felt standing up there next to this immense, extraordinary human being.

I had a tough time when it came to the *lectio magistralis*, when I had to read a speech that I'd carefully prepared together with Ganapini: I was already having problems with my eyesight at that point, and having to read such a long, articulated speech was a real test of my concentration and staying power!

But after I read the introduction a little nervously, my instincts took over: I put down my notes, apologized for my imperfect Italian and simply told the audience about myself and Barilla. Nobody had ever shared those things before! I didn't talk for long, but ev-

everything I said came naturally, and I was able to touch on the subjects that are most important to me, not numbers but values. I remember that my wife and my kids were all there, and really moved to hear me speak.

That evening when I got home I was so proud of my story and Barilla, of having shared that with everyone, that I think I fell asleep still smiling.

XX

MY ARTISTS

Let's leave the factory behind today and walk out towards the administrative building, where my office is. On the way we can take a look at some of the works of art I've collected over the past thirty-five years. Some are right out there, on the big lawn, while I've put others in company offices and hallways so that everyone can enjoy them.

– In fact you've built it up as if it were an art gallery...

And I'm not a collector, would you believe it? I've always sought out artworks because I was attracted to them, because I felt that they embodied a certain meaning or held a certain message not just for me, but for other people too. That's why I enjoy sharing them so much.

– What has art meant for you?

Art... is my horizon, my atmosphere. It warms me and spurs me to look to the future. Art tells us more than simply the present, our needs, our practical necessities. It is infinitely richer, describing our

soul in all its complexity: its torments, doubts, faith and aspirations. It shows us how we want to live, what we want to be. It reminds us what we can become. Art is a path we draw out into the future, a path to perfection, a lesson, a warning, a command, a calling. For me, it was never enough to simply buy an artwork. I've always sought to build a relationship with artists, people who have always transmitted the pleasure of creation and, at the same time, the need for perfection. And though it might strike you as strange, artists – especially artists and sculptors – have taught me to look at the world with ingenuousness, with surprising simplicity. Through them I've seen things that otherwise I wouldn't have noticed; things that others don't see or ideas others don't understand. For example, take a look at these...

This is Pietro Cascella's¹ large sculpture-piazza *Campi di grano* (Fields of Wheat). It pays homage not only to my grandparents, my parents and everyone who has worked at Barilla, but to water, earth, wheat and sunlight. I met Cascella in 1972 and his work had a profound effect on me. I could see a meeting of earth and sky – in other words, life itself – in lots of his artworks. But I started thinking about this artwork right after I'd sold Barilla! I could only buy a few sculptures for the house in Fraore from him, like *Aurora*. I had to wait quite a few years before I could realize my dream. This is a large artwork that moves me every time I see it. A field of wheat is pregnant nature, soil that has been transformed by man. I commissioned it in 1979 when I returned to Barilla, because I wanted to celebrate our company's 100th anniversary. 100 years! Impressive, no? In reality the 100th anniversary had come and gone in 1977, but Grace didn't pay much attention to it. Finally I was back where I belonged, where I could continue the work started by my grandfather and father before me. I was truly proud and thankful, and I decided that in order to celebrate this moment the way it deserved, a simple party wouldn't be enough. Parties are ephemeral,

and memories of them melt away with time. People who couldn't attend are excluded from the experience forever. But a work of art is immortal, and lets everyone participate in it precisely because it is constantly being renewed. I consider Cascella's monument a sort of altar, a sanctuary...

– It *is* a sanctuary: an enormous foundation in travertine upon which large blocks representing wheat rest; sculptures as large and imposing as sun gods, men and machines...

Yes, it's a sanctuary dedicated to hard work and recognition, created to commemorate one hundred years of work, to say thanks to men and women: to those who are no longer with us, and those who continue to work here today. There are lots of ways to say thanks: with prayer, through daily acts aimed to benefit the common good. This is another way of saying thanks, this monument that will remain here forever and bear witness to recognition, to a humble thanks. It's a way of keeping the difficulties, miseries, sweat and tears of two generations from being forgotten...

Here's another sculpture I care about deeply, Mario Ceroli's horse...

– It's marvelous...

As you know, Ceroli worked with wood. He made the form in wood and then used that to create the mold for the bronze cast...

– Why did you commission this horse? What does it represent?

It's a reminder of and homage to Barilla's horses, the animals that brought our carriages full of flour and pasta to their destinations:

white, imposing, beautiful and always perfectly brushed, the way my father wanted. It also pays homage to the company's first generation, the people who built up the company through sweat and hard work. Ceroli also created the large wood sculptures that appear in the stage sets for the commercials starring Mina.

Here are two artworks by Arnaldo Pomodoro: a gyroscopic disc that moves when the wind blows and suggests the sun; and a cube that echoes themes like machinery and technology.

Now look out towards the horizon: you can see the main management office building, all white and sticking out among the dark green leaves of those trees. I put a sculpture by Giuliano Vangi⁻² right in the entryway of that building, a man and a woman running together towards the future. I've always loved that artwork dearly, and I continue to appreciate it today because it expresses the love between a man and a woman, with all the optimism, vitality and desire possible. Feelings I feel are intimately my own. I commissioned that artwork from him, and even suggested the title, *Il nodo* (The knot)⁻³.

Come on, let's go inside. You've already seen the atrium, haven't you?

– How could I miss it? You've put an extraordinary piece by Francesco Messina⁻⁴ – *La grande danzatrice* (The big dancer) – right in the center. There's also an impressive painting by Carlo Mattioli and a bas-relief by Pietro Consagra⁻⁵.

Yes, this way we welcome every visitor with beautiful, tasteful things. You know where I got that idea? When we went to visit Ciba in Basel, I noticed that rather than stick cold, banal furniture in the company entryway, they had installed an extraordinary painting by Picasso. That had a profound effect on me. I realized it was possible to create a different style, a different image; to change the way you express your company's excellence.

– Today you’ve got a large Picasso painting hanging in your office. Pietro, do you know what I think? The idea for transforming the entryway may have come from Ciba, but you managed to perceive it because you have your own, innate sense of taste...

Good taste is presumably a family tradition. When we’re done with this visit, we’ll stop by the historical archives, where you can find not only photographs of our stores and furnishings, but also some of the extraordinary original glass vases we used to use to store pasta.

– You’ve always handled the company’s image and advertising. When did you first start concentrating on art as well?

My passion for art didn’t develop until after the war, I’d say during the trip Alberti and I took to Hollywood. I was deeply struck by the importance and respect they gave to Italian cinema and art. But Parma’s cultural world became my guide. Cesare Zavattini was the editor in chief of the *Gazzetta di Parma*, while Attilio Bertolucci wrote for the paper and Pietrino Bianchi was the most famous film critic in northern Italy. In 1953 I thought it made sense to fund a convention on neorealism⁶ right here in Parma, and that’s where I met many of our film directors and became friends with Valerio Zurlini. In 1960 Zurlini shot his film *Girl with a Suitcase* right here in Parma, in Villa Tedeschi. It starred Claudia Cardinale, Gian Maria Volonté and Romolo Valli, all three of whom were my guests. Zurlini made me an active participant in his film, while was shooting various scenes, and I saw its gestation. Thanks to the close friendship we developed I was able to call on him to shoot the *caroselli* with Mina. Zurlini often came to Fraore as a guest, and loved figurative art as much as I did. In 1970 he had Mina appear between wood sculptures designed by Mario Ceroli; then with a

famous Magritte painting in the background; then before informal paintings by Titina Maselli⁻⁷.

– When did you start collecting paintings?

You're not going to believe it, but it all started with the magazine *Palatina*! In the second issue I was struck by a photo of a still life by Giorgio Morandi⁻⁸ that I found fascinating. So I went to Milan to buy the painting. Zurlini went with me to the gallery, Gino Ghirighelli's⁻⁹ Galleria del Milione.

– Did you meet Morandi?

Yes. He was a very profound and reserved person. I bought other paintings from him as well: two still lifes, two landscapes and his 1953 painting *Fiori*. But we didn't have a chance to become close friends because he died quite young, in 1964.

– Guttuso⁻¹⁰, on the other hand, you got to know quite well...

You're right. I met him for the first time in Parma in 1963, when he held an exhibition for the inauguration of the newly restored rooms in the Scuderie della Pilotta. We became friends, and he came a number of times to stay as a guest in Fraore. I also went to visit him in his studio in Velate, near Varese, as well as in Rome at his studio in Piazza del Grillo. I bought other paintings from him as well: his large work *Interno dello studio di Velate* (Inside the studio in Velate), which you can see hanging in that corridor over there; and *Il fumatore* (The smoker), which is hanging in my office. That was back before I sold Barilla.

– You're also a lover of sculpture...

The first time I visited the Galleria del Milione, together with Zurlini, I also bought a small sculpture by Giacomo Manzù⁻¹¹ entitled *Cardinale seduto* (Sitting Cardinal). It's in my house in Fraore. Later on I bought a number of other artworks by Manzù. I've always loved his extraordinary ability to capture and express different sentiments and ways of being in a truly intense manner: the fragility you can see in *Filemone e Bauci*, the strength in *San Giorgio*, the passion in *Gli amanti*, the desire in *Fauno e Ninfa*, the loneliness in *Il muro di Odissea*, the elegance in *Passo di danza*. I also asked him to create a large bronze sculpture to put on the side of property at Pedrignano that faces the highway. In 1968 he made a sketch for it entitled *Grandi pieghe* (Large folds). But then we sold Barilla and the new owners didn't do anything with it. Grace wasn't at all interested in these things. They considered them nostalgic Italian peculiarities.

– Was Ghiringhelli's gallery the only one you visited?

No, I also went to Mario Tazzoli's gallery Galatea in Turin, where I bought a Francis Bacon⁻¹² painting – *Two Americans* – in 1968. Have you ever seen it?

– Yes, but I have to tell you I find it disturbing.

I find it difficult to look at too. It had quite an effect on me. But over time I've learned to understand it more and more deeply. I've fallen in love with that painting...

– What did you do after you sold Barilla?

At the international art fair in Basel Marilena and I gave ourselves two extraordinary paintings as Christmas gifts: one by Magritte⁻¹³,

La belle captive; and another by Max Ernst⁻¹⁴, *Le Romantisme*. Magritte's painting shows a rural landscape with a painter's easel holding a canvas with a house and a peasant with a little horse-drawn cart. But the content of that painting could easily be a full landscape; all you have to do is extend the boundaries of the canvas. Later on I bought an artwork by the refined pre-Raphaelite painter Edward Burne-Jones⁻¹⁵: *Study for The Garland Weavers*, portraying a woman dressed in sky blue and moving away from the viewer.

– What about Italian artists?

I met Ennio Morlotti, who often came to visit at Fraore. He's an artist I learned to appreciate more and more with the passage of time. He's a non-figurative artist, a talented colorist. Then I bought four paintings by De Chirico⁻¹⁶, first two and then the others later on: the 1929 painting *Le consolateur*, which was part of an extraordinary collection put together by the great art merchant Léonce Rosenberg in Paris; the 1934 work *I bagni misteriosi*; *Chevaux sauvages*, a group that's always fascinated me, and *Ippolito con i compagni*, which is one of his most mysterious artworks. But I never met De Chirico personally. I saw him a few times at the Caffè Greco in Rome, but I never went over to talk to him. I have to admit that I was a little intimidated by his greatness.

– But you became friends with Mino Maccari⁻¹⁷...

Absolutely! I met him in Cinquale, in Versilia, where he had a studio. He was a multifaceted, complex individual: painter, journalist... He wrote for *Selvaggio*, and then for *Mondo*, producing vignettes and cutting commentary on Italy's political, cultural and social "fauna" of his day. But he was also the kind of man who could be very generous and considerate with simple people in need. We

used to get together in Versilia, often meeting at Caffè Roma together with people like Eugenio Montale, Attilio Bertolucci, Carmelo Bene and Ubaldo Bertoli. Maccari was a versatile man: simple, immediate and spontaneous. Everybody liked his paintings, and so I gave lots of them as gifts to friends, including one to Enzo Ferrari.

– That was a period during which you were traveling all the time...

Yes, and I made a number of purchases when I was abroad, too. In London I bought an artwork I mentioned earlier, *Femme sur un fauteuil*, from Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, who was Pablo Picasso's dealer. I also bought the 1962 work *Buste*, as well as Fernand Léger's⁻¹⁸ 1953 painting, *Des oiseaux dans les arbres*. And a small but extraordinary sculpture by Henry Moore⁻¹⁹, *Doppio ovale*, which we brought back to Parma by train from Paris!

– What did you do after you'd returned to Barilla?

Then I tried to do something major! I've already told you that during the 1960s, before I'd sold the company, I asked Manzù to prepare a sketch for a large sculpture to put alongside the highway where everyone could see it. For years that project was shelved because we realized that it would cost too much. But then I talked it over with Arnaldo Pomodoro, who came up with the idea to create a three hundred-meter-long wall that would include representations of all Barilla's different activities. He wrote a letter about it... I know I've got it here somewhere...

"I believe my proposal has something absolutely new from a visual point of view... This entirely new artwork, in addition to providing extraordinary artwork and advertising for

the factory and the public space of the road, would appear in every magazine. It would be a historical innovation for all of art history.”

Unfortunately we never managed to create it because, once again, the cost would have been too high. But I commissioned Pomodoro to create *Giroscopio*, which you can see here outside the office building, as well as another sculpture that I donated to the University of Parma for its engineering department in 1987. This totem that indicates Barilla, on the other hand, is by the designer Bob Noorda⁻²⁰.

– Which of your paintings is your favorite, the one that moves you the most?

Maybe Umberto Boccioni’s⁻²¹ *Il romanzo di una cucitrice*, which I’ve hung in my office. I also have a penciled preparatory sketch by the same artist: *Testa di donna*. But that painting stirs deep emotions in me; the sense of mystery that emerges from the pages of the book, the feeling of suspended time that filters together with the light from the windows thrown open to the day... The incredible thing is that when it was first shown to the public, critics didn’t understand it. But I was immediately, powerfully struck by it. Gianni Agnelli and I fought each other to buy it...

– Do you remember any other memorable purchases?

I was able to buy Arnold Böcklin’s⁻²² *Prometheus*. By this point I was oriented on creating a true collection, but also to create a special exhibition. I still needed a few works by artists I was literally fascinated by, like Alberto Savinio⁻²³. Eventually I bought his *L’ira di Achille*, *Le départ de la colombe* and *Fruits et orage*.

I also bought an intense drawing, *Divinité*, which Max Ernst made of the larger painting, already part of the Peggy Guggenheim collection in Venice. At that point I already owned Ernst's painting *Romantisme*.

– You also harbor a deep appreciation of Marino Marini²⁴, and one of his horses can still be seen here in the entryway to Barilla's offices...

Marini has always inspired deep feelings and tenderness in me. I've read critiques of his work that suggest he wanted to represent the anti-hero. It's a little like Cervantes, except here the antihero is not just the knight, but the horse as well. To me, it seems more like a symbolic representation of reality. Over time I bought four of his works. In the first sculpture in 1945 the knight and the horse are riding along calmly; in the second they're rigid, cold; in the third the horse is rearing up and about to throw the knight, whose arms are opened wide; in the last work the knight has been thrown from his saddle. Every once in a while I liked to embrace the knight who is opening his arms, as if I could somehow help him.

– You also have quite a few artworks by Carlo Mattioli...

Even though Mattioli was born in Cremona, he grew up in Parma, and we'd known each other since we were little boys. He didn't have a gallery to sell his works. Every once in a while I'd go visit him in his studio in the city center, next to the Duomo, where I'd choose a few artworks I liked. We also got together in Versilia. Two of his paintings make clear references to Versilia: the first is *Estate in Versilia*; and the second is *Aigues mortes*, which portrays an intense, compact carpet of seaweed and herbs.

But I'm realizing I've failed to mention a lot of other impor-

tant artworks, like Chagall's⁻²⁵ delicate violinist, or several of the paintings by De Pisis⁻²⁶...

– Pietro, you built up Barilla like a work of art...

Every time I had to build something – a house, a factory, an industrial complex like Pedrignano – I've always found myself facing the same choice: build an edifice to respond to the needs and resources of the moment, and therefore choose a cheap, modest, simple and Spartan building; or build a headquarters for what I dreamed of becoming, therefore something extremely modern, technologically avant-garde and artistically striking. Basically, it's a choice between the present and the future. Should I represent what we are today, or bet on an ideal image of what we'll become? I've always chosen the latter. In order to pull it off you have to believe in yourself, in your future possibilities, which represent not what you are, but what you would like to become. In this sense, art does not portray us as we are, but as we will become. It doesn't respond to today's needs, but to the needs of people who have yet to come...

XXI

BATTLES AND EXPANSION

– After pasta and Mulino Bianco, Barilla also grew through the acquisition of mills, facilities and other companies...

Our first acquisition was Voiello, a company we purchased at the beginning of the 1970s in order to have a renowned Neapolitan pasta brand that was well known and well distributed across southern Italy. But that was 1973, and I didn't sign the contract. Grace did. The following year they bought il Mulino in Altamura, in order to guarantee quality control over the production of raw ingredients for the entire line.

As you know, when I returned to Barilla I put a lot of energy behind pasta. We needed more production capacity, so in 1983 we bought the Foggia pasta factory, then the Matera pasta factory in 1986, and the Braibanti di Parma pasta factory in 1987, which had been founded even before Barilla, in 1870, and had excellent contacts with a number of clients overseas. I remember that I was outside Parma when the owner, Pier Luigi Pizzetti⁻¹, called me to tell me that he had an interesting and tempting offer from a foreign company. For me, the idea of allowing a competitor to set up shop in my own backyard was inconceivable. So I told Pizzetti, who

was also family friend, that I was interested in buying the company myself, and we concluded the operation over the phone in less than an hour. When you've known someone all your life, you can do things like that...

– Then you bought Pavesi...

In that case, more than a desire to expand the purchase was the result of a strategy designed to defend the market position we'd achieved for pasta and Mulino Bianco. At one point it appeared that an industrial group was taking shape that would be capable of attacking us on two fronts at once: Buitoni in pasta and Pavesi in the dessert sector.

– When did this happen?

In 1985, when IRI put SME⁻² up for sale. SME was a conglomerate owned by IRI, which was run by Romano Prodi at the time. He'd offered to sell the company back to the private sector. In 1985 I met with Prodi, who told me informally: "Do you know I'm thinking about selling SME?" I said, "Really? To whom?" "I don't know yet, but I'm thinking about it. Would you be interested?" Thinking about that giant jumble of companies I finally answered: "No, it's too big. Besides, I'm already busy with pasta and Mulino Bianco."

One evening a month and a half later I turned on the TV to see Romano Prodi announce at a press conference that he was selling SME for 500 billion lira to Buitoni, which Carlo De Benedetti had bought just a few months earlier. You have to remember that Buitoni had always been our most dangerous competitor in the pasta sector, in part because it had excellent distribution overseas.

For us, this was a truly dangerous development, because by mixing pasta on one hand and baked goods from Pavesi, Motta

and Alemagna on the other the De Benedetti group could now offer consumers a combination identical to the one we'd set up with Barilla and Mulino Bianco. They could fight our leadership position as equals.

I'd never have thought that Prodi would sell that group to our direct competitor. It's true that he offered me the entire SME group and that I'd turned him down, but I had no idea he was going to offer it to the head of Buitoni! Nor at such a cheap price!

Everybody in Italy knew that Barilla and Buitoni were close competitors, as were Mulino Bianco and Pavesi. That's why I had to act. As I mentioned before, I didn't move to expand, but simply to defend our position. Taken together, Buitoni and Pavesi were a dangerous threat. We put together a group of food companies and bid a higher purchase price. At a certain point the threat from Buitoni was diminished when the government got involved, knocking down the agreement between IRI and De Benedetti. But after that the companies involved got into a series of complex legal actions that dragged on for years before they finally...

– Please! Spare me the details! This is a biography, not a treatise on labor laws... I'd rather you told me why, then, you turned around several years later and bought Pavesi separately?

Because once that problem was resolved, another one cropped up. During that same period Danone, an international colossus that included Saiwa, a longstanding cookie company that was first founded in Genoa in 1900, and Pasta Agnesi, founded by the Agnesi family in the 1820s in Pontedassio, in Liguria. If Danone managed to buy Pavesi, then put it together with Saiwa, they would create a dessert company that could compete with Mulino Bianco. And if Pasta Agnesi were adequately relaunched, it could threaten our position in pasta. At this point I decided to buy up Pavesi, paying almost

400 billion lira – an enormous amount of money, even more than its sales, which back then amounted to around 250 billion lira. By doing so I was able to defuse another threat to Barilla. After that, the president of Danone decided to abandon the pasta market because he realized that a big Italian company like Barilla had more credit with consumers overseas. This let Barilla and Mulino Bianco remain market leaders, both in pasta and in desserts.

You also have to bear in mind what Pavesi was like: it had unique products, like the Pavesini and Ringo cookies, the result of brilliant thinking by Mario Pavesi⁻³. There was no competition in the market for those products. It also had Gran Pavesi, the number one selling crackers in Italy. Even though the company's founder had been retired for some time, the company still had interesting potential. And it integrated perfectly with our group, becoming a source of no small satisfaction for us.

– What about Tre Marie?

