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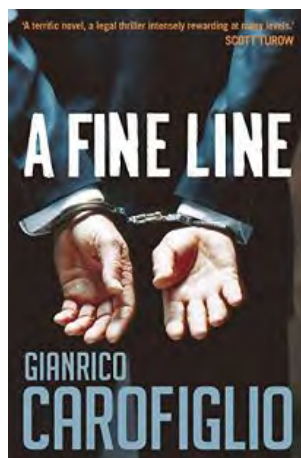
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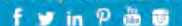
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## A Fine Line

Gianrico Carofiglio, trans. from the Italian by Howard Curtis. Bitter Lemon, \$14.95 trade paper (288p) ISBN 978-1-908524-61-4

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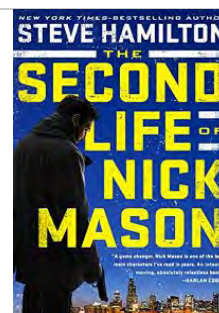
Carofiglio's fifth Guido Guerrieri novel (after 2011's *Temporary Affections*) edges gracefully over the line from legal thriller into the realm of Paul Auster, as much a series of philosophical musings on life as a mystery. Guerrieri, a middle-aged lawyer in Bari, Italy, who spends more time eating well than drinking these days, hires attractive PI Annapaola Doria, a former freelance crime reporter, to help him defend a judge, Pierluigi Larocca, who's charged with corruption. But the case against Larocca is incidental to Guerrieri's thoughts on getting older, his witty observations of his colleagues (a legal trainee has the "expression of a psychotic pigeon"), and his struggle with his attraction to Annapaola. It's a combination that works because of Guerrieri's strong narrative voice and wry sense of humor. Readers looking for hard-boiled (or even soft-boiled) investigating might be disappointed—most of that's handled off-page by Annapaola—but there are enough great courtroom cross-examination scenes to satisfy readers who want them. (May)

### DETAILS

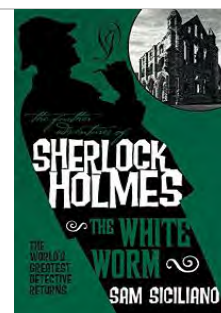
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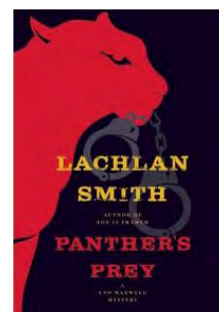
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## Im Netz der Gefälligkeiten

**Einst Staatsanwalt, heute Schriftsteller: Der Italiener Gianrico Carofiglio ist beim Krimifestival mit seinem brisanten Korruptions-Thriller "Eine Frage der Würde" zu Gast**

*Von Anne Goebel*

Gianrico Carofiglio mag seine Bücher. Das klingt vielleicht erst einmal absurd - Kunststück, sie zu mögen, er hat sie schließlich geschrieben. Aber es passiert gar nicht so häufig, dass Autoren ungezwungen und gern über das eigene Werk sprechen, und im Fall des italienischen Bestseller-Lieferanten wirkt das nicht einmal eitel. Eher so, als blicke er aus nüchterner Distanz auf sein Schaffen, und im Fall des neuen Bands um den Anwalt Guido Guerrieri findet er eine Spätabend-Episode ziemlich gelungen. Der Anwalt um die Fünfzig, erfolgreich, alleinstehend, trifft in einer Nacht-Buchhandlung für einsame Schlaflose auf eine schöne Frau, versinkt mit ihr in ein Gespräch über Poesie - und geht danach allein nach Hause. "Meine Lieblingsszene in dem Buch", sagt Carofiglio. Dabei ist das Werk eigentlich ein brisanter Korruptions-Krimi, aber der Südtaliener hat eben auch ein Faible für Helden, die im Grunde zaudernde Melancholiker sind. Diese Mischung ist Teil seines Erfolgs.

