

1.

Lucio

Honey: So, how did you come to live here?

Lucio: This house, or Venice?

H: In Venice. Have you always lived in Venice?

L: Yes, I was born in Venice, so definitely, I've stayed here since the beginning.

H: So Venice has always been your home. So how long have you lived in this house?

L: 7 Years, it started in 2010. 7 years in this house, and my former house was not far from here.

H: So you've always lived in this area? Why do you like this home?

L: This house is really interesting because of the stairs, basically. It's three floors, and I was not so used to having stairs. It's quite difficult to manage especially with kids in this house but, it's quite interesting because it's a standing-alone home and also with a small garden. This is the home of my wife when she was a child.

H: Oh ok, so this has always been her home?

L: Not always, just for ten years when she was young.

H: So then you moved into it together 7 years ago? That's really interesting.

L: Yeah, so she had many memories here from when she was a child.

H: Have you done many changes or is it the same as when she lived here before?

L: It was the home of my Mother and Father In-Law, they basically left to us the home. We made some arrangements, for example this furniture, also this part and also this part. But small works I would say.

H: Ok, so this has always been the kitchen area?

L: Yeah, it is mostly the same.

H: And how much time do you spend in this room? Do you live in here?

L: Basically 90% of the home is in here. This is the main room. It's the worst aspect of this home, it's huge, around 130m but I use just this 25m².

H: So you have all this other space, but you choose to spend your time in here. Why do you like this room?

L: Because I love that me and my wife designed this part, and it was made by a friend of mine- a carpenter.

H: Ah, so you designed and built this space yourselves?

L: Yeah, and this part was made for the size of this sofa, it's perfect. He was a very kind friend of ours, so it is more or less a part of his life, in our life. Andrea, the name of the carpenter.

H: So is there an object in this room that reminds you of being here? Reminds you of home?

L: Many books.

H: Which one?

L: My favourite book, this one. Yeah. Something about Venice.

H: And why this?

L: Why? For two reasons. One- because it's a special edition of this book, very rare and difficult to find. The last print was 1973. Two- Definitely the content of the book, it's a very famous book. Wladimiro Dorigo, he's a historian, and the title of the book it's 'A Law Against Venice- Natural History Interests in The City and Lagoon' it's a sort of milestone in the discussion about the Venice Issue.

H: What is the Venice Issue?

L: What is the Venice Issue? The safeguarding, the maintenance of the city. It's the main important law for sustaining the maintenance of Venice after the big floods in 1966. There was a huge discussion in Venice -and I would say on a national level- on the likely life of Venice in the future- If there will even be a future for Venice. That law is the basis of the last 30 years of budget and grants for Venice, and it was this book that sustained sort of a cultural opposition to this operation on a national level.

H: And is that important because Venice is your home or..?

L: It's important for many reasons, I love a lot the book, the role of the book in Venetian history in the past 50 years. For me, it's an important book, in my interests, research, work, everything. Wladimiro Dorigo, he's one of the most important people of the past century in Venice.

H: So back to the home, who's room is this? Do you all spend time here?

L: I would say that this is the space of the kids, the room they use mostly, 100% of the time. Now you see the space without kids and without toys, normally there's something everywhere. I use this space after 10 in the night, it's my room one hour a day.

H: It's the space you use as a family, then. Do you cook a lot in here? Do you cook?

L: I prepare the breakfast in the morning.

H: What do you prepare for breakfast?

L: What? Milk for the kids, coffee for me, and bread with marmalade for the kids. This is my daily task, the task in the kitchen. Because I am alone with the kids in the morning. This is my part of the work in the kitchen, the remaining is all my wife. She prepares- 95% of the time- lunches and dinners.

H: So tell me your daily routine? What do you do when you wake up?

L: I wake up, I also get the kids up, I wash them, I put clothes on them, I then take them downstairs. I put Giacomo here, and Teresa here. And I prepare the breakfast here. With one eye on the milk, and the other eye on the children. Especially with Teresa, it's quite dangerous. She's not so skilled.

H: So do they always have to eat from the same bowl? Do they always drink from the same cup?

L: The same cup, the same thing- everyday.

H: Can I see?

L: This one is Giacomo's. It's the (film) CARS? You know it?
And Teresa, this one.

H: So these are always milk cups?

L: Yes always for milk.
And the marmalade- Fiordifrutta Lamponi
And the bread- it depends, sometimes I use this one.
And one biscuit. Always the same.

H: Just one biscuit? Always one biscuit?

L: Just one biscuit for Teresa. And she loves the whole biscuit, not two halves of the same biscuit.

H: No no no, if it's broken- no.

L: No. You have to be very able and skilled to take one out without breaking it.

H: That is very important!

L: It's a very important part of the work. And, yep. It's the same movements everyday, the same cup, the same seconds for the microwave, it's the same things everyday. Kids have 10-15 minutes, from 8am-8:15.

H: And you like that? Is your whole routine like that now? So you have to eat lunch at the same time everyday?

L: Yep, yeah, everyday. And if I love it? Yeah, I love to look at them. Because they expect the same thing, in the same way- everyday- and they love this routine.

2.

Susanna

Honey: Can you tell me about yourself, were you born in Venice?

Susanna: Yes, I was born in Venice and I've always lived here. I would love to have lived somewhere else but when I was 21 I had my first child, and this made me stay. Actually, I'm really happy of being here in Venice, is a city to discover for me and my children. It's a safe and quiet place, they can walk by themselves, and contrary to what the majority of people think of Venice as being a slow city, it's full of things, but you need to find them.

H: So you chose to stay here when you had children, does it feel more home now that you have family here than it did when you were growing up?

S: I've always felt it was home. I just wanted to travel to have a different experience, to see other places from my house.

H: What's your favourite thing about the city?

S: The colour, and the range of colours that you can find. For example, here you can go out of your house and your eyes are filled with arts and colours. This is something that you can't find in other cities. I think about one artist, Hundertwasser, who had a passion for natural material and he said that the green is not only one, but hundreds, hundreds of colours and the city which is the closest to this richness of colours was Venice, because it is alive, full of reflections. It is like that, unique! I love this part of Venice, wherever you go it's amazing - and then of course you meet people, it's full of all forms of life.

H: So how long have you been living in this apartment?

S: I've lived here for 8 years. I love this house, for the big windows, the light and what you can see from the house: Frari and the canals, the gondola. I feel like a tourist- I love the gondolas and the canal!

H: Did you always live in this area?

S: No, but before I wasn't very far away. Before, I lived close to Santa Marta, close to the jail. I loved it there for the green spaces, but then we decided to move here. I prefer here, anyway.

H: Does a lot happen on the street here? What's it like?

S: Here there are lots of things, all very alive, all the shops, even from the shop of the Bangladeshi, people are very nice and smile. I really like it here, I feel welcome, friendly.

H: Do you have your friends around here? Do you use this space as a social space?

S: Yes, my friends live close to here, then the school, and my job are all here!

H: Do you eat in this room? How much time do you spend in the kitchen?

S: Yes, we eat here. A lot! In the morning I like to have my breakfast by myself, in front of the window and I look out, looking at the people in the street. I like that, being with my mug and

looking out of the window, seeing what happens to people, to the neighbour with the same carpet hanging for ages! Then I spend a lot of time in here the rest of the day, I set and clear the table. I put music on and I take it slowly because it is relaxing, I cook and help my kids with their homework. But of course, cooking everything takes two hours (especially for dinner).

H: How many of you live here?

S: Six, we are six

H: Is it quite busy? Do you like when it's busy?

S: Yes, the thing is that I don't even remember what it means to be quiet! In the past I wasn't very active, but then, with four children, if you give me a free hour then I need to do something and not stop!

H: Do you always eat meals together?

S: We try to eat together, except sometimes when children are at school. But generally, yes.

H: Is there a food you eat a lot as a family? Something that everyone likes? Is there a food with a memory?

S: Everyone likes cotolette and they always want spelt and barley salad, they like beans, spelt, pearl barley. Then foods with a memory- biscuits, because we cook a lot of biscuits, we have done that a lot together, for example the San Martino in particular. Kneading the dough and shaping it, that's the part that everyone wants to do. Last year we made the nativity scene with dough and colours and everyone participated. When we make pasta, they like using their hands, they like the process and the preparation which reminds them of when they were younger. Another food they like is 'cappe' - this is thanks to my husband, who takes them towards Sant'Erasmo. They know how to get them from the holes in the sand, then they collect them and when they get home they clean and prepare them for the pasta.

H: Is there anything in this kitchen that is your favourite object?

S: Yes, two! There is this clock, which I bought when I was 16, during a trip to Milan with some friends. On the clock there is a date, which is 21.12.2000, and is the date of birth of my first child. I'm really close to it for two reasons: the trip, and the date. There are a lot of things which I care about in here. There is this little painting, a present from a painter friend who left Venice, and then this other painting made by another friend who drew these porcini. Then the little jar with Gries, which means semolino in friulano, because my grandmother was from Trieste, and it reminds my grandmother. Then the jar from London. I really like those drawings I made on the wall, because I made them in a particular moment of my life and I decided to cut some apples, onions and bay leaves and with the color I print them on the wall. It was really helpful, I just needed to do something creative at that moment.