The talks took place between 1987 and 1988. It was a really interesting company. It made products that we liked a lot, and the owner – Enzo Ricci – was a friend of Signor Manfredi's, who set up our first meeting. Barilla's interests were handled by Andrea Alodi, who during those years ran Mulino Bianco, and who had identified interesting potential for expansion in the Tre Marie product line, one coherent with our business. After Manfredi broke the ice, I met Enzo Ricci personally, and he immediately made an excellent impression⁻⁴. He was a brilliant entrepreneur, somebody capable of transforming a longstanding and artisanal brand into a modern industrial food company. In just a few years he had built up a beautiful brand name, with high quality, innovative products. He was the first one to distribute frozen brioches to cafés, lending continuity to an area of production that had only been seasonal up un-

til that point. Waiters could heat them up at the counter in a special oven and serve them hot and steaming directly to their clientele. It was an enormous success. Tre Marie also made the best *panettone* in Italy. I'd already been a client for some time. On Christmas Eve in our house I usually opened up a four-kilo *panettone* and sliced it up myself! When I found out that Ricci was willing to sell the company, we immediately settled on a sale price and management solutions that satisfied us both enormously. From that moment forward Tre Marie has been part of the Barilla group, and it has grown quickly, becoming a huge satisfaction from every point of view, even economically, since it paid for itself in just three years. As part of our agreement, Enzo Ricci stayed in the company and remained a loyal collaborator for a while longer. Once he retired, I made Luca president of the company, and he has run it intelligently for a number of years now.

– You were also close to buying the Panem brand...

I'd always been nostalgic for days when we still produced bread, before we abandoned it after the end of World War Two. My dream was to produce bread that stayed fresh and fragrant for a long time. We'd come close to perfection with the bread we made for Mulino Bianco. The 1989 purchase of the Panem brand, which had a number of production facilities including one in Muggiò, just outside Milan, as well as the Buralli brand with bakeries in Altopascio, in the Lucca province, was made with this in mind, though connected with the development of a large distribution network, which at that point in time demanded enormous quantities of bread, since the tendency for people to freeze bread at home meant that people could buy bread once a week and keep it fresh.

There was a simple reason the operation didn't succeed: after we closed the bread factory in 1952, Barilla had restructured from

a strategic and organizational point of view specifically for products with a long shelf life (several weeks for oven-baked products and years for pasta). The company was no longer equipped to products with exactly the opposite characteristics.

So after trying for a few years to improve our management of these products, in 1999 Barilla sold Panem to Tre Marie – still controlled by our family – which was far more competent in this field. After reorganizing the company and making its first profits, Tre Marie sold Panem to an investment fund in September 2003.

XXII

THE BIG BUILDER

– You have built a great deal...

Yes, starting in the postwar period, when we renovated our facilities in Viale Veneto. My brother Gianni and Signor Manfredi were really the ones who oversaw that, although I was the one who kept saying that we'd ignored it for too long and let the facility grow old. You can't conquer the market if you don't have the right tools to produce! The first and second floors of the older facility were made of wood, and all production took place on the ground floor. In 1953 we started designing new automatic equipment and, in order to set it up, we had to radically restructure. We removed all the wood parquet and installed reinforced concrete flooring that could support all the packaging machines on the first floor, and all the production machines (including heavy presses and pasta-drying machines) on the second floor.

– Why did you put the heaviest machines on the second floor?

Because back then development was vertical, from high to low, the way it was in factories in the 1800s, and gravity pulled the prod-

uct downwards along slides that ran from one floor to the next. We didn't start horizontal organization of production lines along a single floor until we built the facility in Pedrignano, where we had all the space we needed. There we set up production lines, then packaging and finally the warehouse.

– What did you build next?

In 1964 we built a factory in Rubbiano di Solignano to produce *grissini*, Italian breadsticks. As I mentioned before, we had some small diversification, producing *grissini* and dried, sliced bread that we had previously bought in France. At a certain point we said: now that production has increased, in order to guarantee product quality we need to build our own factory.

– Then came Pedrignano...

That's right. Work started in February 1968, when we began digging the foundation, then building the facility itself. We finished in 1969 and the equipment was installed in 1970.

– It's an imposing building, an enchanted castle set up alongside the highway...

We wanted to build something extraordinary and unique in Pedrignano. At the time, it was the only factory of its kind without windows. The Austin Corporation built those ten-meter-tall windowless walls out of prefabricated modules. They give Pedrignano the feel of an impregnable castle, a fortress with all the sacredness of Fort Knox.

– Were there technical reasons for creating this kind of building?

Absolutely. You know that in order to properly dry pasta the relationship between humidity inside the building and outside becomes fundamental. Fixed humidity levels are one of the reasons you can keep cooking quality constant in the final product.

I wanted the facility built near the highway because I wanted everyone to see and admire it. It's truly an impressive monument, with an immense, 46-meter tower of silos, and that mill that my kids built, bringing a dream of my father's to life. Below lies the horizontal factory, running three hundred and forty meters long – that's the length of five jumbo jets set end to end! – which hosts eleven production lines, each of which is capable of producing 1,000 quintals of pasta per day. Then Grace took over, and I didn't return to deal with the facility until 1979. Then, inside the Pedrignano area, I immediately built a cookie factory and a large warehouse for finished products. Later, just a short distance from the office building, I had the architect Vico Magistretti²¹ design and build the management complex we're in right now. Last but not least, we needed a company restaurant. I wanted it to be surrounded by nature, with a room that could host five hundred people at a time. In order to reach the restaurant you had to walk across a large lawn where the fountain Pietro Cascella created was set. This turned Pedrignano into a city: Pasta City.

– In the meantime, Grace had acquired Voiello.

In reality, we were in talks with Voiello before we sold Barilla. We had purchased a marvelous property in Caserta, a long stretch of which ran alongside the “sun” highway, relying in part on government funding for improvements in southern Italy. I know that Barilla later bought the Voiello pasta factory in Torre Annunziata, but that facility was old and inadequate, so in the end we moved production to Caserta. In 1973 we purchased the SAEF (Società Am-

ato e Filippone) facility and renovated it so that we could produce several of the special Voiello formats there, turning it into one of the most important and modern pasta factories in southern Italy.

– Now I need to tell you something. I spoke at length with Andrea Allodi, who told me something about you that no one else has ever mentioned. Do you mind if I read his quote to you?

Go right ahead...

– Allodi said,

“Pietro Barilla’s specific skills, his genius, lay in the way in which he conceived of machinery. He was convinced that production lines should run uninterrupted, that they should have an ‘endless life.’ He believed that the flow should never move backwards, that there should never be any corners because these led to breaks or inequalities in the product. It was an idea that he couldn’t fully follow through on until we built the snack factory in Melfi. There the lines are all straight. The facility is four hundred meters long, like a car factory, and employees need bicycles to move around inside. The Melfi factory is the only factory in the world to produce snacks this way. You should also bear in mind that Signor Pietro believed you could never build one production line identical to the one before it. Whenever you needed new production facilities, they had to be more advanced and powerful than previous ones. In Melfi we’d already created a production line that was double the largest line we had in Rubbiano, and that line was already three times larger than the biggest one Buitoni had. But the line that Pietro wanted for Melfi was twice as large again, and had to

start from a continuous-cycle dough mixer that could function nonstop. It took months of designing and planning before we could create it, but in the end they built it the way he wanted. Today Melfi is the most completely automatized facility of its kind in the world; there's nothing else like it! When the people from American Bakery came to visit – and Signor Pietro wasn't happy about hosting them, because he said they'd take photographs and copy him – they were absolutely amazed.”

Well, Allodi's right. But there's a deep-seated reason for making such long production lines. In Pedrignano, the drying units are all there together with the mixing and kneading machines and the presses. But once the product comes out of the dryers, the lines that move the pasta run inverted for a spell for space and layout reasons. In other words, they run backwards. That's where product loss and damage occurs, because there's an interruption or change in the automatized flow.

– Now let's talk about those “endless life” production lines that Allodi was referring to...

At Melfi, I wanted to avoid creating a divide between the mixer and the over. Think about the way production develops for a moment: different types of flour come down from the silos, are mixed together and wind up in large tubs with mobile arms that mix the dough. Then that mix is lifted up, divided, shaped and brought along the cooking line. But after the mixer there's an interruption in the flow. That's what I wanted to avoid. I believed – an idea I'd developed from the world of bran dough – that the mix had to have an “endless life,” inside a large cylinder that functioned like a mixer. So I called in Werner & Pfleiderer, the company that had

built the continuous ovens we imported to Parma in 1910. Before those ovens, first the bread was put in to bake, then taken out on a paddle. But in the automatic oven the loaves went in one side and came out the other already baked. I asked them to create this rotating, endless life machine and we argued over it for the next year and a half! I talked to the owners, I insisted... They told me it was impossible, but then they built it. They built it! And it's true: everybody was amazed!

– My compliments! Then allow me to quote Allodi once again, who said:

“More than anything else, Signor Pietro concentrated on simplicity and automatization. Automatization was born of two needs. First, he was convinced that labor costs would always rise. But the second reason was equally important. He couldn't bear the idea of recreating the kind of sheer human fatigue he'd seen as a kid where his mother worked, where the employees came out of the dryers drenched in sweat, or the kind he'd witnessed in Russia. He didn't want that to happen anymore. He wanted the people in his factory to be able to work calmly and serenely, in a comfortable environment. That's why he loved technology. I guess you could say that he could 'feel' the machinery...”

It's true that I couldn't stand human suffering. And as far as technology was concerned, I had understood right from an early age, first in Germany and then in America, that technology was the key to progress. I went into the factory to look at the production lines, to look at the materials because I was always convinced that the product was born of metal, of technology and perfection, and I never stopped telling my management that if so much as one sin-

gle screw was off in a machine, the product would suffer. And if that screw wasn't fixed or substituted, it would set a terrible example for our workers and employees. It would worsen the whole. If you want something to be perfect, you have to make everything perfect...

– You've pointed out two criteria that have always governed your entrepreneurial decision-making process, and which you've always wanted people to respect. You haven't listed them in order of importance, but merely as they've emerged from your conversations. One is continuous technical progress, automatization; the other is closely connected to it, and that's worker well-being and safety. Are there any others?

They're not easy to sum up. I'd say that a third criteria is to always aim for the highest level of quality possible, to always look for the best and always hire the number one candidate. For pasta advertising I chose Mina, then Gavino Sanna, who created the slogan "Where there's Barilla, there's home." I selected the Austin Corporation for the facility in Pedrignano. I wanted long lines in Melfi, and since Baker & Perkins couldn't do it, I went straight to number one: Werner & Pfleiderer. We always selected the best raw ingredients available for our products, then used the most modern, safest technologies to prepare and cook them. We did this even though we knew full well it would cost us a lot more.

– Anything else?

A fourth principle was the conviction that we should always buy big spaces so that we wouldn't be strangled when we needed to grow. Here in Pedrignano we bought 1.2 million square meters, compared to the 70,000 we had in Viale Veneto. We guaranteed our

future. But even when we built the first Mulino Bianco factory in Ascoli Piceno we bought a 100,000 square meter plot. You have to bear in mind that the covered facility only measured 16,000 square meters, including all the parking garages and truck routes. But I put everything on hold for two whole months so that I could buy more land, for a total of 300,000 square meters. The same was true in Melfi, Cremona, Mantua...

– Is there a fifth criteria?

Yes. Make peace with everyone. Once I returned to the company I reconciled with my wife and all the people with whom I'd had arguments...

– Yes, I've heard about this point. I spoke with Bernardo Caprotti⁻² at Esselunga. You know him well. I'll tell you what he told me: "I met Pietro Barilla when I was still a young kid, before the war, and I'd always respected him and we'd always been friends. Then, in 1982, Esselunga and Barilla got into fight over pricing. We had a policy of low prices, and when we lowered prices Barilla would suspend its orders. So in January 1984, we put all our Barilla products on sale and printed up ads that said, 'Barilla wants us to sell at a higher price, so we're selling off everything by Barilla.' The result was a separation that lasted five years. But it was a battle between two companies; Pietro and I remained friends. He came to visit lots of times, sometimes with Indro Montanelli. We had a number of meals together. Unfortunately in 1986, at the Cibus event in Parma, Pietro made an unacceptable statement and our conflict turned personal. The situation wasn't resolved until Achille Maramotti came over to me and said, 'Bernardo I have to ask you a favor. Last night I was in Bolo-

gna, there was a luncheon for the Cavalieri del Lavoro, and after lunch Pietro Barilla pulled me aside and right there underneath the porticoes (you know that Bologna has these marvelous porticoes) he said to me: 'You have to help me make peace with Bernardo. I have to have my abdominal aorta operated on and I don't want to go through with the operation until I've made peace with the world. The only two people I'm still fighting with are Bernardo and my brother, and you have to help me make peace with Bernardo. Call him. Ask him to have me as a guest. I want to go visit him.' So I'm asking you, Bernardo, will you meet with him?' I was deeply struck by this, and I told him I would go myself to meet with Pietro in Parma. He was the one who was sick. He was older than I was. So I called up Pietro, I got in my car and I went to his house. We spent an hour together: we talked and hugged and made peace. Afterwards he went into the operating room calmly, his mind at rest."

Let's see if we can turn this into a manual, a Decalogue! What could be a sixth principle?

Always look to the future. Anticipate the future. That's why, since I believed there would be growth in the market, I always insisted on making my equipment bigger than what they were offering.

– Seventh?

With production, there's always something you can improve. Take the dried, sliced bread products for example. Our factory in Melfi was the most advanced there was. The bread slices moved around on a sort of grill, not a sheet like you'd use for cookies, but a metal grill that heated up. On the outside edges of the grill there was a metal border, which took more metal to make, and so it got hot-

ter than the rest of the grill and burnt the bread. We needed to solve this problem. We managed to do so by using different metals that had different thermal conduction properties so that heat levels were equal across the grill.

– Eighth?

Create new, tasty products that are better than the ones you already have. The most significant example is bread. We made *pancarré*, or sliced bread, which is a typical English and American production. But I felt it wasn't good enough, but I didn't say so very loudly because we didn't have anything else. It was an extremely important product for the service it supplied, because you could put it in the refrigerator, then take it out and toast it. You couldn't simply re-heat it, because it emitted a faint alcohol smell due to the alcohol we put into it in order to guarantee its long shelf life. But I dreamed of making a different kind of bread. We worked so hard on that! We struggled with it for two and a half years together with an extremely talented Swiss expert who had studied flour ventilation. The problem lay in bread decay, something called "staling": when bread has a certain degree of humidity, over time it either gets moldy or turns dry and stale. With the help of our researchers we solved the problem! Barilla's great innovation was to move from *pancarré* to a kind of industrial bread that is always fresh, soft and exquisite, yet lasts for a month. I have to admit that I was incredibly happy for this success, because it brought me back to my roots, to the time when we made enormous efforts to make bread. It highlighted all the incredible progress we'd experienced back then, and which at a certain point we had to abandon...

– Ninth?

Choose your collaborators carefully. Create a community of people who understand one another and work together for the common good.

– Tenth?

Beauty is contagious, and produces other beautiful things. Goodness and beauty are, as the ancient Greeks believed, two faces of the same coin. Goodness, beauty and well being, I might add...

– We did it. We've created a Decalogue.



XXIII

THE BENEFATOR

– You’ve always been a generous benefactor... I know it’s something you’ve always avoided talking about...

I’ll confess that this subject makes me feel very embarrassed, and I’d like to ask you to move on to something else. There are some things – intimate and reserved – that have value only as long as they remain out of sight.

– You’re right, but this is a biography of a person, and we can’t keep such essential details hidden from sight...

Oh alright. I promised you I’d do this, that I’d tell you about my life and my work and so I guess I can’t refuse. I’ll start by saying that in this area of life, both my father and I were enormously influenced by two individuals, both of whom possessed extraordinary moral character and expressed it through concrete actions: father Lino Maupas and father Paolino Beltrame. They are two important, significant figures in the history of Parma.

Father Lino was a Franciscan priest I knew when I was just a child. Father Paolino Beltrame, on the other hand, was in Parma

from 1935 to 1967. Father Lino⁻¹ came to visit the Barilla factory all the time in order to gather bread, pasta and jobs for people he was trying to help. I can guarantee that he took care of lots and lots of poor and sick people with a devotion that was heartrending. Our family, which has always been part and parcel with the company, has always been deeply religious, rooted in our city and our land, connected with the people of Parma. My grandfather, father and mother all came from humble origins; they were common folk and shared a life of suffering and hard work along with everyone else. My father Riccardo was very close to father Lino, and knew what he did for the poor, for prisoners, at the reformatory and wherever else there was misery and pain. I'll even go so far to say that he shared in the father's charity work, and contributed a great deal.

– When did father Lino die?

He died on May 14th in 1924, right in the entryway to our factory. I was eleven years old. There's still a marble plaque there commemorating the event. My father did everything he could to honor him. He paid for an extravagant funeral, even though that wasn't in observance of Franciscan tradition. The entire city came to pay their respects to the priest who helped so many people, and they immediately called for him to be declared a saint. Even the bronze statue of father Lino that stands in the cemetery was paid for largely by my father. He called in the sculptor Guglielmo Cacciani⁻² and provided him with a room in the factory where Cacciani could prepare the statue. It is very lifelike, portraying father Lino as he walking through the streets of Parma.

– What was father Lino like as a person?

He wasn't a preacher; he was a man of action. His love of God made him totally devoted to others, a hero of charity. He didn't bandy his deep religiousness about, but expressed it through actions.

– He clearly made an impression on you...

Yes, thanks to my father. As I said before, my dad was devoted to father Lino. When I left for World War Two my dad gave me a "little saint" card of father Lino that I kept in my wallet.

– What can you tell me about father Paolino Beltrame?

Father Paolino Beltrame Quattrocchi was an extremely cultured Benedictine monk, capable of drawing crowds with his energetic speeches. He was also a man of action, and an extraordinary organizer. He was the perfect expression of Saint Benedict's rules: *ora et labora*. There's even a book about his life – *L'avventuriero di Dio* (God's Adventurer) – I'll see that you get a copy. Father Paolino stayed in Parma, in the San Giovanni monastery, for thirty-four years, from 1928 to 1962. So I spent a lot of time with him. After September 8th 1943 he joined the partigiani's freedom fighting, conducting important missions for the partigiani and the Allies. During those years the Benedictines saved a lot of Jews and other refugees, hiding them in the convent. Later, he was given a silver medal. But his true character emerged most strongly in 1945, after the Liberation. Italy was a destroyed country, with all its war wounds still open and ravaged, all the prisoners returning from concentration camps, lots of orphans, sick, desperate and lost people. The Bishop of Parma charged father Paolino with organizing all the city's charity work. "From that moment forward," runs a passage in the book about his life, "every poor person was his responsibility, every hunger his hunger, every injustice done to an unfortunate was an injus-

tice against him.”⁻³ He organized base camps to welcome veterans back home and put them in touch with their families. He opened and ran a food kitchen for the Pontificia Opera di Assistenza. Starting in 1946 he founded seaside and mountain retreats for orphans and poor kids, and an institute to cure children with tuberculosis that later became the big Misurina hospital for infant respiratory illnesses. Then he created dozens of social centers in the Appenines and the Bassa region (including thirty-three in 1954 alone!). He was a volcano... Finally, in 1967, he retired to hermitage in the Trappa delle Frattocchie in Rome.

– I’m sure you helped him...

Yes, I tried to help him conduct his work.

– Pietro, maybe you’ve forgotten that father Paolino Beltrame wrote your children a letter about you that they gave me, with your permission⁻⁴. May I include it here?

Of course...

– Father Paolino writes:

“I can’t seem to remember when and how I first met Pietro Barilla, though I’m sure we already knew each other years before the war. We often saw each other together with his mother – Signora Virginia – and a group of friends on Sundays in San Giovanni, beneath my pulpit for midday mass. I also confessed him on more than one occasion, along with other friends of his, when there were important religious days. But this was all simple familiarity: he knew I was father Paolino and I knew he was Pietro Barilla. Our familiar-

ity began to turn into friendship – a friendship that would grow stronger as the years went by – towards the end of the war, and especially right after the war was over. I remember quite clearly that between August and September of 1944 his father Riccardo Barilla was taken hostage by the partigiani. I had been involved with the resistance command for some time, and was in direct contact with General Cadorna. At the time I was in Maggiore hospital in Parma. Pietro knew about my ‘dangerous friends,’ and came directly to me to ask me to see if I could do something to free his father. After that we began spending time together, though cautiously, while I managed to become the chaplain for prisoners. That was how – during those tragic days of reprisals and purging – one morning I ran into a little group of ‘star’ prisoners in a hallway in San Francesco prison, all of whom had been arrested on accusations of collaborating with the enemy.

I vouched for them and they were freed within a few days. This event marked the start of a true friendship. With Pietro, this friendship – always very reserved – had characteristics of brotherly esteem and solidarity. By unwritten and unspoken agreement, each of us gave to or asked of the other without reserve.

I – just Paolino, no ‘don’ – became one of his trusted confidantes for years, a person he could turn to for a vast range of ethical, religious, social and familial issues. I never stepped beyond my boundaries as priest, a fact he deeply appreciated. Whenever I met with Pietro – just Pietro, no ‘signor’ – we always found something to think about and discuss, and though we approached things from different points of view, we always respected one another’s opinions, and shared a desire to understand, through calm and mo-

tivated dialogue, one another's points of view. He always listened to me thoughts with interest, and almost always heard what I had to say and translated it into action.

Therefore, years later, he asked me to bless his marriage, and to baptize each of his children.

In the meantime, already during the months following the Liberation, I had begun my whirlwind of postwar activities. This was precisely the area where – though with the most discreet and, I would go so far as to say, modest reserve – Pietro stood by my side. He remained behind the scenes for years and years, not only providing prudent advice given his extensive managerial experience, but even more so providing enormous financial support for almost all of my activities. He was always, almost instinctively faithful to the Biblical saying that you must 'not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing...'