"Eine Frage der Würde" (Goldmann Verlag) heißt das neue Buch, auf Deutsch mit dem unvermeidlichen Untertitel "Ein Fall für Avvocato Guerrieri" versehen: Mit einer Schar immer neuer Commissari, Carabinieri und anderer Ermittler werden ja hierzulande seit Jahren Kriminalromane aus Italien nach ein und demselben Schema vermarktet - kein Leser kann da den Überblick behalten, und ob diese Strategie die tatsächliche Vielfalt der Schriftsteller und Protagonisten abbildet, ist sowieso eine andere Frage. Gianrico Carofiglio wird in seiner Heimat jedenfalls dafür geschätzt, heikle Themen anzupacken und dabei das süffige Erzählen nicht zu vernachlässigen. Das gelingt dem Autor aus Bari so gut, dass er sich seit einigen Jahren ganz auf das Schreiben verlegt hat und nicht mehr als Staatsanwalt vor Gericht agiert. In dieser ersten Karriere hatte sich Carofiglio einen Namen als hartnäckiger Antimafia-Spezialist gemacht. Damit gewinnt man in einer Region des Südens wie Apulien nicht nur Freunde - für die Glaubwürdigkeit seiner Bücher (und für ihren Erfolg) spielen die Erfahrungen aus dem echten Leben aber eine wichtige Rolle.

Ein Einwanderer aus dem Senegal, dem ein Mord vorgeworfen wird, ein braver Familienvater, in Drogengeschäfte verstrickt: Das sind Fälle, derer sich der eigenbrötlerische Guido Guerrieri so annimmt. Es geht dabei auch immer um den kleinen

und großen Selbstbetrug der italienischen Gesellschaft von heute, um die Frage nach latentem Rassismus, nach Abgründen hinter der bürgerlichen Fassade. Und natürlich, Ehrensache bei Carofiglio, kämpft der Avvocato stets unerschütterlich für die Wahrheit. Fast immer zumindest, es sei denn, eine interessante Frau kreuzt seine Wege durch die Hafenmetropole Bari. Dann kann es zu Gewissenskonflikten kommen - und Carofiglio spielt sein erzählerisches Talent aus: Gerade bei der Schilderung der angedeuteten, fast zustande gekommenen oder gescheiterten Liebesaffären erweist er sich als psychologisch versierter Beobachter. Und meistens steht der schwermütige Guido abends wieder alleine vor dem Kühlschrank, lässt die gesunden Vollkornsachen liegen und kocht sich tröstliche Pastagerichte, immer mit der passenden Musik dazu.

Den neuen Fall um die "Frage der Würde" und einen hoch angesehenen, aber korrupten Richter möchte Carofiglio nicht als direkte Parabel auf die italienische Politik verstanden wissen. "Aber natürlich symbolisiert das auch ein Fehlverhalten, das leider in Politik und Verwaltung existiert." Er beobachtet gerade in Italien eine Tendenz, offenkundige Fehltritte zu verharmlosen und zu rechtfertigen, zumal vor sich selbst. So unerbittlich der Roman die Praxis kleiner und großer Gefälligkeiten unter die Lupe nimmt, auch um selbstgerechte Trägheit in einem verzapften Justizapparat geht es - am Ende überhöht Carofiglio die Thematik zur philosophischen Frage nach Wahrhaftigkeit. Daher wirkt sein Blick auf gesellschaftliche Missstände stets nüchtern, aber nie verbissen.

Wobei der ehemalige Antimafia-Berater des italienischen Parlaments eigentlich Grund genug zur Desillusion hätte. Als Carofiglio vor einiger Zeit ein Amt im Freundeskreis des ehrwürdigen Teatro Petruzzelli in seiner Heimatstadt übernahm, kamen prompt unschöne Fälle von Korruption in der Theaterverwaltung ans Licht. "Im Grunde mache ich dort wieder das, was ich als Staatsanwalt gemacht habe", kommentiert Carofiglio trocken. Und wie geht es weiter mit Guido, dem einsamen Wolf? Findet er die richtige Partnerin, streift er seine Melancholie ab, wird er am Ende doch noch Vegetarier? Es hilft nichts, da bleibt der schreibende Jurist aus Bari verschlossen - es heißt abwarten bis zum nächsten Band.