H: A lot of objects! So, what's your everyday routine?

S: I wake up, and I have 20 minutes alone in front of the window, and then my kids get ready and they go to school, except for the little one who I need to take to school near Accademia. Then, I go to work, and I love to be there, even if it's not my perfect environment, I don't know much about hardware stuff, but I've learned a lot! I love my job, because I can be around people, speaking, chatting and on the days that I don't go to work I miss it, because the shop is a social space, people just pop in to say hello and chat. For example, my painter friend- I met him in the shop, or you for example! It's a place where different things happen. Then in the afternoon I stay at home, cooking and helping my children with their homework. Some afternoons I work at the shop or I give dance classes. This is something I really like doing, it's another outlet for me, once or twice a week in Treporti, which isn't close, it's means a bit of traveling, but I like it. If I stay at home I will always work, I always have something to do, or cooking, doing the washing, cleaning or helping the children with their homework, but when I go out for dance classes I forget about these things and I can do something else. Something that's mine, being around people. So my routine is this: morning- working, and in the afternoon - spending time with the family and then, during the evenings when everyone's in bed, I confess, I use a lot social networks! Because I always have music in the kitchen on the radio, then I move into the living room and my husband watches movies that I don't like- So I prefer Facebook, Instagram or a good book!

H: What sort of dance do you do? Why do you enjoy teaching classes?

S: Contemporary dance, very soft! Sometimes you see very complicated dances, mine are really simple! I like it because when you enter the gym, you clear your head completely, you feel better and then you realize that there are no differences: young, child, adult, girl and boys, good at school or not, funny or not funny, all the differences don't exist anymore, you are a group. You can find some differences, the one that is fastest, the one that you need to repeat things few more times to, but those are not the ones that you experience in the everyday life. This was clear to me some time ago when I took a class with a famous Chinese dancer, who was in Pechino Express. It was me, my colleague, a 15 year old boy, a girl from the Philippines, the dancer and two other local girls. We took a picture of us all, and looking at the picture later I just thought: look, it's amazing how good you feel, it doesn't matter where you're from, if you're a boy or a girl, if you're little or an adult, you simply feel good together. I teach a group of little girls and the other parents ask me how I can do that having four children of my own! It is true, but it's different, it energizes me, it gives me the will to play with them, to transform me into a little girl who wants to play with them. It's a magic place and feeling like this makes me happy. It's like entering in another world!

H: Which ages do you teach?

S: From 4 to 20, but I have basically the same approach for everyone. You are the person who changes, not them, you just need to adapt to the different ages and the way to communicate with them. Another thing that I like is the physical contact. Normally you don't do that, usually it can sound a bit strange, but it's different. I've found that it's important in everyday life, not to be afraid of touching.

H: I just want to ask you about the window again, do you look out the same time each day?

S: Yes, from 7:30-8:00, and then in the evening. In the morning I see my son's friends when they meet on the way to school. I'm not there to control them, I'm just looking and see how beautiful it is and I imagine what the day will hold for them, their chats and how exciting the

day will be for them. In the evening I see my friend who closes the shop and walks home, it's a window into real life. When it's Carnival there are a lot people in the streets and I look, I'm really curious!

H: Do you go shopping in the area?

S: Yes, there is the supermarket which is very practical here, I go always to the bakery, and the vegetable shop in San Giacomo, due the fact I work there, I buy fruit and vegetables there, which are tasty. Those are my three main stops, my routine. Then there is another bakery, really close, it's just opened and they make fresh pasta. So I try to go in different shops and not always to use the supermarket.

3.

Anna

Honey: Ok, so do you want to tell me a bit about you, and how you ended up living in Venice? When did you move here?

Anna: Well, I came here for studying, but I always loved Venice - even when I was in high school. I was coming here every year - for the carnival - no? I used to come here to meet the make-up artists during the carnival period. I was so in love with Venice, that I decided to come here to study. During University I was living in this house, the first house I had- it was with Olga, a dear friend, and another three guys.

H: So this was your first house in Venice?

A: Yes, and the story is really unbelievable because then I decided to move out of this house because I didn't like my flatmates- Olga- I love Olga- but not the others. So I moved with other friends because Olga graduated and she left Venice. So I moved with other friends and was in a horrible house near the Frari- very dark, on the first floor, you know it's very humid in Venice. And I became pregnant with Veliko, who I met just 3 months before we got pregnant. In the middle of University... So I remembered the owner of this house was a really really nice person. So I asked him if he had other apartments, because I knew this one had students in it, and he told me "No sorry, I don't have other properties, but if you want I can give you the house where you were living? Because I am so tired of the students, they don't renew the contracts, they are messy. So I can give you the house, but I can't empty it until September" so the first night I slept here it was the 23rd of September, and she was born on the 26th, the first night I slept here I had contractions and after two days she was born. This house was empty and they left a box of mussels in the freezer, and uh- stinky.

H: So the first year you lived here, it didn't feel like home- but when you came back, did it feel like it was going to be your home? Was it different?

A: Yes, when I met Veliko, the first night we slept together, we came here because I was living here with Olga. We smoked a cigarette on the terrace and he told me "oh my love, if we have a house like this when we are married...." and I thought- What are you saying?! I'm not in love with you! I just met you! So when we came here he said "And so you see! I was right!". So when I met him, I had just finished a relationship of 6 years, it was the first time I was free in my life, I was 22/21, I didn't want anything serious, and this Bulgarian- you see how serious we have it!

H: So you fell in love, but did you also fall in love with Venice? You always loved coming here but do you think you will live here in the future?

A: In the future, no. After many years of living here I miss things. I don't have a family here, that can help with the kids- I don't have a mother, grandmother, sister, someone to help me with the kids but there is a lot of solidarity between the other mothers. We have a beautiful connection. I like that you go into the street and you meet people and you go to the pharmacy and you meet people 'hello' 'hello'- it's like a village and so I love that, but I miss, so much, nature. Green spaces, the trees, bicycles, animals. Here we have birds, but it's not the same. We are very lucky because my mother lives in Padova and I can go to her and take a bicycle and see nature. I miss nature a lot.

H: So do you think you'll move back there?

A: We've always thought that Venice was a temporary solution. Since last year, my husband became self employed to do agriculture- he's a farmer, but only with fruit and vegetables. They grow herbs and vegetables for the 5 star restaurants. But he grew up in Bulgaria, and in Bulgarian, in the Soviet Union, the most important thing is the ground. Growing your own vegetables, your own things, it's stayed with him.

H: So did he move here for university too?

A: He moved here for a girl, she wanted to do mime, they went to Rome, to Venice, he started going to University to study physical education, because he was a kickboxing champion in Bulgaria. He wanted a certificate so he could teach. Then he decided to go back to Bulgaria, but it was so poor and corrupt he decided there was no future in that country. So he came back to Venice. He came back in February 2011 and we met in July, by December I was pregnant.

H: So when did you get married? Was it important for you to get married?

A: The next July, I was 7 months pregnant with Rosa. Bulgaria was in the European Union, but we didn't want to have any problems so we decided to get married. We didn't marry in the church, we did it in the City Hall. My dad wasn't very happy, I still hadn't finished university, I was very young. For my dad it's very important for his children to study, get a good job, have money. But I don't care really, for me the most important thing is to be happy, to love my family. Money comes! Everything comes! I've had a job now for the past 3 months.

H: So does your job help you to feel more at home in Venice?

A: Oh yes, I feel very proud. It's a very alternative place, an interesting shop. The owner belongs to a very important Venetian family. Both her mother and fathers families are very very interesting. Her great uncle was Luigi Nono, so through her I am shown pictures of her grandmother in the Vaporetto in 1918, so I understand the city more. She's a real Venetian and she loves Venice. Many Venetians escape, but she came back when she had a child.

H: So the kitchen- do you use the kitchen a lot? Do you like socialising in here?

A: A lot, a lot. My dream is to have a huge kitchen. If this was my house, I would put the kitchen in the next room and knock this wall down. Have the kitchen and living space together.

H: It's nice to have people together and talking in spaces like this, sharing food.

A: Yes yes, my favourite thing is to cook dinners, lunches, invite friends. To eat together is the best.

H: Which is your favourite part of this room?

A: The window, definitely.

H: Why?

A: Because you can see outside, I can see the seagulls, they are making a nest. Very beautiful.

H: So do you always do the cooking?

A: No my husband is a very good cook. He loves to cook, we share it. Sometimes he doesn't want me to cook at all because he is so much better- we fight over the cooking. When he cooks I always say "add some more salt" and when I cook he does the same.

Veliko: I am the cook.

H: So is there something in this room that reminds you of home, something that you've had for a long time...?

A: I love this lamp, but nothing is really special in here. The kitchen was already here.

