

My Writing Life

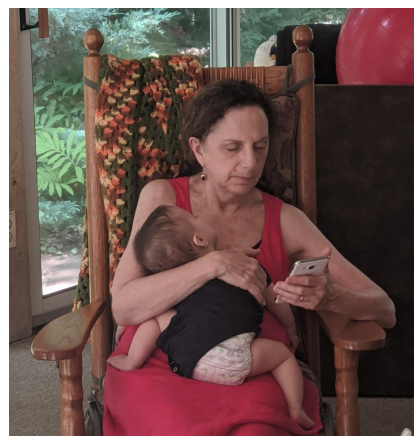
August 2020

Well, here we still are, adapting to life behind a mask and six feet apart. It is my fervent hope that you and those you love are healthy and safe.

My expanded multigenerational household of husband, son, daughter-in-law and granddaughter adjusted with joy to a family room strewn with toys and board books; a constantly churning washing machine; four adults juggling Zoom schedules; and communal dinners on the screened porch, cooked in rotation by three of the four adults (the fourth one always does the dishes). Like many others, our menu choices have become more adventurous as we shelter in place, with the younger generation introducing us to their favorites: spicy buffalo wings; pork ribs marinated in soy sauce, honey and garlic; buckwheat noodle bowl; Beyond Beef tacos; Korean pancakes with shrimp and calamari; and tofu noodles in peanut sauce.

In the midst of family life, I'm still finding time to create. Read on for my literary news, a new recipe and a special message about spreading the word.

Take care.



Nonna gets to read after Kaia, exhausted, finally falls asleep in her arms. . . following Nonna's repetition of every lullaby she knows.

Because life happens across the table..

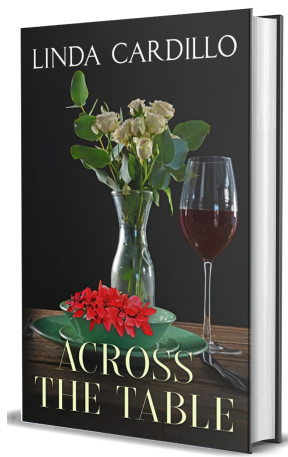


When my cousin Lisa sent me this photo, one of her favorites of her mother's family, I was immediately pulled into its story. It was a scene I'd witnessed often in my own childhood -- the kitchen table, the intensity of a family conversation anchored by cigarettes, coffee, and rich pastry.

Ten years ago, my Harlequin editor urged me to consider writing a story focused around food, after descriptions of meals and their evocative power showed up as a common thread in my first three books.

Running my own restaurant had once been a goal of mine, and I saw this new novel as an opportunity to finally realize that deferred dream. In creating the Dante family and their restaurant Paradiso, I tapped into the stories I'd heard around my own family's table -- especially the stories of the women of my mother's generation, the first-generation aunts who influenced and inspired me.

Across the Table has been out of print for several years, but its timeless story of three generations of Italian-American women is one of my favorites. That is why I'm excited to announce its reissue on September 14th and hope that you will come sit at the Dante family's table and share in moments that define a lifetime.



[Read an excerpt.](#)

On sale September 14, 2020
Preorder a copy now.

[Amazon](#)

[Barnes and Noble](#)

[Independent Bookstores](#)

An opportunity to help spread the word

A Special Request

If you've been reading my newsletter for a while, you know that each time I release a book, I make a pitch for reviews. They are the currency by which a book rises and falls, especially in the Amazon universe. This time, in addition to my usual plea, I am making a special offer to my loyal readers (you!). It is a common practice for publishers to send out advance copies of books to influential reviewers. You, dear reader, have a sphere of influence, and Bellastoria Press is happy to send you a free e-book or PDF of *Across the Table* if you are interested in posting a review on Amazon, Barnes and Noble or Goodreads on September 14, the launch date. Please reply [here](#) if you are willing to "spread the word" for me. Thank you!

Hear Me, See Me

If you weren't able to attend my recent live-stream presentations, I'm delighted to announce that two are available on demand.

Telling HerStory with Four Italian-American Women Writers

We talked, with lots of laughter and hand motions, about what compels us to write about our heritage, family, and community, and how our families' immigrant past empowers us to be successful in the present.

[Listen to the recording on SoundCloud.](#)

LOVE THAT MOVES THE SUN: The Challenging and Passionate Life of Vittoria Colonna and Her Relationship with Michelangelo Buonarroti

I shared my literary journey of my discovery of Vittoria, my research in Italy, and the work of weaving history into story. My talk included lots of photos from my trips "walking in Vittoria's footsteps."

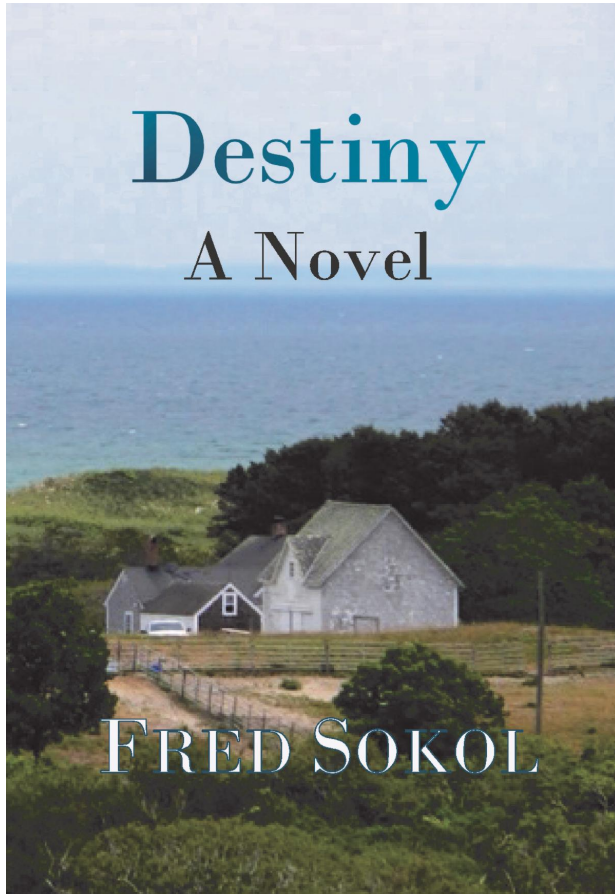
[Register to watch the video](#)

It's Just Historical...A New Podcast

My friend [Susanne Dunlap](#), historical novelist and adventurer in all things to do with book marketing, has launched a podcast that focuses exclusively on historical fiction. She invited me to be her first interview/guinea pig, and the results are [here](#). If you'd like to hear a couple of writers dishing on the past and how we turn history into story, listen in!



New from Bellastoria Press



Two old friends head out in search of adventure...and the reassurance that life is still ahead of them.

On a windswept beach they discover Destiny - a woman, a place, and an opportunity to reimagine the rest of their lives.

On sale August 31.

Preorder now.

[Amazon](#)

[Barnes and Noble](#)

[Independent Bookstores](#)

Food for the Soul

Summer weddings and basil pesto seem to be a theme in our family. My husband and I had our reception at home and I did all the cooking (except for the cake and cookies). I served pesto with farfalle and peas (made with traditional pine nuts) as the pasta course. Thirty-four years later, when my niece married an Italian from Matera, Italy, pesto made with pistachio nuts was the pasta course at their wedding.



Visit my website!

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