

## Not Your Mother's Library Transcript

### Episode 45: Some Shall Break with Author Ellie Marney

(Brief intro music)

Rachel: Hello, and welcome to Not Your Mother's Library, a readers' advisory podcast from the Oak Creek Public Library. I'm Rachel.

Mary: And I'm Mary.

Rachel: Today we have an incredibly special episode, and I am busting at the seams over it! We are here to talk with internationally bestselling author Ellie Marney about her upcoming book, "Some Shall Break." This is the second installment in Ellie's "None Shall Sleep" series, a hard-hitting young adult thriller with a focus on realistic criminal psychology. "None Shall Sleep" takes place in the early 1980s, introducing serial killer survivor Emma Lewis and US Marshal candidate Travis Bell, both of whom are teenagers recruited by the FBI to interview convicted juvenile killers and provide insight on cold cases. Soon, though, they are called to give advice on an active case, and they must turn to one of the country's most notorious incarcerated murderers for help: teenage sociopath Simon Gutmunsson. Despite Travis's objections, Emma becomes the conduit between Simon and the FBI team. But while Simon seems to be giving them the information they need to save lives, he's an expert manipulator playing a very long game. Mary and I both read "None Shall Sleep" in preparation for today's interview, and I'll admit that I enjoyed it immensely. Everything from the writing style to the plot to the character development held me at gunpoint until I turned the very last page. Ellie was also kind enough to send us an advance reading copy of "Some Shall Break," which will hit shelves on June 6th. You can also find Ellie's previous works at your local library, including "The Killing Code," "White Night," as well as the "Circus Hearts" trilogy and the "Every" series. While she is clearly a prolific writer with an impressive body of work, today we are here to talk specifically about "Some Shall Break." Thank you so much for coming on the show with us today, Ellie!

Ellie: It's so nice to be here. I can't believe that we get to talk to each other from so far away. You're in Wisconsin, is that right?

Mary: Yes.

Rachel: And we realize this is very early in the day for you, so...

Mary: (laughs)

Ellie: Yeah, it is very early in the day. It's, um, it's seven in the morning here. And, um, it's kind of the start of our autumn. So, the days are getting shorter and, you know, it's still quite dark at 7 a.m. (laughs) and dark again by about 5:30, 6:00 in the afternoon.

Rachel: We're just starting to climb out of that ourselves over here. (laughs)

Mary: Yeah, we don't miss it.

Ellie: No, I...I mean, I like the, um...I like the jackets and sweaters, you know, you can pull out of the closet at that time. It's really nice. Um, and all of the leaves are falling and things like that. Well, some of the leaves are falling. Most of the leaves over here in Australia are green all year 'round. (laughs)

Rachel: I'm sure.

Ellie: Um, but my...um, my partner and my sons are about to wake up and get ready to go to football training this morning. So, I actually...they're going to a game this morning, so, um, they'll be up soon. They'll be hunting for football boots and, um, and, you know, trying to drag themselves together and get ready to go to the game, and then dodging kangaroos on the way in as they drive.

Mary: (laughs)

Rachel: Obviously, yeah. (laughs)

Mary: We just have silly old deer. We don't have kangaroos. (laughs)

Ellie: (laughs) Oh, we have deer, too! We've...it's become, um, a thing. I think something happened during the pandemic, and, I mean, there's...there's deer farms in the state where I live, and I think a lot of people...a couple of people kind of let their deer loose when their businesses crashed during the pandemic.

Rachel: Oh, no!

Ellie: So, now we have all of these feral deer around here, which is really weird because you just don't see deer very often in Australia. But, yeah, um, there was one on the road the other night when I was driving home, so that was really strange. I'm...I'm used to dodging kangaroos, but I'm not used to dodging deer. (laughs)

Rachel: (laughs)

Mary: What do you think is faster, a kangaroo or a deer?

Rachel: (laughs)

Ellie: I think they're actually about on par with each other.

Mary: Really?

Ellie: Yeah.