V: I like this orchid, I found it on the street. It looked like it was dead but when you loved it it came back and now each year there are beautiful flowers.

H: So is your routine the same each day?

A: Yes, the same each day.

V: it's very stressful. Mornings are very stressful

A: Yes and that's why he goes to work very early! 7, before the kids wake up- "Ciao, ciao! I have to go! ciao!" it's much easier to escape!

V: Not always.

A: One day every two weeks he stays! First Toto wakes up, I dress him and make some breakfast. Then I wake up Rosa because she doesn't wake up. 8:30 we go out, take the kids to school, then I go to work.

V: Where I work here in Venice I can see the difference between cooking for work and cooking for pleasure, because I love to cook but when I work it's just work.

A: It relaxes him to cook.

V: It's my hobby, and maybe one day I have my own restaurant.

A: The thing is we pay a very high rent for the house, but we don't know where to live if not in Venice. The cities, Padova, the life is much more lonely. Here we have the other mothers, and it's a quiet life.

V: In the morning when I go to work I take the boat, and I see the mountains of Padova, and the clouds and I think 'I don't want to go to that place'

A: I don't like Padova so much, but there I have my mother, my father, my family. We really don't know for sure where we want to live.

V: Here in Venice, yes we pay a high rent but we don't have a car. That is another expense.

A: He thinks because we don't have a car the high rent is ok, because we don't have other bills.

H: So is there a particular food that reminds you of home?

V: CHINESE

A: (Laughing) The Chinese in Mestre! When we go to restaurants we eat something which we think we could cook better at home.

V: We only go to the Chinese or Marisa if we eat out. Marisa is typical Venetian.

H: So what do you eat here?

V: Very fast food, we are crazy for basmati! Once I made this thing, and Anna loved it, it's our favourite. Using Bulgarian spice.

A: It's our salt here!

V: Sweet paprika, salt, fenugreek and chubriza. You can make two variations of this food. Faster is to fry the egg but you can have a poached egg too. You put feta, yoghurt, the herbs and spices, and fry the egg and put it on top. It's cold, you can get it from the fridge and it's quick. Pour the oil from the pan onto the yoghurt. BELLISSIMA!

4.

Christine

Honey: So tell me a bit about yourself, your family, and how you came to live here in Venice. How long have you lived here?

Christine: It's quite strange, because I'm French, and I lived here in Venice for two years when I was between 12-14 years because my father was a diplomat so we travelled a lot and we had our home here in Venice for a couple of years. I was so fond of Venice and of my friends here in Italy that I had the opportunity to come back to visit each summer, and I thought the best thing if I want to Venice is to marry a Venetian. That's why I'm here.

H: So you married a Venetian!

C: So I married a Venetian, I have three children- they are now adults. I lost my husband eight years ago, so now I am alone, two of my three children studied in Ferrara so they don't live here, and one is here- but he is not here, he's a student so he comes and goes. So I am mainly alone, but with a lot of people around and very busy.

H: A lot of friends. So when did you move back here permanently?

C: I moved back here when I was 21 because I married very young. I was 22 when I married. So it's a long life here in Venice, I always say I'm more Venetian than French.

H: And what is it that you like about Venice?

C: I think it's a very nice life, it's not so easy at the beginning as people are not so open but the life in Venice is really something that's outside your home, because you meet people. It becomes very easy when you have children, because you live outside with the children, they have a lot of fun outside on the Campo and that's a way to meet people. Really, my life changed when I had children, before it was really quite difficult to meet Venetians and now it's OK.

H: Why do you think that is? Because there aren't many Venetians actually living here?

C: Yeah I think Venetians are used to meeting outside, and I have been friends for years and years without knowing the inside of their home. It's very nice and social, sharing, but sometimes it's quite closed.

H: So you would meet people for years on the Campo or at a bar but would never go to their houses?

C: Yes I have friends that I know very very well but I have never seen their home.

H: Really? So then here I am inviting myself inside people houses!! So you don't socialise here at all then? You don't invite friends round?

C: Not so much now, no. I have some friends that when they come they come into my kitchen. My husband was a teacher of history at the university, and he needed somewhere very quiet to do his reading and his research so that's why we never used our living room- it was his office. So we are used to living in the kitchen.

H: So as a family you live in the kitchen?

C: Yes, we used to have a round table and we were always sitting around it.

H: So do you still spend a lot of time in here on your own? Is this your favourite room?

C: Yes, yep. But it's not my favourite. I spend much of my time with my hobbies, which I do in my little corner in the other side of the house, but I love the kitchen and things like that so I'm very happy here.

H: What's your favourite thing about the kitchen?

C: Here?

H: Yeah, this kitchen.

C: A bit of everything, my pictures, my family, I used to have everybody there. It's difficult to say, but usually I eat here and I look at the drawings of my daughter when she was little and pictures of the whole family. A bit part of my family is in France or in Austria so I like to have the pictures to look at, some are very old and with the sun they are going but there's something nice about that.

H: So in terms of this area, would this be an area you would choose to live in always? Are there other parts of the city you would move to?

C: Yes because when I was small I lived nearby, and I didn't choose to live here now but it happened and it's very nice because I can remember when I was here as a girl. I have memories on these streets. You see the same things, the same people.

H: I think what's really nice about Venice is that people who live here really all know each other just because they're so used to seeing each other everyday.

C: Sometimes you cross for years, when you go to your job or just walking around, but then when you see them somewhere else you go 'Oh ciao!' -you don't even know their name! I used to cross a dad with a small girl each day for years because she was going to the kindergarten and once I crossed him somewhere else without his girl and I said "Oh, where's your girl?" and he said "Well now she's in the high school!" -it was nice.

H: But that must be something that everyone notices, it's amazing.

C: For the same reason it's a very safe town for children. When my children went off very early on their own but I would always tell them "if you do something wrong- someone will tell me!" Because everyone sees the children around, it's very safe.

H: A strong sense of community. Do you think you'll always live here?

C: I'm not sure, I'm not sure. It's not that I'm not fond of the town, but because I'm very worried about the future of this town. I'm not sure I will want to go on like that here.

H: And what is it that worries you?

C: It's no longer a town, it's a Disneyland and that's all. There is no sense. If you empty a town it has no social network.

H: So has it changed a lot since you first moved here?

C: A lot, it's like a ball rolling and you never catch it. It's impossible to stop. I know my children will probably never live here- their interests and work will send them somewhere else- but it's not the matter of my children it's a matter of everyone. It's very difficult for young people to find a home even if they have an activity that could be here. I will have to choose, but it will be very difficult to choose!

H: So this town is home to you.

C: Yes, every time I go into another town I think- Venice is best!

H: The amount of people who come to this town everyday- it's madness. You don't realise so much around this area because there are students and local people- it's quite quiet.

C: I moved here 18 years ago, we used to have families around. I'm very happy because we have a family upstairs, some older people next door. But in front- there's nobody! It's all tourist flats. No one lives there. You have very few families living here and that changes quite a lot.

H: Is it people who lived in the flats and moved away who rent the flats out? Or is it people just buying the flats to rent?

C: Buying for rental, moving somewhere and renting it out. You earn money without doing anything.

H: I really wouldn't have expected that from this area at all.

C: I think maybe in all the buildings from here to there there are maybe five families. People who inherit a flat, they will never move here, they will rent it. They won't rent to Venetians, people who want to live here for a couple of years- students maybe.

H: Because they can get so much more money. Well that changes a lot in a community, the shops..

C: Yes, it changes a lot, it's a problem with all towns I think. But that's not the main problem, Venetians are fully responsible for this choice. That's the problem, at the origin, the flats belonged to the Venetians, and if they choose this easy way to earn money it is their fault. It's not easy, we all have a family, but the easy way to make money has caused this. Venetians are now very worried but it's too late! Everyone thinks it's a political choice, and for the election

you never know how things are moving, but I think it's also a social choice. If you can choose to rent your home to a young family it's different to giving it to an agency to rent for tourism.

H: Do you cook a lot in here?

C: Yes, I love cooking now less than before, when there were 5 of us. I make my own bread, I cannot change anymore. My bread is my bread, and my own jams as well. It's something social- I used to only give gifts I'd made like my jams, it's nice to bring something you've made.

H: So what does your daily routine look like? Do you do things the same most days?

C: Yes nearly, I have a long breakfast in my kitchen.

H: What do you have?

C: Bread and jam! Now I eat very little, salads and things like that. I like when we have dinner, we stay here quite long just chatting. My husband used to cook, it was something everyone was involved in- it wasn't just me.

H: What's your favourite food?

C: Risotto- onions, any kind of vegetable you reach first in the fridge, good rice, water and parmesan.

H: Do you do all your shopping around here?

C: Yes, I don't like supermarkets, I would love to have things direct from the producer but we don't have that luxury in Venice, we have the boat full of vegetables. We have a garden behind a church nearby, and it was left full of rubbish but we converted it into a garden with vegetables and everyone can go there- the Carmini church. Venetians don't like very much to get dirt on their hands but the children really enjoy it. I have a lot of fun here. I know I would never manage to have a garden here in Venice, but I've managed to get a garden and everyone works in it!

