



THE LOVESTORY NEWSLETTER



Dear LifeStory Family & Friends,

February has arrived, which for many of us means that love is on the mind! I always take time around Valentine's Day to reflect on my luck and the extraordinary circumstances that brought me and my love, Jess, together. I was never one to believe in fate, but sometimes our lives unfold in ways that just feel "meant to be." Here's what happened:

In July of 1993, I was with my family in Israel for the Maccabiah Games—the Jewish Olympics, in which Jews from around the

world gather every four years to compete for their home countries. At the time, my father was the chairman of the U.S. Men's Tennis team. Unbeknownst to me, Jess's father was on the U.S. Men's Golf team.

On July 3rd, my family, along with dozens of other families, ascended the sacred Mount Masada where my brother Robert and many others performed their bar and bat mitzvahs amidst the ancient ruins. It was a beautiful day of celebration alongside strangers who had all gathered for the same purpose.

Fast forward to December of 2001: I was traveling with my family to Whistler, British Columbia, for a ski vacation. During our layover in the SeaTac Airport in Seattle, we had a chance encounter with Jess and her family, who were also traveling that day. We hit it off immediately.

Jess was (and still is) beautiful, charming, funny, and brilliant. Our families were mirrors of each other in many ways. Perhaps it wasn't actually a chance encounter at all.

Months later, I learned that Jess had performed her bat mitzvah on Mt. Masada as well—also on July 3, 1993. We immediately opened our families’ photo albums to learn something stranger than fiction: we had been photographed together all those years ago on the other side of the world. There we were, smiling away in celebration in the background of each other’s special family moments, as if we had been together our whole lives. Truly, it was a match forged by fate.

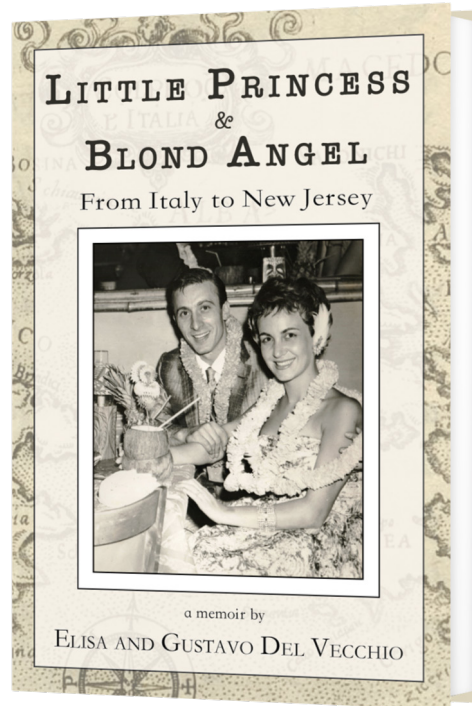
July 3rd is an easy date to remember, because it happens to also be the date we were married exactly thirteen years later.



That's me in the blue baseball cap. On the left, Jess and her mom are in the circle.

MEMOIR HIGHLIGHT: A LOVE STORY

In honor of Valentine's Day, I'm excited to announce one of our newest **LifeStory** Memoirs: *Little Princess & Blond Angel*.



This memoir tells the love story of Elisa and Gustavo, who both grew up in different Italian towns. With the onset of WWII, they and their families faced hardships including hunger, violence, and the Nazi presence.

After the war, Gustavo enlisted in the Air Force, and Elisa went to work as a hairdresser in her father's shop. Then one day, Gustavo spotted Elisa leaving the shop and took a liking to her. Soldiers in uniform, however, were not very welcome to

speak to girls. They had a bad reputation because they would inevitably leave. Nevertheless, Gustavo continued to show up in Elisa's life, making regular appearances outside of the shop and complimenting her.

As Elisa recalls,

I wasn't sure what to make of this guy. His family was from Sicily; every time I saw him, he would say something in a Sicilian accent, and I didn't know what he was saying. I thought he was talking nonsense. Then my

friend told me, "He's saying, 'What a lovely girl.'" He was very handsome, but I wasn't interested.

At the same time that Gustavo was pursuing me, my friends were all chattering about the Blond Angel who played on a basketball team. They would go just to watch him play, and they said I should join. "We're going to see the Blond Angel," they said. "Oh, oh, the Blond Angel." They were so giddy. So I went, and when the game began, I learned that Gustavo was the Blond Angel!

According to Gustavo, the two

liked each other, naturally, but I figured nothing was going to happen because I was in the Air Force. I couldn't go to her house and say, "I like your daughter." Her father would have screamed. That was the mentality in those days. "Guys with uniforms? They're no good." Girls who went out with military men had a bad reputation.



Elisa and Gustavo, Napoli, 1954

Eventually the tides turned. As time went on, Elisa, the Little Princess, fell in love with Gustavo, her Blond Angel. And there was something about Elisa that Gustavo just couldn't shake. When she emigrated to the United States with her family, leaving him behind in Italy, he wrote her love letters regularly, which only made Elisa fall harder.

Elisa 1 - 12 - 1953

Amore mio caro,
ancora una volta la tua delusione
non è stata immensa, forse mi aspettavi in
matrimonia, ed io nell'ora in cui tu stavi in
finestra attendendomi io mi diressi qua
in questo deserto maledetto. Questa sera
ti scriverò da un angolino solitario della
Pianura di Lido. Sono di Guardia ancora
una volta. Domani ho fatto il turno
festivo, oggi quello regolare. Amore mio
immensa è il dolore quando solo la sera,
fanno alla mia giovinezza, perduta in questo
maledetto posto. I migliori anni della mia
vita sono trascorsi e trascorrono inerti
senza poter obbiettare, tu non li ho mai
immaginare questo luogo, forse non hai mai
visto tali luoghi. Certamente ti ricordi
il campo sperimentale, ottene lo rimpiego,
ho cercato di trovar meglio ed ho trovato
pezzo. "Chi ha colpa del suo mal
fianco se stesso, rimpiego con estrema
B. Piore, desidero allontanarmi da Lido
come al più desidero un pezzo di fare
quando si ha fame.

A love letter from Gustavo to Elisa, December 1, 1953

When Elisa returned to Italy (along with a wedding dress just in case), Gustavo realized he could not let her get away again. As he remembers it, “Even though I was not one hundred percent sure, I had to marry Elisa because I knew that if I didn’t, if she got away from me and came back to the United States, it would be the last time I would see her. I worried she would never come back.”



Their memoir chronicles their love story, emigration to the United States, careers, children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, as well as their lifetime of love and commitment to each other and their family. They are truly living the American Dream, and it has been my pleasure to capture their legacy.

LOVESTORY

♡ SPECIAL ♡

Thank you to all of my clients and friends who have taken advantage of our special pricing on **LifeStory** books for the holiday! Trusting me with the story of your life is an amazing honor and I couldn’t be more thrilled to start working on your projects.

To show my appreciation, I’m extending the sale! From now through the end of February, we’re offering 10% off of a **Classic Memoir** for a couple to share the story of their love, or a **Specialty LoveStory** book featuring photos, memories, anecdotes, and special messages.

Best wishes for the upcoming Month!

Richard

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