

LINDA CARDILLO

Stories of the search for connection and belonging

My Writing Life

June 2021

On Sale Today!



"Through the haze and dust, Zia Pasqualina could make out Papa's open carriage, punctuated by the unmistakable daffodil-yellow of my mother's parasol."

Family honor, jealousy, curses and retribution. . .
Another day in the life of a Southern Italian family

From mountain villages in the Mezzogiorno to immigrant neighborhoods in America, healers, matriarchs and defiant daughters endure the somber

shadows of resentment and suspicion to shape their own victories.

Giulia Fiorillo, the youngest daughter in a prominent family in her village, learns from both her mother and her grandmother the divergent ways in which a woman can triumph in a challenging world.

In another village, Fiammetta Navarra holds onto a treasure filled with bitter memories and transforms it into a life-changing gift.

A collection of four short stories featuring some of the characters from my award-winning novel, *Dancing on Sunday Afternoons*

On sale June 15, 2021

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\$0.99

A Special Note

If you enjoy the book, please consider leaving a few words of review and a rating on Amazon or Goodreads, so that other readers can discover my stories.

Thank you!

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Seeking Your Insights

If you've been reading my newsletter for some time, you know that part of my writing life is marketing my stories. I'm in the midst of updating the book descriptions and covers for my First Light series in anticipation of releasing the fourth book, *A Place of Refuge*, later this year. I'd deeply appreciate your reactions as I work through each of the books. Whether you have read *The Boat House Cafe* or not, if you saw this description on the Amazon or Barnes and Noble book page, would you buy this book?

**The islanders of Martha's Vineyard have a saying:
"Some come here to hide; others come to heal."**

After a series of bitter disappointments with men and a shameful secret she has kept hidden for ten years, Mae Keaney retreats to the island of her childhood to rescue herself. Turning an abandoned fishing camp into a successful café, she builds a wall of independence around herself. She needs no one and will not allow anyone to hurt her again. Ignoring the hostility of the close-knit community to a woman alone, she finds solace and peace in her solitary life on the dunes.

But the onset of World War II disrupts both Mae's life and the life of the island. When the carelessness of soldiers training near Mae's café causes a catastrophic fire, she confronts the reality—and loneliness—of her isolated life. In a moment of weakness, she accepts help from Tobias Monroe, a member of the native

Wampanoag tribe who shares her preference for solitude and her love of the wild land.

Together they battle the fire and discover a common bond as outcasts—a bond that deepens first into friendship and only later into love. But that love is challenged—by their own secrets; by the tensions between the white and native populations on the island; by tribal members who view Mae as an impediment to Tobias’s leadership of the tribe; and by the desperation of Mae’s sister, who is willing to destroy the family for her own selfish needs.

THE BOAT HOUSE CAFÉ, the first book in the multigenerational family saga First Light—a story of courage in the face of loss and the sacrifices one makes for love.

A Sunfish Story



A few years ago, my husband put together an anthology of stories written by friends and family who had sailed his Sunfish sailboat. The boat had been a high school graduation present from his parents, and the book was a way of celebrating 50 years of fun and adventure on the water. Yesterday, I lived through another Sunfish story that will have to go in the second edition of *Everybody Has a Sunfish Story*.

It was the first race of the season for our local sailing club on the Connecticut River. Last summer, when our son was living with us, he happily crewed for my husband every Sunday. But now that we are on our own again, I stepped up to help, relearning how to mount the mast, raise the sail, and connect the tiller. We set sail on a beautiful, sunny day with strong winds. I needed a few (OK, several) attempts before I could gracefully switch sides as we tacked back and forth across the river. But I was ready, and as the horn blew, we took off with the other boats around the starting marker.

The river is still high at this time of year and the current strong, and whenever we tacked into the wind, the boat tilted dramatically. It was as we were approaching the second marker to make our turn about that the wind gusted more than this inexperienced sailor could manage, and the boat flipped, dumping us into the river.

Now, it's not unusual for a Sunfish to flip, and the boat is designed so that it can easily be righted. But the last time I capsized was nearly twenty years ago on Shear Pen Pond, the setting for my First Light series. I would like to point out that I was twenty years *younger* then.

As the current carried me downstream from my husband and the boat, I struggled to get back to help him, clutching my flotation cushion and realizing quickly that my swimming skills were no match for the river. It was then that rescue arrived in the form of a very large, very powerful jet boat, piloted by four very strong young men.

"Help my wife first," called out my gallant husband. And so they did, swinging gently over to me, throwing me a line and then lifting me onto the boat, saving my baseball cap in the process. After checking that I wasn't injured, they turned back to my husband, who had successfully righted the Sunfish and was already at the tiller. He decided to continue sailing.

I, wisely, did not. I knew I didn't have the endurance or the energy to manage another flip, and I watched the rest of the race from the dock. And yes, the boat flipped two more times. As I told people later, I now have material for a good story, although in the midst of my adventure, all I could think about was keeping afloat.

As my husband sailed in after the race I went down to the river bank and asked him what he needed.

"A big kiss," he said. And I gladly obliged.

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Many thanks for your continued support of my writing and my warmest wishes for a happy summer!

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