H: So are there any rules you have in your house?

C: Simple rules, I don't like to keep all the plates waiting to be washed. I used to eat and then wash. And I don't like to move the timetable: 7:30 for breakfast, 1:30 for lunch and 8pm for dinner. And even with my children when they wanted to sleep, It's not like that here! 9:30- the kitchen is closed! Now they always say "It was so hard for us, we couldn't sleep like our friends did!"

H: Did you used to eat all of your meals together?

C: Yes, we tried, sometimes someone was late but normally we would eat together. My son was with a family in France for one year, he was very upset because they didn't used to eat lunch or dinner together. I think that's terrible.

H: I think it's important for everyone to come together and stop for an hour just to sit down and relax, enjoy eating. Quite a lot of families in the UK don't even have kitchen tables anymore.

C: With that family in France they had a small table next to the wall, and so if you ate there, you ate looking at the wall! Like in a bar! When I am alone I eat with the radio.

H: What do you listen to on the radio?

C: At lunchtime I listen to something about the opera, on Radio Tre.

H: Could you show me some of your favourite things from the kitchen?

C: This is from Alsace in France, it's the region of my family in France and I like the colour. When I prepare something normally I put it in this bowl, I hope to not chip it too much. I used this for apples, when you cook them with cardamon and cinnamon in winter? Italians don't like that at all, they say if you cook apples you must be feeling sick. In Italy cooked apples are for sick people. The things that you eat, in different places have different connotations. Here you would never find Rhubarb, which we use a lot in France. When you choose something it means something, but also it changes.

H: Is there a food that reminds you of childhood? Or is that food the apples?

C: Yes, that, or Quiche Lorraine, my grandmother used to cook it.

H: Do you eat from the same plate each day?

C: Yes! Nearly always the same plate. With my parents I travelled quite a lot, I lived in Japan when I was small, and some of my things are Japanese. I love this plate. This was my plate when I was a girl. Some things remind me of Japan so I bought them. And this- my Grandmother used this teapot. I found similar things on the small markets but I like this, I like the strange noise, I like remembering my Grandmother.

H: Are there any household tasks that you enjoy?

C: There's nothing really awful to do, I like my home and I like taking care of it. I like to see everything clean, and it's nice to have to do it. Ironing sometimes. My mother always said that you need to do things at home because it keeps you trained. She's 89 now, and she says "if I couldn't do my own cleaning it would be awful because I couldn't move anywhere" I think the way you care for your home goes along with your family and your life, part of it. I know there are a lot of people with too much work, and too much to do for the family and that makes things difficult but otherwise I think it's nice to take care of your home. But maybe it's also the kind of life we have here, I'm not sure if when you live in a big town like London or Paris and your life is full of noise and things there's anything you can do to relax. I wouldn't like someone to do these things for me, if I had the money to pay someone to clean, it's something that's mine and I like to do it. My mother used to have a maid, she couldn't do everything, it was impossible. But I like to do it.

5.

Jane

Honey: So would you like to tell me a bit about yourself, how you came to live in Venice?

Jane: OK, so I was working in Milan, in environmental economics, and I had been there about a year and a half on a fellowship, and just about the time I was thinking it's a little too crazy here, I'll never get anything done, I'd better go back to England, was when I met my now husband- and he was living in Venice. So then we went on holiday in the summer, and then he said to me after the summer it was getting a little too difficult, we'd see each other on weekends then once when we could we'd meet on a Wednesday, he'd take the train to Verona and I'd take it from Milan and all these things- we'd miss the last train home again- and it was just so complicated. So then he said- "Why don't you move to Venice" and I said alright! He said "You know, if you move to Venice we better get married or else people will talk badly about you" - so I said oh alright. So that's how I ended up here. We got married at a simple Chelsea registry office on the Kings Road and then I came to live in Venice, and a little while later when we were in Venice his mother said "Oh you know we better have a reception for your wedding for you or else people will think badly" and by then our daughter was on the way, and then our son, and then another son, and then another son. So this house has 6 people living in it, plus a lodger, but she teaches at the university in Bologna so she just comes and goes whenever she likes, she's not here a lot. And my two oldest children aren't here a lot because they are both at university, one in Bologna and one in Leeds. I founded an NGO called We Are Here Venice about saving Venice but saving Venice in it's complete context, so one of the important aspect is the connections between the city and the lagoon. The health of the city depends on the health of the lagoon, and not a lot of people are aware of that. And the other thing is- what makes Venice, Venice- is it's people, so I'm not surprised that you're doing this project and looking at people who live in Venice. But one thing that we're working on in a research context is trying to characterise the difference between somebody who lives here all the time like us and our family, and the apartment in the building opposite which is now 100% used as tourist accommodation, and what does that mean for the city, for the building, for the neighbours, for the state of Venice- you know, having different people coming every 2/3 days. And it's not quite the same, and how can we characterise why it's not quite the same to demand the kind of policy responses to put it back to how it was.

H: So you're working to reinstate a sense of community, that's really interesting.

J: Yes, my work is more think-tank type work, trying to explain things, and communicate things. There's not so much that I can do as an organisation if there isn't the policy response, but obviously sometimes the policy response needs to be achieved via direct action, like a foot in the door type thing, sometimes we do small little pilot projects to show that actually it can make a big difference. We founded a nursery school in an abandoned park - that I did as a mother, not as a founder of We Are Here Venice.

H: So it's a cause you care about and it's something that you wanted to do. Just being proactive.

J: Definitely being proactive, in fact often I say that I patch up holes I do the things that nobody else does, because if other people did this stuff then I'd be really happy staying at home. I love sewing, I could be a better cook, there's no mother that doesn't want to spend more time with her kids but then I end up doing this stuff because I care about it and there's nobody else doing it, so then I do it. That's my approach, it's not like I want to be famous, I don't do it for myself I do it because it needs doing. I couldn't live with myself letting the bad

things happen all around. That's not to say that I've at all been successful, in that there are still cruise ships in the city for example.

H: From the apartment I'm staying in you can see Guidecca, and I was looking out the other morning, it was really early, the sun was coming up, and I realised the buildings I was looking at were moving, and they weren't actually buildings at all but a cruise ship- and it's so much bigger than the houses!

J: You see that from here! Can you see through that window the bell tower of San Marco? Sometimes I see this yellow rectangle moving past, and it's the chimney. It's mad. It's mad that they come here.

H: So when you first visited Venice, did you fall in love with the city, or the person who lived in Venice?

J: Two separate things, I'd been to Venice a lot before I met my husband because my Mother bought a house here. So I came as a visitor to Venice, I just liked being here. Not like- Crazy, devouring the city- it just felt good to be here, the slow life. And so it started, my mother suddenly found herself emancipated- I'm the youngest of seven children, so when I went off to university it was a few years after she'd gotten divorced. And my father, I don't want to criticise him in any way- they're both dead now, but he did other things, he didn't exactly help make any of those big decisions or small decisions to do with the children. So finally, I went off to university, she had a little bit of a divorce settlement and so she just thought well what am I going to do, so she rented an apartment for six months and she loved it, so stayed another six months, and then someone said "well you know, that apartment over there is for sale" and so as the youngest I was always coming to visit, we were very close.

H: So you've had a long relationship with Venice!

J: But very personal, when I used to come before I was married to Francesco I just did my own thing here, I liked to be here just for the sake of being, so I'd buy a little bit of food at the market. So I just liked being here for personal reasons, so I'd come here to read, sometimes friends for London would visit me here and we'd take long walks, visit the museums, things like that. I didn't feel like I needed to know more people here, not that I had anything against people here, I think just that I was at a very busy stage of my life and it was nice to be somewhere that was a restful place. But then when I met Francesco I met his friends and now I have great friends here, I love the Venetians. They make me laugh. And there's not a day that- despite my professional life being filled with problems, there aren't many joyful moments when you're campaigning for the future of Venice! Just even going to the market, to run some errands, there's always things I hear that just make me feel all warm inside. The other day I was- it was winter, it was very cold- and the lady before me complained that the zucchini were all a bit damaged, they had brown bits on them, and the man who was selling them said- you know, in Venetian dialect- "Oh I know signora, we treat them like our daughters, we cover them with blankets in the boat, but they still get damaged" And I just loved so much that he was talking about this zucchini like his daughter. But you get this sort of thing every day!

H: So, so you invite your friends here, is this a social environment? Or do you go out to socialise?

J: We have people come here, often have dinners, but we normally have people to stay. It's a bit like a train station. Because two of the children have gone off to university there's a bit of empty space, so now I'm at the age where my friends kids travel. And if you really want to know, we also have a piece of an island out on the lagoon, so if people come to visit we like to have a picnic or a BBQ over there. We tend not to stay because with teenage children we have to be around to make sure they come home from their parties!

