

# BROCCOLI FRITTERS (AND OTHER FAMILY STORIES)

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Some old and “classic” family stories seen and told through the eyes of a six year old girl, Costanza, to whom everything seems fantastic and astonishing and for whom reality and the story of her origins and the Story, can be known and named only if told through fantasy oral narration.



*-Hey Cochi?! are you awake?!*  
Asks mom smiling and stroking her hair in that way that Costanza loved!

*-No...I'm going to sleep a little...*  
Cochi was sleepy, just like every morning. Her head was resting on the table and her bowl was still full of milk and cereal.

Obviously it was her favourite cereal!

The only one that she ate, the awesome JumpFishMilk.

However, this was not a normal morning!

Or at least not like all the others...

First of all, there were only three days left until Christmas and Christmas was Costanza's absolute favorite holiday.

Secondly, the previous evening it had snowed and Withe Plaince was all white and bright and sunny.

Thirdly, and most importantly of all, it was a very special day even if Cochi seemed to have forgotten this.

*-Do you remember what day today is?*

Her mom asked her.

*-No...*

Answered Cochi after thinking about it a little and wrinkling her nose as she always did at school when she searched amongst the thousand possible answers to a maths problem for the correct one.

Cochi hated maths!

*-Today all the relatives from Italy are arriving?*

*-All of them?!*

*-Wow!*

*-Listen mom...*

*-What is it?*

*- I feel that I'm having emotions...*

Costanza, who, as you know by now, everybody calls Cochi

(even her maths teacher) was very excited!  
She couldn't sit still and kept hopping around the kitchen!  
She even started to help mom organise the kitchen without having to be asked the usual six or seven times!  
It was all movement and asking questions.  
Cochi was a bit like their cat Archibald that started to run up and down the room before a storm, to climb up the walls and the shelves, without anyone being able to stop him!  
*-But do they speak Italian?*  
*-Of course!*  
*-Will they recognise me?*  
*-What kind of question is that?*  
*-I don't know...I've never met them...*  
*-You'll see, everything will be fine, dad's going to collect them from the airport after work...*

*-Is Uncle Armando coming aswell?*  
*-Yes, they're all coming.*

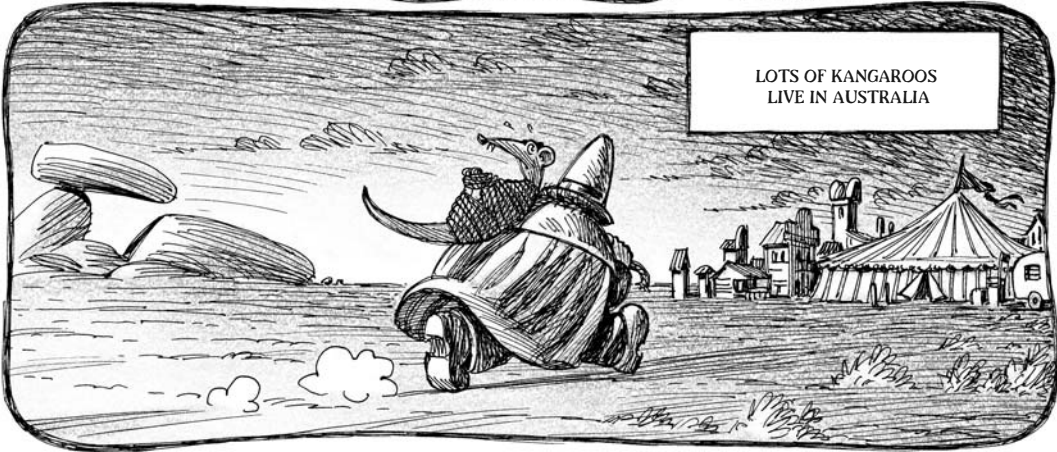
DURING THE WAR THEY BROUGHT  
UNCLE ARMANDO TO AUSTRALIA



IN POSITION...  
IN POSITION...  
READY!



CERCHI DI FUOCO...  
ALE!