Mary: Is it harder to dodge a kangaroo than it is a deer? I'm not even sure! (laughs)

Ellie: Uh, kangaroos are kind of...um, they're really not very bright. You know? (laughs)

Mary: They have...they have that in common with deer, then.

Rachel and Ellie: (laugh)

Ellie: Yeah. So, they actually...Yeah, they're probably much, uh, like each other. Kangaroos, like...you basically have to drive toward them. That's the only way of avoiding them, because otherwise they will just, like, jump in front of you. But if you drive towards them they jump away. You know? Like...

Rachel: That would go against every instinct in my body. (laughs)

Mary: Right.

Ellie: (laughs) Yes, I can understand. But, um, yeah, they...they kind of otherwise they'll jump around...they'll jump around on the side of the road near the car, so you kind of have to inch past them, or if they come on the road, you have to aim for them and then kind of approach

slowly, and then they get out of the way. But, yeah! (laughs) But you do have to be careful around here because, um, I live in a rural area and, um...and, yeah, there's kangaroos everywhere. I'm teaching my son to drive right now. He's driving down to the school bus every morning with me and, um, I'm always having to tell him to slow down for kangaroos.

Rachel and Ellie: (laugh)

Rachel: That's pretty surreal, to hear that.

Ellie: (laughs)

Rachel: Like Mary said, we just have deer and that's about it. (laughs) So...

Ellie: (laughs) Um, it's really, really nice to see you! And thank you so much for inviting me on the podcast.

Rachel: Oh, of course! Thank you for reaching out to us. It's very exciting for us.

Ellie: Aw, I'm really delighted to be here. It's really lovely to come from so far away. Um, do you know where I'm located?

Rachel: No, I don't believe we do. I mean, we know Australia! (laughs)

Mary: Yeah, for sure we knew Australia. (laughs)

Ellie: Okay, so, I'm basically, um, down in the southern...south,-eastern bottom corner of Australia. So, just before you hit, um, Tasmania, which is the little island off the...off the south-east coast. Well it's...it's not that little—it's pretty big. But...but yeah, I'm...I am down in Victoria, which is...and the, the city here is Melbourne, but I live about two hours north of the main city, so I'm in a pretty country area. It's mainly farming and local industry and, you know, stuff like that. So, I'm a little bit out of the city which is kind of nice. (laughs)

Rachel: Yeah, it must be beautiful.

Ellie: Yeah, it's really nice. It's, um, you know, there's always a bit of a danger of wildfires in the summer and stuff when you live out of a...out of a main city. But yeah, I like that there's not so

much traffic. We have, uh, two sets of traffic lights in the town where I live. So, that's about as much as I want to have to deal with on a day-to-day basis. (laughs)

Rachel: I'm officially jealous.

Ellie and Rachel: (laugh)

Mary: That's kind of how I grew up, and now I'm in Milwaukee, which is a big change. So, I miss living in the same kind of environment. (laughs)

Ellie: Yeah. Yeah. So, hang on...I'm trying to think of Milwaukee. That's...how far away are you from Milwaukee?

Rachel: So, Oak Creek is maybe, what, a ten-minute drive from...?

Ellie: Oh, wow.

Mary: Like, downtown. Yeah. Yeah.

Rachel: It's not far.

Mary: It's the same county. It's all, kind of, urban sprawl.

Rachel: Yeah.

Ellie: Yeah, yeah, right. How many...how many people have you got in Milwaukee?

Mary: It's 600,000-ish, if you include the little suburbs.

Ellie: Oh, wow!

Rachel: Yeah:

Mary: Yeah.

Ellie: That's pretty big. Yeah, I think...I think Melbourne's got about five million or something, so you know...like, Australia's just...doesn't have a very big population. I think our population is about 25, 20...somewhere between 25 and 27 million. So, um, yeah, we're kind

of...comparatively large country with a really spread out population. But I nearly...I nearly went to Wisconsin a couple of years ago. They have a riders police academy in Green Bay?

Rachel: I've heard of that, yeah!

Mary: I haven't heard of that.