H: How long, would you say, over the course of the day would you spend in this space? Is it one of the most used spaces?

J: Evenings, definitely. We don't have breakfast here but that's because I'm no good in the mornings, we have breakfast in our bedroom. My husband makes coffee and then he brings it upstairs, and brings some cereals and biscuits and milk up for Cosimo, Pierangelo the poor thing, the 16 year old, he just has to get himself up and I think he gets a croissant on the way to school. So breakfast isn't a big thing in here, except on weekends when we have eggs and bacon or pancakes or something.

H: So on weekends you have a big family breakfast.

J: Not all of us no, my husband doesn't like the English kinds of breakfasts so as soon as he can stand on his own two feet he goes to the fish market and gets a tramezzino. And sometimes some of the children prefer that- but Cosimo likes his pancakes, so I make breakfast for him.

H: So would you say this is one of your favourite rooms in the house?

J: Yeah, I like the view, I like sitting on the sofa, also after dinner, after Cosimo goes to sleep, my husband goes upstairs to watch TV, and I like to stay here, I either do stuff on my computer or I read. Or Instagram! I used to wake up and read the newspaper but it got so upsetting now I do Instagram- it's happy, beautiful, funny.

H: So which is your favourite part of this room?

J: I like sitting here and talking with everybody, I like being on the sofa, I like being in the kitchen, it's the most easy, ergonomic kitchen. It's just organic, it's not been planned or anything. So you've got this, it's just so easy to get stuff done in here. I'm not a good cook, my husband was writing a book and so all these different publishers sent him different cookbooks to see if he wanted to publish his cookbook with them. But that's why we have a lot of cookbooks. So I like just fiddling around in here, I wouldn't want a different kitchen.

H: So why do you like sitting on the sofa and looking out of that window so much?

J: Because it means I've gotten through another day.

H: So do you have a routine? Is every day similar for you?

J: No, I wake up and I think 'this is what I'm going to do today' and I get to this moment at the end of the day when I'm on the sofa and I think 'I haven't done anything that I was going to do, I've just done a whole lot of other stuff'

H: So what do you like to cook?

J: I like doing stuff with leftovers, it's very creative. When I've managed to persuade everyone to eat what I've made.

H: So do you have any rituals? Anything that calms you down?

J: Hot baths, in the evening.

H: So could you talk me through the things that you have to do everyday?

J: Put moisturiser on, mascara, lipstick, get dressed, sort stuff out, figure out who's doing what- who's going to pick up Cosimo, lots of organising and the further along we get there's more and more stuff- it just accumulates, and when I say it out loud it doesn't seem a lot but it just takes up masses of psychic space, headspace, it's like pollution. And what's not good is seeing all this stuff, my approach to it is things that I need to get out of the way, I don't perceive them as achievements but maybe I should. If you think that it's like rubbish to sweep stuff out of the way to get onto the next thing it's like a hinderance and it doesn't give you satisfaction to having done it. So I'd like to change my attitude to that stuff. So instead when I get back home and onto that sofa at the end of the day I think finally my real day can begin because I've spent 12 hours trying to sort things out. But instead I should think- oh I've managed to resolve this, I've booked five flights.

H: So if you could pick an object in this room which one would it be.

J: Cosimo! My plants! See they re-flower, the orchids, not everyones orchids re-flower, that one in the middle just finished flowering, and there's the avocado I grew from a stone.

H: And is there an object that reminds you of being at home, or a sense of home?

J: I like that vase up there.

H: And what's the story behind that vase?

J: That, Francesco gave me. No! I gave it to him! When he gave me the engagement ring I thought that I should give him something. So I got that nice vase. It's really ancient Chinese Tang Dynasty or whatever, it's gorgeous. I like everything that's here.

H: Is there something you use everyday?

J: My phone, and my keys to the house. I made these, they were napkin rings until the plastic went. All of our names until Cosimo came.

H: So is there something that you and your family eat every day, something you and your family always have here?

J: Yep, coffee, always coffee in the morning. Fizzy water, we have a SodaStream that makes the fizzy water. To run out of the canisters for that, or the coffee is tragic. Cosimo always likes there to be crackers, because he's fussy. Sometimes he doesn't eat what's there so at least he can fill up on crackers. And if my husband was deciding, he'd eat meat all the time. So luckily he doesn't decide.

H: So who does the cooking, do you share it?

J: Me, or Neisa Manuela, who comes four afternoons a week.

H: And what's the most common meal to eat here?

J: Our convenience food is pasta with pesto, if all else fails we'll have those two things in the house. Or a can of sardines, I've stopped buying tuna because it's full of mercury and it's bad for the sea.

H: Do you use a particular coffee?

J: No, just any coffee, one that involves as little maltreatment as possible. Cosimo loves jelly, we always have a fruit bowl, if my husband was talking to you he'd say he'd always want dark chocolate. This is nice, this rice- someone gave us these bags of rice for Christmas. Here we keep the sardines, this is the nice pesto, and I don't know what to do with old egg boxes! I just can't throw them away! Would you like them? You could sound proof a room with this many! Last year I gave them to Cosimo's school for a project and the teacher said to me "Basta!" because I kept bringing them in every week. In the freezer we have these two Lego men, I asked Cosimo why they were here and he said "I'm punishing them!!".

6.

Laila

Honey: Do you want to tell me a little bit about yourself and how you came to live in Venice? Have you always lived here?

Laila: I wasn't born in Venice, but I've lived here since I was a child. The reason why my husband and I still live in Venice is because we have jobs here, otherwise we would already have moved somewhere else! We have our elderly mothers, but basically we still live here because of our jobs, otherwise we would leave immediately- because of how it is now. I've always loved Venice, but today it is too difficult, it's a fairground.

H: Where do you want to live instead?

L: We are planning, when we can, to move to Treviso, and we will commute to Venice. My husband has a studio- he is an architect- and all his clients, partners, everything is here- he even teaches here.

H: Have you always wanted to leave or is just a recent thing?

L: No, no, it's a recent thing, the situation here with tourism, it means it's difficult to move around, careless tourist like the ones that we have now- we pay for them (in taxes), but it's not convenient for us.

H: Do you think that's specific to this area, or do you think it's less of a problem in other parts of Venice?

L: Yes it's bad here, because we're two minutes from San Marco Square, and so when you leave your house it's always really crowded. If you live in other areas; Castello, Cannaregio, Dorsoduro- You can move around much easier, here it's a disaster! If you have a job you know that you have to leave much much earlier to be there on time, you have to walk because it's impossible to use the Vaporetto.

H: Do you do much of your shopping around here or do you have to go somewhere else?

L: Yes, I'm quite lucky because here I have some little supermarkets. The usual community shops like a butchers, a fishmonger, a bakery- They don't exist here anymore. They've been replaced by the souvenir shops selling tourist tat. Luckily I have few supermarkets where I can still buy my food.

H: When did all the little shops close down?

L: I remember when I first moved to this house- 26 years ago, at that time it was the old Venice, more Venetians lived here. I remember there were little shops, but when things started to change they all closed down. The tourists don't use those kind of shops- the ironmonger, the cheese shop, the delicatessen- but tourists use the supermarket. So yes, 20 years ago this was a completely different Venice.

H: So have you always lived here in this apartment?

L: Yes, 26 years ago I moved here. I used to live close to Ponte Dei Tre Archi. It was a small house so then when Vito and his sisters were born we decided to move here. I lived there for 8 years and then I moved here.

H: How many children do you have?

L: 2; Vito and his sister. I don't want to give a negative idea of Venice speaking about tourism!

H: No I understand! That's what I want to hear, the honest truth! Did you bring up your children in this house, is this your family home?

L: Yes, yes.

H: And did your children enjoy living in Venice, did they leave or do they want to leave?

L: My daughter studied for 3 years in Bologna, at the Fine Art Academy, and then she decided to come back to Venice, so now she has to finish the Academy here. Vito left for necessity, for the kind of studies he was interested in. He studied in Ferrara and then he did a Master degree and a PHD abroad. Now he's back here, because he found it difficult to live abroad with the atmosphere and the people. He loves Venice but it's clear that it won't be easy to find a job here.

H: So they both live here at the moment, but they don't know for how long.

L: Vito will stay here until he finds a job, this is just a passage for him.

H: This room.. do you use this room a lot for socialising with family? Do you invite friends here?

L: Yes, yes, and that's why here it's such an open space.

H: In your family do you share the cooking, or is it one person who does the cooking?

L: Generally I'm the only one, but if I'm not here my daughter and my husband can cook some dishes. Vito lived by himself so he is fine, he can feed himself.

H: Is there is something you enjoying making a lot?

L: Yes, I love cooking fish.

H: Is there a food is special to your family? One that you always have in a house?

L: Yes, everyone likes fish. I cook it quite well and in particular I do traditional Venetian cuisine. Some dishes are spaghetti allo scoglio, mussels, risotti with mussels, squid with ink or sarde in saor, grilled fish.

