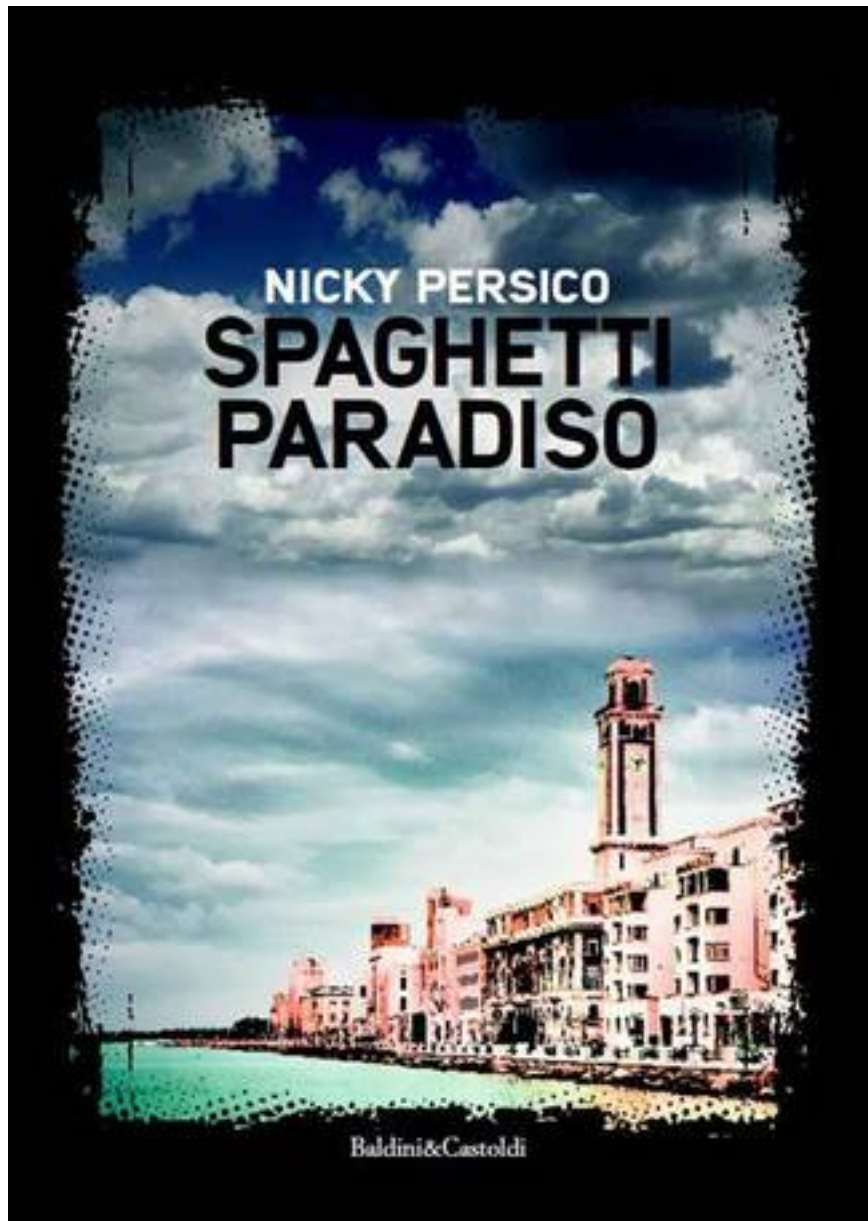


## Spaghetti Paradiso

Traci Andrighetti (March 27, 2014)



A Surprising "Smart Thriller" from Nicky Persico

Nicky Persico (b. 1964, Bari), an attorney and journalist by profession, published his debut novel, [Spaghetti paradiso](#) [2] (Spaghetti Paradise), in 2011 (Aliante) and again in 2013 (Baldini & Castoldi). Persico draws on his legal expertise and personal studies to expose the little-known aspects of stalking and manipulation. This so-called "smart thriller" has drawn critical and public acclaim not only for the originality of its content but also for the author's skill in balancing the ugly reality of domestic violence against moments of beauty and serenity.

Spaghetti paradiso is the story of Alessandro Flachi, an inexperienced attorney who unexpectedly finds himself representing two women who are victims of domestic abuse. Alessandro initially believes that he has a grasp on the respective cases, but when he meets Lara, a social worker who runs a women's shelter, he discovers that he knows nothing at all about the psychology of stalkers and how they prey on their victims. Based on a genuine desire to understand, Alessandro goes on a personal and professional journey into an obscure and complicated world, risking his own life in the process. What emerges unscathed from the darkness is a recipe for life and love called "Spaghetti Paradiso."

Aside from a smattering of legalese, the language of Spaghetti paradiso consists of neostandard Italian with regional accents, or regional Italian. Lexical items include regionalisms, neologisms, colloquialisms and foreignisms. This contemporary language together with the straightforward conversational style of the author make for an absorbing and at times breathtaking read.

**REGIONAL ITALIAN** (from Barese, the dialect of Bari, and the surrounding area)  
fafueco (Ital. rimestatore; Eng. troublemaker)

Fafueco [pron.: fa'fuèch'] – soggetto avvezzo a seminare zizzania, o ad alimentare conflitti. In determinati contesti, ha anche accezione di persona incline a esagerare gli eventi, o millantare.