Rachel and Mary: (laugh)

Ellie: Yeah. If you're...if you're a crime writer, you can attend the police academy where it's...I think it's, like, a whole weekend, um, and they have workshops and panels with, uh, law enforcement...um...personnel and also with criminal investigators and criminal psychologists and forensic scientists and also, like, driving instructors. You can do, like, a defensive driving course if you're writing, um, like, car-chase scenes? Yeah.

Mary: (laughs)

Rachel: That's very cool!

Ellie: It's very cool. So, I was...I was tempted to go last year or the year before, erm, but I haven't had a chance to. I haven't been able to coordinate it yet to get over to...to go to the writer's police academy yet. I'm kind of hoping that I might be able to go next year, actually.  
(laughs)

Rachel: That'd be awesome, and then you could swing by and you could say "hi" in person!

Mary and Rachel: (laugh)

Ellie: That's right! (laughs) I could come visit the library.

Rachel: Yes—love to have you. (laughs) So, I'm going to start things off right away. Um, both of these books— "None Shall Sleep" and "Some Shall Break"—have some pretty dark and mature content in them. How did you decide that the story would be geared toward a young adult audience instead of more of just adults in general?

Ellie: I guess first of all I should say I don't always write, you know, super dark stuff (laughs) I, um, I do like to, um...to try and leaven the darkness with a bit of humor and things like that, you know, um, from time to time.

Rachel: Mmhm.

Ellie: But I think with this one I decided that, um, a serial killer thriller hadn't really...the kind of serial killer thriller that I wanted to write hadn't really been done before for YA. Um, and a friend was encouraging me to just kind of go for broke. So, I just wrote it without really thinking too much about it, um, in terms of how violent and dark it might get. And then when I submitted it to my publisher, I, uh...I was like, 'Oh, this, you know, they probably won't like it because it...it is so dark'. Um, but to my surprise they were totally on board with it. And it seems to have—since it came out in 2020—it seems to have been really popular. So, look, I...my only guess is that, um, teenagers are as familiar, I guess, with dark themes and with darkness, you know, as much as adults. I don't think it's something that's confined to adults. So, um, you know...and we've all been through, particularly over the last couple of years, some...some dark times. So, I think, um, teenagers familiar...more familiar with dark themes than we probably give them credit for, you know? Yeah, but I do...I do feel like I have a real responsibility to write tragedy and trauma and darker themes with, um, as much emotional honesty as I can to give teenagers a sense of what it's like—you know, particularly in "Some Shall Break"—to sort of see trauma on the page or a character who has experienced trauma on the page. And so, we can kind of track how they respond realistically and also in "Some Shall break" how that kind of traumatized character goes through a kind of recovery process, so that teenagers can kind of see that and respond to it. And, look, the other thing is, I think crime stories are a morality play for teenagers in some ways, because they are a bit like...how would you say? They're kind of about people driven to extremes, and the good and bad decisions that they make. So, they're about people at a moral crossroads, you know? Um, and I think teenagers—a lot of teenagers are kind of reaching a point in their lives where they have to start thinking about the kinds of decisions that they're going to make that will affect their adult lives as they come closer to adulthood. So, they...they feel like they're at a crossroads, too, and they like to sort of see how those decisions and those consequences play out on the page. So, yeah, I think that's probably

one of the reasons why you find a lot of teenagers reading crime fiction. And also 'cause, you know, it's about that adrenaline rush, I guess, as well. The same reason as you watch an exciting TV show or read a, you know, like, any kind of thrilling action book. So, yeah, some of my teenage readers say that they're just reading for the thrills and others are saying that they're reading...they're reading to sort of see themselves or see what it's like when those kind of good or bad decisions are taken to the extremes on the page.

Rachel: You know, that's fair enough.

Ellie and Rachel: (laughs)

Rachel: And I...I do think that that realism really comes through in your works, where the younger crowd is starting to realize it's not just black and white. There are a lot of moral grays here.