**Gianrico Carofiglio, Sa., 19. März, 19 Uhr, Literaturhaus, Salvatorplatz 1, ausverkauft**

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THE DAILY BOOKS

## ITALY'S SCOTT TUROW

Less sentimental than “Inspector Montalbano”, but just as flavoursome, the legal thrillers of Gianrico Carofiglio – a former gang-busting lawyer – have sold more than five million copies

### BOYD TONKIN



In his life before literature, Gianrico Carofiglio faced threats more serious than a razor-edged review. From John Mortimer to Scott Turow, quite a few courtroom stars have also shone in crime fiction. Hardly any can have worked closer to the cutting-edge of organised thuggery than Carofiglio – author of a series of thrillers featuring the defence lawyer Guido Guerrieri – who used to serve as an anti-gang prosecutor in Bari, where the books are set. In that part of Italy, on the Adriatic coast, the mafia goes by

the charming name of the Union of the Holy Crown.

Carofiglio's gang-busting prowess eventually took him to Rome, first as an adviser on organised crime to the Italian senate and then (from 2008) as a senator himself. For a while, he still needed a bodyguard. His enemies, you sense, would not have been satisfied by posting a one-star review on Amazon.

Given this scarily authentic back-story, readers can expect rather different fare from the genial, even sentimental, adventures of Inspector Montalbano across the straits in Sicily. Carofiglio, whose books have sold more than five million copies, delivers a grittier, tougher brand of case than Montalbano's begetter Andrea Camilleri. Guerrieri also has a tendency to plunge into bouts of introspection about the meaning of law and justice, guilt and innocence, at just those moments when the Sicilian sleuth would start to think about his dinner.

Not that Carofiglio's protagonist counts as a bloodless ascetic. Divorced, and now approaching fifty, he boxes, drinks, dates and – inevitably – eats well. Early in his fifth and latest outing in English translation, "A Fine Line", Guerrieri celebrates the end of a successful suit by preparing "a dressing of very spicy chilli pepper, black olives, anchovies and fried breadcrumbs" and tossing it with "two-hundred grams of spaghetti from the Abruzzi". Although it's not quite a gastronomic playground on the Montalbano model, you might still plan your suppers from this series.

Gang crime aside, Guerrieri's role as a defence lawyer leads him down every dark alley of the Adriatic port.

"Involuntary Witness", the first of Howard Curtis's robust and flavoursome translations, explored ingrained racism and the precarious plight of immigrants from Africa. In "A Walk in the Dark", Guerrieri exposed violence against women and the code of omerta that renders it invisible in the grandest families, just as much as among slumland mafiosi. Now, in "A Fine Line", he tangles with judicial corruption and its toxic seepage not only through a single court but through the rule of law itself.

Pierluigi Larocca, a fellow-student of Guerrieri's who has risen to become a senior appeal judge in Bari is a dry, prickly but solid pillar of society. Then, out of the blue, gangsters down the road in Lecce start accusing him of taking bribes: 50,000 euros to quash a case. Larocca hires Guerrieri, who believes that the hoodlums want to save their own skin by shifting the blame. When, however, Guerrieri calls in extra help from the intrepid private eye Annapaola Doria – a fearless bisexual biker with more than a touch of Stieg Larsson's Lisbeth Salander – the story grows as murky and risky as the inner-city "Cep" neighbourhood where she lives with her Maine Coon cat and Tom Waits CDs.

Guerrieri has just suffered a cancer scare, even if his diet hints more at acute cardiac risk. Mid-life ruminations over time wasted, errors committed and roads not taken punctuate a case that also makes him – and us – tread the fine, blurred lines that divide right and wrong, truth and lies. The lawyer has heard Judge Larocca deliver a wise and subtle lecture on the law's quest for a safe space where "rules, guarantees and rights" can flourish. Could this paragon of moral jurisprudence really have betrayed himself and his ideals? And if he has, what remains of his counsel's cherished self-image as an upright man who defends the weak?

