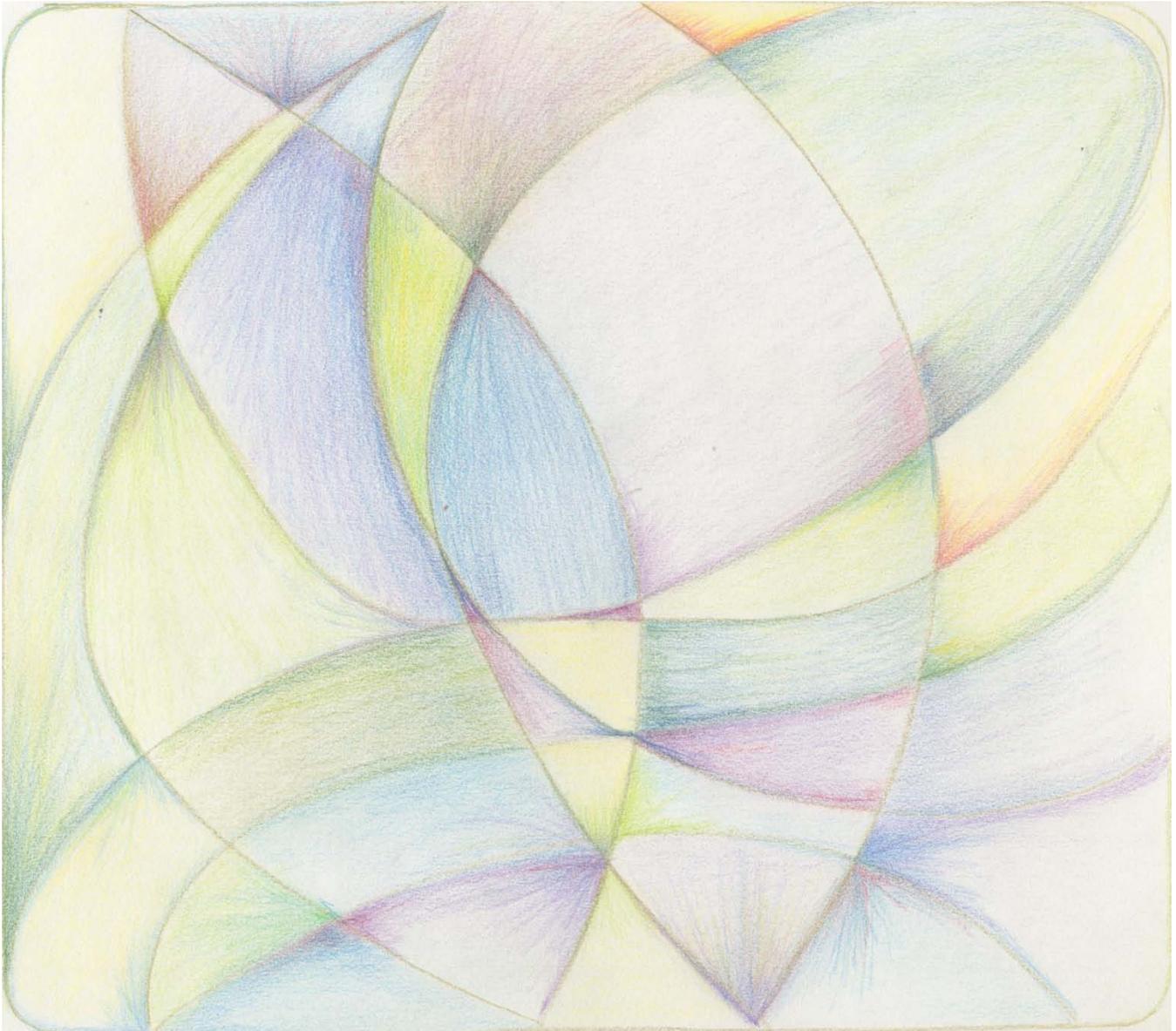


My Writing Life



April 2014

Dear Friends,

A few clumps of snow still obscure my garden, but this morning I discovered four daffodil shoots pushing up through the frozen earth in one tiny, protected, and sun-blessed corner. Like those daffodils, I'm eager to greet spring—with new work, new ideas, and new places to go. I hope you'll come along!

Linda

Filling the Well

It's not always about the words

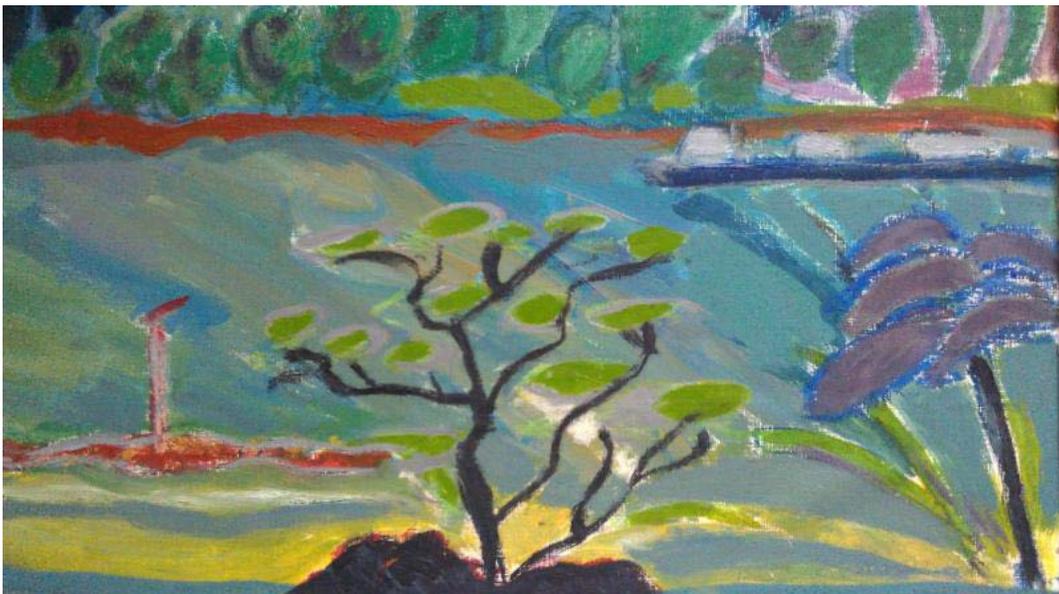
During the first week I lived in Germany, I met a woman shepherding her two little boys on the playground where I had come with my three-year-old daughter. Ursula was to become not only one of my most special friends, but also the woman who sparked my curiosity and nurtured my creativity in many ways.