H: Do you buy the fish around here?

L: Yes, I used to buy it at the Rialto Market, but now it's very expensive. Now we go to Mestre, to Auchan where they have good fish and great choice, it's cheaper.

H: How often do you use this room?

L: Quite a lot! I love cooking, so I spend a lot of time in the kitchen, so yes, I spend a lot of time here.

H: Do you have a routine?

L: Yes, in the morning I clean the house and then go shopping and then back for cooking.

H: What sort of cleaning do you do everyday?

L: A little bit, the essential things- the beds, the kitchen- because the house is too big. Once a week I clean the whole house.

H: Do you have a favourite part of this room?

L: Yes, the kitchen. The only thing is that I'm really sorry that I have such a little little kitchen, because I spend a lot of time there. I would love to have one of the American Kitchens; huge kitchens where they just make milkshakes, reheating food, eating bread. It makes me jealous, they don't cook but have huge kitchens!

H: In you house in Treviso what will your kitchen look like?

L: Well, next year we are going to do some work and expand the kitchen. So I will use that space with the table, get a higher table, put in drawers. I want to have more space and tables. In Treviso the kitchen will be like one from the American movies.

H: Treviso sounds like heaven!

H: Is there an object in this room which reminds you home?

L: I would say this painting, which was in the other house too. It's the plan of Tokyo, it was a present from a friend. I will always take with me and it will remind me of home even though it's Tokyo!

H: What do you use everyday in here? What do you pick up, what do you use?

L: All the objects used for cooking. Here I have all the pots, plates, pans.

H: Do you have a favourite things? Spoon? Is there something you particularly like using?

L: I really love the pressure cooker. Because it's fast and cooks very well. So this is my favorite, the perfect pan.

H: Do you always use the same cups, plates?

L: For the family yes, if we have guests we have a different set. If you want I can show you them? Because when we have guests we use the nicest ones, and we have the nicer plates, glasses.. those ones are for everyday use.. and if you are back next year you will see the new kitchen!

H: I really like the flowers and the mushrooms close to the clock, where did you get them?

L: Yes, they are a decoration. The mushrooms are there because I love very much the mountains, so they remind me of the mountains even here.

H: Do you spend a lot of time in the mountains?

L: A lot, because we have a house in the mountains! I would love to invite you to see the house because is wooden cottage in the mountains, a chalet! So I go there quite a lot both in summer and winter.

H: Would like to move to that house?

L: No, living there permanently, no. I love cities! I like the mountains for holidays!

H: Living here do you know your neighbours?

L: Well, next door you have some tourist flats, but close to here, yes there are people and even some families with children! Not just rent, but even the cost of living is high here; the prices are higher for shopping, for services, and it's normal for most families go somewhere else to live where they can buy a house.

H: Is there anything you love about Venice, that you will miss about the place?

L: I will miss the city, what I won't miss the tourism. I will really miss the city because it's beautiful, wonderful.

7.

Beatrice

Honey: So, would you like to tell me a little bit about yourself, where you're from, and how long you've lived here?

Beatrice: Well, I came here four years ago, to study for my Masters degree, I was studying in Genoa before, then I came here to study my Masters degree in linguistics, I study sign language in particular. So linguistics related to disabilities, communicative problems and in particular with children and kids. And then I really fell in love with the city, so I got my degree and I decided I hoped to be here longer. So I applied to study my PHD here in Venice and I got it, so I started in September, in Linguistics. I'm very happy because I'm sure I can stay here for another 3 years at least.

H: So you really love Venice, what is it that you like so much?

B: I like almost everything, I know it's not an easy city to live in because of the number of tourists who come here everyday, and it's a bit dirty in some places, the humidity. But I really like it because it's a very famous city and so many people live here but I feel it's like living in a little village. I feel at home.

H: And is that just in this area, or all across Venice?

B: Well I would never live near San Marco, near Rialto or San Marco actually, that would be very different I think. But in this area, Santa Croce, Dorsoduro it's really good to live in.

H: So compared to other cities you've lived in, does this feel more like a home to you?

B: Yeah, so I lived in a very small city for 16 years, in Piemonte. And then I was in Genoa for 3 years. 6 Months in Vienna, and then I came here. But after a month of living here I already felt really at home. But I sometimes go back to my little village near Piemonte but I don't consider it home anymore.

H: So what changed to make this feel more like your home? What makes this your home?

B: Here there's a particular atmosphere I haven't felt in the other cities I've been in. Here there are no cars, and no metro or subway, no nothing. And also the noise is different, it makes me feel relaxed. There are many people, but very few Venetian people. So I feel like I'm part of a group of people now that I've been accepted. Which is hard here because Venetian people are not that confident usually. I think it's because they're used to meeting so many people and knowing they'll never see them again. But I was lucky because I met the right people in the right moment.

H: And do they all still live here too?

B: Yes, some of them. I don't know a lot of Venetian people actually, but many people who really love Venice like me and do things to make Venice a better place.

H: So your apartment is really really beautiful, do you think it's difficult to find an apartment like this as a student?

B: Yes, I've been looking for an apartment for a year before. It was really hard for me and I didn't want to move to Mestre, but the majority of people here decide to move to Mestre because it's much cheaper and it's not that far, you can get a bus or a train and be here in 15 minutes. It's ok, but I wanted to be in the city. I looked everywhere and then I met a girl who had a friend who wanted to sell the apartment- I couldn't buy it of course! But I asked her if I could rent it from her instead and she accepted so I was really lucky. I've lived here since September and won't move for a while. Moving here is very complicated, so I asked four or five friends to help me last time to move stuff from one house to this one. And the biggest thing I came to the nearest canal on a rowing boat. It was funny but we managed, it took a week or two to move everything. My previous apartment was in San Toma so not that far but it's still difficult.

H: So do you think you'll ever move to Mestre and stay working in Venice, or do you think if you ever leave Venice you'll move somewhere completely different?

B: I don't want to leave Venice so I hope to stay here for as long as possible, but if I really don't have a possibility to living here I would accept working in Venice and living in Mestre, but I don't want to do that.

H: So how much time would you say you spend in this kitchen?

B: Not much actually, but I often have lunch here, though only for 15 minutes. It's in a good position and my office at the university is near Zattere so I can come back for lunch. Even if I only have half an hour. But I like organising dinner if I have time! I'm not that good at cooking but I have friends who love cooking so sometimes I have friends here and we cook together, or even better if they all come here and cook and I do the dishes!

H: The ultimate!

B: I have some dishes I always do like risotto, or torte salate, and my grandmother tried to teach me how to cook and I liked doing that with here but now here I don't have time to do it and time to look for the right ingredients.

H: So how many people live here? Is it just you?

B: Now I live on my own, before I lived with another girl but she left Venice so now I live here alone. I will see if I can afford it, I'm not sure I can afford it, she left 3 months ago. I'm experimenting!

H: So is rent here very expensive?

B: Yes very. I have a scholarship for my PHD and I have a job working in schools or at home with children. So not only the rent but also the cost of living- buying food is expensive too. Not everything is expensive- for example drinking is very cheap, and if you go to the right place, the busier places full of local people- they're cheaper. If you go in a tourist cafe, of course it's expensive. Spritz is very cheap here.

H: So do you socialise a lot? Is that why you like living here close to the Campo?

B: Yeah, this is really the centre of the social life in Venice. In winter we go to people's houses, but normally we prefer to stay in Campo, stay outside we have a lot of picnics. We like to just eat and drink outside. The best thing is I can just walk to Campo and meet people there, we don't need to have a plan to meet, but I know people will be there if I want to socialise.

H: So have you made this house your own, do you have a lot of your own personal things or is that difficult because of moving?

B: It's difficult but I have some things of my own. For example this picture is of the city where I was born, and this red piece of furniture is mine, it was difficult to move! I bought it in Genoa, because I moved in with my brother when I went to study (he was already studying there) and so we had to live together. But he was used to living on his own and wasn't very happy about having me there- he had a very big room with a big bed and there was room for me to sleep in there, but he didn't want me in his room so I bought that to sleep on and folded it away every day.

H: Every day! How long did you live with him?

B: Around a year!

H: No! And you packed your room away every day!

B: Then we moved to another house and I had my own room luckily! We used to sleep in the same room when we were children and he hated that, because I used to fall asleep very quickly and he'd always try to speak to me and to play and I was asleep straight away.

H: So do you just have the one brother? Are you a close family?

B: Yes just the one brother, we have an age gap of 15 months. My parents want to come to visit me every month, and so they come to visit almost every month for two or three days. It's good because the four of us love each other but it's hard because here I have a different life. They come here and they look through everything, and my mother wants to clean everything. She always wants to clean the mirrors of the bathrooms and she thinks she's doing me a favour but actually I feel strange about it! When they come here I usually clean the house before they arrive but then she gets here and starts cleaning again!

H: So once a month your house gets cleaned twice in the same day!

B: And they see things like empty bottles of wine- it's like I'm a child "ohhh, someone's been smoking in here"!

