

# OLIVE BRANCHES DON'T GROW ON TREES

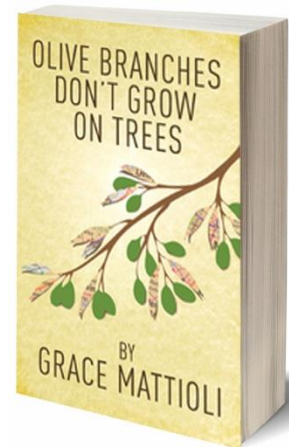
BY GRACE MATTIOLI

## Excerpt

Silvia Greco knew that the silence would not last. There was not enough silence in her world, and there was definitely not enough of it since she had moved into her father's house in New Jersey. She knew that her father, Frank, had taken a brief break from his current project of searching for a lost frying pan, and that he would be resuming his search any second with the clattering of pots and pans and slamming of cabinet doors. In the very short meantime, she enjoyed the sound of nothing as she sat waiting for her coffee to finish brewing as if it was all she had left in the world.

She sat at a square wooden kitchen table that took over the entire room. It looked good from a distance, but upon closer inspection revealed several nicks and scratches that had given it a memory of its own- a bad one. The table was bare except for an economy sized bottle of TUMS displayed in the middle like a centerpiece. She sat on a chair that was almost too big for her little body. A big girl misplaced inside a little girl's body, she had a big voice, a big laugh, a big stride, a big Romanesque nose that sat proud beneath her big brown eyes. Her big head of hair was currently chopped in some crude style of uneven lengths, the color orange on the top and black at the bottom...

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