It seems like a violation of his need for 'modesty' in his amicable and significant contributions if I so much as tried (though certain I wouldn't have succeeded!) to make even an approximate list of the financial assistance he dedicated to my initiatives almost every time we saw one another. He contributed to practically everything I did: from assisting war veterans returning from Germany to refugees from different parts of Italy; from my first summer camps at the Preventorio di Misurina, to the poor struck by flooding or those suffering from polio, the school for social services, ex-prisoners... He was always, silently by my side, adding the robust weight of his generous donations.

I'd like to merely mention one among many episodes involving Pietro. I believe it is emblematic. One day we met by chance on the street near the courthouse. He was returning from the orphanage – a place that was dear to his heart –

and he spoke with me for a little while, betraying all the deep emotions that were stirred in him when he came into contact with those children. At a certain point he stopped, evidently following some inner thought, and without any explanation, reached as he always did into his jacket pocket to pull out his checkbook. He took out a check and handed it to me after having filled it out with a number followed by three zeroes, just as he always did. I was moved and thanked him deeply, but he interrupted me: 'No, Paolino, don't thank me. In reality, I'm the one who has to thank you, because you give me a chance to do real, lasting good. You know about real needs, real suffering, that I don't know about and couldn't reach without your help. This is a source of true joy for me. You see? I've got everything I need, and I enjoy having the chance to add this rare satisfaction as well. It's priceless to me: the act of giving, giving for giving's sake, where I know it's needed, without expecting anything in return, not even thanks! And I've still got a lot to give!'"

Well, like I said before, father Paolino was an extraordinary man who did extraordinary things, and I was happy to have a chance to do things through him.

– You truly loved your hometown...

Yes, and my hometown loved me. I received a great deal from Parma...

– Would you mind if, with the help of your assistant Albino Ganapini, I reconstruct a few of your charity works? For example, we could start with the facility you built for the University of Parma's engineering department...

You know I've always believe that the engine driving progress is the union of technology and work, and I've always felt that technology is a way of freeing a laborer from hard work, from exhaustion and illness. I've said it before: I can still remember the sweat pouring off our workers when they came out of the big pasta dryers during the 1930s and 1940s, and how during the winter they were often the victims of pleurisy and pneumonia. That's why I decided to give the University of Parma a new building for its engineering facility. Why? Because I wanted for Parma to become a place where people continued developing scientific and technological progress that might reduce hard labor for mankind. I said as much in the speech I gave following the chancellor Giuseppe Pelosio's thanks. I said that I found the sacrifices of the generations who came before us in the first half of the 1900s impossible to forget: their struggles, their exhaustion and discomfort. I went on to add that the future is fascinating, the new technologies would continue to free mankind from fatigue and discomfort, making ulterior innovation and development possible as long as mankind figures out how to dominate them and protect himself and the environment through clear moral rules. That's it.

– I'm afraid I have to apologize again. I knew you wouldn't talk about it, so I did a little digging around and Albino Ganapini sent me a letter describing a few episodes that struck him deeply.

Let me see... Of course some of these occasions I remember clearly, like the first one he mentions. I often traveled to Rubbiano di Solignano on Saturday mornings: it was one of my favorite factories because of its high degree of automatization and productivity. I liked to stop by and talk to employees. We had an extremely capable technician there, a person who was very loyal to the

company, and who oversaw our automatization systems. After he showed me a few of the technical solutions he'd put into place I asked him about his family, where he lived. He told me they were renting a house, and wanted to buy, but didn't have enough money yet. So right there on the spur of the moment I said: "I'll give you the rest."

– Goodness gracious!

Don't go thinking I gave money to everybody who asked me for it (and that man hadn't even asked). I just knew that he deserved it...

– Of course, but I've heard quite a few stories like that one. One was about your head of training for sales, a person who was deeply connected with the company, then there was another about Allodi. He must have told me his story at least three separate times: "I saw a house I really liked, then Signor Pietro came to look at it and said, 'We're going to get it, we're going to get it! I'll help you!' And so we did." Did you have a lot of money available in your personal accounts?

Yes, especially starting halfway through the 1980s. Without touching a penny of the company's funds, after paying off amortizations and taxes, I still had extremely high personal earnings. I spent my money first and foremost for my family, my house, the artwork I left to my kids or hung in Barilla's offices, then for friends who deserved it and for the poor.

– And nothing else?

You mean in yachts or villas in exclusive places? Racehorses or high-stakes casinos? I've never been interested in those things. I

spent my money on things I liked, things I felt were useful or important. Therefore, partly in charity. In addition to the money I gave to father Paolino, I made donators to the sisters at Buon Pastore, to works dedicated to father Lino, to don Valentini's⁵ Comunità di Betania and don Picchi's center for drug addicts⁶. I donated money to the bishop, to the Pezzani theater that don Dagnino⁷ built for young people, and the windows of Sant'Andrea church that my friend Carlo Mattioli painted. Is that enough?

– You also financed the restoration of Tocanini's studio in the music conservatory in Parma, as well as the headquarters of Famija Pramzana. You donated an Arnaldo Pomodoro sculpture to the engineering department of the University of Parma, and gave Parma itself a big, marvelous artwork by Pietro Cascella that's been put at the start of Via Emilia, where anyone arriving from Milan can see it. What gave you the idea to do all these things?

Often, in the mornings, my driver would drop me off at the hospital so that I could take a long walk on foot. I'd stop to get a coffee in Bar Monica in piazzale Santa Croce. Lot's of people would say hello – “Buongiorno, Signor Pietro!” – but without any flattery or adulation. It's wonderful to feel at peace with your hometown... My boys have always felt at home in Parma too. Besides, I like piazzale Santa Croce. It's a symbolic place, because via Emilia starts there, at the outside limit of the residential area.

In 1987, for the festival of Sant'Ilario, the patron saint of Parma, the city decided to give me a special award for services that came with a gold medal. The mayor, Lauro Grossi⁸, came to visit me in Pedrignano and told me: “We're thinking about rebuilding piazzale Santa Croce, the first piazza in Parma for anyone who's coming in from Milan or Piacenza along the via Emilia. Those sad,

afflicted pine trees they planted during the 1960s close off any view of via D'Azeglio and the Mezzo bridge. You can't see the beautiful Paolotti towers anymore. We can move the gas station, improve the flow of traffic, but we need a nice monument to put in the middle." I listened to him carefully, thinking to myself: "We need a nice fountain, but not just any fountain..." While he was talking I mentally went down a checklist of the artists I knew. As soon as the mayor left, I said to Ganapini: "You know who could do it? My friend Pietro Cascella." I made a call to Fivizzano, then met with him and the project was a done deal. A few months later we went to visit the mayor with a model of the artwork that Cascella himself made of stone. It's a beautiful model; Ganapini got it back after this was all over and we installed it at the entrance to the company restaurant in Pedrignano. Cascella had created a "monument to Via Emilia," a welcome to everyone who comes to visit Parma, a sort of invitation to stop by and visit the city. For me, it was a way to commemorate and celebrate the point of departure from which all our carriages, then all our trucks, basically all our merchandise came and went over the years for Barilla. I'm sure you know that the factory in Viale Veneto looked out over Via Emilia: it's a major artery, along which all our activity flowed.

The idea of using white marble from Carrara to mirror the jets of water in the fountain appealed to me immediately. But we had to wait a few years, and through no fault of Cascella's; a year after he got the commission he'd already sent twenty-three truckloads of material to the municipality's warehouses. The problems were all inside the municipality, and all financial. I set things in motion personally, talking to the new mayor in 1992. I completed the donation and paid for the construction work myself. This way the city finally had a new monument. Go see what piazzale Santa Croce looks like today. It's a hymn to the human spirit!

– And in order to do all these things, even with your high salary, you always had enough money to cover the expense?

I'll admit that by the end of the year I rarely had anything left. Sometimes I even had to beg the forgiveness of people who asked for my help, telling them they would have to wait until January...

XXIV

OBSTACLES AND ERRORS

– We’ve talked about your wife, your kids, your collaborators, you friends, your artists and your successes, but we haven’t talked about your mistakes, your failures and your enemies. Have you ever had any enemies?

Enemies? Goodness gracious, no! At least, I don’t think so. But maybe there have been some people who hated me. Sometimes even your mere existence can bother someone else, or constitute a source of envy. But enemies? No. Adversaries, I might say. People who have gotten in my way or offended me. Even some people who betrayed me. But you hate an enemy, and I don’t think I’ve ever been capable of really hating someone.

– Tell me about the obstacles, then. The difficulties and things you’ve had to fight against...

Of course. There have been plenty of obstacles, fear, battles... Plenty of difficulties. Life includes lots of problems. It’s a continuous battle, no matter what your line of work is. And when you’re an entrepreneur, an innovator, whenever you have to forge a new path

you inevitably make mistakes. I'm an optimist, and I've always imagined there's a positive solution to even the most difficult problems. But there have been lots of times when I felt the weight of difficulties. When I was in Russia I suffered and witnessed suffering. There were times I got ready to die. And I was deeply upset when I was put in prison, not because I feared the worst, but because of the strong sense of injustice and the meanness I saw all around me. Then I had other difficult times because of my own health problems. I suffered a heart attack when I was still a young man, full of entrepreneurial energy, right when things were taking off.

– What about when you were still a little boy?

I don't know... Looking back on my life I can't really remember any unhappy moments, except perhaps my time in the Scolopi boarding school. All told, I had an easy childhood. But when I think about my family I can't help but think of the tough times my parents went through when I was a little boy. As I told you earlier, my uncle Gualtiero was an extremely intelligent and audacious individual. He and my father balanced one another out, the completed each other: Gualtiero was more impulsive and audacious, while my dad was more prudent. In order to develop the company they'd made investments and gone into debt. When Gualtiero died unexpectedly, my father's sisters got scared and wanted to sell everything. My father was against a sale. He believed that the company and its people could not be abandoned outright; that if we worked hard and dedicated ourselves to the company we would have a chance to pay our debts and move forward. But his sisters wouldn't hear of it, and even went so far as to take him to court.

My mom and dad decided to fight them. They took on enormous debt in order to buy out his sister's shares and liquidate their stock in the company.

Even though I was just a little kid, I understood that we had to face not only financial difficulties and enormous fatigue, but even hostility. I could see they were preoccupied, and I felt the same preoccupations: I can still remember the pain in my father's eyes, his fear for the company, for his employees and for his family, which was falling apart. After that operation things were incredibly hard for my parents for some time, because not only did they both have to work, every day of the week from early morning until late at night, they also had to put up with insinuations and slander behind their backs. But I never saw them give up. In fact, the more we moved forward, the more they got along in the workplace and the more determined they became. Maybe that's another reason why I've always put the company first and always been very close to my mother and father. I believe that period left me with experiences that would prove incredibly valuable years later: a lesson in having faith in your own abilities and in the future. There is a lot of fatigue and toil wrapped up in our family's history, but also a lot of courage. We've always been bolstered by our ideals: family, work, respect and solidarity.

But I'll always be bothered by the memory of my father falling very ill and the company in trouble because of the war.

– What about the period after the war, when everyone was striking?

Yes, that was a difficult time too. But I'd grown strong. I'd learned how to take on responsibilities in Russia. Furthermore, I was working in close contact with my brother, I felt and experienced a very strong sense of duty. You see, back then life was full of danger, but also full of enormous possibility. It all depended on the choices you made. If you made the right choices, then everyone benefited. If you made the wrong choices, then everyone suffered. When we

shut down bread production and found new jobs for all our employees, I knew we were doing the right thing, something useful. The people who went on strike were making a mistake. They didn't understand that there was enough work and a better future for everyone. Knowing this gave me strength and courage. I could look into the eyes of each and every one of our employees and make them understand that I knew how to act for the common good.

– Have any of your collaborators ever disappointed you?

I've been lucky: I've always found excellent collaborators; for example our directors of personnel like Barbuti or Minardi¹. But things haven't always run smoothly. For example I had a truly unpleasant experience during the 1950s that left a bitter taste in my mouth. A very close collaborator, a person who was also a close friend and someone I trusted completely, disappointed me enormously. He put me in a difficult spot, and in the end I had to fire him. For a number of years after that he continued to attack me, to drag my name through the mud and create problems for me.

I had another disappointment with Signorina Rivola, our secretary and the faithful confidante for the letters I sent back from the front. In 1946 she became a municipal tax assessor with the socialist party, and that marked the start of a separation that was painful to me, and perhaps to her as well. Fortunately during those years I had clear objectives in mind, and when you know what you want to do and realize that you can do it, you feel stronger; you can face down even the bitterest difficulties. The really difficult times in life, the most negative times, come when you're uncertain; when you don't know what to do, or when you realize you've made a mistake.

I went through a terrible period at the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s when I sold Barilla, when I gave in to dark emotions, when I made lots of mistakes and was surround-

ed by people who took advantage of those mistakes. I even had to endure some subtle attacks in the pages of newspapers, receiving anonymous, threatening letters, and constantly ask myself: “Why?”

– What has been your greatest pain?

My separation from Marilena, being left alone with the kids, uncertain about life and bitter about the loss of my company, during a period of political instability and violence, social struggles and kidnappings across Italy...

– But despite all this you always dreamed of buying back the company, even when everyone else told you it was impossible...

That goal, that dream gave me courage and strength. It made me tenacious. Some people say we shouldn’t nurture impossible dreams because they can disappoint us, because we can wind up frustrated. I disagree. I think that desire, a desire that’s deeply rooted in your soul, doesn’t weaken you: it makes you stronger. True dangers never come from desire, but from unhappiness and desperation. Doubt, uncertainty and unhappiness are temptations. As soon as you start crying for yourself, you stop wanting and doing.

– Looking back on your life, are there any mistakes you regret?

When you’re a professional, an entrepreneur, you’re always on the lookout for new paths, always starting new projects. Then you discover that things didn’t go the way you’d planned and you have to make corrections. Then the corrections aren’t enough and you have to make more, sometimes even start over on a completely different path. You have to have a strong desire to do things, to in-

vent something, as well as a strong ability to be critical and a healthy dose of tenacity. Sometimes the mistakes are bigger than others, because you've veered away from your real mission, wasting time and precious resources. Or you're too far ahead of the times and you're not ready. That's what happened with DieBa, which we talked about earlier. We were too far ahead of the curve on dieting, and we weren't able to correctly evaluate the times and responsibilities of the operation. We let ourselves be enchanted, get carried away, and we weren't critical enough. But at least we had the courage necessary to shut the company down quickly. We took our losses, but at least it didn't turn into a catastrophe.

– Can you tell me about an error you didn't manage to set right?

Fresh pasta. That's an area where I used the wrong strategy and I've never been able to fix it. Barilla started producing and selling fresh pasta before I returned to the company. Andrea Allodi was running the operation. They set up an extremely advanced project, fifteen years ahead of its time, putting fresh product in specially treated packaging and distributing it through the Mulino Bianco sales network. But the technology was still defective. Every once in a while the packaging would break, or something else would go wrong. In 1979 Allodi came to me and said: "Signor Pietro, the market is doing well. We're still small, but we have some very interesting opportunities for development. I'm here to ask you to invest in producing fresh pasta products in-house!" But I'd already seen that some of the packaging tended to break, while mold formed in others, and my drive to sell only the highest quality items made me afraid that I'd never be able to give people a perfect product. I was afraid I'd ruin Barilla's reputation. I got scared, and I turned him down. I said no. What a mistake! Halfway through the 1980s both

Carelli and I noticed that the fresh pasta market kept growing, so I asked Signor Giovanni Rana⁻² if he might be interested in selling. Rana is a wonderful human being. First he came to visit me in Parma, then we went to see him in Verona. However – and quite correctly – he didn't want to sell his company. So we decided to do things on our own and with our own ideas. We built a production line for fresh pasta in the old Barilla factory in Viale Veneto. It was a gem: all stainless steel, equipped with all the latest technology. When Barilla decided to do something there was no skimping! It cost us at least 40 billion lira or, since the lira was on its way out, 20.5 million euro. Unfortunately we made the mistake of applying the mentality we'd developed as producers of dry pasta to fresh pasta production. Better yet, we tried to compromise: a soft pasta that could be sold on the shelves alongside dry pasta. Allodi told me we were making a mistake: "No, no. Fresh pasta is a different product. You can't cook the filling because that will change the taste. Distribution has to go through somebody else; the product has to go on the shelves alongside fresh foods; the warehouses have to have different characteristics..." And he was right. We made a royal mess of the whole project... Fortunately the rest of our production was going well and we were able to absorb the losses. Luca is right when he says: "We lacked humility. We wanted to change the market with pasta created in a different way. We didn't realize that it didn't live up to people's expectations; that it wasn't what people wanted, and the market ignored us. We should have been more respectful of the market and copied what Rana was doing, trying to make a product that was better than his."

– What's the greatest obstacle you've ever had to overcome?

My health problems. I had a heart attack when I was just over fifty years old. That gives you a sense of danger, of insecurity. I gath-

ered strength anywhere I could, started taking care of myself, but I had another heart attack in 1981, right after I returned to Barilla and just as we had started our big expansion. Then, in 1987 I had to be operated on for a problem in an aorta. It was a complex operation, especially given that I had a weak heart. That was when I made peace with Bernardo Caprotti. But why do we have to talk so much about my illnesses?

– To do the job right. You’ve done a million things in your life, and one might be excused for thinking that you’ve never been sick, that you’ve always been in perfect health. But you accomplished all this despite having to deal with serious illness, thanks to your own vital energy and enormous sense of optimism. You even had to face serious problems with your eyesight...

Well, as long as you have faith in providence, as long as you have faith, then illnesses can’t stop you. Even when you can’t see very well, you can still accomplish lots of things. I used magnifying glasses, or I had other people read things out loud to me. It certainly wasn’t enough to stop me.

– No one has ever been able to stop you, I know. Let me share something your kids told me with you: “Our dad never complained. If he had a headache you knew he wasn’t feeling well, but he wouldn’t tell you about it. He didn’t want to drag other people down and, except in the cases when he needed specific medical help, he self-medicated and got better on his own. He’d cover up more and take his trusty aspirin. Our dad used aspirin to fight anything. And he used that word – ‘fight’ – because he couldn’t stand laying around in bed and being overwhelmed by an illness. He wanted to be the one doing the

overwhelming. Aspirin was his favorite remedy, and after he took one he'd come back and say: 'Here I am. I'm doing better. I'm defeating my illness.' He also had an extremely high threshold for pain. When he broke his leg skiing, or when he had his heart attacks, or the delicate operation on his aorta, or the extremely annoying cures he had to undergo for a tumor in his prostate, you would never once hear him complain. He never swore or sought sympathy. You can easily say that even in these difficult situations he had his own, powerful sense of dignity."

Those were not such serious problems. I always took the grave illnesses seriously. I was courageous, but not reckless, optimist but not foolish. I bet on providence but never threw my money away heedlessly. And I always tried to maintain my inner balance, my equilibrium. You know, having a clear conscience counts for a lot in this life.



XXV

MY VALUES

FAMILY

I've had two key points of reference in this life: Family and Work.

A family united is not only the safest refuge life has to offer; it's also an extraordinary force with which you can calmly stare down the difficult moments you encounter along the way.

After Marilena and I separated, I wound up sad and alone. Then I started thinking that one day we would reconcile with one another and that everyone would find the serenity we were lacking. Over my last years, as I mentioned earlier, I had a number of health problems that I was only able to overcome thanks to the strong, constant presence of Marilena and our children. For me, the family was a strong source of energy and optimism. For this reason I've always tried to spend as much time as possible with my wife and kids. I loved going out for walks with each of them, or taking "working" vacations together, as happened several times with Guido, Luca and Paolo together. Whenever we had a chance like that we'd organize things so that we could stay for a few days in some European city, spending most of the day in important meetings discussing various business issues and then, once the evening arrived, going out

for dinner in a good local restaurant. Eating together, tasting different foods and wines, has always been something we've greatly enjoyed. For one of these trips we spent three memorable days together in Marrakech.

Of course we often traveled to the United States, a place that has always been a strong source of inspiration for our work. We would visit supermarkets and stores of all shapes and sizes, then museums. I tried to use these experiences to teach my kids an appreciation for art and beautiful things, because I've always considered an ability to appreciate beauty to be a personal patrimony of inestimable importance. Not a day went by when I didn't have a chat with at least one of my kids, and I tried to take advantage of these occasions to share some life experience that might prove useful to them.

One family custom I tried to establish right from the start was to eat dinner at home, all together. During the day everybody has his or her own commitments and it wasn't easy to get everyone under one roof so that we could spend some time together. But evenings are perfect for gathering, talking and listening. I was always curious to hear what was going on in my children's lives, to understand how they're growing, how they spend their free time. I always hoped they were using their free time wisely and not throwing it away in meaningless activities. Fortunately I could see they were doing well, living normal lives made up of school, sports and good friends. We talked with each other about everything: the company, politics, friends and our plans.

I've always emphasized the importance of education for my kids. Personal experience has taught me that in order to be successful in life, good preparation is an excellent foundation. I'm still paying for having had an insufficient education, even though I compensated for that at least in part with the time I spent studying in Germany before I started working fulltime. In any event, those were

different times. There was more room for people with ideas and a spirit of initiative, two prerogatives that I've never been lacking.

As far as studying was concerned, Emanuela never gave me any cause for worry: she made independent choices and has always gleaned the most she could from them, and in fact she did well and earned a degree quite quickly.