H: Do you cook when they come here too? Is there something your family really enjoy eating?

B: My mum cooks, there's a dish that reminds me of home. It's a kind of salt cake, made with potatoes, capers, tomatoes and leek. And it was a recipe of my Great-Great-Grandmother so

everyone likes it in my house, sometimes she cooks it for me and then sends it to me! She normally brings it when she comes but once she sent me some in the post! It was a really little piece of course because it's not that easy to send but at the time I was living with another girl who used to eat a lot, so when she opened the fridge and saw it she ate it. And I was crying! Because I didn't eat it on purpose, when the package arrived I thought I would keep it in the fridge until I need it because it's special. Then I came home and she'd eaten it all!

H: That's awful!! So what does your daily routine look like? Is it very similar each day?

B: No it's not, because sometimes I work at the school in the morning with children, and sometimes I'm at university, and sometimes I'm at children's houses after school. Normally in the evenings I do some sports, two days a week I teach athletics to children, and I run either by myself or with friends.

H: So you have a running group around here? Where do you go?

B: It's depends because sometimes we just run for half an hour around Zattere, back to San Basilio, Piazzale Roma, and sometimes if we have to train for a long run we go to Lido.

H: The bridges are killing my legs!! I can't imagine actually running over the bridges! Venice is such hard work! Do you have any rules in your house?

B: I like making rules, making plans for my life, it's relaxing for me- organising things. Like making a plan of when I'll clean what. So for example on Monday I have to clean the bathroom, then on Tuesday I have to clean my kitchen, then the day after I have to do everything a little bit because friends are visiting, but I never respect it! I always break my own rules. The worst thing is that I forget to buy things, I always forget things when I go food shopping. So all I eat is pasta with tuna! It's the easiest thing and I usually have those two things. Once a week I get vegetables from a group of friends who have a garden and deliver the vegetables by boat. Most of the times I don't know what the vegetables are though so I don't know how to cook them! Downstairs they have the kitchen of alla Bifora in Campo, so the smell of their food always drifts up through the window.

H: So do you know other people who live in this building?

B: They're not very friendly, unfortunately, there's this old woman who's nice to me, but then I always hear her speaking to the other woman downstairs and she's never happy about me. My music is too loud, there are too many people here. But she never says anything to me about it. All the Venetians are always angry, maybe because of tourists. They only speak Venetian and shout at people.

H: Do you understand Venetian?

B: Yeah, and I sometimes say some words but they get offended, because it seems like I'm joking and making fun of them. But I just like their expressions! Maybe it's the accent I try to imitate sometimes.

H: What's the most used thing in your kitchen?

B: The bottle opener is the most used thing in my kitchen! I have two actually. My favourite is the moose! It's a magnet. It's my brother's, he doesn't know I've got it. It was a present to him from me! I also like this mug, my friend gave it to me when I was accepted onto my PHD, it's the most intelligent one of the Seven Dwarves. This is also very important to me, it's not open. It's from my city Piemonte- you can only find it in my city, so it reminds me of home. I do this a lot where I want to wait for the right moment and then the moment never comes.

8.

Guglielmo

Honey: Could you tell me about this house and how long you've lived in Venice?

Guglielmo: I now live between Padova and here. In Padova I have my daughters and my grandchildren. I was born here, in this house. My family came here in 1927, when they built the entire island, with new buildings for the army, these kinds of houses were assigned to officers with higher titles in the Navy.

H: Is your family in the Navy?

G: Yes, my grandfather was Admiral and my father a Commander.

H: ..and you always lived in this house?

G: Yes, this house had been assigned to them by the War Office, then we bought the house and now it's the family home.

H: Do you think Venice has changed a lot since you were younger, when you grew up here?

G: Venice has changed a lot, in particular for the tourism business. It's a different city now because there are different people. A lot of Venetians left, they moved elsewhere, young couples get married and don't have the opportunity to buy a house, so there is this exodus towards other places and it's gone on for years, the number of people who live here has decreased incredibly.

H: Is that something that worries you?

G: I'm worried about how people inhabit Venice, people's lives here. It is not like in the past, in which Venice was important to the Venetians, with tourism this feeling is completely lost, the Venetian (Venezianità) is rare. There are few people remaining who speak Venetian, which is a language and not a dialogue. Venetian has its own grammar, its own syntax and a lot of theatrical plays have been produced in the language.

H: Are you worried about the language disappearing?

G: The Venetians care about the language, they speak a different dialect.

H: Do you like living in Venice?

G: Yes, because Venice is so different compared to other cities and if you are born here it becomes so difficult to change place, to move somewhere else, because the city is part of you, the city always reflects how you feel.

H: So this will always be your home..

G: Yes, sure. Even though we have family in other cities, my family was originally from Padova and then part of the family moved here. My ancestors in Padova go back as far as 900, when they moved there from Ungheria, so it's a long long story!

H: Do you have a lot of memories in this room, in this house? When you were a child when you were growing up?

G: Oh, tons! Venice is a safe place so children were free to play here, in front of the house, in the park, and we spent so much time there, inventing stories, fantastic stories like the ones that Jules Verne wrote and they lasted for ages! In the past; just after the war, I remember having a little car and playing with that in this park where there was a tiny hill.

H: Has your kitchen always looked similar to this or you have changed a lot over the years? Was it like this when you were younger?

G: Always like this. Very few things have been replaced, only electrical appliances. Then, you see the stove in the corner, that was the most used part in the kitchen, between my grandmother from Bologna and my mother from Ferrara, all our stoves have seen the most amazing things! Then, you see this table, in the past there was a marble top, perfect for fresh pasta; tortellini! I remember the table full of tortellini. During Christmas time, there were 3000 tortellini in here, made on this table and then we left them to dry in another room, because natural cold temperature is better than the one that the fridge has. I can still smell them! Nothing is comparable, even the best restaurant is not the same!

H: Do you have a favorite filling for the tortellini?

G: Yes, the fact that my grandmother was from Bologna and my mother from Ferrara meant they argued a bit- because they traditionally have slightly different fillings. Finally, the one with prosciutto won.

H: Do you cook them yourself?

G: Yes, mostly in the past! I used to help my mum a lot, now I'm a bit lazy.

H: Do you have a routine, something you do every day? What do you do when you wake up in the morning?

G: Now I'm retired and I take it easy in the morning. I wake up around 7:30-8AM, I have my breakfast and then at 9:00AM I sit in front of my laptop or in my studio to work a little bit on other projects (I was an architect but now I'm a consultant, I advise on architectural projects) or to study different things because now I'm really passionate about history and archeology.

H: So, what's your favorite thing in this room?

G: These scales, they're older than me! It's from the early 20s, and still works. Then I love the old coffee grinders, they work even better than the modern ones.

H: .. and this?

G: This is a tiny bell which was hung on the door of my house in the mountains since the 40s. It was supposed to bring good luck, and I clearly remember it, in particular the sound, because it was a sign that someone was at home, it was sort of welcoming. As I child, I loved it.

H: How many children do you have?

G: I have two daughters both living in Padova and two grandchildren, a boy of 14 years old and a girl of 5 years.



Mattia

Honey: Would you like to tell me a little bit about you? Have you always lived in Venice? How long have you lived in this house?

Mattia: I'm Venetian, I was born here but I always had a sort of double identity because my family had two houses, one here and one in the countryside, along Riviera del Brenta, just outside Venice. Anyway I consider myself a Venetian, I'm really attached to this place, Venice is in my blood. Venice is a perfect, golden prison and this might cause some problems, but in the end I always stay and produce works which ties me with the city. I have been living in this house for 15 years. I was very lucky because this house came as a present from my mother, a Christmas present and it came with a letter and a red jumper. This house belonged to two sisters and when I came in for the first time it was entirely covered of tapestries. I kept one little object- a tiny painting which now lives above my bed. This house changes a lot, accounting to the fact that I'm a man involved in theatre and it welcome part of the objects used on my plays.

One funny story about this house, is that we discovered some years ago that it wasn't legally separated from the neighbour's flat. It was a long story, but in the end this story helped me meet Giorgia, an brilliant artist who I work with now on an project called Teatro in Bottega

H: Venice; will it be always home for you?

M: Yes, sure. Venice is the perfect lover and the perfect mother. Water. It's essential, it's like giving birth. I will always come back here and all my projects look towards Venice. I refused some other opportunities because I wanted to come back and live here. So, yes, it's my home, but not only this house, the entire city because Venice is like a big home, in which streets are corridors and campi are living rooms and halls.

H: Do you socialise a lot in here, do you cook here or more outside?

M: I love hosting people, I love hosting dinners, parties, teas. I would love to have a bigger house, so I can have even more people round! I believe that a table with people sitting around is the greatest theatrical act which someone can conceive. This idea of house influence my work and my work influences my house: My house is a theatre!

H: And is your mum still living in Venice?