LOTS OF KANGAROOS  
LIVE IN AUSTRALIA



WELL  
DONE!

VERY WELL  
DONE!

PHENOMENAL!

THANK YOU, THANK  
YOU... YOU ARE VERY  
KIND, THANK YOU...

KANGAROOS JUMP BETTER  
THAN ANY OTHER ANIMAL!

-What color was Uncle Armando's ship? Why did they send him to Poland instead of sending him home?

Asked Costanza from the back seat. Usually, going in the car to the mall put her in a good mood and made her feel calm.



That morning, however, it seemed as though nothing could reassure her! She was the most worried little girl in the whole world!

She wanted to know everything about these Italian relatives, she wanted to be sure that she had understood who they were and that she remembered all their names and that she wouldn't get them wrong because of the excitement! First impressions are always important and dad never got tired of repeating this when she didn't want to comb her hair before leaving the house or when, particularly in the summer, she wanted to walk barefoot around the neighbourhood.

-No, he couldn't go wherever he wanted to...

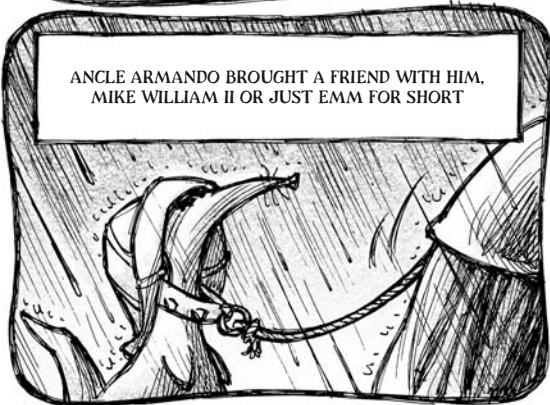
Answered mom after a pause which seemed three trillion seconds long to Cochi!

-Uncle Armando was a prisoner of war...do you know what that means?

-Yes I know, I saw it in a film! Cochi was a bright child and was



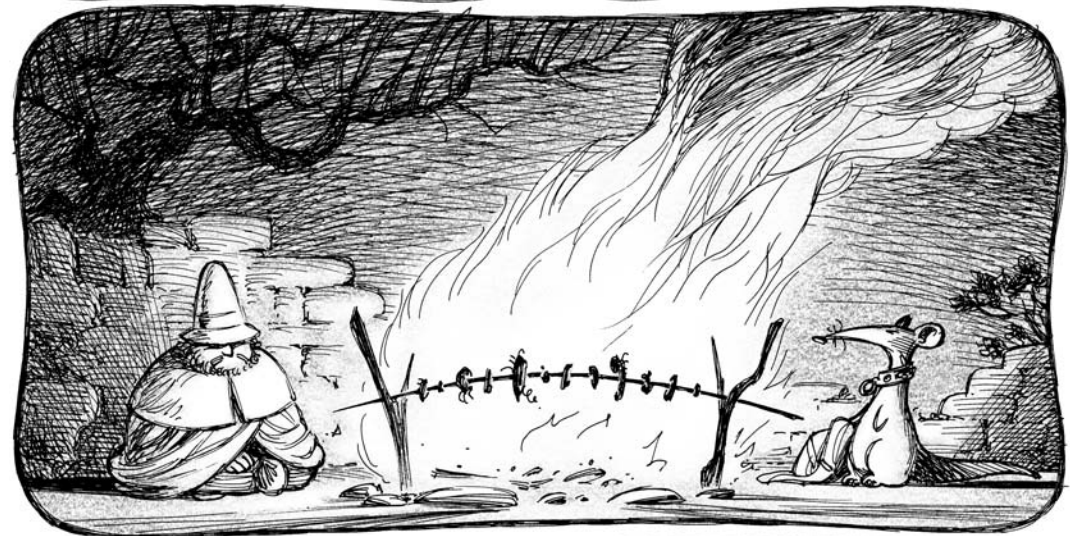
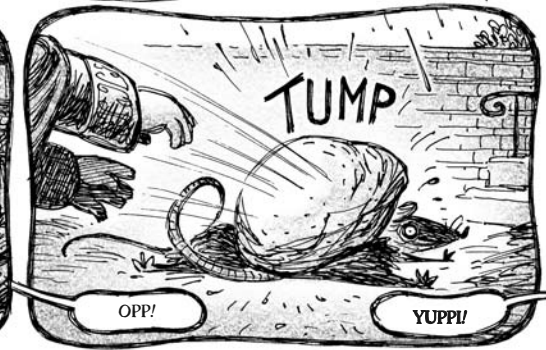
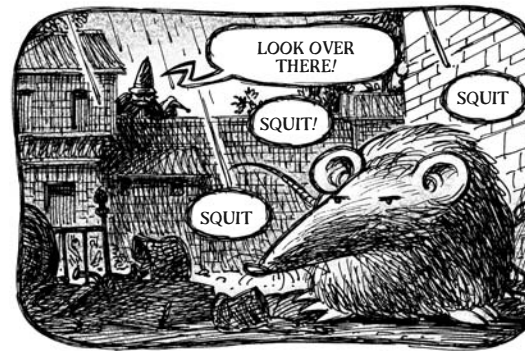
already six years old! Sometimes her mom asked silly questions!  
 -But what colour was the ship?  
 Cochi asked again.  
 -I don't know... maybe white...it was a big ship because it had to travel half-way around the world.