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Carofiglio seasons his plot with enough philosophical spice to satisfy readers who want more from crime than the usual procedural rollercoaster. He also stays alert to the law's deviations from reality – not least in its jargon, that "foreign language" stuffed with "mysterious and ridiculous formulas". In contrast, his own prose neatly switches between twist-packed plot-development, well-salted scenic (or culinary) interludes and clear-headed reflections on the fuzzy borderlands between law and justice. In his

lecture, the judge had defined a middle way between the formalistic “rules of procedure” and a noble but fragile “romantic idea of justice”. In his bruised and wary fashion, *Avvocato* Guerrieri seeks exactly that. So, as the jailed mobsters of Bari can testify, did his creator.

*A Fine Line* by Gianrico Carofiglio, translated by Howard Curtis (Bitter Lemon Press, £8.99)

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**Boyd Tonkin** is senior writer and a columnist at the *Independent*, and that paper's former literary editor. In 2001, he re-founded the Independent Foreign Fiction Prize for literature in translation, and serves on its judging panel each year

Eyevine

**KEYWORDS: CRIME, THRILLERS, BOOKS, ITALY**

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# Difference is Europe's dream – indifference, its nightmare

Gianrico Carofiglio

Being European means not looking away and pretending not to notice. Because passivity is the fertile soil in which intolerance and hatred grow .

Sunday 15 May 2016 11.34 BST

Giulio Regeni was born in Trieste, in north-east, Italy on 15 January 1988. He was doing a PhD at Girton College, Cambridge, and was in Egypt in order to conduct research on independent trade unions. He wrote articles under a pen name, relating the difficult situation in which Egyptian democracy and society found itself after the 2011 revolution.

He disappeared on 25 January 2016, and his body was found a few days later in a ditch beside the Cairo-Alexandria highway. His body bore the marks of extreme and prolonged torture. Egyptian security services are strongly suspected of being responsible for his disappearance and murder.

At a press conference promoted by the human rights commission of the Italian senate to demand truth and justice from Egypt with regard to the Regeni case, the young man's mother found the strength to sum up her pain in a powerful phrase, describing her son as "a contemporary young man": in other words, an intelligent, inquisitive person who devoted his life to study and knowledge, travelling, learning languages, attending schools, universities and cultural institutions in different countries – one of so many young men and women who embody the European dream – that of a continent without borders and, beyond that, of a world without walls.

Regeni's murder is an attack on this dream. His death concerns Italy, of course. However, it also concerns the UK, the country where he had been studying for a long time, and of which he was a cultural and spiritual citizen. Actually, it concerns the whole of Europe and should involve our sense of belonging to a culture that hails from much further back, from the Greek way of thinking that identified the notion of Europe with the very concept of freedom and tolerance. Europe symbolises a place – both physical and ideal – of exchange, of integration, of differences considered as assets. A place of solidarity and equality.

In 1917 Antonio Gramsci, one of the greatest thinkers of the last century, who was persecuted by a dictatorial regime and died in a fascist prison, published a magazine to which he gave an evocative, civilised and poetic title: the Future City. That magazine contained, among others, a piece that comes to us in the soberly epic tones of a great political and moral manifesto, entitled Against the Indifferent.



“I hate the indifferent. I think to be alive is to take sides. Those who are truly alive cannot avoid being citizens and taking sides. Indifference is lethargy, it's parasitism, it's cowardice, it's not life. Therefore, I hate the indifferent.

“Indifference is history's dead weight, it's the inert matter in which the most glowing enthusiasm often drowns, it's the swamp that surrounds the old city and shields it better than the most solid of walls.

“I am alive, I take sides. Therefore, I hate those who don't take sides, I hate the indifferent.”

Gramsci's words seem to match perfectly the dream of European citizenship, the dream of the founding fathers and the young people who travel without frontiers. The dream of a place inhabited by citizens who are free and not indifferent.

Being European means not looking away and pretending not to notice. Being European means having the courage to stick to your values, and not fall into the deadly trap of intolerance and hatred. Just like Antoine Leiris, when he addressed the butchers who had murdered his wife and dozens of others at the Bataclan concert hall, telling them that he would not hate them; telling them that he would not give in to fear or sacrifice his freedom in exchange for alleged safety; telling them that even Melvil, his young son, would not hate them but would for the rest of his life be an affront to them with his freedom and happiness.

