



L.L.

The
Writer

Returns

Louisa Luisi swings for the
fences again with
her new book

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Interview
Albert Stampone

Photography
T.C. Geist

IF YOU THINK that children's book author Louisa Luisi is using a pen name because her name sounds a little made up, then you're not alone. There are all kinds of famous people who share her smooth-sounding double hockey sticks initials—Lisa Loeb, Lisa Ling, Laura Linney, Lorenzo Lamas, Loretta Lynn, and Lucy Lawless, to name a few—as well as a few totally unreal, off-the-wall characters like Lois Lane, Lex Luthor and Lindsay Lohan. Is Louisa destined for great things with her ready-for-fame name? Our Magic 8 Ball is broken. Ask again later.

In the meantime, the Ridgewood High School English teacher, director, producer and playwright has published her second book in a little over one year's time, and that's fortunate for us all.

Though she told us when her debut book, *Your Best Coaches*, was released in the fall of 2012 that her ultimate goal was to "keep writing children's books," Louisa's new effort, *Together*, is the poignant and true story of a mother of 10 who lost her husband on 9/11.

MAIN STREET: HOW HAS YOUR LIFE CHANGED SINCE WE LAST SPOKE FOLLOWING THE RELEASE OF YOUR BEST COACHES?

LOUISA: Since publishing *Your Best Coaches*, my life as a writer has been exciting! I was able to visit many schools and libraries, and share the book with children. I was also able to write with some of them. Hopefully, I even inspired them to read more.

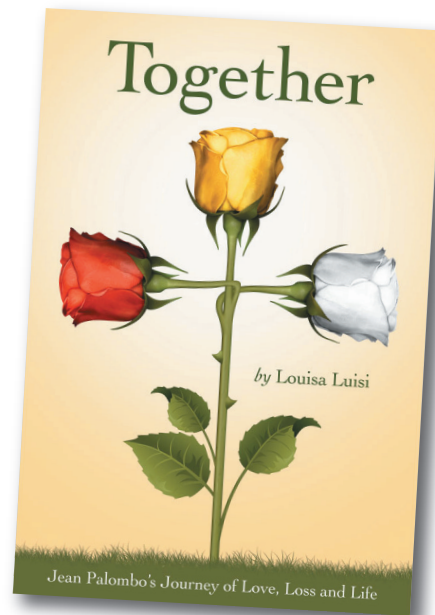
ARE YOU A PRO AT BOOK SIGNINGS NOW?

Book signings are always exciting, because you witness the support of your own book from a wide spectrum of fans. Not only do friends and family attend, but complete strangers come out to offer support because they like the book. That's the most exciting part. Signing at Barnes & Noble in Freehold back in September was an amazing experience. Just being in a book store and meeting people who wanted to buy my book

and meet me was incredible. Also, seeing my book displayed in the store was an amazing feeling!

TELL US ABOUT SOME INTERESTING AND FUN THINGS THAT HAPPENED AT YOUR BOOK SIGNINGS.

The most interesting part of doing a book signing for a children's book is hearing the questions asked by kids. Because the book is about baseball, sometimes, kids would come to the signings dressed up in their baseball uniforms or their favorite player's jersey. Kids love asking questions and that's what makes me smile the most! I've heard questions such as "Why doesn't the little boy in your book have a name?", "Did you play baseball when you were a kid?", "Do you play baseball now?", and "Are you going to write another book?" Those are fun questions, but the most common question from both parents and kids was, "Is Louisa Luisi your real name or a pen name?" Yep! That's my real name!



WHAT'S YOUR NEW BOOK, TOGETHER, ABOUT?

Together is very special to my heart. It is a short book about my time spent with Jean Palombo prior to her death last summer. Jean lost her husband, Frank, a firefighter, on 9/11 during the attacks on the Twin Towers. They were from Brooklyn, and leave behind 10 children. After Frank's death, Jean and the kids moved to Ridgewood. The book mainly focuses on her thoughts on love, life and loss. All proceeds from book sales will go to The Palombo Family Scholarship that will be awarded to a graduating Ridgewood High School senior.

YOU PUBLISHED YOUR BEST COACHES THANKS TO THE ONLINE FUNDING PLATFORM KNOWN AS KICKSTARTER. DID YOU DO THAT WITH THE NEW BOOK?

No, we took pre-orders this time, which helped us gauge how many books to print. You can order a copy of *Together* at my Website, www.LouisaLuisi.com. ☞