ANCLE ARMANDO BROUGHT A FRIEND WITH HIM,  
 MIKE WILLIAM II OR JUST EMM FOR SHORT



I'M ABSOLUTLY  
 STARVING!



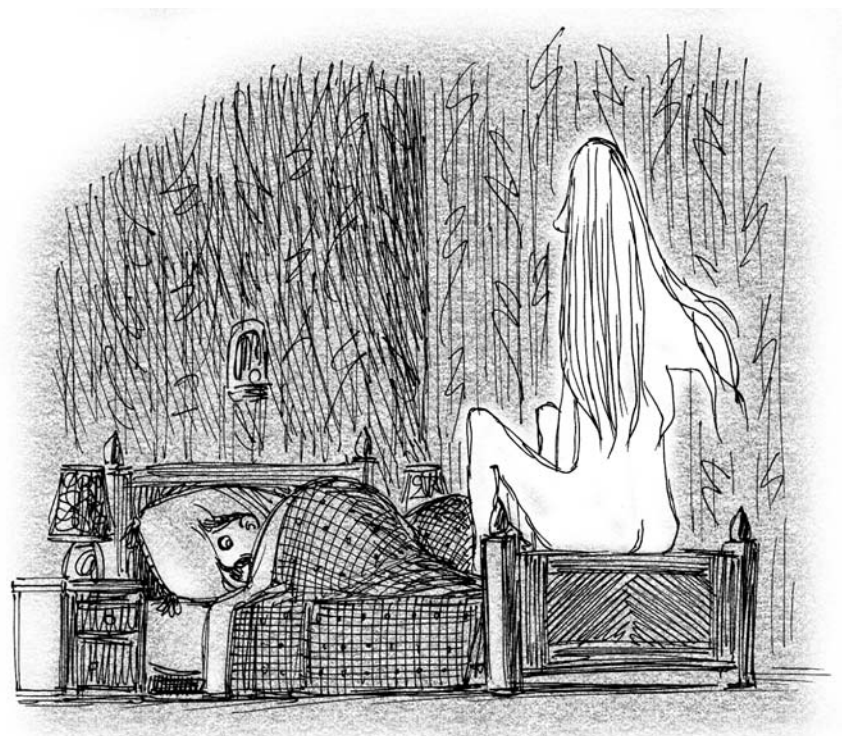
SUPER DELICIOUS!!!

MMH!

