Marcella Luiso Flanagan Releases 'American Destiny: A True Story of Family, Roots, and the Journey Between Two Worlds'

Award-winning memoir follows one family's return to postwar Italy, and the impossible choice that shaped each of their lives differently



American Destiny: : A True Story of Family, Roots and the Journey Between Two Worlds

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, September 23, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- "American Destiny: A True Story of Family, Roots, and the Journey Between Two Worlds" is a recently published memoir by Marcella Luiso Flanagan, co-authored with her niece, Phyllis Clare Orlowski. In 1948, eighteen years after first leaving Italy for New York, Marcella's family returned to rebuild the life they'd once left behind. Just five months later, they were back in New York for good, and that decision would echo for the rest of their lives.

Told through the eyes of 14-year-old Marcie, the memoir follows everything that choice cost the family and everything it gave back. It's the kind of story many Italian American families have, in some form. The book has won a Silver Award in the Readers' Choice Book Awards' Adult Non-Fiction category.

"So many families have lived some version of this story," Flanagan said. "Leaving the place you love changes you, and it changes the people who stay behind, too. That's really what American Destiny is about."

Some important themes in the book include:

Family and roots. The book is as much about its authors as its subject. Marcella, now 91, and Phyllis spent years shaping decades of family memory into a single story together, aunt and niece writing side by side. At its center is a family, reckoning with an impossible choice: what it means to stay, what it means to leave, and how differently that choice shaped each member for the rest of their life.

Heritage and Italian-American identity. The Argenti family's roots run through Cassano delle Murge and Acquaviva delle Fonti, two towns in Bari province, Puglia, and through New York, which the family eventually called home. Dialect, food, faith, and customs from both places carry through the book, offering a specific, lived-in portrait of Italian-American heritage rather than a general one.



American Destiny Authors Marcella Luiso Flanagan and Phyllis Clare Orlowski

Food and recipes. Seven family recipes are woven through the book, each tied to the relative who kept it alive, and to a specific moment in the family's story: Nonna Angela's Almond Biscotti, Nonna Marzia's Biscotti dal Anice, Zia Camilla's Homemade Orecchiette, and Christmas Cartellate and Vin Cotto among them. The food is more than a cultural detail — it is how the family remembers and stays connected across distance and generations.

> So many families have lived some version of this story. Leaving the place you love changes you, and it changes the people who stay behind, too. That's really what American Destiny is about."
>
> *Marcella Luiso Flanagan*

Faith. Catholic faith runs quietly through the Argenti family's daily life, from a worn prayer card to Padre Pio hanging in the family home to the Feast of the Madonna celebrated each year in Acquaviva. Marcella, a Eucharistic Minister, has carried that faith throughout her life, and the memoir reflects how it shaped the family's understanding of home, hardship, and hope.

Women in business and fashion. Marcie's time in Italy left its mark in an unexpected way: she returned to New York with a newfound confidence and a growing interest in design. She went on to graduate from the Fashion Institute of Technology, launching a career that would span more than four decades, including years designing childrenswear for the Cheryl Tiegs line at Sears and running her own Bronxville, New York boutique, Marcella Luiso, where she sold her own label, Achievers. In 1977, she turned that same drive toward advocacy, founding the New York Association of Women Business Owners and organizing the city's first Salute to Women in Business Week, work that helped open doors for the generation of women entrepreneurs who followed her.

"American Destiny: A True Story of Family, Roots, and the Journey Between Two Worlds" by Marcella Luiso Flanagan, co-authored with Phyllis Clare Orlowski, is available:

Hardcover | 6 x 9in | 348 pages | ISBN 9798765267110
Softcover | 6 x 9in | 348 pages | ISBN 9798765267127
E-Book | 348 pages | ISBN 979876526710
Amazon and Barnes & Noble
High-resolution professional photography and videos are available upon request.

###

Susan Fecko
ROOT Marketing PR
+1 307-690-8381
email us here
Visit us on social media:
Instagram
Facebook

This press release can be viewed online at: https://www.einpresswire.com/article/944312536

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.
© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.