Luca and Paolo never failed any classes, but they weren't exactly enamored of school. Luca loved the factory, just as I had. Paolo had his racing career to think of. Guido seemed to be the most cut out for studying, and in fact he has continued to study philosophy with a passion. But each of them, once they decided to quit school, chose to throw themselves enthusiastically into their work and pursue their goals with an enormous sense of responsibility. I was serene during my final years because I could see that my kids were well set up inside the company.

I believe that the open dialogue I had with them, the custom of talking any problems through together, and even the dinners I mentioned earlier have all been important for their formation. Over time, in a sweet and progressive manner, each one matured the deep passion that everybody who has a job like ours must possess.

RESPECT

Respect is an attitude that has accompanied me throughout my life. Respect first and foremost for people, for the work everyone does, regardless of whether they're managers or laborers. Respect for our company which, at least as I see it, has never truly belonged to me. I explained to my kids that Barilla is more important than the rest of us put together, since it existed before we were born and, as long as it's well run, will continue to exist for generations. We're just passing through; our lives are brief, while Barilla's life

may last for centuries and create wellbeing for an enormous population of families.

Therefore, since Barilla belongs to its past and its future, it must be respected at all levels. Ownership has to be considered a temporary responsibility that is passed from generation to generation. That's the way it was for my grandfather, for my father, then for me and today for my children.

I've always felt enormously responsible for the company's destiny, and I believe that the best way of guaranteeing its future is to prepare for "after" well in advance by properly educating my successors, in this case my children.

Educating children requires two apparently opposite qualities: authority, leadership ability; and at the same time respect for the individual, for their specific nature, and for their freedom.

It requires an ability to observe, to humbly understand their desires, their values, their dreams. You have to be able to live their lives; that allows you to participate in the continuous changes taking place in the world. I've stayed young through my children. I've continued to look at the world with fresh eyes thanks to them. If I've taught them things, then they've taught me things too. I would never have had the energy, the strength, the desire to live and take back my company if I hadn't had my children by my side. Later on, the enthusiasm I expressed running the company, continuing to innovate, came from them. It all started with them. The same is true of the numerous ideas and transformations, because we've always discussed everything, analyzed problems together, tried different solutions together and made decisions together.

When I say that Barilla is our family's product, that's precisely what I mean: my father inherited it from my grandfather, who raised him; I inherited it from my father and helped him; the same has happened between me and my children. My mother Virginia

made an important contribution to the company too, just as my wife Marilena has done.

We all created Barilla together, and nobody – neither I, nor Guido, nor Luca nor Paolo – deserves a greater share of credit. It's a group product, the fruit of union, solidarity, harmony and love. For this reason I taught my kids the importance of staying together, of doing things together. And I'm sure they'll continue to do it that way after I'm gone. That will be their greatest strength.

Unfortunately, this kind of mentality is not widespread in Italy, where companies are often the object of the intimate and personal interests of their owners or managers.

SOCIAL HARMONY

I've seen evil in this world. I've seen it during the war, in prison, in betrayal by friends, in the painful neediness of the poor, in the exhausting fatigue of workers, in sickness, in meanness, in envy... I've always tried, as much as possible, to contrast it and fight against it.

I've done so first by keeping it out, by making sure it doesn't contaminate a company inherited from pioneers and which I have helped grow, creating a community marked by order and harmony.

Every company is made up of human beings, and these people must be selected by evaluating not only their abilities, but also their moral qualities. I've already said that I always wanted to be surrounded by gentlemen. But that's not enough. A business blossoms and prospers when people at all levels value and respect one another; when rather than hate each other they collaborate and work together; when they don't envy one another; when they understand each other and are honest with each other.

Furthermore, a business has to be organized and run rigorously. It has to be efficient and just at every level. I've always been con-

vinced that you have to be generous, because only if you're willing to give first will others be willing to give back in turn.

Running a company is also order and discipline. You can't build anything of value if you don't insist that everything be done correctly, if you don't continuously strive for perfection. If you don't teach people how to do things, if you don't keep a constant eye on quality, if you don't correct those who make a mistake and send away those who continue, despite everything, to do so, then you'll never create something worthwhile.

Today some people are convinced that goodness is tolerance and negligence. That's wrong. Tolerance and negligence produce disorder, incomprehension and division. A company prospers when everyone, from the president to the mail clerk, all feel united, part of a community, and share common goals. And they should be good goals. In Barilla we've always produced food, and we've done so according to the principle that it is our duty to give people what we would like to give to our own children. Everyone in the company has to know that. Everyone has to act and work to achieve that goal.

A company lives and works in a city, and if there is suffering in that city it can't be ignored. The company can't turn the other way and say: "I've done what I can in my own house and it doesn't matter what goes on outside."

I've always collaborated to help improve my city in the areas I'm skilled in. But providence has seen to it that I received enough money to be able to help lots of people who were suffering and in need. I've tried to do so with discretion and as best I possibly could.

I've made my own small contribution to fending off and reducing the amount of evil in this world, and I'm convinced that what little good I've done has put me, my family and Barilla in a more positive light.

We were never a paradise island, separate from the rest of

the world. We've been connected to others. The people of Parma, when thinking of Barilla, have never seen it as a company driven by greed, by avidity, and this helped us do things even better. Good produces more good. And the same can be said of beauty. I've always been fascinated by art in all its forms – music, painting, sculpture, architecture – and I wanted my home and the entire company to be immersed in art, to be surrounded by beauty.

The effects of this immersion are incredible, because people become illuminated; they wake back up and are calmed. Of course some people don't even notice, but if you watch them closely you can see their behaviors change: they stop talking loudly, they slow down, their eyes rest on a work of art and then move on. It's as if they encountered something magical and sacred along their way, and this thing has had a benign influence on them. It makes them more responsible, deeper human beings.

Beauty, goodness and wellbeing constitute a single spiritual force that we must always cultivate, and upon which we can always rely.

PROVIDENCE

I've always thought about the future by imagining situations, markets, products. I've always drawn up projects, and more often than not I've managed to see them through. I've always had faith in providence¹. Some people use the word luck or fortune, but fortune is a sudden, unreasonable force, like playing dice or spinning a roulette wheel. I don't like to gamble. I've always thought and made plans while counting on a silent, discreet force to guide, support and console me, to hold me back from making too big of an error: that force is providence.

Providence helped me when I was about to return to Russia

on the eve of that terrible retreat during which almost everyone died, making me meet an army doctor in Udine who admitted me to the city's military hospital and declared I wasn't fit to return to the front. You see, once again I'm not talking about luck, because I'd already been to war in Russia and was about to go back again: I was doing my duty. But providence intervened: an unexpected encounter in a café, the hospital, a doctor who quite simply saved my life. If I had returned to Russia, just a few weeks later I would have been caught up in that terrible, devastating retreat.

I also felt the hand of providence during the dramatic events that followed the war, when I was in prison, and when I was saved.

The same is true of the sale and repurchase of Barilla. You see, I don't think that the sale of Barilla was bad luck. It was a mistake, a weakness. But it wasn't luck when I bought back Barilla either. I desired it intensely, imagined it at length, studied a hundred different ways to achieve my objective, then finally providence put Lady Anda on my path and I had the inspiration to go and talk to her, the skill to convince her, the tenacity to hold fast when Grace pushed for more money. But I knew that I was right, that Grace wasn't really that interested in pasta, that they didn't understand how it worked, and that we could do better. And providence helped me. Providence has been kind to me, and for that reason I'll always feel a little bit in her debt. It's one of the reasons I've always been sensitive to the needs of people who have been less fortunate than I.

MONEY

I was born into a modest family of humble origins, but fortunately we always had enough money in our house. The reason for this was because my parents always worked, ever since they were ado-

lescents, making enormous sacrifices in order to guarantee our family its own small independence.

I think I inherited my relationship with money from my father: I've never wanted to accumulate much, nor have I ever enjoyed the company of greedy or miserly people. For me, money is a fundamental element for creating wellbeing, but in order for this to take place, it has to be "invested" through people. It has to be used to create initiatives, things, companies, so that it jumpstarts a virtuous cycle of continuous supply and demand, which in turn creates market and jobs.

I've always "invested" the money that has come into my hands, believing that the best possible way to honor life in all its forms: houses for my kids; equipment and machinery for the factories; artwork for personal pleasure and the enjoyment of my collaborators; financial rewards for those who deserve them; solidarity for the wellbeing of those in need... I have to say that in every case, the returns on my investment were even greater than I'd expected.

One day a very talented collaborator who had come to say goodbye to me before beginning his retirement wanted to stop by and see Guido and Luca as well. He wanted to share with them a thought he had about me, and which they later shared with me too. "Your father," he said, "has the gift of transforming money from an object of interest into an instrument of love."

That's it. I'd never really thought about what money really means to me. But I think that sentence sums it up nicely.

WORK

I've looked at people's hands all my life. I think did so because hands can tell you a lot about that person and his or her life history. But I also did so because hands have always told me things about

many different aspects of life, first of all commitment and work, sacrifice, but also vices, greed and wasted lives: I've seen so many stories, so many different experiences and learned so many lessons from people's hands!

I'm particularly attracted to hands. It's an instinctive, maybe even ingenuous curiosity; a desire to dig into someone's past, almost as if I were searching for confirmation for my initial impressions of someone. The past is writing that cannot be erased. It's the most concrete testament to who we are and what we've done. It will stay that way forever, despite the passage of time and events, happiness, regret and the desire to go back and change something.

I've looked at everyone's hands, submitting to the magnetism of some, feeling admiration or respect or solidarity for others. Some have inspired comprehension, sadness or a sense of participation. But the hands that have always drawn me most are those that people have "used up" on the job: the hands of farmers, workers, craftsmen. Beautiful hands, lined with fatigue, need, passion and pain. They were always simple, sometimes irreparably ruined, but always intensely expressive.

Every era has had its hands. The first I saw were the suffering hands of poor workers who gave everything they had to give, then the frozen hands of soldiers during the war: I will never forget the things I felt on those occasions; the sense of closeness and participation I experienced during those terrible moments.

Maybe, if I've been closest all my life to humble people, to people who have made the most sacrifices, it is because their hands have spoken to my heart, teaching me that a proper life is one dedicated to work, devotion and in many cases sacrifice.

I've come to realize that the story of my family is based on these things, and if today Barilla is an established, appreciated company, we all owe it to generations that dedicated their lives to hard work and sacrifice.

I feel indebted to these people. Not only did they help me in my company, they taught me things that have enriched my life enormously. I learned the importance of work, of the product, of a search for perfection, of personal commitment and respect for your fellow man, of participation and solidarity. These simple people, some of whom didn't even know how to read, were capable of transmitting values that it's hard to find in cultured and refined environments. So many lessons for my spirit lay in those hands!

Then I saw the hands of artists, saw them at work as they moved around with sure yet unpredictable gestures. I've seen them create marvelous works of art out of nothing, objects that are fascinating and capable of stimulating incredibly strong emotions.

I've admired the hands of orchestra conductors, of my friends Guido Cantelli and Riccardo Muti: their hands emanated charisma and incredible harmony, and every time I watched them move I fell into a state of intimate admiration. I felt hypnotized. I watched them wave through the air and let myself be captured by these gestures capable of bringing together an enormous group of people, of coordinating talents and ultimately producing perfect symphonies.

Hands are a symbol of work, and for me work means production and product. You know, I'm a bit old-fashioned. I grew up with this concept in my head, and I believe it still applies today. I can't justify, nor even comprehend, all those things that make money without a clear thought or project behind them; without something useful for people, and therefore part of physical labor.

To be even clearer, let me say this: I reject everything that is born of "finance," everything that seems so popular today and is called capital gain. I'm convinced that the root of the problems facing societies today can be found in this speculative mentality that new generations of businessmen have adopted in order to get rich

quickly without having produced anything tangible, and therefore without effort. I hope that young people won't be influenced by these examples; that they'll rediscover the pleasure of working together, producing together, of enjoying something that benefits everyone.

XXVI

DEPARTURE

I left this world during the night between September 15th and 16th, 1993.

At dawn the sky was perfectly clear, turning a bright blue as the day wore on, and remained that way until sunset.

My departure was suddenly and quick: in just a few seconds my long, exhilarating voyage was over.

It ended well, in the quiet night, after I'd spent my day like so many others: in the office, among my people, talking about products and plans, looking to the future as if that was a theme I intended to contribute to for some time to come.

That evening I came home calm and tranquil. Sergio was waiting to give me a massage and I had plans to dine together with Marilena.

Providence was looking after me even then, during the last chapter of my life.

You should know that I departed after I'd had time to say goodbye to everyone, and see that everything was left on the right track, that my family was together and caring for one another, that all four of my children had matured more than enough experience and knowledge to carry on without me.

I turned eighty in April, and I'd taken advantage of that moment to take stock of my life, to thank everyone who accompanied me on my long journey, from company employees to my friends, from that part of Parma I'd always identified with to all the people who had in some way contributed to the story of my family and Barilla.

With the help of Roberto Tassi, I'd organized during those months an exhibition of the most important artworks I'd collected over almost forty years. I had them installed in the Magnani Rocca foundation, a splendid villa-museum located in the countryside outside Parma. I personally paid for the organization of the exhibition so that all the profits from ticket sales could be given to charity.

You can imagine my surprise to see that over just four short months more than 70,000 paying visitors came to see the show. I was incredibly satisfied, and had a chance to do a number of wonderful things with the profits.

I departed after having played my part, bolstered by the sense of pride of someone who, looking back, sees a job well done, accomplished with love and passion and attention to detail.

My work has a deep soul, one that leaves behind strong sensations inspired by the values that permeate it, eternal values to be handed down to future generations, to help them find the right path to follow.

I could see that Guido, Luca, Paolo and Emanuela were ready to follow in our footsteps.

Despite their youth, I had some time ago given them most of the responsibilities. I'd always believed that it was useful for them to realize the difficulties and traps that life can present. I wanted them to know that a person's attractive appearance does not always conceal good sentiments; that deception, once discovered, can cause not only disappointment but enormous pain as well.

Through the story of what I've done and seen, I wanted them

to know that betrayal exists, and that it can be done by people above all suspicion; that money, power and women can be a source of terrible conflict and destruction for a man; that gratitude is a virtue that few possess. But I also wanted them to know that when the common good is your ultimately goal, nothing can stand in your way, and providence will always balance things out in the end.

In the moments before I departed, I was saying before, I felt extremely calm because I knew that I accomplished what I set out to do. I crossed this stage with dignity, with respect for everyone, and I left behind memories, hopefully a source of help or inspiration for anyone who wants to chase their dreams, or finds themselves facing difficulty, or needs a solid point of reference.



NOTES

The citations included in the text are the result of careful research conducted in Barilla Historical Archives, and have been drawn from interviews Pietro Barilla gave with different journalists over the course of his career, as well as from interviews conducted by Francesco Alberoni with members of his family and collaborators. The Barilla Historical Archives also contain the original transcriptions with extended notes that have been omitted here in order to avoid weighing down the text unnecessarily. The photographs and documents reproduced here are all conserved within the company's historical archives.

CAPITOLO I

1 Manfredo Manfredi, born in Parma in 1925, earned a degree in engineering at the Università di Bologna and took a training course at the Harvard Business School in Boston. He then began a long career as a manager at Barilla, where he was Technical Director and Director of Production for eight years (1952-1960), General Director for ten years (1961-1970), then CEO and General Director beginning in 1971, a position he would occupy uninterrupted for the next 20 years. From 1991 to 1998 he was vice-president of the company, then an advisor on the board of directors. He died on January 23, 2013.

2 Braibanti was first founded in Milan in 1928 by engineers Mario and Giuseppe Braibanti, sons of the engineer Ennio Braibanti (1860-1898) who founded a pasta factory of the same name in Parma. In 1933 the sons patented a continuous automatic press that could work the pasta dough and make pasta in a single machine. Barilla began using six Braibanti presses already in 1936, and the two families have continued to maintain a close relationship ever since.

3 Attilio Bertolucci (1911-2000) was born in Parma. An art history teacher, Bertolucci also worked as an editorial consultant for Garzanti, collaborated with RAI, and in the 1950s founded the magazine *Palatina* with support from Pietro Barilla. The father of filmmakers Giuseppe and Bernardo, Bertolucci eventually moved to Rome to dedicate his energies to literary activities, then moved back to the Parma region, to Casarola in the Apennines, where he lived until his death. He is considered one of the greatest Italian poets of the twentieth century.

4 Cesare Zavattini (1902-1989) was born in Luzzara, near Mantua, but grew up in Parma. He was the editor in chief of the *Gazzetta di Parma*, for which he wrote important editorials during the 1920s. Zavattini moved to Rome in 1940, where he became an important screenwriter (*Ladri di biciclette*, *Miracolo a Milano*, *Umberto D*), film director and painter.

5 Giovanni Drei (1881-1950) was a priest and literary figure who had been a favorite student of Pascoli at the University of Bologna. For 34 years he worked as the archivist and then director of the state archives in Parma. He ran the magazine *Aurea Parma* from 1934 to 1950.

6 Carlo Mattioli (1911-1994) was born in Modena but moved to Parma and taught at the Accademia di Bologna. He began exhibiting his artwork at the Venice Biennale starting in 1940, dedicating himself to graphic design. He illustrated works by Balzac and Stendhal, and collaborated with numerous Parma companies on ad campaigns. He is considered one of the most important Parma artists from the second half of the twentieth century.

7 Erberto Carboni (1899-1984) worked in graphic design and advertising after having earned a degree in architecture. In 1932 he moved to Milan, where he began collaborating with some of the most prestigious companies in Italy, including Motta, Olivetti, Campari, Strega, Bertolli, Pavesi, Montecatini and RAI. He designed stands, window displays and ad campaigns. He created calendars for Barilla in 1922 and 1938, and oversaw the company's image from 1952 to 1960, managing the brand, packaging, convention presentations, press releases, TV presentations and company automobile design.

8 Pietro Bianchi (1909-1976) was born in Fontanelle, in the southern Parma region. A journalist and writer, Bianchi was one of Italy's most important film critics. He taught philosophy in Parma and played an important role in cultural life in the early years following WWII. He later moved to Milan, where he ran *L'Illustrazione Italiana* and *Settimo Giorno*. He died at his home in Baiso, in the Reggiano region.

9 Orio Vergani (1898-1976) was born in Milan but lived most of his life in Rome, where he began working as a journalist. He became an editor for the *Corriere della Sera* in 1926, a job he would hold until his death. Vergani was a famous writer, an author of the texts for most of Barilla's ad campaigns (overseen by Erberto Carboni).

10 Ugo Betti (1892-1953) was born in Camerino, in the Marche region, the son of the director of the Parma hospital. Betti became a magistrate, and alternated his judicial duties with his work as a writer and his passion for literature. He became a judge in Bedonia, in the Apennine Mountains, and later in Parma, starting in 1927. He was the main exponent of Pirandellian theater, and authored roughly twenty works.

11 Antonio Marchi (1923-2003) was born in Parma and studied humanities in Parma and Florence. A lover of cinema, Marchi worked in Rome and created art documentaries. He founded and ran "La critica cinematografica" as well as the film production company "Cittadella film." He eventually abandoned film directing and in 1952, with the help of his brother Virginio (1912-1980) and support from Gianni and Pietro Barilla, Giuseppe Tanara's business, transforming it into a modern industrial gelato giant. With the creation of Tanara, he became the first Italian to introduce industrial production methods into the gelato sector.

12 The "Bagutta" prize for fiction, essays and poetry was created in Milan on November 11, 1926 by Riccardo Bacchelli, Orio Vergani, Adolfo Franci, Paolo Monelli, Gino Scarpa, Mario Vellani Marchi, Ottavio Steffenini, Luigi Bonelli, Mario Alessandrini, Antonio Veretti and Antonio Niccodemi – "two journalists, two painters, a lawyer, a playwright, three men of letters and a dandy," as Monelli would write. The prize was suspended from 1937 to 1946, but continues to be awarded today.

13 M. MANFREDI, *Un "pesce d'aprile" lungo cinquant'anni* (A fifty-year-long April Fool's joke), in *Barilla. 125 anni di pubblicità e comunicazione* (Barilla. 125 Years of Advertising and Communications), Silvana, Milan 2004, vol. II, pp. 250-257.

14 Bruno Munari (1907-2004) was one of the twentieth century's most active and energetic protagonists in the visual arts, graphic design and general design.

15 Born in Trieste, Marcello Dudovich (1878-1962) was a graphic artist for advertising. He moved to Milan in 1897, where he worked for some of the most important publishers of his day: Ricordi, then Chappuis in Bologna, then Ricordi again. Dudovich later continued his work in Munich and Turin.

16 Achille Luciano Mauzan (1883-1952) was a French-born commercial artist, illustrator and painter. He moved to Italy, where he concentrated on producing post-

ers for film and advertising. In 1927 Mauzan moved to Argentina, and in 1932 he returned to France, where he continued to work as an artist.

17 Tamara de Lempicka (1898-1980) was the pseudonym for Tamara Rosalia Gur-wik-Górska, a Polish-born painter who belonged to the art deco movement. She worked in Paris in the 1920s, and moved to America following the start of the Second World War.

CAPITOLO II

1 As was common practice at the time, Pietro Barilla Senior (1845-1912) worked for six years as an apprentice in his maternal grandfather Vincenzo Lanati's bakery before he was able to open a bakery of his own and join the official baker's guild.

2 R. BARILLA, *Storia della mia vita dal giorno che sono nato* (The history of my life from the day I was born), in *Barilla. 125 anni di pubblicità e comunicazione* (Barilla. 125 Years of Advertising and Communications), Silvana, Milano 2004, vol. I, pp. 346-349.