She introduced me to the vineyards of her family's generations-old winery, Weingut Geromont, and shared her experience of taking over its management when she was the thirty-something mother of three. Her struggles and triumphs became the seeds of my novella "The Hand That Gives the Rose."

When our youngest children were born a week apart, we gave each other the gift of a morning to ourselves each week by sharing their care. We bought a double stroller, and while one of us took the babies for long walks, the other got to write or paint.

Ursula also unlocked a door to my past when she invited me to participate in a weekend painting workshop with the artist Christa Moering. It had been nearly twenty years since I had painted, and I had all but ignored what had once been an important and satisfying part of my life. But after three days of immersing myself in Christa's exuberant love of color and encouragement of my experimentation, I realized how vital it was to my writing to explore other ways of creating. In artist's parlance, it's called "filling the well."

Fast forward to the present. As those of you who have read *The Smallest Christmas Tree* know, I've once again picked up my paintbrushes. And a few weeks ago I took a course in a medium I've never worked in--colored pencils. At the instructor's suggestion, I simply played with line and hue as my hand wandered around the page. The abstract image at the top of this newsletter was the result. But more than a colorful experiment, those shapes and shades loosened up the stiffness and shadows of winter and gave me new energy to write. So I urge you to find your own colored pencils, oil pastels, or watercolors--whatever medium you choose—and discover something new about yourself!



Christa Moering, *Der Rhein*

Reverie

To make a prairie it takes a clover and one bee,
One clover, and a bee,
And revery.

The revery alone will do
If bees are few.

Emily Dickinson



Asking for help is sometimes an uncomfortable task for me. It's taken me several hours to find the "right" tone and the best words. Please bear with me as I ask a favor of you.

Emily Dickinson's elegant, spare poetry gave me the image I was searching for as I set out to write this piece. I'd like you to engage in a bit of reverie with me and imagine the prairie seeded by that single bee, guided by warmth and color and fragrance. The sun is

blazing and a light wind ripples through the field as if it were a purple sea.

I discovered today that the French root of the word *reverie* means "to behave wildly." Like a wild bee imbibing the clover's nectar and spreading it far and wide, would you be willing to behave wildly for my books?

I've been blessed by you, my loyal readers. You have read and loved my writing, told your friends about me, invited me to speak to your book club or library or women's organization. Thank you! Thank you! But now I need you to raise your voices.

As my agent continues to shop *The Poet* to publishers, it's crucial that I enlarge my circle of readers. As always, I'd be delighted to speak to your group--it's one of my favorite ways of connecting beyond the page.

Here are some other things you can do in spreading the word, loudly and wildly-

- Forward this newsletter to your friends.
- Post an update on Facebook.
- Tweet about your favorite passage.
- Read *The Poet* Sampler offered on the next page and send me a note about what you think of it. I'm forwarding comments to my agent as examples of the enthusiasm for this book.

I remain truly grateful for all the support you've given me over the years. Thank you for being such avid fans!

Thank you



I grew up before Title IX encouraged girls to take to the fields and basketball courts. My childhood "sports" were bike riding around town and ice skating on a small local pond, neither of which involved teams. Consequently, I was never named to an all-star team--one of those formative experiences that is supposed to help you succeed in business.

That all changed last week. Constant Contact, the service that sends the email version of my newsletter, named me one of its 2013 Constant Contact All-Stars. The main reason for my award? YOU! Constant Contact invited winners to offer a tip on how to market a business successfully. Here's what I wrote:

"My Writing Life" newsletter is a demitasse spoon skimmed across the frothy milk on a cup of cappuccino; it's a scarlet-painted toe dipped in the swirling azure water of the Mediterranean; it's a whispered secret shared with friends. As one of my loyal readers once wrote me, it's a "little taste of great things to come." As a novelist who weaves stories about the tangle and embrace of connection, I continue the connection with my readers through the vignettes in my newsletter. My tip for success: tell a story--with words and pictures--that invites your reader into your world.

The Poet Sampler



As part of my marketing effort to promote *The Poet*, I've created a "sampler" that I hope will entice readers--much like a movie trailer. I hope my words will convey you to 16th-century Italy and give you a preview of what awaits you when you the book appears in print.

If you would like a free copy, please write me to request one, either through my email address, linda@lindacardillo.com, or at the following mailing address:

Linda Cardillo
P.O. Box 298
Enfield, CT 06083-0298

After you read it, please let me know what you think by sending me a note at the above address or email.

Thank you!