

SHE WAS ALONE

The neighbours, hidden in the night, ignore about her position. They know that the people from social services visit her frequently. Poverty has been spreading like a plague for a few years now, they are afraid of falling into its clutches and, as an antidote, they practice the spell of invisibility.

Does Lola live here?

No, it's on third C.

She keeps in vain the habit of pressing the switch. She remembers that one winter day in 1956 her partner came home from work full of joy, with a broad smile on his face and a huge cardboard box which he opened wide. They hugged and laughed, as happy as children, both of them: their wish fulfilled, the lighting of the living room. Months later, Julian was born, the coldest year of the century according to the chronicles of oral tradition.

She leaves the candle on the chest of drawers. It is cold, very cold. She turns over to go to bed and the candle falls on the floor, rolling like a ball.

They crossed the Pyrenees fleeing from the uncontrolled fury of the bombers that thundered on the horizon, diabolical and menacing, like emperors of destruction.

Elena, her great-granddaughter, beautiful and loquacious, suddenly appeared on the threshold.

- Where is the queen of the neighbourhood? I've brought you some fish. How did you sleep today?

They walked hand in hand, shivering in the snow, covered up to their eyebrows with a grey blanket, their families, anxious, behind them. Six years sharing the first words,

laughs, tears, stories, birthdays, dreams and, lately, desolation. Six years, a lifetime, six ~~years nothing~~ more.

She feels an intense heat rising from her feet. She needs to scream in order to break the night calm into more than a thousand pieces which shake the impassive cadence of the clock and someone senses that she is here, but it is so hard to breathe... She never knew that one of her childhood friend's sons was a prominent shareholder in the Southern Electric Company. She chokes. A muffled trickle of voice dies away before dawn.

She was all alone, alone in her flat and in her room, an early morning in December two thousand sixteen.

"Stories without Mufflers" (2006 -)