M: My mum lives in the countryside. She would like to come back to Venice, she is thinking about Lido, because of the beach and because she thinks it's the perfect place for elderly people. I'm not sure about this, I believe she will get bored during winter!

H: Did you grow up in this area or another area?

M: No, I lived in Cannaregio, close to the Train Station. My father had a huge house with a garden, palms and a pond but it's been sold. My father worked in hospitality and he had a restaurant in that area. The house has been sold so they finally moved in the countryside because he wanted to divide private life and work life.

H: Do you normally do your shopping in the area?

M: I like to do shopping here, all the shopkeepers know me and I love that. I'm a bit upset because the shops around here are changing and becoming more shops for tourists (paccottiglia). For example once there was a florist, a shoe shop and now they've closed down.

H: Which shop do you enjoying going and talking with the owner the most?

M: Rizzardini! It's a pasticceria and I meet a lot of people!

H: What do you get from them?

M: The puncetto or a pastry called Festivo, which they make only on Sunday!

H: So how often do you spend in this kitchen area?

M: Yes, sure. I like open spaces, so I try to live all the areas and even when I have my friends over they are welcome to live the entire house and not just stay in here.

H: Can you show me your favorite objects in this room?

M: Oh, this is difficult, I'm deeply in love with all of them, because they have been part of my plays and they tell incredible stories. I'm so attached to each of them, they became a sort of installation in my house. They have their own life and they make me feel less lonely. This is a city which fills you but at the same time creates a void. Venice is a city of excesses, and my house reflects this characteristic.

My favourite object; I have a little rabbit which I'm really attached to but one thing that I like is the Tour Eiffel. It's an object which represent me and I collect them! I have here a cheese grater, a toast maker, a biscuits tin/cutter with the shape of Tour Eiffel.

H: Do you re-arrange the objects often?

M: Absolutely yes, this house changes often. I change the atmosphere, sometimes I want it to feel more yellowish, reddish and now it's more white.

H: What's your daily routine?

M: It's very difficult with my job, because depends on what I'm doing that day. The only thing that I do is when I wake up I have to drink coffee.

H: Is anything you cook a lot in here?

M: Oh, I'm not a very good cook. I love setting tables and they look amazing, but not cooking. Usually those who cook are friends and lovers. Sometimes I'm lazy and I eat at the restaurant, my favorite, Nono Risorto.

10.

Marco

Honey: So how long have you lived here? How did you end up in Venice?

Marco: 25 years, I got this job at the University in 1992. I've only been a resident of Venice since 2001. Because I was commuting weekly before that, between Rome and Venice. Because my Mother and Father were living in Rome at the time, and I had been living in Rome for 20 years before that. And so, at the time, I didn't think I was actually going to settle here. I had relatives here in Mestre, and so I was undecided. I didn't have a clear idea, I didn't have too many responsibilities and rent was high- rent is still high- but now I have progressed in my job and so it's easier. I got tired of the constant traveling and decided to settle here. I got to know the city, and I got to know new people. Like so many others, I've been moving all around the city every two-three years. I lived in Lido for a few years, Dorsoduro, Cannaregio. I've been living here for 9 years, but I'm going to move again though. My parents passed away in the last year and so the flat in Rome is empty- full of things- but I'm packing away. And then I'm going to look for a flat to buy, I've always been renting, for 25 years here, but now's the time because I've got the money. So Venice will have a new permanent resident.

H: So when you're looking to buy apartments are you looking to buy something in this area?

M: I don't know, that's a big question. I like this area, although I don't like this constant flooding of tourists which can be very annoying on a Saturday. So, I love all of Venice, it's beautiful. I was in Castello the other day, and it's great, but it's far away from everything. So I don't know, I don't want to live on Murano, Lido or Guidecca though, I don't want to need to use a boat.

H: It'll be exciting I guess to have something more permanent, of course I know you've been here for 9 years, that's quite a while but somewhere of your own.

M: Yeah I know, I was talking to the lady upstairs, I was thinking of buying this apartment but I don't know, I'm not really sure I see myself living here longer. But anyway, they weren't selling, so the questions is 'where else?'

H: So Venice feels like home now?

M: Big question, I've been moving around a lot, I was born in a small village in the country, two hours from here in Emilia-Romagna and when I was 14 I moved to Rome with my parents, then in Rome we moved twice, and then I came here, so I don't have a clear concept of what home is. It's not Rome, I'm sorry in a way to go and to leave but there's no point having a flat you don't use, and my life is here. The village I was born in, my cousins are there, my relatives are there but it's not home. But this isn't home either.

H: What is it about Venice that you like then?

M: I like the city, I like the slow pace, I like the fact I don't need to use buses, transport, public transport, I don't like driving in the city- and here there's no cars so I don't have to think about that. And I like the way you meet people, just by stumbling upon people day-to-day. Just by accident in a way! Just from hello-ciao, and everyone knows everyone, it reminds me of my childhood. But at the same time it's international, it's not a provincial town like Treviso. Here, it's small but it's not a small town.

H: Is there anything you don't like about Venice?

M: Sometimes you get the feeling you're going round in a circle, I don't feel trapped but I feel sometimes I'm in a circle and I get lazy. A routine sets in... Crossing the bridge to Mestre, it's just 10 minutes but .. uch. I have friends, relatives, doctors over there so I go quite often. For the last year I've been in a rock group and we rehearse in Marghera, on solid ground. I don't like the way Venice is changing, all the cheap stores, I don't like the way it's exploited. Something has to be done. I was in Ireland two years ago, I was at an ancient site, got into a queue waiting to go inside, and a woman came up to us and said "Sorry, you can't come in today, we have exceeded the daily number of visitors" and she said "this is the second most visited site in the Republic of Ireland, we get 20,000 visitors a year.." and I just thought, the place where I live we get 20,000,000 a year! That's far too many people to be visiting Venice.

H: So does having that amount of tourists effect your life?

M: It doesn't effect my way of life, but it affects the setting. You have so many cheap stores, cheap restaurants.

H: Is it difficult to buy your food around here, to go shopping?

M: No no, not here, just 50 yards from here they've opened a new supermarket. It's very easy to go shopping around here- over where the Guggenheim is, it's impossible. You get art galleries but no shops. So that's why I'm searching around for where to buy.

H: What is your daily routine?

M: I go to work every morning, I walk from here 20-25 minutes, Then I have classes or tutorials, or meetings. So I'm usually home by 4/5- maybe 3 depending on what I'm doing. Sometimes I don't get home until 10/11 because I've met friends for a drink. This goes on between September until June/July more or less. Then things slow down. Summer is very hot, it can be very annoying. But I like spending evenings in the bar, spending time outside, meeting people.

H: And is your social life very centered around the bars here? Or do you ever invite people into your home here?

M: I usually meet my friends outside, I've had some friends round here but no I prefer to meet outside. You meet people, go for a drink, have a chat, you eat out- which is something I don't like about Venice- the food quality is not high. If you want quality food here you pay- a lot. That's what I'll miss about Rome. I like alla Bifora.

H: So do you cook a lot?

M: Weekends mostly.

H: Is there something you particularly enjoy cooking?

M: I'm not an expert, I have a very basic knowledge of food. I usually do what my mother always taught me, the kind of food we were eating at home. Minestrone, soups, roasted meat, pasta of course, and in summer salads and tomatoes- all of which I'm very fond of.

H: At your family home when you were a child did you all eat and cook together then?

M: Well it was, for a while, and then we moved to Rome and after a while my parents divorced, and I stayed with my mother, and then after a while the family unit disbanded. So I don't have this thing about having a number of people around at home, I feel comfortable on my own, I don't have a problem with that. I started having friends over for dinner in the last few years since I decided I had to do something about my cooking.

H: So you're on a learning curve with your cooking!

M: This kitchen is too much for me! This is a really good oven! I have someone, a cleaning lady who comes once a week to take care of everything.

H: Is there something that you particularly like, if you were getting a quick snack or something?

M: Something very stable is that I have tea and biscuits in the afternoon- sometimes cake, but I always have afternoon tea. For breakfast I have a sweet breakfast, I eat more or less the same- biscuits and tea, if I travel I have to adjust but I like a sweet breakfast.

H: Is there a particular biscuit?

M: Pavesini, they've been with me all of my life, I grew up with Pavesini, I always have them at 4pm with tea, I don't like coffee.

H: So how much time do you spend in the kitchen?

M: Not much.

H: Do you use other rooms more then? Which is your favourite room?

M: I would say the room that I work, there I have my computer, and I write essays, I watch movies, and it also serves as a guest room, which I have occasionally. My mother, friends from abroad.

H: So this room is a preparation room?

M: A few minutes in the morning, on weekends- more, but I don't use it. I like that it gets a lot of light, I look over a very small garden, but the sad thing about that garden is that until last year there was a beautiful old fig tree and it got cut down.

H: Do you have a favourite object in this room?

M: Well none of this is my furniture, but I like the stove because the brand is SMEG and the G stands for the village I was born in. It's famous for household appliances. I felt welcome when I saw it.