Ellie: Yeah, that's right. There are a lot of morally gray characters in real life, but also in my books! (laughs)

Mary: So, I mean, as you said...I mean, the age of the characters are really important, um, and I think a lot of the decisions that they do make are, you know, really important for the age, as well. Because, um, as an adult, I don't think that a lot of the situations that they find themselves in would be very...um, like, they wouldn't be against the same kind of decisions. So, I guess the fact that it is YA, um, and you do see these younger people in a situation, like, working with the FBI. I mean, like you said, you don't see that in any other books, which is really, really cool. And, you know, maybe people can start to look at...you're in high school, and you're looking for different career choices. I think that's really cool to even just see the inner workings of the FBI. So...

Ellie: Yeah, absolutely.

Mary: I guess it's not really a question. I just wanted to say that so cool, that people just can see that, and you don't see many books like that.



Ellie: Yeah, I mean, uh, I think it's interesting to me that people have gotten, um...you know, I've had...I've had a few responses from people who have said 'Aw, you know, some of the decisions that these characters are making aren't very realistic'. Um, and I'm sort of thinking, well, are you approaching that from an adult reader's perspective or are you thinking about it from a teenagers perspective?

Mary: Right.

Ellie: Because, you know, teenagers do silly things. (laughs) They make bad decisions. They...uh, they act emotionally. You know? They...they kind of get swept up in something that they're feeling and they make...they make a decision based on that, or they do something a bit foolish based on bad information or their own kind of immature understanding of the world. So, I think every time someone emails me or contacts me or puts down a review saying, 'Oh, I don't think...I don't think, you know, most people would have made that decision,' I'm like, really? You know, when was the last time you were 18? What...what are some of the crazy things that you did when you were 18? (laughs)

Mary: And they're coming from a place of trauma and trying to make these decisions, as well.

Rachel: Right?

Ellie: Oh, yeah, absolutely. You know, especially if you've had, uh, an experience of violence, um, or, you know, in Emma Lewis's case, she's like a literal Final Girl. So she's, you know...she's survived abduction by this serial murderer, and then, uh, it's two years later and she's still in recovery. And suddenly the FBI is kind of saying, well, 'You know, how about you come and jump aboard this unit and we're going to...we're going to go back and talk to the kinds of people that abducted you?' (laughs) And...and her initial reaction is like, 'Oh, thanks. No, thanks.' (laughs) But, um, you know, it's the...it's the kind of, uh, her own sense of responsibility and these, kind of, cracks in her psyche that push her inexorably into the story.

Rachel: I noticed at the start of "None Shall Sleep" that although Bill and Emma are on very similar paths they differ in a major way. So, Bell really wants to protect people, but Emma's focus is on survival, right? And Bell focuses inward instead of lingering on tragedy, like,

especially his father's death, while Emma strives to, kind of, fill in the gaps and reassume control of her own narrative. Now, this does shift a bit toward the end of the first book, and I'm sure readers are excited to see how things evolve even further in "Some Shall Break." Is this sort of character development a main goal as you write, or is it more of a byproduct?

Ellie: I mean, obviously with the sequel the characters are all there, so they're all kind of set up.

Rachel: Mhm.

Ellie: Which make things...makes things a lot easier. But when it...when it first came to me thinking about these characters for the series...um, so with the first book, "None Shall Sleep," I was kind of building the characters still out of...out of whole cloth, you know?

Rachel: Mhm.

Ellie: Um, and I think I had the idea first. I always tend to have an idea first, and then I sort of think, what would be the most interesting kind of person to put into this situation? I think with "None Shall Sleep" my first thought was, well, if the FBI did do this really wacky thing and... (laughs) Which, you know, wasn't completely out of the question in 1982.

Rachel: (laughs)

Ellie: I mean, the...the FBI was still...I mean, the...the FBI Behavioral Science Unit only got set up in like, um...between 1972 and 1974. So, it had only been in its first decade when I...I kind of wanted to set the book in that time period, um, because they were doing strange things at that time. They were going into jails, they were going into mental asylums and interviewing serial killers to find out more about them. And it was the first time that they'd ever done that, you know, just gone straight to the source to find out more about motive and process from the people who were doing these things. So, I thought, okay, what if we pull these...these two teenagers into the mix? And then I thought, well, the only way that they would get hired would be if they had some sort of understanding or qualification that gave them inside knowledge about serial killers. And then I sort of thought, well, that would mean that, you know, if they're only 18, that would mean that their...their inside knowledge couldn't come from study. They couldn't have spent years and years at college, um, studying the psychology of serial killers

because they're both too young. So, they would have had to have real-life experience of serial killers. Um, and that's sort of how Emma Lewis came about, and she's the survivor of someone who's abducted and murdered women. And...and then Travis is...his father's been killed by a serial offender before the first book starts.