Antoine and Melvil Leiris, European citizens. Giulio Regeni, European citizen. And Tess Asplund, European citizen, 42, Swedish, black. Alone, her fist clenched and raised, she faced 300 neo-Nazis who had taken to the streets in Borlänge, north-west of Stockholm, to demonstrate against immigrants.

“It's not right that Nazis should march down our streets,” she said when asked why she had done it.

European citizens. Against the indifferent.

. Translated from the Italian by Katherine Gregor. *A Fine Line* by Gianrico Carofiglio is published by Bitter Lemon Press at £8.99

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# Autor kryminalnych bestsellerów: pisanie powieści to zawód przerażający

Beata Zatońska | publikacja: 26.06.2016 | aktualizacja: 08:13



Gianrico Carofiglio (fot. (C) Francesco Carofiglio)

– Pisanie powieści to zawód w pewnym sensie przerażający. W fantazji buduje się całe światy. Umieszczenie opisywanej historii w znajomym kontekście – którym w moim wypadku był świat sądów, śledztw i procesów – pomaga pokonać przerażenie – mówi portalowi tvp.info włoski pisarz Gianrico Carofiglio, autor bestsellerowych powieści kryminalnych. W Polsce ukazała się właśnie książka jego autorstwa „Cicha fala”. Opowiada w niej historię Roberta, byłego policjanta z jednostki antynarkotykowej, który przez długie lata pracował jako tajniak, a teraz zmaga się z poważnym kryzysem.

**Jak to się stało, że prawnik, sędzia, człowiek zaangażowany w działalność polityczną, stał się pisarzem? Spełnił pan swoje marzenie z dzieciństwa?**

Właśnie tak. Pierwsze opowiadanie napisałem w zwykłym szkolnym zeszyte. Miałem wtedy osiem lat i byłem uczniem trzeciej klasy szkoły podstawowej. Potem dorosłem, ale cały czas towarzyszyła mi chęć napisania powieści. Nie potrafiłem jednak znaleźć w sobie odwagi, by spróbować. Dopiero latem 2000 r.

uświadomiłem sobie coś, co wprawiło mnie w panikę, a mianowicie, że czas pędzi i jest go coraz mniej na realizację marzeń. We wrześniu 2000 r. zacząłem pisać i w



Elity z Bari, mafijne powiązania i nocne wędrówki, czyli „Zasada równowagi” Carofiglio

maju 2001 r. moja pierwsza książka, czyli „Świadek mimo woli”, była już gotowa.

**„Świadek mimo woli” wzbudził zainteresowanie wydawców, ukazał się w 2002 r. i stał się bestsellerem. To kryminał, a właściwie thriller prawniczy. Napisanie kryminału było prostą konsekwencją tego, że przez lata pracował pan jako sędzia?**

Pisanie powieści to zawód w pewnym sensie przerażający. W fantazji buduje się całe światy. Umieszczenie opisywanej historii w znajomym kontekście – którym w moim wypadku był świat sądów, śledztw i procesów – pomaga pokonać przerażenie. A poza tym, jak wiele razy już podkreślałem, na styku zbrodni i maszyny sprawiedliwości zawsze rodzą się niesamowite historie, ten świat podsuwa interesujące historie.



Akcja „Cichej fali” rozgrywa się w Rzymie (fot. Flickr/Karl, materiały prasowe)

**Pana powieści mają gęstą od wydarzeń fabułę. Życie pisarza jest usłane różami i sukcesami, czy to raczej trudna praca?**

Pisanie jest męczące. Trud i strapienie to nieodłączne komponenty procesu twórczego. Jeśli pisarz nie angażuje się w pracę, nie odczuwa pewnych niedogodności, efekty zwykle są mierne.