3 Virginia Fontana Barilla (1890-1976), the daughter of milk farmer Ermenegildo, married Riccardo Barilla in 1909. The couple had three children: Giovanna (1910-1992), Pietro (1913-2004) and Giovanni (1917-2004). Working alongside her husband in the company, Virginia mainly handled the hiring of new personnel, organization within the packaging section and distribution of weekly pay. She supported the charity work of father Lino Maupas (1866-1924) and numerous other charity organizations.

4 Please see also: "Un nuovo forno" (A new oven), in the *Gazzetta di Parma*, February 14, 1910, p. 2.

5 After the death of Gualtiero Barilla (May 17, 1919), in accordance with his will his shares in the company passed to his sisters Aldina (1877-1969), Ines (1879-1925) and Gemma (1888-1980). After conducting a full evaluation of the company, Riccardo attempted to buy back these shares, but they became a source of dispute that continued over time.

6 A sculptor from Parma, Emilio Trombara (1875-1934) was one an exponent of Parma's Liberty style, and the creator of important funereal artworks. Gualtiero Barilla knew the artist because he was connected with the Xaverians. In 1910, Trombara created the company logo with a baker's boy opening an egg.

7 Erberto Carboni designed the 1922 calendar for Barilla when he was barely twenty years old.

8 For the 1923 Barilla calendar, Bologna painter Emma Bonazzi (1881-1959) reproduced the style of Gustav Klimt, echoing the symbolic implications of Viennese secession.

9 *L'Uovo cameriere* and *Il divoratore di spaghetti* inspired the 1927 film *Il cantante di Jazz* (The Jazz Singer), starring Al Jolson in blackface. The artworks are attributed to Raoul Allegri (1905-1969), an illustrator and teacher from Parma.

10 Filippo Tommaso Marinetti (1876-1944) is considered the leader of Italian futurism, a “global” cultural movement that produced specific manifestos for art and other areas of cultural life. One of these, written by Marinetti and the painter Fillia, and published on December 28, 1930 in the *Gazzetta del Popolo* in Turin, was dedicated to futurist cuisine, and was republished independently in 1932.

11 Adolfo Busi (1891-1977), originally from Faience, earned a degree from the Accademia in Bologna and began painting portraiture in 1914. Around 1920 Busi became involved with the graphic arts, and began collaborating with Officine Ricordi in Milan. He designed the 1931 calendar for Barilla, which portrayed explosive, dynamic characters designed to contrast the battle the futurists were then waging on pasta.

12 At the second national grain convention, held in Rome in October 1932 as part of the celebrations for the 10-year anniversary of fascism, Barilla was awarded a gold medal for best stand.

13 Born in Fiorenzuola, in the Piacenza province, Mario Bacciocchi (1902-1974) studied at the Accademia di Milano and Politecnico University in Milan under Piero Portaluppi. Thanks to his collaboration with the entrepreneur Fonio, between 1925 and 1935 Bacciocchi completely transformed architecture in Salsomaggiore, a famous spa and thermal bath town. He created Villa Barilla as well, and in 1929 his close relationship with Riccardo Barilla resulted in a commission to create the extraordinary Barilla store in via Cavour in Parma, as well as design the interiors of the pasta factory offices in 1934.

CAPITOLO III

I Born in Busseto, in the Parma province, Angelo Braga (1883-1958) earned a degree in medicine when he was just 24 years old, and was head physician for the second medical division of Maggiore hospital in Parma for forty years. He ran a private medical practice in via Veneto that later moved to a new location, after which Ricca-

rdo purchased the original offices and turned them into the company's headquarters in 1933. Braga was the Barilla family doctor.

2 Werner & Pfleiderer – today WP Industrial Bakery Technologies – was founded in 1879 in Tamm, not far from Stuttgart, Germany. The company specialized in the design, production and installation of machinery for oven-baked goods. Today it the world's largest and most important company in this sector.

3 In 1928 Giulio Cesare Ricciardi, a Milanese graphic artist who got his start in journalism, opened Balza-Ricc together with Pier Luigi Balzaretti, head of advertising for the Rinascente department stores. Balza-Ricc would handle advertising for Gancia sparkling wines, Locatelli cheeses and Alfa eye drops. In 1937, the agency organized the communications campaign for the Bonaventura competition.

4 Born in Rome to a Neapolitan family, Sergio Tofano (1886-1973), or “Sto,” was one of the most important protagonists of Italian theater. Tofano was a director, costume designer and playwright. Tofano also wrote children's books, illustrated, designed clothing and created advertisements.

5 Translator's note: A weekly children's magazine published in Italy from 1908 to 1995. The *Corriere dei Piccoli* (literally the “Kids Corriere”) was the first Italian periodical to publish comic strips regularly and was extremely popular across the nation.

6 Milanese journalist Nino Giuseppe Caimi (1876-1952) began working in advertising after two decades as a journalist, inspired by experiences he'd had during a stay in the US. Caimi was director of the Erwin Wasey agency, and would later found the EnneCì agency, which handled Barilla's national campaign for the launch of Pasta Fosfina in 1937.

CAPITOLO IV

1 All the letters entrusted to Rivola, which substituted company records from 1939 to 1946, were given back to Pietro Barilla on December 18, 1991, several years after the death of Giuseppina Rivola, who was hired by Barilla on November 6, 1933 and became Riccardo Barilla's trusted secretary.

2 Translator's note: This is a reference to Fascists (black) and Communists (red).

3 Cesarino Beltrame Quattrocchi (1909-2008), or father Paolino, was born in Rome on November 27, 1909, the son of Luigi Beltrame Quattrocchi and Maria Corsini, and was canonized by Pope John Paul II on October 21, 2001. In 1924, Quattrocchi

chi joined the San Paolo Benedictine monastery located outside Rome. Four years later he moved to Parma, to the San Giovanni convent, where he was ordained in 1933. A talented orator and military chaplain for the Italian Alpini soldiers stationed in Yugoslavia during World War Two, Quattrocchi began working with the resistance in 1944, collaborating with the Allies and saving thousands of lives.

During the difficult postwar years he conducted a number of extraordinary social and charitable activities. These included a position as head of a Vatican charity program that included a network of ten children's centers, including one in Misurina (initiated in 1946 and purchased in November 1950 with help from Pietro Barilla) that hosted thousands of children from Parma who suffered from respiratory illnesses. It also included, in the provinces, others in Scipione di Salsomaggiore and Corniglio. Quattrocchi created the Casa del Reduce (a veteran's home) to host soldiers who returned home from prison camps; founded Villa Serena as a hospice for newly-freed inmates; instituted a refectory for the poor; labored to collect relief for flood victims in Polesine, Italy; supported the Boy Scout movement (which he himself was a member of), founding an Italian female branch of Girl Scouts in 1946; founded a school for social service workers; and the Sant'Anselmo d'Aosta hostel for university students at the San Giovanni convent. In November 1962 Quattrocchi left Parma to retire to the Frattocchie Trappist monastery in Rome, where he dedicated himself to prayers and the beatification of the saints. He died in Rome on December 30, 2008 when he was nearly one hundred years old, having served as a priest for seventy-five years.

4 A lawyer, partigiano and socialist, in 1946 Primo Savani (1897-1967) became the first mayor of Parma after the Liberation. In 1950 Savani was elected president of the Parma province. He was known as an extremely cultured man, and a committed civil servant.

5 Leonilde Iotti (1920-1999), known as "Nilde," was born in Reggio Emilia and earned a degree in letters from the Università Cattolica in Milan. Iotti was an active member of the resistance, and later joined the Constituent Assembly of Italy. She served as a member of Italian parliament for fifty-three years (first elected in 1946), and was an important member of the Italian communist party, as well as the companion of the party's longstanding leader, Palmiro Togliatti (1893-1964). Iotti died in Rome on December 4, 1999.

6 Palmiro Togliatti (1893-1964) was secretary of the Italian communist party from 1927 to 1964, and was defeated by Alcide De Gasperi in the general elections held April 18, 1948. Pietro Nenni (1891-1980) was secretary of the socialist party.

7 Alcide De Gasperi (1881-1954) was the founder and head of Italy's Democrazia Cristiana political party. He won the April 18, 1948 general elections, and served as Prime Minister of Italy from 1945 to 1953.

CAPITOLO V

1 Parma native Erminio Barbuti (1920-) was head of personnel for Barilla from 1948 to 1981.

2 After having attended the Parini high school in Milan (where Cesare Musatti introduced him to philosophy), Assunto Quadrio Aristarchi (1929-) earned a degree in medicine and began practicing as a doctor. However, father Agostino Gemelli convinced him to become an academic, specializing in developmental psychology and later in social psychology. Aristarchi was a professor of social psychology at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, and criminal psychology and family mediation at the Università Vita-Salute San Raffaele, both in Milan.

3 Parma native Ciro Medioli (1900-1982) was a secretary for Pietro and Gianni Barilla who was given specific responsibilities in the company's financial affairs.

4 Parma lawyer Ernesto Avanzini (1914-2006) was an exponent of the liberal party who began working as a freelancer immediately following the end of the Second World War, assisting various companies and institutions in Parma. Pietro and Gianni Barilla hired Avanzini to work in the company handling relationships with personnel.

5 Architect Luigi Vietti (1903-1998) earned a degree in Rome in 1928 after studying in Milan. He collaborated on the EUR project, but his proposals were considered too rationalist and modern, and were refused. He concentrated on designing villas and private homes during the postwar period, and oversaw the urban layout for Cortina, where he met Pietro Barilla. In 1957 Barilla commissioned Vietti to design his private home in Fraore, in the Parma province. The architect died in Milan on March 28, 1998. He was 95.

CAPITOLO VI

1 Mina Mazzini (1940-) was born in Busto Arsizio, in the Varese province. Known simply as "Mina," she would become the most famous Italian popular music singer of the second half of the twentieth century. Her career began in 1958 when she debuted at Bussola in Marina di Pietrasanta. She later performed at famous singing events and

TV shows like “Canzonissima” and the Sanremo festival. In 1961 she began working for television, appearing on numerous shows including a memorable performance on Studio Uno, together with Don Lurio (Donald Benjamin Lurio, 1929-2003) and the Kessler twins Alice and Ellen (1936-). In 1974, she performed “Mille Luci” as a farewell to television and direct contact with the public, retiring to Lugano, Switzerland, where she has continued her artistic efforts, recording albums and writing as an editorialist for Turin-based newspaper *La Stampa*. Mina was the spokesperson for Barilla from 1965 to 1970, appearing in more than forty-five displays and various communications events.

2 Valerio Zurlini (1926-1982), the Bolognese son of Parma parents, studied law in Rome, but later dedicated himself to theater and documentaries. He shot his first full-length film, *Le ragazze di San Frediano* (The girls of San Frediano), in 1954. In 1960 Zurlini directed *La ragazza con la valigia* (The girl with a suitcase), with a number of outdoor scenes shot in Parma, and during filming he met up again with Pietro Barilla, whom he had first encountered in Rome in 1958 through their mutual friend Pietro Bianchi (who in 1965 called on Zurlini to direct a series of shows starring Mina). Later, in 1970, Zurlini filmed that last series of Barilla short films to star the singer. Zurlini's passion for art, clearly evident in the pieces he shot for Barilla, influenced Pietro Barilla as well, who started to visit galleries and meet with important artists with Zurlini as his guide. In 1976, Zurlini produced the film version of *Il deserto dei tartari* (The Desert of the Tartars). He died in Verona in 1982.

3 An interior designer by trade, Piero Gherardi (1909-1971) earned a degree in architecture and later became famous as a set and costume designer. He worked in film, handling costumes and set designs for a number of Mario Soldati productions starting in 1946. He collaborated with Federico Fellini (1920-1993) on *Le notti di Cabiria* (Nights of Cabiria, 1957), *La dolce vita* (1960) and *8½* (1963), helping create the surreal atmospheres so distinctive in those films, and for which he won two Academy Awards. In 1966 he directed several of the Barilla productions with Mina, creating surreal and imaginative costumes, as well as designing the sets and choosing the locations (previously utilized for a Fellini film that was never completed: *Viaggio di G. Mastorna*). Gherardi can be considered one of the primary protagonists of Italian set design in the twentieth century.

4 Born in Rome, Antonello Falqui (1925-) was a television director who, after gaining experience as an assistant director, joined the Milan branch of the newly established RAI (Italy's national television company) in 1952. Falqui was involved with creating important TV shows during the 1950s and 1960s, including: “Il Musichiere”

(1956), with Mario Riva; “Canzonissima” (1958, 1959) with Delia Scala, Paolo Panelli and Nino Manfredi; “Studio Uno” (four editions from 1961 to 1966) with Mina, the Kessler twins, the Cetra Quartet, Walter Chiari and Rita Pavone.

5 Born in Milan, Paolo Limiti (1940-) began his career collaborating with two important ad agencies: Lintas and CPV. In 1968 he joined RAI as a writer and director. He would go on to collaborate with Maurizio Costanzo, Pippo Baudo, Sandra Mondaini and Raimondo Vianello. Limiti wrote songs for some of Italy’s most famous singers, including: Mina (who he met on the set of Barilla’s films from 1965 to 1968, which he produced), Ornella Vanoni, Fred Bongusto, Mia Martini and others.

6 Genoan Amedeo Tessari (1926-1994), known as “Duccio,” earned a degree in chemistry before moving to Rome, where began working in cinema as a screenwriter. In 1961 he debuted as director, collaborating with Sergio Leone (1929-1989) on the script for *A Fistful of Dollars* (1964) and directing his first spaghetti westerns. In 1966 he directed Mina in the movie *Per amore e per magia*, while at the same time handling a number of Barilla *caroselli* filmed live at the Bussola in Viareggio in 1968. Tessari died in Rome on September 6, 1994. He was 68.

7 After completing his artistic studies in Rome, Mario Ceroli (1938-) began experimenting with raw wood, which he began using more intensely in 1967. In 1970 he began working as a set designer as well, creating the large wood set with a profile of Mina that was used for two different Barilla films in 1970, both directed by Zurlini. Ceroli created the large bronze horse upon commission from Pietro Barilla, intended to celebrate the pioneer generation and placed on display in the Pedrignano property.

8 In 1946 Mario Maghenzani founded Aldea, later renamed Pandeia, a small oven-baked goods company located west of Parma that was sold to Chiari & Forti in 1970.

CAPITOLO VII

1 Biochemist Daniel Bovet (1907-1992) was born in Switzerland but later became an Italian citizen. He became famous for his research in pharmacology and therapeutic chemistry, winning a Nobel Prize in medicine in 1957.

2 Giulio Natta (1903-1979) completed high school in Genoa when he was only 16 years old, and went on to earn a degree in chemical engineering in 1924. After working for a year in Fribourg with the Hermann Staudinger group doing research on macromolecules, Natta returned to Milan and began studying the crystalline structure of polymers. In 1938 he was chosen to run the Institute of Industrial Chemistry at Mi-

lan's Politecnico University, a position he held until 1973. In 1963 Natta was awarded a Nobel Prize for chemistry for having created stereospecific catalyzers for polymerization.

3 Born in Palermo, Domenico Marotta (1886-1974) earned a degree in chemistry in 1910 at Palermo University, and later became a famous chemist and scientist. In 1911 he was hired to work at Italy's public health institute. Marotta is credited with inventing the Istituto Superiore di Sanità, or Higher Public Health Institute, which he ran for twenty-six years, from 1935 to 1961, optimizing the quality and quantity of research conducted there. He was president of Parma's experimental station for the canned goods industry from 1947 to 1950.

4 Parboiled (from "partially boiled") rice is treated, first in a vacuum, then in warm water, and finally pressure-cooked with vapor in such a way that it maintains its cooked state and the grain's original vitamin and mineral salt content.

CAPITOLO VIII

1 Maria Maddalena Da Lisca was born in Verona in 1935.

2 Guido Maria Barilla (1958-) studied classics in Parma and the US, and began working in the company in 1982, at the subsidiary Barilla France. In 1988 he joined the board of directors of Barilla G. e R. Flli S.p.A., becoming vice-president along with his brother Luca. In September 1993, following his father's death, he was named president of Barilla G. e R. Flli, the group's holding company.

3 Luca Barilla (1960-) studied classics and then went to live in the US. Between 1980 and 1982 he spent considerable time in the company's production facilities, then joined the sales force. In 1984 he officially joined the company as a product manager, and spent the following year working in sales in Paris, France at the subsidiary Barilla France. In 1986 he finished his studies in the US, and in 1987 he joined the board of directors at Barilla G. e R. Flli S.p.A., becoming vice-president the following year along with his brother Guido.

4 After completing his studies, Paolo Barilla (1961-) worked for a number of years as a professional race car driver, becoming Italian champion in go kart, then racing in the prototype category, where he won the 1985 24 Hours of Le Mans, and later Formula 1. He lived and worked in Japan for two years as a test driver for Toyota, then joined the company in 1992, initially working in the group's subsidiary Barilla France. He later began working with production processes and technologies, apply-

ing experience he'd gained in racing. He became a member of Barilla's board of directors in November 1993. Paolo Barilla is vice-president of Barilla G. e R. Flli S.p.A.

5 Born in Milan, Emanuela Barilla (1968-) attended school in Florence, then studied food science at Università Statale in Milan. Interested in modern art and photography, she worked as a television journalist, co-hosting a number of programs together with Mino Damato. She has been a member of the Barilla G. e R. Flli board of directors since 1993.

6 Born in Fucecchio, Tuscany, Indro Montanelli (1909-2001) earned degrees in law and political science before emigrating to France, where he a reporter for *Paris Soir*. He later became a foreign correspondent in Spain for the *Messaggero*. His reporting was criticized by the regime in Italy, and Montanelli was expelled from the Italian journalists' guild and sent to Estonia. Upon his return in Italy, Aldo Borelli hired him at the *Corriere della Sera*, where Montanelli work remain for more than forty years. As a war correspondent, he interviewed Hitler and described the Russian-Finnish conflict. In 1944 he was imprisoned in San Vittore and condemned to death by the Nazis, only escaping execution thanks to an intervention by Cardinal Schuster. After the war he continued collaborating with *Corriere della Sera*, providing memorable correspondence from Budapest during the 1956 uprising. In 1974, unhappy with the newspaper's move towards the political left under the leadership of Ottone, Montanelli left and founded *il Giornale*, which he ran until 1994. In 1977 he was the victim of an attack by the Red Brigades. Montanelli died on July 22, 2001. He was 92.

7 Translator's note: Lasting from the late 1960s into the early 1980s, the name "years of lead" refers to a period of socio-political turmoil in Italy characterized by terrorism and numerous kidnappings.

CAPITOLO IX

1 American company General Foods Corporation was founded in 1895 by Charles William Post as the Postum Cereal Company. In 1929, following a number of acquisitions, the company changed its name to General Foods, becoming a multinational food corporation. In 1985 it was purchased by Philip Morris, which went on to purchase Kraft Inc. in 1988, creating one of the most important packaged food companies in the world.

2 Born in Germany, Theodore Levitt (1925-2006) moved to the US in the 1930s, where he became a famous American economist, professor at the Harvard Business

School and director of the *Harvard Business Review*. Levitt became famous for having made “globalization” a household term, and for his research on the subject.

3 Unilever is a British-Dutch multinational that owns numerous food, household and hygiene products. The company was created in 1930 through the merger of British company Lever Brothers (1885) and Dutch company Margarin Unie (1927), in turn created through the merger of Jurgens and Van den Bergh (1872). Today the company is present all over the globe.

4 W.R. Grace & Co. is an American multinational founded in 1854 and today present all over the world, active in the chemical sector, plastic materials and the production of construction equipment.

5 In 1968 Grace purchased a majority share in Tanara, a food company specialized in producing gelato, from Antonio and Virginio Marchi.

6 Born in Felino, in the Parma province, Antonio Moroni (1925-) became a diocesan priest in 1948, then the vice-rector of Maggiore seminary. In 1968 Moroni was a protagonist of the occupation of Parma University, and later taught animal ecology (1978) in the science department. He was the founder and president of the Italian ecological society, the Italian center for environmental research and education, and has been a professor emeritus of ecology since 1997 as well as a member of the academy of the sciences.

7 Bruno Trentin (1926-2007) was a partisan and union leader starting in 1949. He joined the PCI political party from 1962 to 1972, and was the secretary general of CGIL union from 1988 to 1994. Trentin was a member of the European parliament from 1999 to 2004; Pierre Carniti (1936-) became a union worker in 1957 and was secretary general of the CISL union from 1979 to 1985. He was a member of the European parliament from 1989 to 1999; Giorgio Benvenuto (1937-) was a union worker and founded (together with Carniti and Trentin) the Federazione Lavoratori metalmeccanici union. From 1976 to 1992 he was secretary general of the UIL union, then secretary of the PSI starting in 1993, following the resignation of Bettino Craxi. Benvenuto served as a representative until 2006, and as senator from 2006 to 2008.

8 Gabriella Dalcò (1920-2011) was born in Florence on January 20, 1920. She married Gianni Barilla on October 16, 1941. The couple had three children: Riccardo (1942-1961); Beatrice and Riccardo Jr., born July 11, 1962.

9 Born in 1936 in Carpineti, in the Reggio Emilia province, Albino Ivardi Ganapini earned a degree in agricultural sciences at the Università Cattolica in Milan. He worked in Barilla from 1961 to 1995, where he was put in charge of the president's of-

fice and institutional communications starting in 1979, working in close contact with Pietro Barilla until his death.

CAPITOLO X

1 Lorenzo Bandini (1935-1967) debuted in Formula 1 in 1961. In 1962 he was hired by the Ferrari team, with which he raced for several seasons, winning the 24 Hours of Le Mans in 1963 and the Austria Grand Prix in 1964. He died in 1967 after having won the 24 Hours of Daytona, due to complications from severe burns he suffered during an accident at the Monaco Grand Prix.

