

Web Books Blog

## Follow Stella on social



---

## Stella's Latest Thoughts

Back in pre-North Carolina days, when I lived in the San Francisco bay area, one of the highlights of the year was “Sanctuary,” an art and writing retreat organized every January by writer [Susan Ito](#) (whose new book, [I Would Meet You Anywhere](#), is a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award in Autobiography).

Susan loves the [Santa Sabina Retreat Center](#), a former Dominican novitiate in Marin County where young women once gathered in preparation for their role as Sisters of the order. The nunnery became a retreat center in the 1970s, and its rooms and gardens retain the essence of contemplative space. At Susan's retreats, artists write and writers make art. Inner Critics take a walk in the garden while a pantheon of goddesses play at collaging and poetry.

I go back to California from time to time, but in the intervening years I had never made it to Sanctuary. I missed it terribly. So when the announcement came that Santa Sabina was being sold, and January 2024 would be the last retreat there, I packed my bags—including my laptop with the only copy of *The Well-Seasoned Romance*, the book I planned to edit at the retreat.

My partner and I stopped in San Francisco on the way to Marin to visit the Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park. While we toured the dinosaur exhibit and the aquarium, thieves smashed the windows of our rental SUV and stole the belongings hidden in the back, including my laptop with the only copy of my book in progress. This was at eleven in the morning; the retreat would begin that afternoon.

In the intervening hours, my amazing partner took me to an Apple store so I could get a new laptop and setup the new machine so that all my files (including my Word file, email, etc.) from iCloud appeared, as though by magic. He made sure I got to the retreat while he attended to business at a company he owns in Napa. I arrived at Santa Sabina sans backpack, but with a box containing my new computer and every word I had written for the new book. Women at the retreat took me into town to buy toiletries, gave me medicine for my headache, and showed once again what real community looks like. We danced, we talked, we laughed, and over the next three days I edited eight of the sixteen chapters in my new book. And even better, we renewed friendships, made new friends, and discovered fantastic talents in one another before we said our goodbyes to each other and to Santa Sabina.

I visited another goddess pantheon before I returned to North Carolina: a reunion of the Elderotica writing group, the women who inspired my first book ([Aphrodite's Pen: The Power of Writing Erotica after Midlife](#)). We shared a meal and talked about where we are now, five years after *Pen*. Several of us have health challenges or have experienced grief and loss.

One woman is part of an upcoming [documentary](#) about [life before Roe](#). Another read a story at Moth.

And then we wrote together and read to each other the rich variety we created from the same prompts. Terrific lines emerged: *Once she was feral. The Pussy of Sentimental Music. For a taste of the Carrot of Bliss.*

A taste of bliss, indeed. That trip was ten days, it was forever. It was now, and now it's then.

We are back in North Carolina. Thanks to several all-night editing sessions in my nun's cell at Santa Sabina, I'm on to editing the last chapters of my book. *The Well-Seasoned Romance: Write and Sell Your Late-Life Love Story* is a soup-to-nuts guide to create a Romance novel with older main characters. It is both a manual for new writers who have never written a book, and a road map for experienced authors making a move into Seasoned Romance. All the keys to write, edit, publish and market your late-life love story are there. Romance is the perennial top genre, selling more books than science fiction and mystery combined—and many of us would rather read about the love lives of people our age than people our children's age. Are you tempted? I hope so.

And just to let you know, I will soon be calling for Beta readers for the new book. If you are curious about *Well-Seasoned Romance* and would like to read the almost-finished book and give feedback, please drop me a note at [stella@stellafosse.com](mailto:stella@stellafosse.com).

This has been a memorable start to 2024, for me and I hope for you as well. I'm wishing for each of us a creative year, a passionate year, a year of love and friendship, of movement and growth.



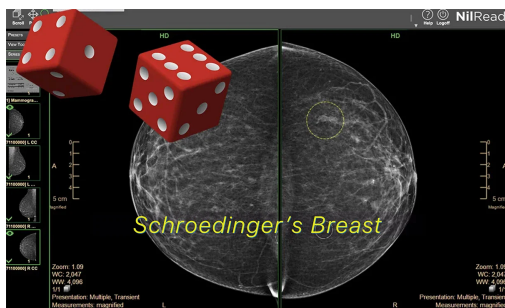
Keep Clicking Those Keys!  
Stella,  
[stella@stellafosse.com](mailto:stella@stellafosse.com)

---

**Please Share this Newsletter!**



# From the blog this month



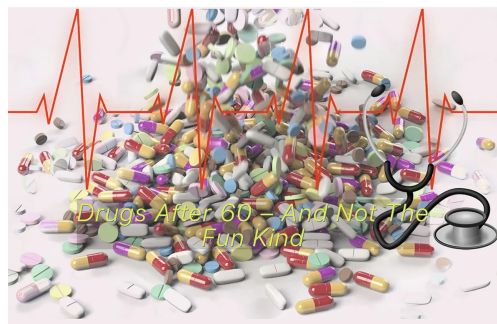
## Schroedinger's Breast:

### Welcome to Mammogram-O-Rama

When the mammogram center called the week after my scan, I knew it was not good news. Those folks don't ring you up to say hi.

"Your scan shows calcifications," the woman said. "We need you to come in to see if we can resolve your case. We'd like you to wait after this mammogram and talk with the radiologist."

I scheduled the scan for the next week and spent the intervening days in true bionerd fashion, reading everything I could about breast calcifications and preparing a [list of questions](#) for the doctor.



## Drugs after 60 – And Not The Fun Kind

I react badly to most medications – sometimes badly enough to warrant a [MedWatch](#) report to FDA. A bit ironic, given that I spent my career in biotech writing submissions to FDA for product approvals. But knowing what I do about medical regulation, it did not surprise me to learn that the American Geriatric Society has developed the [Beer's List](#) of approved medications they do not recommend prescribing to adults over 65.

If you have ever read the package insert for a medication, you know that drug labeling lists warnings and contraindications, including who should not take the drug. So you might wonder:

Why didn't I just wait to hear the word from on high? Trusting doctors is not my style. I came by that skepticism the hard way.

[Read More.....](#)

Why do we need the Beer's List? Doesn't FDA make drug companies study the effects of new products on older people?

Let me tell you a story....

[Read More.....](#)

---

**Stella Fosse**  
125 S Estes Drive #4311, Chapel Hill  
North Carolina, United States of America



You received this email because you signed up on my website, social media, took a class or bought from me.

You may unsubscribe whenever you want, but I'll be sad to see you go.

**You'll be welcome back at anytime!.**

[Unsubscribe](#)