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**Spędził pan wiele lat w towarzystwie mecenasa Guida Guerriero, który jest bohaterem pana książek. Jaki między wami panują stosunki? Co was łączy?**

Jesteśmy w bardzo serdecznych relacjach. (śmiech) Wydaje mi się, że wyposażyłem go w kilka elementów autobiograficznych. Z przyjemnością myślę np., że współdzielimy specyficzne, autoironiczne podejście do życia. Ale reszta cech Guida Guerriero, to jest po prostu czysta kreacja literacka.



Powieści Gianrico Carofiglio, których bohaterem jest adwokat Guido Guerrieri, rozgrywają się w Bari (fot. Flickr/Salvatore Freni Jr)

**Podobają mi się m.in. fragmenty powieści, w których pokazuje pan, jak mocne związki łączą Guida Guerriero z jego rodzinnym Bari, morzem i całą Apulią. Wydaje się, że Guerrieri nie mógłby istnieć bez Bari. A pan?**

Ze mną jest to samo. Tylko pod tym względem mogą powiedzieć, że Guido i ja jesteśmy identyczni.

**Przywilejem artysty może być wymyślanie takich bohaterów, których chciałby spotkać albo miejsc, w których chciałby bywać. Myślę np. o prywatnej detektyw Annapaoli Dorii, mocnej, fascynującej kobiecie, w której w „Zasadzie równowagi” zadurzył się Guerrieri. Albo o czynnej tylko w nocy księgarnio-kawiarni Osteria del caffellatte w Bari.**

Ma pani rację, to takie spotkania to wielka przyjemność. I przyznam szczerze, to jeden z największych przywilejów pisarza. Takie spotkania w przestrzeni literackiej są fascynujące.

**Adwokat Guerrieri w swojej pracy, podczas spraw, które prowadzi, cały czas zmaga się z dylematem, co jest ważniejsze – dążenie do prawdy czy trzymanie się procedur. Doświadczył pan tego podczas pracy w wymiarze sprawiedliwości?**



Wolę kłamać jako pisarz niż jako poseł na Sejm

Na szczęście nie jest to codzienny dylemat prawnika. Ale rzeczywiście, bywają takie sprawy, w których podjęcie decyzji, wybór między tymi dwoma systemami wartości może być rzeczywiście procesem bolesnym.

**Polscy czytelnicy znają i lubią pana książki z adwokatem Guido Guerrierim. „Cicha fala”, która właśnie ukazuje się w polskim przekładzie, to już inna historia, inny bohater. A akcja rozgrywa się w Rzymie, nie w Bari. Czy odnajdziemy w nich jednak podobne motywy?**

W swoich książkach opowiadam różne historie, ale głęboko wierzę, że pojawiają się w nich pewne wspólne wątki, przemyślenia. Np. wątek upadku i odkupienia win, który jest niezwykle wyraźny w „Cichej fali”. W tej książce chciałem także opowiedzieć o niezmiernie ważnym, często bolesnym i wzruszającym, związku między ojcem i synem. Piszę też o potędze snów i zachowaniu równowagi między marzeniem sennym a jawą. Mamy też oczywiście w powieści wątek kryminalny.

**Jest pewna sprzeczność w tytule „Cicha fala”. Morze rzadko kojarzy się z ciszą. Co znaczy dla pana ten tytuł?**

To przemyślany wybór, oksymoron. Cicha jest fala, która pojawia się w snach bohatera książki, Roberta. Gdy zaczyna słyszeć łoskot fal, zwiastuje to początek odrodzenia Robert.

**Gianrico Carofiglio** pochodzi z Bari. Włoski pisarz, polityk, prawnik, działacz antymafijny i antykorupcyjny. Popularność przyniósł mu cykl kryminałów sądowych z adwokatem Guido Guerrierim w roli głównej. W Polsce ukazały się: „Świadek mimo woli”, „Zasada równowagi”, „Z zamkniętymi oczami”, „Ponad wszelką wątpliwość”, „Ulotna doskonałość”. Jego powieści zostały przetłumaczone na wiele języków, m.in. hiszpański, japoński, francuski i portugalski (brazylijski). Na podstawie „Świadka mimo woli” i „Z zamkniętymi oczami” nakręcono filmy telewizyjne. Carofiglio jest laureatem kilku nagród literackich, był m.in. nominowany do głównego wyróżnienia tego typu we Włoszech, czyli Premio Strega.

