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## In Italy, the Ultimate Deconstructivist

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*About a month ago, I received an intriguing black wooden box in the mail, ominously marked “Dynamite Stories.” Inside was book by Danilo Coppe, an Italian explosives expert. For years, from one end of Italy to the other, he’s been plying his craft while hanging from a rock face, soaking in torrential rain, freezing in biting cold and suffering through sweltering heat (I mention lingering up to his ears in mud or murky water). The book offers up nine dramatic stories, jam-packed with suspense and revelations. Alas, it’s currently available only in English version is due out soon. We conducted an email interview with him and his publisher a few weeks ago:*

### Who’s the author and what’s his background?

Born in 1963, Danilo Coppe is an explosives engineering expert and mining geotechnician with a degree in political science and a specialization in criminology. He teaches “Blast Investigation” to fire departments, directs the “Research Project on Defence from Terrorist Attacks with Explosives” for the European Commission, directs a General Explosives Engineering Course at the Military Air Force. He’s also a consultant and assistant to Italy’s Criminal Police. A specialized frogman, off-road driver, rock-climber, speleologist and black belt in karate, he has participated in major controlled demolition operations carried out in Italy, with more than six hundred documented interventions. In addition, he’s published more than 40 scientific papers and is a consultant for *Focus* and *Newton* magazines and television channels RAI and Mediaset.

### What’s the intent of the book?

An explosives expert is often perceived as a “white glove specialist” who goes to work an hour before the explosion, by sticking two little charges in a corner somewhere and pocketing the results. *Dynamite Stories* paints a very different picture of the job.

### What were the challenges inherent in developing and writing it?

The book was written from 1992 till 2010. Since it is a book of personal thoughts and considerations, these reflect the time of writing, with different manners of seeing the various situations.

### So why destroy buildings rather than create new ones?

Unfortunately, at least in Italy, there are too many people building new construction! In fact, we see a lot of ecomonsters in the environment of our cities. All joking aside, the true reality is to try to be as close as possible to perfection in the mining art as applied to demolitions.

### What was the most fun about creating this book?

It was very challenging to create a book that could also be nice to touch and usable as an object. We wanted an exciting and fun book that you would want to give as gift.

### The cost? And where is it available?

*Dynamite Stories* is now available in Italian only but will be translated into American English. The translation will be ready in October, 2012 and will be inserted in a CD enclosed in the book. The book is available only on our online shop ([www.fermoeditore.com/shop](http://www.fermoeditore.com/shop)) in two different versions: with and without box (with box: about \$76 USD; without box: about \$44 USD). For more information, contact [info@fermoeditore.it](mailto:info@fermoeditore.it), so that we can communicate shipping costs and delivery times.



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