2 Ignazio Giunti (1941-1971) began racing when he was twenty years old, making a name for himself in street racing in the Gran Turismo category. In 1970 he debuted in Formula 1, racing for the Ferrari team. On January 10, 1971 he died in an accident on the Buenos Aires track when his car struck a stopped car that had run out of gas.

3 Alfredo Ferrari, known as “Dino” (1932-1956) was Enzo Ferrari’s son by his first wife Laura Garelo. He suffered from muscular dystrophy, an illness that took his life when he was only 24, interrupting a promising career as a mechanical engineer. Fiat’s Dino Spider and coupé were dedicated to him, as well as a new Ferrari brand and, beginning in 1970, the Imola racetrack. Starting in 1988, the racetrack took his father’s name as well.

4 Paolo Barilla won the 24 Hours of Le Mans race held on June 15-16, 1985 driving a Porsche in the prototype category, racing for the New Man Joest Racing team.

5 Born in the Bergamo province, Giacomo Agostini (1942-) was a motorcycle racer who won 123 Grand Prix races and earned fifteen world champion titles between 1966 and 1977. Agostini is generally considered the greatest motorcycle racer of all time.

CAPITOLO XII

1 Parma native Gianni Maestri (1929-) earned a degree in economics at the University of Bologna. He joined Barilla as director of the company’s Milan offices in 1958. In 1961 he was transferred to Parma, where he ran the marketing division until his retirement in 1994. During the 1970s, Maestri played a fundamental role in creating and launching the Mulino Bianco brand.

2 Hortense Anda-Bührle (1926-) was born in Zurich. Together with her brother Dieter, she inherited and became a leading shareholder of the Bührle industrial group. Beginning in 1956, she became a member of the board of directors of Oerlikon-Bührle Holding AG, Bally International AG and Ihag Holding AG. Anda-Bührle has also been an important administrative member of various cultural foundations: the Géza Anda Foundation, created to support young pianists; the Goethe Foundation for Art and Sciences; and the Ittingen Charterhouse. In 1960, Anda-Bührle founded (and continues to run) a foundation that manages her father Emil Georg Bührle's art collection, most of which is now on permanent public display.

3 Géza Anda (1921-1976) was a Hungarian pianist who became a naturalized Swiss citizen. After finishing his studies in Budapest, Anda won the Liszt Prize in 1940 when he was just 19, initiating an extremely prestigious career. He moved to Switzerland in 1943 (where he married Hortense Bührle in 1964), and continued performing and teaching. Anda participated in the Salzburg Festival every year from 1952 to 1964.

4 Elvira Leonardi Bouyeure (1906-1999), known as "Biki," was a Milan native and the niece of Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924) through marriage. Puccini gave Bouyeure the nickname "Biki" (from the Italian *birichina*, or "prankster") that would later become her work pseudonym. From the 1940s through the 1960s Biki was one of the most famous Italian clothing designers in the world.

5 Born in Lyon, in France, Antoine Riboud (1918-2002) attended business school in Paris and joined his family's company, Souchon-Neuvesel glassworks, in 1942. He became secretary general of the company in 1952, and vice-president and general director in 1962. In 1965 Riboud became president of the group, which also owns a sizable share of the mineral water company Evian. In 1966 he supported a merger with Glaces de Boussois that resulted in the creation of the BSN group. In 1968 he attempted to purchase the Saint-Gobain group, but the acquisition was unsuccessful. Riboud then decided to move into the food sector, purchasing majority stakes in Evian and Kronenbourg in 1972. In 1973 he oversaw the Gervais-Danon merger, creating a company that would become the most important food industry business in France, which he intended to turn into an international leviathan through a series of progressive acquisitions. In 1996, on the thirtieth anniversary of the group's foundation, Antoine Riboud announced his retirement, handing the reins over to his son Franck.

6 Born in Florence, Gianfranco Virginio (1939-) was the sales director for Maggiora-Venchi Unica (1966-1976) before becoming head of marketing for Mulino Bianco in 1976 and later sales director and head of the division at Barilla until 1988.

He oversaw the “Rigatoni Operation” personally alongside Federico Fellini, as well as the launch of the “Dove c’è Barilla, c’è Casa” (Barilla is where home is) ad campaign in 1985.

7 Born in Viadana, in the Mantua province, Elide Marchini (1936-) earned a degree in economics at Parma University in 1958, and joined Barilla in 1959 in order to organize the company’s archives. In 1961 she moved to the administrative and financial offices. In 1979 Pietro Barilla called on Marchini to collaborate with the president’s office as an assistant, concentrating on management control in particular.

CAPITOLO XIII

1 Charles Lindbergh (1902-1974) completed the first flight across the Atlantic Ocean, alone and without stopping, on May 20, 1927. Pietro was fourteen at the time.

2 Born in Lecco, Ennio Morlotti (1910-1992) began working at a very young age in order to pay for his studies. In 1936, after having earned a degree from the Accademia di Brera, he left his job and moved to Florence, where he attended the Accademia di belle Arti and studied with Felice Carena. A year later he moved to Paris, where he met the most important artists of his day. Returning to Italy, Morlotti moved to Milan and returned to the Accademia di Brera. In 1939 he joined Corrente’s group along with Guttuso, Birolli and Cassinari.

3 Born in Città di Castello, in Umbria, Alberto Burri (1915-1995) earned a degree in medicine and served as a medical officer during the Second World War. Captured by the Americans, he began painting while in prison. Returning to Italy in 1946, Burri moved to Rome, where he began painting abstract subjects on material he found in the street. In 1952 he exhibited at the Venice Biennale for the first time, and his work earned its first important international recognition in 1953 with exhibitions in Chicago and New York.

4 Roberto Tassi (1921-1996) was an art critic. He attended the Maria Luigia school in Parma and later earned a degree in medicine. In 1957 he was among the founders of the magazine *Palatina*, which he ran until its last issue was published in 1965. A student of Roberto Longhi, Tassi was a passionate art critic, collaborating with the *Gazzetta di Parma*, the magazine *Paragone* and, beginning in 1977, the culture section of the newspaper *la Repubblica*. In 1993, Tassi curated the exhibition “La Collezione Barilla di Arte Moderna” (The Barilla Collection of Modern Art), held at Fondazione Magnani Rocca di Traversetolo, in the Parma province.

CAPITOLO XIV

1 Born in Soresina, in the Cremona province, Maria Luisa Solzi (1936-) earned a degree in pharmaceutical science at the University of Parma in 1958. She was hired the following year by Barilla's nascent research and development department, where she would work until she retired in 1996. Solzi made a decisive contribution to developing recipes for Mulino Bianco products.

2 Born in Chiavari, in the Genoa province, Dario Landò (1937-) earned a degree in philosophy before becoming a copywriter. He moved to Milan in 1961 and joined CPV, the McCann Erickson in 1967, and Troost Campbell-Ewald in 1975 (where he would become president). In 1973, together with art director Sergio Mambelli and Gianni Maestri, he invented the Mulino Bianco brand, which would be officially launched in 1975.

3 Born in Rome, ad consultant Sergio Mambelli (1931-) worked briefly in Brazil before moving to Milan in 1962 and joining CPV. In 1967 he joined McCann Erickson as head of their creative group, handling (among others) the campaign for Barilla pasta. At the beginning of the 1970s, Mambelli and Dario Landò studied the image for Mulino Bianco. In 1972 they designed a line of cookies and baked goods for Barilla. Both would later join Young & Rubicam, continuing to handle communications for Mulino Bianco. Over the next thirteen years, Mulino Bianco grew to represent fifty percent of Barilla's total sales.

4 A Parma native, Andrea Allodi (1937-) earned a degree in economics in 1962 and joined Barilla in February 1967 as an assistant to the head of sales. In 1973 he was entrusted with the "fresh food" project for the Mulino Bianco brand, and after its launch he became director of the fresh food network. During the 1980s he became director of the company's bakery division, as well as CEO of Barilla Dolciaria, Tre Marie and Pavesi until 1996.

5 Parma native Luciano Armellini (1930-1986) earned a degree in chemistry in 1954 at the University of Parma, where he would remain as an assistant until 1959, the year he was hired by Barilla to help set up the company's new research and development division, which Armellini oversaw until January 9, 1986, the day he died in a car accident on his way home from visiting a Barilla factory. A special plaque placed over the entrance to the Barilla laboratories in Pedrignano commemorates Armellini.

6 Born in Parma in 1925, Dino Fornari earned a degree in engineering at the Politecnico in Milan in 1952. He returned to Parma after working for a couple of years

as an assistant at the university. In 1959 Gianni Barilla hired him to oversee production during a period of major expansion and significant technological change for the company. In 1960, when the company was reorganized, Fornari became Barilla's primary technical director, a job he would cover until retirement.

7 Today the sliced bread production capacity at the Ascoli Piceno facilities totals twenty-five thousand tons annually.

CAPITOLO XV

1 Born in Mezzano Inferiore, in the Parma province, Mario Belli (1925-1996) studied philosophy at Università Cattolica in Milan before working in advertising and joining Lintas at a very young age. He worked for CPV, the international ad agency that handled Barilla's advertisements from 1960 to 1968, for much of his career, and oversaw the realization of Barilla's *caroselli* starring Mina firsthand. After leaving CPV, Belli spent some time with McCann Erickson, and in 1972 founded his own ad agency in Milan that remained active in the industry until the early 1990s.

2 Translator's Note: *Carosello* (or "carousel") was an Italian television advertising show broadcast on RAI from 1957 to 1977. Each episode included a number of short comedy sketches, theater pieces or music performances followed by commercials.

3 Testimony from Mina Mazzini, recorded on January 27, 2012.

4 Born in Naples, Giovanni Calone (1951) later took the stage name Massimo Ragnieri. He began as a singer, and was discovered in 1966 by Enrico Polito, who brought Calone to perform on the television singing show *Scala reale*. After that his star was on the rise, and in 1969 he won the *Cantagiro* competition singing the song *Rose rosse*. In 1970 he debuted in film, acting in *Metello*, directed by Mauro Bolognini. The following year he starred in the made-for-TV film *La sciantosa*, playing alongside Anna Magnani: the experience marked the highlight of his acting career.

5 Born in Milan, Marco Lombardi (1941-) got his start in business marketing, planning media and research. In 1968 he became an account executive at Young & Rubicam in Milan, where he was later promoted to head of client services and, in 1987, general director. In 1990 he began concentrating on strategic development, with particular attention to building brand value. In 2002 he became vice-president and director of strategic planning. Lombardi has collaborated with Barilla for over forty years.

6 Born in Krailling, in Bavaria, Horst Blachian (1936-) was the creative director for Young & Rubicam Italia during the 1960s and 1970s. In 1967 he was among the founders of Milan's Art Directors Club.

7 Born in Rome, Alberto Sordi (1920-2003) is an important figure in Italian cinema. He was an actor, voice actor, director, screenwriter, singer and the undisputed protagonist of Italian comedy on film. He won ten David di Donatello awards, four Nastro d'Argento, a Golden Globe and a Golden Lion for lifetime achievement (1995). He acted on stage, radio and television, and appeared in over one hundred and fifty films, working with such film directors as Alberto Lattuada, Mario Monicelli, Federico Fellini, Dino Risi, Luigi Comencini and Vittorio De Sica, as well as directing eighteen films of his own. Sordi died in Rome on February 24, 2003. He was 82.

8 Born in Rimini, Federico Fellini (1920-1993) attended university in Rome to study law, but never completed his studies, abandoning academia to follow his lifelong passion: inventing stories and creating characters. In the early 1940s he met Aldo Fabrizi, whom he collaborated with on radio shows, as well as radio actress Giulietta Masina, who would become his wife. He then began directing films. Fellini first earned international recognition in 1953 with *I vitelloni*, for which he also won his first prize, a Silver Lion at the Venice film festival. His movie *La Strada* (1954) won the first of four Academy Awards Fellini would garner over the course of his long career. In 1960 he filmed *La dolce vita*, which won the Palme d'Or at the Cannes film festival. Fellini died in Rome on October 31, 1993.

9 Born in Porto Torres, Gavino Sanna (1940-) studied architecture in Sassari and New York, then began working in advertising in the 1970s. He joined Young & Rubicam upon his return to Italy, eventually becoming the agency's creative director. Sanna left the agency in 1994 to found his own ad company. In 2000 he retired from advertising and began producing wines in Sardinia. Over the course of his career, Sanna has garnered seven Clio Awards, the "Oscars" of American advertising, as well as seven Lion awards at the Cannes Festival.

10 Neapolitan Ugo Castellano (1939-) began working in marketing and communications at Young & Rubicam from 1960 to 1978. He worked for six years in São Paulo as CEO of Young & Rubicam Brazil. In 1984 he returned to Milan as CEO of the entire Young & Rubicam group in Italy.

11 Born in Naples, Riccardo Carelli (1945-) earned a degree in political science from the Università Cattolica in Milan. After working for several different companies, he joined Barilla in 1973, when the company was owned by American multinational W.R. Grace. He was soon promoted from product manager to CEO of Voiello. He

later returned to Parma and became the head of marketing, becoming director of the dry goods division. At the end of 1990 Carelli became CEO of Barilla Alimentare, a position he would cover until December 1995.

12 Vittorio Storaro (1940-), a Roman, earned a degree from Italy's experimental film center and found work as a cameraman in 1961. He debuted in feature-length films in 1970 with Franco Rossi's *Giovinezza giovinezza* (his first and only film in black and white). In fact, the important role he played in Italian and international filmmaking is connected exclusively with color films, where his intense and at times strongly symbolic use of color became important for narrative. Storaro had important collaborative relationships with Bernardo Bertolucci, Luca Ronconi, Franco Rossi, Giuliano Montaldo, Giuseppe Patroni Griffi and Francis Ford Coppola (who hired him in 1979 to shoot *Apocalypse Now*, a film that earned Storaro an Academy Award for best photography).

13 Massimo Magri (1940-), a journalist and film and theater critic, worked as a copywriter for CPV, Lintas and McCann Erikson during the 1970s. In 1968 he founded Politecne, a film production company, acting as president until 1992. During the 1990s he worked freelance as a documentary filmmaker and director for RAI, BBC and Swiss TV, and created numerous commercials.

14 Evangelos Odysseas Papathanassiou (1943-), a Greek composer of electronic music, is known to the public as Vangelis. He has created countless movie soundtracks, including music for *Chariots of Fire*, *Blade Runner*, *Antarctica* and *Missing*, and the anthem for the 2002 Soccer World Championships. The song "Hymne," different arrangements of which were used for a series of Barilla ads by Press Agency, was created in 1979 as the soundtrack for Frédéric Roussif's documentary, *Opéra Sauvage*.

15 Nikita Mikhalkov (1945-) was a Russian actor, director, screenwriter and film producer. Born into a performing family, Mikhalkov began acting for film when he was just 16. Already popular as an actor, he enrolled in the VGIK in 1972 to study directing. In 1975 Mikhalkov garnered considerable international acclaim with *Raba lyubvi*, and again in 1987 with *Dark Eyes*, starring Marcello Mastroianni. In 1989 he filmed the commercial *Mosca* for Barilla, which reproduced the rarified atmosphere experienced by Russian painters while discreetly imitating Federico Fellini's 1985 *Rigatoni*.

CAPITOLO XVI

1 The son of a gardener, Pietro Porcinai (1910-1986) was a Florentine landscape artist who, over the course of his sixty-year career, created projects for gardens, parks,

industrial areas (Barilla, Olivetti, Marzotto, Mondadori, Pirelli and others), highway rest stops and sports centers all over the world. Porcinai also patented the first diaper-underwear (1947) and cement highway dividers with basins for bushes and other plants (1967).

CAPITOLO XVII

1 Originally from Reggio Emilia, Romolo Valli (1925-1980) earned a degree in law in Parma in 1949, but followed his true passion for show business and began working as a stage actor. In 1954 he founded the Compagnia dei Giovani theater troupe, with which he would continue to work until 1974. A subtle and incisive actor, Valli was an intelligent exponent of Pirandellian theater. In film, he worked with many directors including Mario Monicelli, Valerio Zurlini, Luchino Visconti, Vittorio De Sica, Sergio Leone and Bernardo Bertolucci. Over the last years of his life, Valli ran Teatro Eliseo in Rome (together with Giorgio De Lullo and Giuseppe Patroni Griffi) and the Due Mondi festival in Spoleto. He died in a car accident on October 1, 1980. The town theater in Valli's hometown was named after him in his memory.

2 Walter Annichiarico (1924-1991) was born in Verona to a family originally from Puglia. Taking the stage name Chiari, Annichiarico worked as a stage actor, filmmaker and television director, and become one of the most famous Italian comedians on television during the 1960s, along with Totò and Ugo Tognazzi (with whom he often collaborated). A tireless lover and star of gossip magazines for over twenty years, he enjoyed an extraordinary career in Italy, becoming one of the country's most beloved performers. He worked in film, sometimes playing dramatic roles, together with Damiano Damiani, Dino Risi, Orson Welles and Alessandro Blasetti. In 1981 he was honored by Milan. Annichiarico died of a heart attack on December 20, 1991.

3 Born in Modena, Enzo Anselmo Ferrari (1898-1988) was a racecar driver, engineer (given an *honoris causa* degree from the University of Bologna in 1960) and entrepreneur who founded the world-famous Ferrari car company. Under Ferrari's leadership, the racing division of his company won nine Formula 1 world championships, and fifteen overall.

4 Originally from Naples, Riccardo Muti (1941-) attending a conservatory in his hometown before moving to Milan, where he studied under Antonino Votto. In 1967 he won the Cantelli Prize for young conductors, and was the lead conductor for Maggio Fiorentino from 1968 to 1980. He was musical director of Teatro alla Scala in Milan from 1986 to 2005, and in 2004 founded the Luigi Cherubini young

people's orchestra. Muti has been the music director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra since 2010.

5 Born in Novara, Guido Cantelli (1920-1956) was a young conductor and the favored student of Arturo Toscanini (1867-1957). He began working internationally in the 1950s, conducting orchestras at the Metropolitan in New York and the NBC Symphony Orchestra. Cantelli was made director of the Teatro alla Scala orchestra in Milan on November 16, 1956. He died eight days later in an airplane accident at Orly airport, in Paris.

6 Born in Genoa, the son of a construction company owner, Renzo Piano (1937-) studied architecture at the Politecnico in Milan under Marco Zanuso (1916-2001), earning a degree in 1964. He collaborated with French architect Jean Prouvé (1901-1984) and, together with Richard Rogers (1933-), founded the studio Piano & Rogers, which won an international competition to design the Centre Pompidou in Paris in 1971. After a professional collaboration with Peter Rice (1935-1993), Renzo founded the Renzo Piano Building Workshop, with offices in Genoa, Paris and New York. In 1988 he renovated the port of Genoa; in 1992 redesigned Potsdamer Platz in Berlin; in 1994 the Parco della Musica auditorium in Rome (inaugurated in 2002); and in 2004 inaugurated the Padre Pio church in San Giovanni Rotondo.

7 Greek silversmith Sotirios Voulgaris was born in Epirus and moved to Italy, where he founded in 1884 in Rome the jewelry shop BVLGARI. The shop initially specialized in silver, expanding to jewelry design at the beginning of the 1900s.

8 Born in Felino, Pietro Cavatorta (1926-2010) began working as an assistant in the Papotti salumeria in Viale Tanara when he was fifteen years old. A partigiano fighter during the war, when he was nineteen Cavatorta was hired to run the agriculture consortium's store in Via XXII Luglio. In 1949 he opened his own shop. In 1958, together with Severino Tagliavini, he bought the storied Gino Gabbi salumeria in Via Garibaldi. His partnership with Tagliavini ended in 1962, and Cavatorta went on to run the salumeria alone. It became and remained the most famous salumeria in Parma until 1988, when Cavatorta retired. He died in Parma in October 2010.

9 Born in Piacenza, Carlo Bavagnoli (1932-) trained as a photographer in Milan halfway through the 1950s, collaborating with Ugo Mulas and Mario Dondero at the magazine *Cinema nuovo*, run by Pietro Bianchi, and *Epoca*, run by Enzo Biagi. In 1957 he moved to Rome, where he met Attilio Bertolucci, who introduced Bavagnoli to Parma's cultural scene and gave him the chance to create the book *Cara Parma*, published through support from Pietro Barilla in December 1961: the first volume of images dedicated to a city to be published in Italy. The book garnered considerable

attention outside Italy as well, and was featured in *Sunday Times* and *Life*. Through the book's success, Bavagnoli began collaborating with *Life*, the only foreign photographer to work for the prestigious American magazine, and would remain on the magazine's staff until it closed in 1971. Bavagnoli also published other volumes of photography: *Gente di Trastevere* (1963); *Verdi e la sua terra* (1972). Today he lives in Paris, and works in France and Rome.

10 Ubaldo Bertoli (1909-2000) was a journalist, narrator and painter from Parma. Born in Solignano, in the Apennines above Parma, Bertoli fought as a partigiano during the Second World War, and began working as a journalist in 1945. He ran *Il vento del Nord* for the ANPI in Parma, and was editor of page three for the *Gazzetta di Parma*. In 1956 Bertoli and Pietro Bianchi helped establish the Milanese newspaper *Il Giorno*, after which Bertoli transferred to Rome to work at *Sera*, and later at the press office of ENI, where he oversaw *Il Gatto selvatico*, the periodical established by Mattei for agency employees, and continued at *Il Giorno* as a special correspondent. In 1961 he published *La quarantasettesima* with Guanda, a history of the 47th partigiano brigade. The book included a preface by Attilio Bertolucci, and was republished by Einaudi in 1976 and Bompiani in 1995. Bertoli died on September 16, 2000.