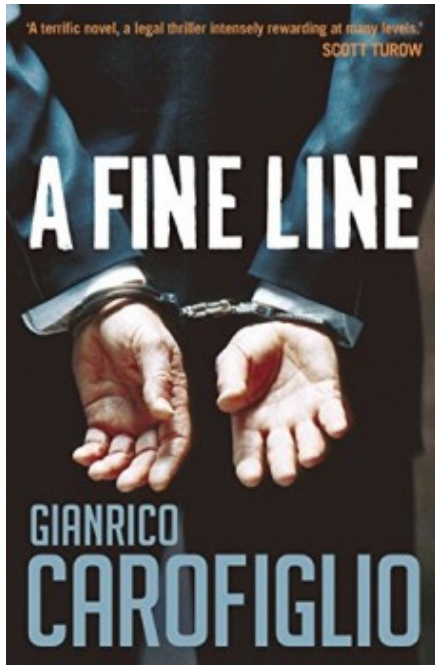
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## A Fine Line

by **Gianrico Carofiglio (translated by Howard Curtis)**

Guido Guerrieri is a defence lawyer working in Bari, southern Italy. Having just completed a successful appeal on behalf of a man accused of sexual assault, he receives a telephone call from a judge requesting his help.

### Review

This is Gianrico Carofiglio's fifth novel featuring Italian lawyer Guido Guerrieri, following on from *Temporary Perfections*, published in 2011. He is now approaching 50, has experienced a cancer scare which turned out to be false and is in consequence very careful about what he eats and how much he drinks – a significant lifestyle change for a man who has always enjoyed both. He also lives alone in his apartment and there seems little likelihood that the situation will change. However, circumstances do change according to events and something is to happen that will force him to rethink the kind of life he leads and to re-examine the principles upon which that life is based.

We find him, along with Consuelo, a partner in his law firm, cross-examining a woman who has brought a charge of sexual assault against his client. It is a fairly routine situation for a lawyer and we assume that the book is to consist of many such scenes. In fact, Guido spends very little time in the courtroom after this successful appeal and instead becomes involved in preparing a defence for a judge, Pierluigi Larocca, who suspects that he is going to be facing charges of financial corruption.

In order to find out more about what may lie behind this, Guido engages the services of Annapaola Doria, a former newspaper reporter, now turned private detective. We have, therefore, a scenario in which he is neither actively involved in court nor in looking into the possible corruption charges, this being mainly handled by Annapaola. This comparative inactivity leaves him a lot of time for contemplation and one of the subjects that occupies his mind is the position of a lawyer within the Italian judicial system.

There is a chapter in which he listens to a lecture on the system given by Larocca. It involves various legal topics, including the presumption of innocence, the representation by lawyers of defendants whom they know to be guilty and the ethical problems involved. This is a somewhat theoretical and not terribly interesting chapter, but, in addition to its relevance to what is to occur later, it serves to have Guido question himself about life.

He feels he is getting old – perhaps a little too old for the visits to the

gym and his sparring in the boxing ring. He begins to find himself attracted to Annapaola and thinks more and more about her. Gradually, it becomes apparent that the essence of this novel consists in the thoughts of a man who is gradually becoming concerned with the things that are important to him and the changes he needs to make in his life to achieve them. However, this lack of conventional plot does not diminish the novel in any way. Those passages where Guido analyses his situation are not only insightful. They are also very funny, particularly when he is concerned with Annapaola, of whom he is becoming more and more fond, to say the least.

However, there is still a tale to be told and the reader is anxious to find out the truth or otherwise of the accusations made against Judge Larocca. When it finally does emerge we begin to understand just why so much has been made of the justice system and legal ethics. Whether this will be the end of the affair is unclear and it may be that it will be taken up in another novel. Certainly the reader would be very interested to learn what becomes of the relationship between Guido and Annapaola.

Reviewed 23 July 2016 by [Arnold Taylor](#)

*Arnold Taylor is a retired Examinations Board Officer, amateur writer and even more amateur bridge player.*

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