

A passer-by hails him with "Thank you for IL GIORNO PRIMA DELLA FELICITÀ", ("The day before happiness"), his latest novel. Slightly sheepishly,

ERRI DE LUCA

says: "Fortunately, that doesn't happen very often".

Born in 1950 in Naples, half-way through a "minor" century and on the shores of an equally minor sea, he was a stonemason for 20 years before publishing his first novel, "NOT NOW, NOT HERE", in 1989.

His prose style – taught, unpretentious,

defiant - resembles the man.

Self-taught and an outstanding mountain climber, he knows how to balance on lofty ridges, where the air is rarefied and where nothing unessential is said.

PHOTOGRAPHS STEPHAN CRASNEANSCK! STYLING ANASTASIA BARBIERI

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