11 Originally from Bologna, Enzo Biagi (1920-2007) was a journalist (*Avvenire*, *Resto del Carlino*, *Epoca*, *Telegiornale Rai*, *Corriere della Sera*, *La Stampa*, *L'Europeo*, *la Repubblica*, *Oggi*, *Panorama*, *il Giornale* and *L'espresso*), writer (more than 12 million copies of Biagi's books have been sold in Italy and abroad) and television host from 1961 to 2002.

CAPITOLO XVIII

1 Lodovico Borsari (1858-1939) was a perfumer from Parma. Born into a modest and numerous family (he had eleven siblings), Borsari began working as an assistant in the barber shop in Via Cavour, which he took over in 1897 and began producing the perfume "Violetta di Parma" that the Duchess of Parma was so fond of. In 1920 he opened Aurea Parma, a store that sold what had become Borsari's wide range of perfumes. In 1934 he built a new, Art Deco-style factory in Via Trento, which became the Borsari Perfume Museum in 1990.

2 Today Barilla Historical Archives include over forty thousand documents. In 1997, Italy's Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities declared the archives "of national importance."

3 Ovidius Barilla or De Barillorum was born in Parma on February 26, 1531, the son of Pietro, a grain evaluator. He became a master baker in 1553, signing on with the *Deputati dell'Abbondanza*, as well as with four of the most important bakeries in the city in order to supply bread to Parma.

4 The *Cattedra Ambulante di Agricoltura* was first founded in Parma in 1892 (the second of its kind in Italy after Rovigo) with the aim of transforming and modernizing Parma's agriculture sector. A young agronomist from Trento, Antonio Bizozero (1851-1934) was brought in to run the department, and he worked hard not only to provide practical lessons and demonstrations in the field, but also to encourage the cultivation of beets and the creation of the Eridania sugar factory (1899). The *Consorzio Agrario provinciale*, founded in 1893, made a significant contribution to supporting agricultural evolution in Parma. During those same years Carlo Rognoni (1829-1904), a landowner near Panocchia, promoted the cultivation of tomatoes in open fields, as well as the transformation of harvested tomatoes into preserves, creating the first food transformation companies.

5 La Pilotta is the court services building, constructed by the Farnese between 1583 and 1611. Inside visitors can find Teatro Farnese, built entirely of wood by Giovanni Battista Aleotti da Argenta in 1617-19, and inaugurated December 21, 1628 to celebrate the wedding of Odoardo Farnese and Margherita de' Medici. The building also houses the national archeological museum, founded in 1761, Parma's Accademia di Belle Arti (1757), the National Gallery, the Palatina library (1761) and the regional archives for notaries public.

6 Ennemond Alexandre Petitot (1727-1801) was born in Lyon, France, and joined the studio of Jacques Soufflot in 1741 in order to complete his studies at the Académie d'Architecture de France. Petitot won the Grand Prix de Rome in 1745, and earned a license as student architect from the Académie de France. After returning home, in 1753 he was called to the court in Parma by Duke Filippo di Borbone (1720-1765) to become the court's head architect. His productive collaboration with Prime Minister Guillaume Du Tillot (1711-1774) allowed Petitot to impose a new architectural style and city planning on Parma, as well as various ducal properties.

7 Parma native Gian Carlo Artoni (1923-) was a lawyer and poet. He collaborated regularly with *Raccoglitore*, the culture insert of the *Gazzetta di Parma*, and was a founder and editor of *Palatina*. Artoni was the honorary president of Parma's law association, and a member of its board for forty years, including sixteen years as the board's president.

8 Giorgio Cusatelli (1930-2007), a native of Parma, was a writer and editor for *Palatina*, a historian, and professor of German studies at the University of Pavia. He was a respected expert on German literature, as well as youth literature, which he studied at length, conducting special research on fables and fantasy literature for both personal and academic interests. Cusatelli died on December 24, 2007.

9 Born into a numerous family, during the 1950s Giorgio Belledi (1931-) took over for his father Arturo and became the owner of the Libreria Universitaria bookstore in via D'Azeglio 116, a traditional meeting place for intellectuals visiting Parma. Belledi's father Arturo also worked as a copyeditor for the *Gazzetta di Parma*.

10 *Palatina* magazine was published three times a year from 1957 to 1966 for a total of thirty-three issues overall.

11 This refers to a photograph shot by Ugo Mulas (1928-1973) during the early 1960s of all the collaborators for *Palatina*, together with various individuals from Parma's intellectual scene, gathered on Caprazucca bridge in Parma. A copy of the photo can be seen in Barilla Historical Archives. (See: insert III, page 18, top of page.)

12 C. BAVAGNOLI, *Cara Parma*, preface by Pietro Bianchi, graphic design by Erberto Carboni, published by Amilcare Pizzi Editore, Milan, 1961; Reprinted by Grafiche Step, Parma, 1993. The story by Attilio Bertolucci is taken from the introduction that Bertolucci wrote for the new edition of the book (1993).

13 Born in Parma, Arturo Balestrieri (1894-1979) fought in the First World War. After the war he earned a degree in mechanical engineering at the Politecnico in Turin and began working in Scipioni, a Fiat car dealer, which he would later buy outright and develop. Balestrieri also managed Sorit, the regional transportation system, which he also eventually bought from the local government. He collaborated with Rocco Bormioli in the glass industry. In 1945, together with Alberto Zanlari (1886-1970), Balestrieri reestablished Parma's industrial union, serving as its president from 1962 to 1971. He supported Maggiore hospital, the concert society and Bodoniano Museum. In 1969, Balestrieri was nominated Cavaliere del Lavoro.

14 A Parma native, in the wake of World War One Rocco Bormioli (1897-1974) began transforming the family company – the glassworks Reale Fabbrica delle Maioliche e dei Vetri, which he acquired in 1854 from his grandfather, Rocco Bormioli (1830-1883) – into one of the most prestigious Italian companies in its sector. At the beginning of the 1960s the company had 1,600 employees, and could boast some of the most advanced production equipment in Europe.

15 Giorgio Orlandini (1933-) was born in Soragna, in the Parma province, and earned a degree in law at the University of Parma in 1957. That same year he began working for the union services of Parma's industrial union. He was named vice-director of the union in 1966, then director in 1968, a role he would cover until September 2000. Passionate about art and culture, Orlandini lent his support to Bodoniano and Bottego museums, as well as numerous publishing activities and art exhibitions.

16 *L'uomo libero* (literally "Free man") was a weekly magazine (published 15 times a year starting in 1956) covering political culture and information for Italy's liberal party. It was published in Parma from June 25, 1945 to November 26, 1960.

17 Parma native Baldassare Molossi (1927-2003) started working in journalism in 1945 as editor in chief of the magazine *Pagine libere*, and ran the liberal weekly *L'uomo libero* from 1949 to 1950. In 1950 he was hired by the *Gazzetta di Parma* (where his father Gontrano and grandfather Pellegrino had been owners and directors from 1880 to 1927), where he became first an editor, then chief journalist and ultimately editor in chief, becoming director of the entire newspaper on September 21, 1957. He ran the newspaper for thirty-five years, from 1957 to 1992, transforming its structure and turning it into the local newspaper with the widest distribution in all of Italy. Molossi died on October 2, 2003.

18 Francesco Emanuele (1896-1976) was born in Alcamo, in Sicily, and earned a degree from the Politecnico in Turin. He made a series of significant contributions that helped transform agriculture in and around Parma. Emanuele dedicated himself to making genetic improvements in different strains of tomato, innovating production technology and raising hygiene levels through the food production process. He was also extremely active in scientific publications, contributing often to the experimental station's magazine *Industria delle conserve*, first published in 1925.

19 The European College, a postgraduate school, was founded in 1988 with support from the Parma municipality and region, the Emilia Romagna region, chamber of commerce, Parma's industrial union, Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Parma, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the University of Parma. Working together with the University of Parma and experts from across Europe, the college organizes annual courses for a select group of young graduates from both Italy and abroad, training them in law, economics and policy for local institutions.

20 Arnaldo Pomodoro (1926-) was born in Morciano di Romagna. Today he is considered among the most important Italian contemporary sculptors, famous around

the world for his geometric compositions in bronze – spheres, cubes, parallelepipeds, discs – that open up to reveal complex internal mechanisms.

21 Nicola Occhiocupo (1936-) was a lawyer and constitutionalist. In 1980 he became a professor of constitutional law, and head of the law department starting in 1984. From 1989 to 2000 Occhiocupo was chancellor of the University of Parma.

CAPITOLO XIX

1 Barilla began sponsoring the Roma Calcio soccer team in 1981, featuring the team in newspaper and Television advertising. Sponsorship continued uninterrupted for 13 years, until 1994.

2 The Barilla Boogie Band was a music orchestra led by singer and songwriter Lorenzo “Renzo” Giovanni Arbore (1937-). The orchestra included sixteen musicians, including a black quartet of singer-dancers. In the summer of 1986 the orchestra gave 50 concerts in famous piazzas across Italy.

3 Translator’s Note: The “Cavaliere del Lavoro” is Italy’s highest order of merit for excellence in labor, awarded to 25 individuals each year “who have been singularly meritorious” in agriculture, industry, commerce, crafts, lending or insurance.

4 Born in Ferrara, Michelangelo Antonioni (1912-2007) was a multifaceted artist who became particularly famous for his work as a film director, and won an Academy Award for career achievements in 1995. His movies had an enormous impact on Italian cinema, and included the 1950 film *Cronaca di un amore*, which marked the end of neorealism. A narrator of the “crisis of modernity,” some of Antonioni’s most famous films include: *Il deserto Rosso* (1964), *Blow-up* (1966) and *Zabriskie Point* (1970).

5 Born in Trieste, Giorgio Strehler (1921-1997) was a successful theater director and one of the most important protagonists of contemporary theater in Italy. Strehler’s theater direction embraced twentieth century theories of drama, applying them to Italian and European traditions and created an individual style that became characteristic of performances at the Piccolo Teatro in Milan, which Strehler founded together with Nina Vinchi and Paolo Grassi. In 1990, Strehler founded the European Theater Union together with Jack Lang.

6 Mother Theresa of Calcutta (1910-1997) was born Anjeza Gonxha Bojaxhiu in Skopje, Albania. She decided to become a nun at 18, joining the sisters in Loreto. For 17 years she taught at Saint Mary’s High School in Calcutta, becoming director of the school in 1944. In 1946 she decided to dedicate her life to the poor, and in 1948 be-

gan helping people in the poorest neighborhoods of Calcutta. Several of her former students joined her, creating the Sisters of Charity organization in 1950, which was nominated a Roman Catholic religious congregation by Pope Paul VI in 1965, allowing it to open missions all over the world. Mother Theresa won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979 and donated all the award money to feeding poor people for a year. When she died, India gave her a state funeral, and just two years later Pope John Paul II initiated the beatification process in her honor. Mother Theresa was declared a saint on October 19, 2003 at St Peter's church in Rome.

CAPITOLO XX

1 Born in Pescara, Pietro Cascella (1921-2008) was a sculptor, painter and ceramist. His grandfather Basilio (1860-1950) was a painter, his father Tommaso (1890-1968) was a painter and ceramist, and his uncle Michele (1892-1989) was a painter. Cascella became interested in art at a very young age, moving to Rome in 1938 to attend the Accademia di Bella Arti, where he studied ceramics. After the war he began working in sculpture, influenced by his friendship with the artist Sebastian Matta (1911-2002). He designed the Auschwitz Monument, participated in the Venice Biennale, and created the Milanese monument to Mazzini (1970), the first in a vast series of large monumental works Cascella created in Italy and abroad. He died in Pietrasanta, in the Lucca province, on May 18, 2008. Pietro Cascella created the large piazza-sculpture *Campi di grano* (Fields of Wheat) for Barilla's Pedrignano facilities, as well as *Cento anni di lavoro* (1982), all the benches in the monument area, the sculpture *Grano* (1974) and the circular fountain outside the office building commissioned by Guido, Luca and Paolo Barilla in (1994). Cascella also created the monument in Via Emilia (1990) that Pietro Barilla donated to the city of Parma, after which it was placed in piazzale Santa Croce.

2 Born in Barberino del Mugello, Giuliano Vangi (1931-) studied at the Accademia di belle Arti in Florence, and began teaching at the art institute in Pesaro in 1950. He moved to Brazil in 1959, where he concentrated on abstract art. In 1962 Vangi returned to Italy, living first in Varese, then in Pesaro, and dedicating himself entirely to sculpture and sacred artwork. He realized numerous monuments for prestigious locations, including the statue of San Giovanni Battista in Florence, the new presbytery for the cathedral of Padua, the new altar for the Duomo in Pisa, the new entry-way-sculpture *Varcare la soglia* at the Vatican Museums, and the ambo for the church of Padre Pio in San Giovanni Rotondo.

3 The sculpture *Il nodo* (1993) is made of steel and was cast at the foundry in Ver-rès, in the Aosta province. It was exhibited as part of the exhibition “The Barilla Collection of Modern Art,” which Pietro Barilla held at the Magnani Rocca foundation, and then placed on permanent display on the grounds a Pedrignano, at the center of the piazza that provides access to Barilla’s office buildings.

4 Born in the Catania province, Francesco Messina (1900-1995) grew up in Genoa and moved to Milan when he was 32. He debuted at the Venice Biennale in 1922. In 1934 Messina won the sculpture department at the Accademia di Brera in Milan, which he would run from 1936 to 1944. Sent away following the Liberation, Messina returned to the department in 1947. Some of his most prestigious artworks include *Santa Caterina da Siena* in Castel Sant’Angelo (1962); *Cavallo morente*, located outside Italy’s national RAI television headquarters in Rome (1966), the *Monumento a Pio XII* in St. Peter’s (1963), and the *Via Crucis* in San Giovanni Rotondo (1968-1980).

5 Born in Mazara del Vallo, in the Trapani province, Pietro Consagra (1920-2005) studied at the Accademia di belle Arti in Palermo before moving to Rome in 1944, where he worked in the studios of sculptor Marino Mazzacurati (1907-1969) and painter Renato Guttuso (1911-1987). In 1947 he joined Gruppo Forma 1, which theorized the lesson of abstraction. In 1978 he was one of the promoters of the Matera Charter, which called for safeguarding Italy’s historical centers. Consagra earned a gold medal of merit for culture and art, awarded by Italy’s prime minister. He was also a writer and critic, and collaborated with numerous art magazines.

6 “Il Neorealism cinematografico” was a convention concentrating on neorealism in film held in Parma at the Circolo di Lettura e Conversazione from December 3rd to the 5th, 1953. Pietro Barilla financed the entire convention.

7 Born in Rome, Titina Maselli (1924-2005) studied classics before dedicated herself to painting with encouragement from her father, an art critic. In 1950 she debuted at the Venice Biennale. In 1952 Maselli moved to New York, where she worked for three years before moving to Austria until 1958 and then returning to Italy. In 1963 she began painting large-scale abstract paintings in black and white, similar to those that appear in the Barilla *carosello* directed by Valerio Zurlini. Maselli died in Rome in 2005.

8 Bologna native Giorgio Morandi (1890-1964) was a painter and engraver, and one of the protagonists of twentieth-century Italian painting. He is particular famous for his still lifes and paintings of bottles. There is a museum dedicated to the works of this reserved, well-mannered artist in Bologna, including reconstructions of his atelier and artworks donated by his family.

9 Milanese native Virginio “Gino” Ghiringhelli (1898-1964) studied at the Brera academy prior to the First World War. In 1930, together with his brothers Giuseppe and Livio and his friend Daniele Roma, Ghiringhelli bought the P.M. Bardi art gallery in via Brera, renaming it “Il Milione” (One Million) on suggestion by critic Edoardo Persico (1900-1936). The gallery concentrated on emerging artists, becoming a point of reference for international art in Italy during the 1930s, 1950s and 1960s.

10 Born in Bagheria, in the Palermo province, Renato Guttuso (1911-1987) studied art criticism in Palermo and Naples, and later trained as a painter in Milan and Rome during the 1930s. Guttuso’s style, influenced by the years of war and fascism, was characterized by violent expressionism and social protest. He would later move to cubism, and ultimately develop his own personal style, becoming one of the main exponents of Italian contemporary art. Guttuso was made a senator of the Italian Republic, elected as a member of the communist party, from 1976 to 1983.

11 Giacomo “Manzù” Manzoni (1908-1991) was born in Bergamo to a large, poor family. He left school at a young age to work with craftsmen and engravers, learning the tricks of the trade. After serving in the military, in 1929 he moved to Paris, then returned to Milan, Italy where he began his artistic activities. In 1940 he earned a job teaching sculpture at the Accademia di Brera, bought fought with the administration and transferred to Albertina in Turin. After WWII he returned to Brera, where he taught until 1954, then at the Sommerakademie in Salzburg until 1960. In Salzburg he created the *Porta dell’Amore* for the Duomo, and met Inge Schabel, who would become his life companion and favorite model. A personal friend of Pope John XXIII, in 1964 Manzoni completed the *Porta della Morte* for St. Peter’s cathedral in Rome. In 1979 he donated all his artwork to the Italian state. Manzù is considered one of the most important sculptors of the 1900s.

12 Born in Dublin to English parents, Francis Bacon (1909-1992) moved to London when he was 16, and later to Berlin. He returned to London and began painting in 1929, highlighting the atrocities of the human condition through his portrayal of distorted, tortured figures. His work, characterized by powerful expressionism and disfigured bodies and faces, influenced generations of artists who followed him.

13 Born in Lessines, in Belgium, René François Ghislain Magritte (1898-1967) studied at the Brussels Academy before becoming active in avant-garde movements of the 1900s. He eventually joined the surrealist movement, of which he is considered one of the most famous exponents. After spending several years in Paris and London, Magritte returned home, where he produced artworks characterized by irrationality, mystery and especially man’s bewilderment in a world full of images and symbols. In

the last years of his life, the artist spent a great deal of time in Italy. Magritte died on August 15, 1967 in Brussels.

14 Born in Brühl, in Germany, Max Ernst (1891-1976) studied philosophy, psychiatry and art history in Bonn before he began painting, discovering his true calling as an artist. In 1912 he exhibited artworks in Cologne, and two years later met the painter and poet Hans Arp (1887-1966), who encouraged him to embrace Dadaism. Ernst fought in the First World War, and was discharged in 1917 for numerous wounds. After discovering the paintings of Giorgio De Chirico, Ernst began created lithographs and collages, abandoned Dadaism and moved to Paris, where he perfected the *frottage* painting technique and signed the surrealism manifesto, though he interpreted it in an entirely individual manner. Imprisoned at the outbreak of WWII, Ernst managed to escape to the US, where he remained until 1953 before returning to Paris.

15 English painter Edward Coley Burne-Jones (1833-1898) was the son of an engraver who became one of the main protagonists of the Pre-Raphaelites. During his early period, Burne-Jones's art was heavily influenced by Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882) and Italian Renaissance art, especially works by Botticelli, Ghirlandaio and Michelangelo, which Burne-Jones blended with romantic influences. The subjects he painted most often included classical, Norse and medieval mythology, rendered with a virtuosity of form that was a prelude to art nouveau. In 1885 Burne-Jones was nominated a member of the Royal Academy.

16 Born in Volos, Greece, Giorgio De Chirico (1888-1978) studied painting at the Politecnico in Athens, the Accademia in Florence and, beginning in 1906, at the Academy in Munich. After living in Milan and Florence, in 1911 he joined his brother Andrea (in art Alberto Savinio, 1891-1952) in Paris, where De Chirico met the most important artists of his day. His metaphysical style began to be recognized, and he started painting his first mannequins. A volunteer during World War One, he was sent to Ferrara. His painting changed, with still lifes and geometric symbols taking the place of large, sunlit plazas. De Chirico died in Rome on November 20, 1978.

17 Born in Siena, Mino Maccari (1898-1989) was a volunteer during World War One and then earned a law degree in 1920 and began working as a lawyer while dedicating himself to painting in his free time. In 1922 he participated in the March on Rome. In 1924 he began collaborating with *Il Selvaggio*, becoming director from 1926 to 1940 after leaving his law practice. Meanwhile Maccari began exhibiting his artwork and, beginning in 1930, working at *La Stampa*, a Turin-based newspaper run by Curzio Malaparte (1898-1957), as well as collaborating with numerous art and literature magazines. An established writer, editor and journalist, following the end of

World War Two, Maccari's painting began to earn recognition as well. In 1962 he was nominated president of the Accademia di San Luca in Rome. Maccari died in Rome on June 16, 1989. He was 90.

18 Born the son of Norman farmers, Fernand Léger (1881-1955) moved to Paris in 1900 to work in an architecture studio and study at the school of decorative arts. During the First World War he fought at Verdun, where he was poisoned by gas and had to be hospitalized for a lengthy period. After the war he concentrated on painting and creating mural compositions, tapestries, mosaics, sculpture and artistic ceramics. He also collaborated with theater set designers and costume designers. Following the end of the Second World War, Léger dedicated himself to painting series *Constructors* and *Circus*. Léger died in Gif-sur-Yvette on August 17, 1955.

19 Born the son of a mining engineer in Yorkshire, Henry Moore (1898-1986) became famous for his large-scale, abstract bronze sculpture – influenced by primitive and tribal art – and for his square marble statues.