(Fafueco [pron.: fa'fuèch'] – a person used to sowing discord, or to nourishing conflict. In specific contexts, it also refers to a person inclined to exaggerate events, or to brag.)

**lampascioni** (Ital. cippollotti amaragnoli; Eng. small bitterish onions)

Step 2: schiacciai i lampascioni in una ciotola e unii uova, prezzemolo, pecorino a grana grossa, crosta di pane grattugiata, un pizzico di sale e una spruzzata di pepe tricolore.

(Step 2: I crushed the [small bitter] onions in a bowl and added eggs, parsley, coarse-grained pecorino cheese, grated bread crust crumbs, a pinch of salt and a sprinkle of tri-colored pepper.)

**NEOSTANDARD ITALIAN**  
milanizzazione (Eng. Milanization; derived from Ital. Milano; Eng. Milan)

Oggi è un po' diverso, c'è stata una progressiva milanizzazione.

(Today it's a bit different; there's been a progressive Milanization.)

**qualunquista** (Eng. politically indifferent person; derived from the Ital. uomo qualunque; Eng. ordinary man, every man)

Questo trionfo del qualunquista, eretto a profondo filosofo, è la massima umiliazione che la razza umana può infliggere alla propria intelligenza...

(This triumph of the ordinary man, founded by a profound philosopher, is the maximum humiliation that the human race can inflict on its own intelligence...)

### ARTISTIC LICENSE

sfatigation (a term invented by the author, who describes it as the “antithesis of ‘customer care’”: the Ital. sfaticato; Eng. slacker combined with the English suffix -tion; a possible English equivalent: slackation)

Non fui nemmeno sfiorato dalla tentazione di fargli notare che forse non era proprio eccellente, in quanto sapevo bene che la customer sfatigation prevedeva, per tali casi, procedure operative che spaziavano dallo sguardo torvo all’atteggiamento che trasmette il concetto di “vada a cagare, e grazie per averci scelto”.

(I wasn’t the least bit tempted to let him know that maybe he wasn’t first-rate, since I knew very well that customer slackation allowed, for such cases, operating procedures that ranged from the surly gaze to the behavior that transmitted the concept of “go screw yourself, and thanks for choosing us.”)

### COLLOQUIALISMS

avere la luna storta (literally, to have the wrong moon, meaning to be in a bad mood)

Mi stava tentando, e quel giorno avevo davvero la luna storta: rispettare le regole stava diventando una costrizione.

(He was tempting me, and that day I was really in a bad mood: respecting the rules was becoming a constraint.)

farne di tutti i colori (literally, to make of it all the colors, meaning to use all kinds of tricks)

Lara mi aveva avvertito: questi soggetti ne fanno di tutti i colori, ma invocano per primi il rispetto delle regole, e ti accusano di quello che in realtà fanno loro.

(Lara had warned me: these types use all kinds of tricks, but first they invoke respect for the rules, and they accuse you of what in reality they do.)

### FOREIGNISMS

megakrapfen (krapfen is German for donut; Eng. megadonut)

Dopo la corsa, doccia e colazione macrobiotica: megakrapfen fritto con crema debordante, nel bar sotto casa, che usava rigorosamente il SINT 2000 per friggere, cappuccino scuro doppio zucchero...

(After the run, a shower and macrobiotic breakfast: a fried megakrapfen bursting with cream, in the bar below the house that rigorously used the synthetic engine oil SINT 2000 for frying, a dark cappuccino double sugar...)

supermacho (English and Spanish; a compound adjective used as the English noun super macho type)

Capisco che non avevo fatto esattamente la figura del supermacho, ma che mi mettesse in guardia da un cucciolo, mi pareva eccessivo.

(I get that I hadn’t exactly come across as the super macho type, but the fact that she was warning me about a puppy seemed excessive.)

Concluding Remarks:

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Spaghetti paradiso is about so much more than domestic violence. It's also about compassion for friends and acquaintances as well as lovers and the need for balance in life. The pages of this book are filled not only with powerful information and insight, but also with laughter and love. And the enticing descriptions of Persico's native Puglia will make you want to buy a one-way ticket to the region.

### Online:

For more information about Nicky Persico and his work, be sure to watch the [book trailer](#) [3] for Spaghetti paradiso and interviews with the author on [YouTube](#) [4]. You can also find Persico on [Facebook](#) [5].

**Source URL:** <http://iitaly.org/magazine/focus/life-people/article/spaghetti-paradiso>

### Links

[1] <http://iitaly.org/files/37710spaghettiparadiso1395928138jpg>

[2] [http://www.amazon.it/gp/product/B00FDULGIM/ref=as\\_li\\_qf\\_sp\\_asin\\_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=3370&creative=23322&creativeASIN=B00FDULGIM&linkCode=as2&tag=italicissima-21](http://www.amazon.it/gp/product/B00FDULGIM/ref=as_li_qf_sp_asin_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=3370&creative=23322&creativeASIN=B00FDULGIM&linkCode=as2&tag=italicissima-21)

[3] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Ho21ikT9i0>

[4] [https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=nicky%20persico&sm=3](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=nicky%20persico&sm=3)

[5] <https://www.facebook.com/nuvola?fref=ts>