Rachel: Mmhm.

Ellie: So, they're both coming from this place where they've had contact with serial killers. And, yeah, like you say, they've reacted in different ways, but also they've had slightly different takes or experiences. Travis is...is emotionally affected because his father died, whereas Emma is in a place where she's been actively traumatized by, um, what she went through. So she responds in a really hyper vigilant, hyper alert kind of way. So, yeah, she is...she's always about survival. That is a hundred percent right, you know? Um, and I think anybody who's been through something as intense as that probably, um, you see how that survival response comes out in all of these little ways. You know, they were the things that I had to really dig into and find out more about how her character would react when placed in these really strange, uncomfortable, uh, re-traumatizing situations.

Mary: So, speaking a little bit about the research process and the inspiration process, um, did you draw on any specific cases? Like, any real-life cases that you may have heard about, um, for Emma's situation?

Ellie: I went...I went into the...you know, I dug around in the Internet a little to see if I could find cases of survivors who were speaking about their experience. Um, I didn't sort of try to narrow it down to someone who was...I wasn't looking for that kind of verisimilitude. I was just looking for what it was like for people who'd been in traumatizing situations like that and, um, the kinds of responses that they give and the kinds of life outlook that they had. I guess? So, yeah, that was interesting. But I had to do a lot of research into, uh—for “None Shall Sleep” but also for “Some Shall Break”—about juvenile serial killers. And that was very disturbing. (laughs)

Rachel: I bet.

Ellie: I mean, I'm laughing when I say that, which sounds really weird.

Rachel: Well, if you don't laugh you'll cry, right?

Ellie: Yeah! That's exactly right! (laughs) Um, yeah.

Rachel: Clearly, a ton of research goes into the process overall. I...I read somewhere that you've interviewed members of law enforcement as well as forensic pathologists. That must have been fascinating.

Ellie: Yeah, yeah. I mean, look, that's one of the really cool things about researching as a writer, I think, is that you get to, um...you get to find people who've had these extraordinary kind of jobs or lives and ask them questions about what...what they do or what happened. And people really...they're really happy to talk to you about their job. (laughs) Does that make sense?

Rachel: It's helpful, I'm sure! (laughs)

Ellie: Yeah. People do like to talk about their job. Um, and if you ask a few questions, they will really just, sort of, start spilling out all this information. Um, I was...I was put in touch with, uh, this autopsy pathologist in England. I went to England quite a few years ago to do some research for another book which, uh, had an autopsy scene in it. I went to London and I was given permission to go to the Westminster Mortuary, which was really cool. So, I actually got to go and tour the morgue in London. And I...they toured me through their forensic suite and through the areas where they do the pathology dissection and the freezers where they kept the bodies. And I got to talk to an autopsy technician about the processes that they go through, and she was really, I think, really delighted that someone wanted to know all this information! (laughs)

Rachel: (laughs) And not for nefarious means, either.

Ellie: (laughs) Yeah, yes, exactly right. And she was like, 'Oh, yeah, you know, I never really get to talk about this stuff at parties!' (laughs)

Rachel: (laughs) Oh my gosh.