## THE STORY

Costanza, who everyone calls Cochi, is six years old and lives with her mom and dad in New York. This will be her first Christmas with her Italian grandparents and cousins. There are only three days left until Christmas Eve and this evening dad, after work, will go to pick them up from the airport. Cochi spends the day with mom doing the shopping and preparing the dinner. Cochi has loads of questions about these mysterious relatives that she hasn't yet met. Do they really all speak Italian? How do you cook these broccoli fritters? What does "family recipe" mean? Whatever happened to all of Aunt Santina's husbands? Is Australia near to Austria? What did the ghost that visited Grandad Aristide look like? If they hadn't accepted Grandad Raffaele in the

Carabinieri because of the scar on his arm, would he still have met Grandma Lucia? Why was Aunt Assunta always jealous? Do the models pose nude for the painters? Did Grandma Lucia pose nude awell? This is the Story that frames the book, in between there are six Family stories seen and imagined with the eyes of a little girl.



## THE STORIES

### **Uncle Armando**

During the war he was deported to Australia where he lived with the kangaroos and then to Poland from where he returned by foot. On the road back he ate rats that he crushed with a huge stone. Uncle Armando was once chased by a werewolf when there was a full moon.

### **Grandad Aristide**

He is married to Grandma Amelia but everybody calls her Elena, except her sisters who called her Lenuccia. As a young man he worked as a carpenter and built the roofs of houses. When Grandad Aristide and Grandma Elena got married they went to Caserta to meet Grandma's relatives. Grandad Aristide saw the ghost of Grandma Elena's aunt in Caserta.

The Ghost Aunt passed the whole night sitting on the edge of the bed watching them. The next day Grandad Aristide wanted to escape from there.

### **Aunt Assunta**

One night when she was very, really very very angry, she cut all the hair off of a lady. This Lady was a bad person because she wanted to steal her husband. Aunt Assunta hid around the corner with a pair of scissors in her hand and waited for three hours in the dark.

### **Grandma Lucia**

She had a mother and certain relatives that spoke German because they were Austrian and so during the war she was liked by the Germans who also spoke German. Grandma Lucia had a bar in Fiano Romano with her sister and



mother. At the Bar there were always lots of things to eat because the Germans wanted to celebrate. One day, Grandma Lucia hid a Jew in the attic of the bar and the Germans never caught him. During the war the Germans didn't like Jews.

### **Aunt Santina**

She has had seven husbands who are all dead. They were all young but they died before Aunt Santina. Perhaps she poisoned them because they were unkind or not very nice?

### **Grandad Raffaele**

He lived in Castel di Fiori and when he was one year old he fell into the boiling copperpot while he was running to his father and a mark remains on his arm. In the copper pot was the lunch for all the farmers which Grandpa Raf-

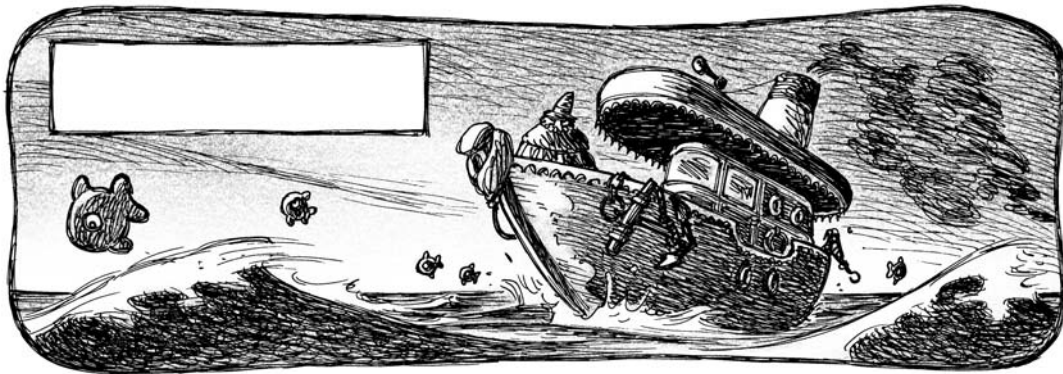
faele's mother Ida had cooked. The mark on his arm is still there and because of it he almost wasn't accepted into the Carabinieri, but fortunately they changed their minds.

An illustrated novel  
with comic pages inserts

target: 6-8 years

pages: 128 (approximately)

b/w



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