20 Born in Amsterdam, Bob Noorda (1927-2010) was a Dutch designer who became a naturalized Italian citizen in Milan in 1957. Beginning in the 1960s, Noorda was one of the main protagonists of a renaissance in Italian graphic design, the creator of numerous brand logos and the graphic designer for a number of major companies, including work for publishing. Noorda was a five-time winner of the Compasso d'Oro.

21 Umberto Boccioni (1882-1916) was one of the most important exponents of Italian futurism. Born in Reggio Calabria to a family from Romagna, the Boccioni family moved often around Italy as the painter's father, a government functionary, was transferred. In 1901 Boccioni met Gino Severini (1883-1966) in Rome, and often visited the studios of painter Giacomo Balla, a proponent of divisionism (1871-1958) and Mario Sironi (1885-1961). He visited Paris and Russia, enrolled in the Accademia di Venezia (1907) and ultimately moved to Milan, where his mother was living. There he met Filippo Tommaso Marinetti (1876-1944), together with whom he and Carlo Carrà (1881-1966), Balla and Severini would write the *Futurist Painters' Manifesto*. A dedicated interventionist, in 1915 Boccioni enlisted in the army together with other Futurist artists. He died in an accident, falling from a horse in Chievo on August 17, 1916.

22 Born in Basel, Switzerland, Arnold Böcklin (1827-1944) was a painter and key exponent in German art. He initially dedicated his efforts to landscapes, and was influenced by Romanticism through his frequent trips to Italy and France. Later Böcklin dedicated himself to mythological and symbolic painting as part of the art nouveau movement.

23 Andrea Francesco Alberto De Chirico, in art Alberto Savinio (1891-1952) was a writer, painting and composer from Athens, and the brother of painter Giorgio De Chirico. He studied pianoforte and composition in Athens, earning a degree in 1903. He then traveled to Munich, but moved again to Paris in 1911 after his compositions proved unsuccessful. In Paris he met the most important exponents of the artistic avant-garde, including Picasso, Picabia, Cocteau and Apollinaire. In 1915 he returned to Italy and, enlisting as a volunteer together with his brother, was sent to Ferrara. In 1927 he returned to Paris to concentrate on painting, and returned to Italy for good in 1933, where he collaborated with *La Stampa*. In 1934 he moved to Rome, reconnecting with literary circles, collaborating with Longanesi and Bompiani and writing for the *Corriere della Sera*.

24 Born in Pistoia, Marino Marini (1901-1980) enrolled in the Accademia di Belle Arti in Florence, where he studied under painter Galileo Chini (1873-1956) and sculptor Domenico Trentacoste (1859-1933). In 1919 he went to Paris, where he encountered new trends in the art world. Returning to Italy, Marini dedicated his efforts to painting and engraving, drawing inspiration from figurative traditions of the late 1800s. In 1922 he decided to concentrate on sculpture and began exhibiting his artwork. He became friends with Henry Moore and, after abandoning realism, increasingly incorporated stylized, elegant forms into his art. Peggy Guggenheim placed one of Marini's *Cavalli* (Horses) outside the entrance to her museum in Venice. Marini died in Viareggio in 1980. He was 79.

25 Born into a Jewish family in Vitebsk, Russia as Moishe Segal, Marc Chagall (1887-1985) began studying painting in 1906, enrolling in the Academy in Saint Petersburg. He moved to Paris, where he became friends with Apollinaire and Fernand Léger (1881-1955), and joined the Russian Revolution in 1917. In 1920 Chagall and his wife moved to Moscow, then to Paris in 1923, where the artist published his memoirs, articles and poetry that his wife translated into French. He was made a French citizen in 1937, and when the Second World War erupted he escaped to Spain, then Portugal, then the United States in order to avoid being deported by the Germans. In 1944, while they were in the US, his beloved wife passed away. The artist returned to France in 1949, settling in Provence, where the light and color inspired the artist to create new artworks. Chagall died in France in Saint-Paul de Vence on March 28, 1985. He was 97.

26 Born in Ferrara, Luigi Filippo Tibertelli De Pisis, in art Filippo De Pisis (1896-1956) was a creative and versatile artist who showed strong literary inclinations despite having studied painting from a young age. In 1916 he met De Chirico, Savinio

and Carrà, then serving in the military in Ferrara, all of whom influenced his style. In 1923, during a trip to Assisi, he began dedicating his efforts to painting, and continued his work in Rome until 1926, when he moved to Paris. There De Pisis became fascinated with the work of Impressionists and Fauves, and he remained in the City of Light until the outbreak of World War Two. The artist then set up a studio in Milan, in Via Rugabella, where he remained until 1943, when his house was destroyed during a bombing, and then moved to Venice, where he remained until 1948. De Pisis died in Milan on April 2, 1956.

CAPITOLO XXI

1 Pier Luigi Pizzetti (1910-1987) was an industrial pasta maker. Born in Parma, he worked alongside his father Umberto up until 1935, helping run the family pasta company Braibanti. Pizzetti made a name for himself by concentrating on product quality and pushing for technological modernization during the period following the Second World War.

2 The SME, or Società Meridionale di Eletticità (Southern Italian Electric Company) was founded in Naples at the end of the 1800s. Halfway through the 1930s the company's bank creditors transferred it to the newly-constituted IRI, or Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale (Institute for Industrial Reconstruction), where it became a state-owned company. When a new center-left government was formed in 1962, Italy's socialist party insisted that in order for the Democrazia Cristiana party to join the government, the electric industry had to be nationalized. (Up until that point, Italian electricity had been overseen by a number of private companies.) After the electric industry was nationalized, SME used the considerable funds it had received from the government to invest heavily in the food industry, acquiring Supermercati Gs, Cirio and Surgela, then dessert companies Motta and Alemagna. The company then merged with and reorganized Sidalm, and, in 1974, acquired Alimont, renaming the company Alivar and including the brands Autogrill, Bertolli, De Rica and Pavesi (acquired earlier from Montedison and Sade with funds derived from the sale of electricity). In 1975, together with Italgel (which had acquired the Parma company Tanara founded by Antonio Marchi), SME created Italy's largest food company. Once IRI decided that the food business was no longer part of company strategy, in 1985 an attempt was made to privatize SME by selling it off to private investors. But the Italian government blocked the plan. During the 1990s privatization finally took place through a series of separate sales: Pavesi was sold to Barilla; Italgel to Nestlé; Cirio, Bertolli and De Rica

to Fisvi (which later sold Bertolli to Unilever); Autogrill and Gs to the Benetton family and Leonardo Del Vecchio. Barilla's acquisition of the majority stake in Pavesi took place over three years: in 1991 Barilla bought 49% of the company's shares; in May 1990 Barilla acquired a majority share by purchasing an additional 10%; and in January 1993 Barilla acquired the remaining 41%, taking full control of Pavesi.

3 Born in Cilavegna, in the Pavia province, Mario Pavesi (1909-1990) worked in his father's bakery, then began his commercial activities in 1934 in Novara, where he opened a small bakery to produce cookies in 1937. In 1948, inspired by the typical "Novara cookies," he patented the unique "Pavesini" cookies, positioning them first in the infant food market. In 1958 Pavesini cookies became Italy's first "national cookie." In 1954 Pavesi began producing Crackers Soda Pavesi, then Gran Pavesi and, in 1967, Ringo cookies. In 1972 Pavesi was sold to Montedison, already a business partner since the early 1960s. Montedison turned Pavesi into a specific food division – Alimont – and Signor Pavesi stayed on with the company as president and consultant until 1974, when the group was sold to SME. Pavesi is also credited with having come up with the idea of a circuit of more than 90 restaurants characterized by a distinct architectural style and built like bridges over highways across Italy beginning in 1950.

4 Barilla owned the Tre Marie brand from March 27, 1987 until October 10, 2008, when it was sold to Sammontana together with the brand Gelati Sanson, acquired in 2001.

5 Translator's Note: *Panettone* (literally, Big Bread) is a sweet bread loaf traditionally served during Christmas and the New Year.

CAPITOLO XXII

1 Ludovico "Vico" Magistretti (1920-2006) earned a degree in Milan in 1945 and began working as an architect during the reconstruction, abandoning monumental rhetoric and revisiting rationalist idealism. He won the Gran Premio at the Triennale in Milan in 1948 and 1954, and was very active in industrial design, for which he won a Compasso d'Oro in 1967 and two in 1979. Magistretti designed Barilla's new management offices (1991), and the new company restaurant (1993) for the Pedrignano facility.

2 Milan native Bernardo Caprotti (1925-) was born into a family of textile industrialists. After earning a law degree, he traveled to the US in 1951 in order to fa-

miliarize himself with the American textile industry and markets. When his father passed away in 1952, Caprotti began managing – together with his brothers Guido and Claudio – the family business in Brianza. In 1957 he became a partner of American entrepreneur Nelson Rockefeller (1908-1979) to create Supermarkets Italiani, the first large chain of supermarkets in Italy. The brand was characterized by an extended “S” at the beginning of the name designed by graphic designer Max Huber (1919-1992). Caprotti acquired a majority stake in the company in 1961, renaming it Esselunga (literally, “Long S”), and beginning in 1965 left the textile sector in order to focus his attention on growing and expanding the supermarket chain. He created a network of 140 sales points with more than 19,000 employees nationally. In January 2010 Caprotti was given an honorary degree (*honoris causa*) in architecture by La Sapienza University in Rome for having entrusted the design of numerous stores in the chain to famous architects including Mario Botta, Luigi Caccia Dominioni, Norman Foster, Ignazio Gardella, Vico Magistretti, Renzo Piano, Gio Ponti and others.

CAPITOLO XXIII

I Alpinolo Maupas, or father Lino (1866-1924) was born in Spalato, the son of a government functionary for the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the actress Rosa Marini. He completed his novitiate with the Franciscan monks in Capodistria, and became a monk in 1882, but four years later he completed his studies and left the monastery to return to his family. In 1888, thanks to support from his uncle, Monsignor Pietro Doimo (1813-1891), the Archbishop of Zara, Maupas asked to be readmitted to the Franciscan order, taking the name father Lino, and once he repeated his novitiate in the monastery in Fucecchio, in Tuscany, was consecrated a priest in Rimini on November 30, 1890. After spending almost two years at a monastery in Cortemaggiore, in the Piacenza province, on June 18, 1893, when father Lino was 27 years old, he was entrusted with the parish of SS. Annunziata in Parma, located in the middle of the poorest neighborhood of Oltretorrente. He became the chaplain of San Francesco prison (1900), and then of the Certosa juvenile reform school (1910). Father Lino often skipped both food and sleep in order to make sure the poor and needy were tended to, leading a life that would quickly make him old beyond his years. He died at the Barilla pasta factory on May 14, 1924 while asking his friend and benefactor Riccardo Barilla to hire a young unemployed man that father Lino was looking after. On July 25, 1942 the beatification process for father Lino was initiated at the Bishop of Parma's curia, and in April 1999 he was declared Venerable by Pope John Paul II.

2 Born in San Lazzaro Parmense, Guglielmo Cacciani (1893-1969) earned a degree at the Belle Arti institute in Parma when he was just 19 years old, and he was sent to create several statues for a monument to Giuseppe Verdi. Cacciani – who is famous for a bust he created of Beethoven (1920), today on display in Belgium; as well as for his intense monument to father Lino Maupas (1929) – ended his artistic activities in 1939 in order to become a model maker and designer for Bormioli Rocco glassworks, where he would remain until 1968, just a few months before his death.

3 R. RASTELLI, *L'avventuriero di Dio. Padre Paolino Beltrame Quattrocchi: un secolo di fede*, published by Pro Sanctitate, Rome, 2010, p. 43. The chapter dedicated to his friendship with Pietro Barilla can be found on pages 50-55.

4 Personal testimony given by father Paolino Beltrame Quattrocchi, *Non sappia la tua destra*, Rome, September 13, 1998, Barilla historical archives.

5 Born in Reggio Emilia, Don Luigi Valentini (1942-) was ordained a priest in 1960. Today he is general provicar for charity services in the Parma diocese. In 1983 he founded the Comunità di Betania in Marore, just outside Parma, to host and help young people who are struggling to escape drug addiction.

6 Don Mario Picchi is the founder and president of CeIS (Centro Italiano di Solidarietà, or Italian Solidarity Center). He was born in Pavia in 1930. Picchi was ordained a priest in 1957 in Tortona, where he grew up with his family. He was a practicing priest for ten years in Piedmont before being called to Rome in 1967 to become chaplain in the papal charity department. In 1971 CeIS – a therapeutic community for recovering drug addicts – was founded, which Don Picchi was picked to run and continues to dedicate all his energies to today.

7 Born in San Secondo Parmense to a deeply religious farming family, Don Raffaele Dagnino (1905-1977) was ordained a priest in the Parma diocese in 1933. He became vice-rector of the Maggiore seminary in Parma and, beginning in 1939, parish priest at Santa Maria Maddalena. After earning a degree in natural sciences, in January 1943 he was assigned to the San Giuseppe parish in the poor neighborhood Oltretorrente, a post he held until 1975. Don Dagnino was the founder and assistant at ACLI from 1946 to 1966, and promoted the Pius XII Social Works (including Teatro Pezzani).

8 Born in Vignale di Traversetolo, Lauro Grossi (1932-1989) earned a degree in economics and began working immediately, first as a representative for Pavesi, then for Faema in Milan. In 1965 he joined Salvarani, where he became a manager. At the same time, Grossi developed his political career. He joined the Italian socialist party in

1964 and became municipal advisor in Borgo Val di Taro from 1972 to 1978. In 1980 he became the Italian socialist party's main candidate for Parma's municipal elections. Although his name was not yet well known, Grossi garnered 1783 votes, becoming the city's eighth mayor. In 1985 he was reelected mayor as head of the first five-party coalition in Parma's history. Grossi died on June 3, 1989 of a heart attack while attending a political meeting.

CAPITOLO XXIV

1 Parma native Giampaolo Minardi (1933-) is a musicologist. He studied at the University of Parma and, after a long experience at Barilla as head of human resources during the 1960s, opted to leave the company and teach music history in the literature and philosophy department at the university. Beginning in 1973 he was hired as a music critic for the *Gazzetta di Parma*.

2 Giovanni Rana (1937-) was born in Cologna Veneta, in the Verona province, into a family of bakers. In 1962 he established a small shop in San Giovanni Lupatoto, in the Verona province, to produce fresh, filled pasta, running the shop together with his wife Laura and a few collaborators. The company grew slowly, but steadily. In 1971 he built a new, modern factory. In the early 1990s he began a successful national ad campaign in Italy for which he appears as the testimonial for his products.

CAPITOLO XXV

1 In the company restaurant in the factory in Viale Veneto, Pietro Barilla had a papier-mâché sculpture of "Divine Providence" – representing Saint Giuseppe Cottolengo (1786-1842) distributing bread to the poor – installed in a special niche. The statue had previously resided in the original factory during the late 1930s. In 1999, when the Viale Veneto industrial complex was demolished, Pietro Barilla's children donated the statue to the Franciscan monks at SS. Annunziata, who continue to run the father Lino refectory to this day.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1877 Pietro Barilla senior (1845-1912) opens a bread and pasta shop in strada Vittorio Emanuele in Parma.
- 1910 Pietro senior's sons Riccardo (1880-1947) and Gualtiero (1881-1919) take over leadership of the company. A new factory in Viale Veneto is built. Ettore Vernizzi is called in to design a new company logo. On July 20 Gianna, Riccardo and Virginia Fontana's first child, is born.
- 1912 On August 17, Pietro Barilla senior passes away.
- 1913 On April 16 Pietro, Riccardo and Virginia's second child, is born.
- 1917 On July 6 Gianni, Riccardo and Virginia's third child, is born.
- 1919 Gualtiero Barilla passes away. Riccardo runs the company with the help of his wife Virginia.
- 1936 Pietro, Riccardo's son, joins the company as head of the sales division.
- 1940 Pietro is drafted into the Italian army, joining the 97th motorized division. He leaves for the Russian front.
- 1941 Gianni and Gabriella Dalcò are married on October 16th.
- 1942 In March Riccardo jr., Gianni and Gabriella's son, is born. In May Pietro returns to Parma on leave. In September, Pietro prepares to return to the front. In Udine he is admitted to the hospital, then transferred to Rome.
- 1943 The armistice takes place on September 8, and Pietro returns to Parma.
- 1944 Riccardo Barilla is kidnapped by the partigiani, Italian freedom fighters.
- 1945 On May 10 Pietro is arrested and falsely accused of collaborating with the Germans. Five days later he is freed thanks to a petition signed by his six hundred employees.

- 1947 Food rationing ends. On July 9, Riccardo Barilla dies.
- 1948 In April, Italian general elections are held. The Democrazia Cristiana party, led by Alcide De Gasperi, wins.
- 1950 In January Pietro takes a work trip to the United States.
- 1952 The Barilla bread factory is closed, and the company concentrates on its pasta business. On October 2 Barilla wins the Palme d'Or for advertising for the campaign, "With Barilla pasta, every day is Sunday," created by Erberto Carboni.
- 1953 The convention on neorealism, financed by Pietro Barilla, is held in December in Parma.
- 1957 The Barilla factory in Viale Veneto in Parma is renovated. The first issue of the magazine *Palatina*, directed by Roberto Tassi and financed by Pietro Barilla, is released. On October 19 Pietro marries Maria Maddalena Da Lisca.
- 1958 Barilla appears on *Carosello* with Giorgio Albertazzi. On July 30 Guido, Pietro and Marilena's first son, is born.
- 1959 Dario Fo is hired to act in Barilla *caroselli*.
- 1960 Barilla becomes a publicly traded company. On May 12 Luca, Pietro and Marilena's second child, is born.
- 1961 On April 20 Paolo, Pietro and Marilena's third child, is born. On August 30 Gianni and Gabriella's son Riccardo jr. dies. Pietro finances publication of Carlo Bavagnoli's volume of photography, *Cara Parma*, including a literary anthology selected by Giorgio Cusatelli.
- 1963 Pietro Barilla has his first heart attack.
- 1965 A new factory for bread substitutes (dried, sliced bread and *grissini*, or Italian breadsticks) is built in Rubbiano di Solignano. Valerio Zurlini directs Italian singer Mina in Barilla's *caroselli*.
- 1967 Piero Gherardi, Federico Fellini's costume designer, directs Mina in Barilla's *caroselli*.
- 1968 Construction begins on a new factory in Pedrignano, alongside the Milan-Bologna highway. On April 8 Emanuela, Pietro and Marilena's fourth child, is born. On May 31 Pietro Barilla is nominated *Cavaliere del Lavoro*.

- 1969 Valerio Zurlini directs Mina in the last series of Barilla's *caroselli*, some episodes of which feature sculptures by Mario Ceroli or paintings by contemporary artists.
- 1971 Gianni and Pietro Barilla sell their majority stake in Barilla to American multinational W.R. Grace. Pietro remains on the board of directors.
- 1973 Barilla acquires pasta company Voiello in Torre Annunziata.
- 1974 Barilla acquires the mill at Altamura (Bari), considered the largest in Italy.
- 1975 The company's Mulino Bianco product line is created.
- 1976 Virginia Fontana dies on September 7.
- 1979 In July, Pietro Barilla buys the majority stake in Barilla back from W.R. Grace.
- 1980 Barilla becomes the official sponsor of Roma Calcio. Barilla will remain the soccer team's official sponsor until 1993.
- 1981 Pietro Barilla has a second heart attack.
- 1982 The monument *Campi di grano* (Fields of Wheat) by Pietro Cascella is inaugurated on the grounds of Barilla's Pedrignano facility.
- 1985 Federico Fellini directs the commercial *Rigatoni* for Barilla.
- 1986 Pietro Barilla receives the De Gasperi award.
- 1987 Barilla acquires the Braibanti pasta factory in Parma, and the dessert company Tre Marie in Milan. On September 26, the University of Bologna gives Pietro Barilla an *ad honorem* honorary degree in economics.
- 1988 Barilla donates a new teaching facility to the engineering department of the University of Parma.
- 1989 Barilla acquires the brands Panem and Buralli.
- 1990 On November 19, Pietro Barilla receives the Guglielmo Tagliacarne prize for marketing. In October, Barilla acquires a 49% share in Pavesi, a company based in Novara, from SME.
- 1991 Barilla intensifies its expansion overseas, acquiring Misko, the leading pasta brand in Greece. Barilla makes another gift to the engineering department at the University of Parma, doubling the department's teaching facility. Paul Newman appears in the Barilla commercial *White Christmas*.

- 1992 Barilla purchases another 10% share in Pavesi, thereby acquiring a majority stake. On February 24 Gianna Barilla, Pietro and Gianni's sister, dies. On September 26, Pietro Barilla is awarded a Campione d'Italia nel Mondo prize.
- 1993 In January Barilla acquires the remaining 41% of Pavesi, becoming the sole shareholder. On April 16 Pietro celebrates his 80th birthday with a concert directed by Riccardo Muti at the Teatro Regio on April 15, and inauguration of the exhibition *The Barilla Collection of Modern Art*, placed on display at the Magnani Rocca foundation (April 17). Pietro Barilla reissues the volume *Cara Parma*, giving it as a gift to numerous friends. On September 16, Pietro Barilla dies. Guido Barilla becomes president of the company. Luca and Paolo are the company's vice-presidents.

CREDITS

INSERT I

- pp. 1, 2: Marcello Pisseri, Parma and Barilla Historical Archives, Parma
pp. 3 (above and below), 13 (above and below), 16 (below), 16-17 (above): Alberto Montacchini, Parma and Barilla Historical Archives, Parma
pp. 4, 12, 14-15: Luigi Vaghi, Parma and Barilla Historical Archives, Parma
pp. 5 (above), 8, 9, 10, 11, 19: Barilla Family
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