Ellie: (still laughing) So, um, so yeah, she was really, um, quite happy that someone wanted to, uh, understand a little bit more about the...the ins and outs of her job. Um, and...and then, you

know, I've also, um, talked to police officers, and I got in touch with the FBI when I was researching...researching this book...these...this book series, to ask them about some details of what it was like to train at the FBI Quantico Academy. Um, but they don't give out a lot of those details to random, sort of, international civilians. (laughs)

Rachel: Go figure! (laughs)

Ellie: Yeah, I know. So, I did end up contacting some people who'd...who had trained at Quantico and who had written blogs. So, they had some publicly available information about their experiences there. And they had taken some photos and things like that of the grounds to give me a sense of what the inside of the facility is like, because again, that's something that you can't find online, you know? They're not going to publish pictures of the inside of Quantico Training Academy, um, on the Internet for various security reasons. And also, like, places like Scientific Analysis and things. Um, I wanted to tour the Scientific Analysis Lab in Washington, D.C. But, yeah, you have to write to the Governor if you come from outside of the U.S.

Rachel and Ellie: (laugh)

Ellie: So I was like...mm, okay, that sounds a little tricky. I don't know if I'm going to get access to that. So, yeah, I...I had to do an awful lot of digging around to find the information that I need, and some of it I really just could not find and I just kind of had to make it up. So, yeah.

Mary: So, we're going to skip into psychology and sociopathy.

Ellie: Mmhm.

Mary: Um, do you think it's a matter of nature or nurture or maybe a mix of both? And then, how would you kind of explain how that ties into Kristen and...Kristen and Simon, because they're pretty—in my opinion, they're pretty stark binaries. Um, I compare them to the moon and the sun.

Ellie: Mmhm.

Mary: Because you...you make a reference to how Kristen is the moon. Uh, so, if you could explain a little bit about, kind of, how you developed their characters, and then nature and nurture.

Ellie: So, nature nurture—that's really good question. It's kind of, like, one of those longstanding psychology questions that I don't think anyone's really ever successfully answered, um, but it seems to be a little bit of a mix of both. You know, um, I mean, Simon Gutmunsson is an awful lot of fun to write. You know, here's this highly intelligent, cunning, manipulative young man who is a sociopath, um, and he really isn't the standard, uh, model for sociopathic people in real life. You know, most people who have these kind of traits, um, and who commit these kind of crimes tend to be, um, sort of fairly organized. But then they...they're kind of noticeably not very good with people. (laughs) You know? They're, um...they're not...they kind of stick out. Like, if you're in a...in a room with someone and you're having a conversation with them, they would tend...you would sort of be like, okay, this this guy is kind of weird. (laughs) It would be fairly easy to notice. And they don't tend to be as intelligent as someone like Simon. You know, they're...they're...as a general rule, their...their IQ is not that high. So, Simon's a bit of a...bit of an outlier, but I think, uh, I think there's also been a lot of study and research that's kind of gone into sociopathy and how it develops, how perhaps you start with some traits or some...perhaps even some genetic markers? They're kind of still looking into that sort of thing for this kind of condition. And then, the conditions in your upbringing have to be, kind of, just right for those existing elements to, kind of, turn into, uh, sociopathy, that...that actually acts out, you know, that...that...that does go out and...and hurt people. So, um, yeah, there's been a lot of research done. There's been, you know, I mean, if you look in...into...into sociopathy, you find a million books—everything from books by Jon Ronson, you know, the sociopath test or “The Psychopath Test” to, like, you know, academic work on how sociopathy is formed and how...how...why some people act on it and some people don't. But...but yeah, I have to say, it was...it was an awful lot of fun to kind of push all of those boundaries when I was writing Simon and Kristen. And you...you mentioned, Mary, about, like, the sun and the moon. Yeah, I think they are. They are kind of, like...they're a bit like a yin-yang symbol, you know? They're very, uh...much Simon is kind of...not really, kind of, emotionally connected at all, whereas Kristen is,

like, all emotion. She's just like one big, kind of, throbbing, massive emotional vulnerability, I guess.

Rachel; Mmhm.

Ellie: So, when they're together it's like they are one person, you know, they kind of complement each other, and it's like each one picks up the...the character slack of the other. So, yeah. You see...you see them much more on the page together in "Some Shall Break." And those scenes were a lot of fun to write because it was much more simple than just writing Simon on his own. Writing Simon and Kristen together was like, 'Oh, okay, here are these two perfectly complementary people having a conversation'. And it's...it's much more understandable, whereas Simon on his own is...um, he's just so intelligent. It's very... (laughs) I always seem to write these characters who are way more intelligent than I am! (laughs) I am not claiming by any stretch of the imagination.

