



## Garden in via Paglietta 10

Via Paglietta, which descends with a discrete slope from the boulevards towards the city centre and whose entrance on the boulevards catches a glimpse of the wall and bell tower of the Annunziata, owes its name to the straw warehouses that were located along the road, at use of the once very numerous stables in the city. Two steps, which gain the slope of the street, lead to the classic entrance with a round arch that gives access to the typical loggia with an internal side staircase and an old glass door at the end. From here you can access to a part of the open spaces of the green core at the centre of the block, where various subdivisions dating back to the 1980s divided the area into a small garden and other tiny domestic spaces. An evergreen curtain of *Rhynchospermum jasminodes* covers almost all the space and also the access gate is surmounted by a thick branch of this generous climber. The interior is shaded by a knotty American maple (*Acer negundo*), a privet (*Ligustrum lucidum*) in the shape of a tree, an Aucuba (*Aucuba japonica*) and by the peculiar crown of a wattle, which stretches out in search of light. The driveway leading to the house, accompanied by a row of boxwoods and a long flowerbed with hellebores and geraniums, is decorated with a large terracotta pot and two iron arches that support the branches of a rose and of a specimen of *Philadelphus virginialis*. On the opposite side, where an oval with a classical relief is placed against the boundary wall, an elegant wattle rises from a small carpet of iris; next to the gate, a yucca, an oleander, a small fruit tree and a spikenard surround a Baroque statue of Bacchus, which seems almost turned towards a statue of "Venus with the apple" placed under the roof of the house. A recess of the building, where the area for the outdoor reception with an iron table and chairs is located, is decorated on the wall by a beautiful blue ceramic tile from Lisbon and embellished by a long branch of *Rhynchospermum jasminoides*. The owner narrates that, until the 1950s, this small oasis of peace was a ceramic factory, then transformed into a woodshed-charcoal kiln and a warehouse of the nearby condominium. Originally, after all, the interior spaces of the blocks had a prevalent utilitarian function, with vegetable gardens and small craft activities. Many buildings in this part of the city near the second circle of walls were once part of the properties of the friars of San Procolo and here there were the homes of the artisan families and workers at the service of the friars and noble families, such as the Ruini, the Ranuzzi and the Baciocchi (who resided in the current Palace of Justice). The area, once known as the Rione dei Mirasoli, which was degraded and rather infamous until the 1970s, was at the centre of a building restoration intervention that took place in the 1980s promoted by the Municipal Administration as part of the Cervellati Plan for the rehabilitation of the historical Centre.

Opposite the entrance door, on the other side of Via Paglietta, is the high wall that runs along the back of the Santa Croce complex (the church overlooks Via d'Azeglio 84), an ancient "Conservatorio delle Putte" ("Girls Conservatory"), founded in 1583 by Bonifacio dalle Balle, a merchant of textile products, to welcome single girls and remove daughters of prostitutes from the street; the girls were kept until they turned 21 years old and were further married off or placed in a convent. Today it is home to the "Lavinia Fontana" junior high school, as well as the "Duns Scoto" College Hall.