

Little Fiction | Big Truths presents Nonfiction. Arancini by Deb Fleischman. In Italy, La Madonna is everywhere-rendered in frescos, enshrined in basilicas, honored in local festivals, invoked in the prayers of old widows and the curses of old men. Even so, a traveler, taken in by the cobblestone piazzas, the art, the hillsides teeming with olive orchards and vineyards, the lyrical language, local wines and regional dishes, might find it easy to forget that this country is Catholic. It is Christmastime when you and your future husband, Nick, take an overnight train from Umbria central Italy to Sicily to visit his eighty-two-year-old great-uncle Jo. Jo greets you at the train with a bag of arancini, a Sicilian specialty-deep fried, conical rice croquettes stuffed with ground meat, tomato sauce, peas, and mozzarella. They are strange looking but delicious. Their tempations you come to love. You spend two weeks calling Jo Zio, because he is everyone's uncle, the oldest living member of his family on both sides. Three times a day Jürgen brews shots of espresso, which you sip from tiny porcelain cups in his cramped kitchen, the only room he feels comfortable in. The cucina is spare save for an old army cot where he sleeps and the two iconic features of the twenty-first century Italian kitchen-a painting of La Madonna, and a TV blaring game shows with half naked go-go dancers. They keep Jo company in his old apartment, but now he has visitors to entertain. "Sit down," he gestures, setting out warm homeade ricotta for breakfast-from his friend who makes it fresh, he tells you, "from the cow." Then he lights his pipe and fills the room with Barolo-scented Forte tobacco and stories of his youth-the time the whole town came out to corral Glauco's escaped pigs, which were running wild through the Centro; his high school field trip up Mt. Etna on Christmas day where he vented.

red onto steamy barrels of cooling lava and burned a hole in the sole of his shoe. You imagine yourself related to this droll old man, dapperly outfitted in a wool jacket, button-down vest, and the traditional Sicilian coppola worn by men young and old. You spend hours each day eating, gathered with his huge extended family, enticed by Sicilian dishes: sfincione, caponate, carne by the truckload (one of Nick's second cousins owns a macelleria), and a assortment of dolce followed by caffè while you listen to Zio rattle off jokes with the kind of deadpan delivery stand-up comics kill for. At the cemetery, where you visit his wife's grave, he gives you the low-down on the dead. "You see that grave over there?" He points to a halo of dozen spectacular sprays of flowers hovering over a freshly dug grave. "That one was killed by the Mafia." He calls your attention to another lavish arrangement of white lilies in the shape of a giant cross. "Blown up... By the Mafia." Then he turns somber, motions to a marble mausoleum in pristine condition that looks like Michelangelo might have carved it. Jo curses under his breath, and speaks of the Cosa Nostra, which has terrorized his town since he was a boy. He empties out the violets and stale water from the vase that sits in a stand by his wife's grave. Jo is faithful to Lina and brings a fresh bouquet to her site every week, but he is bereft without her, and sometimes when he is not nurturing his astounding collection of cacti-hundreds of species that cover his flat rooftop and keep him busy-he wishes for his own death. Christmas Eve arrives and you're looking forward to a Sicilian Mass but no one is getting dressed. Instead you find yourself playing bingo till 3 a.m., eating homemade honeyed donuts, and laughing out loud at Zio's jokes. You don't understand because he is speaking Sicilian, but everyone is in hysterics, especially Aunt Lina's sister Francesca, who must weigh three hundred pounds and is drunk on Zio's homemade grappa, which tastes like kerosene. You drink, the familial warmth intoxicates, and you feel nested, as though you were born into this family. "Al mio primo Natale. To my first Christmas. Salute!" you blur, smiling, the heat of the liquor expanding your lungs. Everyone pantomimes your gesture and drinks to your health. Except Jo, who shifts uncomfortably on his stool. "You are Ebrea?" he asks. Yougulp the remaining grappa and look to Nick to rescue you from the awkward, no, insensitive question, coming from a man who had always felt like a foreigner in the United States, even after receiving his American citizenship. Jo had immigrated to New York just after World War II at the age of forty and worked as a handyman for the Bronx Botanical Gardens long enough to earn a pension before retiring with his wife back to the small town of Lentini, Sicily, where they were born. "Si, Zio, I told you," Nick says. And you let the question slide, because really, maybe, it's a harmless inquiry. Nevertheless-Ebrea-that biblical anachronism for Jew, makes you burn, and you flush red, feeling like a relic of an ancient Egypt and wonder if in a country with noses like yours you could be outed. Jo resumes his role as host, but you can't shake your growing discomfort. In Italy, being labeled Ebrea feels more offensive than being called stranieri, a foreigner-because every non-native is a straniero. Even Christiana, your German landlady, married to Marcelo, an Italian, for over twenty years; even Marcelo, who is no native of the tiny village of San Leo de Batista, where he has lived only half his life. Christmas passes and you begin to feel claustrophobic sleeping in Jo's former bedroom. The bed is too soft, the lighting too dim. Lina's bric-a-brac and perfume bottles clutter the mahogany dresser, still filled with her clothes, while you live out of your suitcase. Then just before the New Year, Uncle Jo snaps. "Da tub it is stopped." "What?" You and Nick have just come in from a stroll. "I said de tub. It is stopped." "What?" you wonder. You only take showers. "I show you!" he says, exasperated, and marches the two of you upstairs to the bathroom, points first at the toilet, then aims his finger in your direction. "Deres a shit in da tub and I tink it was you!" Instantly all the affection you have comes to hold for this man disintegrates like ash at your feet. You feel defiled and small-una Ebrea, who despite her best efforts will never be accepted into this tribe. His accusations cease to be Zio, and you recall the black and white photos of his four brothers that hang in the sterile, unfurnished living room, the couch and chandelier. Nick's faith in you defensiveself becomes a stain on himself and you defen-

der. The following morning it is still nev-

er, who also makes you uncomfortable, with his drinking and self-righteousness. Everything around you turns morbid-Sicilian, and you can no longer excuse him than you can Mussolini. In your bedroom that night you throw a fit and snarl, "I'm not even my shit!" Nick is laughing. But now you are crying and talking about how it feels to be the only Jew in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter! You are taking the next train out. Alone, if necessary, you demand to leave the next day. "He had a spell. Don't take it personally," says Nick. "How should I take it?" you say. "And why didn't you wish person in the room, in all of Lentini, in all of Italy, for that matter!