Rachel and Ellie: (laugh)

Mary: Simon was my favorite character.

Rachel: Yeah.

Ellie: Ah, I have so many people say that!

Mary: Kristen was a very, very close second. But I love Simon. Simon was very fun to read.

Ellie: He is so much fun to write. You know, he is like the guy who will just, um...he's ten steps ahead of everyone else in the room, you know? He's...he's just...you know that you can talk to him about something, but you know that he's...he's already spinning way ahead. Um, the challenge in him was to write him like a real boy, because I didn't want him to sound like he was, like, 45. You know?

Rachel: Right. Yeah.

Ellie: Yeah. He's still just a teenager, and he's still...he still has a certain amount of, um, he...he has certain qualities that kind of expose how he's...he's still a young man, you know? He shows

off for Emma quite frequently. (laughs) Which is one of the classic signs where it's his, you know...he's always kind of very 'Look at me, look at me'.

Mary and Ellie: (laugh)

Ellie: He just really craves attention.

Rachel: I do want to say that we see Emma struggle to deal with monstrosities a lot in this story, and scientific objectivity can be impossible to master as an adult, right, let alone as a teenager. Do you think she's up to that task, given all that she's been through?

Ellie: I think she has no choice. I think it's a really... (laughs) I know, that's kind of putting her on the edge. I mean, in this book, in "Some Shall Break," she's facing a murderer who is copycatting the kind of things that her abductor did. And I think, you know, that was one of the reasons why, um, this story felt so compelling to me, was that she needed to dig really, really deep to find the internal resources that she needed. And also, you know, not just to dig deep inside herself, but to reach out and get help. You know, that was something I really worked hard to portray in the book, is that she has a close relationship with a therapist. Um, she has strategies for dealing with her own trauma. Um, she's...she's working as hard as she can to recover and, you know, have some kind of normalcy in her life. And then, in this situation, she really has to kind of go through it to, um...and, you know, if she doesn't clear this...this hurdle, she's going to be stuck in kind of pre-recovery emotional state for a lot longer. So she's...she's kind of pushed right to the precipice with this one. Um, I felt like...I felt like I had to take her there for this one. Um, a lot of people said to me after reading "None Shall Sleep" they really feel like they got a strong sense of what Emma went through, um, when she was abducted. And, I mean, part of me was like, well...does she really need to tell you in all the gory detail about what happened? I mean, we see this stuff on the news all the time—you know what happened. But, um, in "Some Shall Break," yeah, she has to kind of stare what happened to her more directly in the face, and it was challenging to write that, but it was...I tried to do it in as respectful way as I could. I consulted therapists and talked to people who'd been through trauma like that, and yeah, I wanted to really portray that truthfully on the page so that the young...so you know, some young people reading it might kind of go, 'Oh, okay, so there are



strategies out there that you can utilize that will help you'. (laughs) And maybe somebody will get the help they need, which is really a hopeful thing for me. But yeah, I guess you'll see what happens when the book comes out, and hopefully I've done it justice. Hopefully I've done Emma justice.

Rachel: I've got my copy here, and I think that you did! (laughs)

Ellie: Aw! (laughs) Thank you so much. I'm so glad you enjoyed it.

Rachel: Thank you again for coming on the show with us today.

Mary: It was so great to talk to you.

Rachel: A wonderful talk.

Emma: Delightful. And it was just amazing to come from so far away. It was so great to meet you both, and thank you for having me.

Rachel: Absolutely. That's all we have time for today, listeners. We hope that you enjoyed this episode. Please check the show notes for a list of everything that we just talked about, as well as links to Ellie's website and all of her socials. Remember to subscribe and rate the podcast if you like what you hear. You can always find us through the Oak Creek Public Library website or Facebook page by sending messages to @OakCreekLibrary. Until next time, happy reading.

Mary and Rachel: Bye!

(Brief outro music)