1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:01,376
-Good afternoon, everyone,

2
00:00:01,400 --> 00:00:04,456
and welcome to
today's-- today's event,

3
00:00:04,480 --> 00:00:09,805
How I write – in conversation
with Gemma Cairney.

4
00:00:10,522 --> 00:00:11,656
First of all,

5
00:00:11,680 --> 00:00:14,656
I'd love to know where
everyone's joining us from,

6
00:00:14,680 --> 00:00:16,376
so can you pop in the chat?

7
00:00:16,400 --> 00:00:18,496
Let us know where...
where you are.

8
00:00:18,520 --> 00:00:20,742
Gemma where are you
at joining us from today?

9
00:00:20,742 --> 00:00:21,896
-In Edinburgh.

10
00:00:21,920 --> 00:00:23,265
It's very grey.

11
00:00:23,289 --> 00:00:25,096
-Oh, I love Edinburgh.

12
00:00:25,120 --> 00:00:28,742
I'm probably the
furthest. I'm in Dubai.

13
00:00:28,742 --> 00:00:29,742
-Are you?

14
00:00:29,742 --> 00:00:34,616
-Yeah. Oh, look, we've got
someone from Seville in Spain.

15

00:00:34,640 --> 00:00:36,696
Jade... Hi Jade.

16
00:00:36,720 --> 00:00:38,658
Jade's joining from London.

17
00:00:38,682 --> 00:00:40,709
South London, Cicelia. Woo!

18
00:00:40,733 --> 00:00:42,083
[laughs]

19
00:00:42,120 --> 00:00:44,742
Oh, it's lovely to see everyone

20
00:00:44,742 --> 00:00:46,896
I'm Micallar Walker

21
00:00:46,920 --> 00:00:49,216
and I'm a cultural marketer,

22
00:00:49,240 --> 00:00:52,936
event producer, and audience
development consultant

23
00:00:52,960 --> 00:00:55,896
with over 20 years experience

24
00:00:55,920 --> 00:00:58,056
across books,
films and the arts.

25
00:00:58,080 --> 00:00:59,742
I founded my

26
00:00:59,742 --> 00:01:04,776
brilliant, inclusive consultancy
agency, Dark Matter,

27
00:01:04,800 --> 00:01:06,416
in 2021.

28
00:01:06,440 --> 00:01:10,624
I currently curate Picture
House Cinema's author events

29
00:01:10,648 --> 00:01:13,936
that are broadcast
live across the nation,

30
00:01:13,960 --> 00:01:16,416
and I'm the English
programme manager

31
00:01:16,440 --> 00:01:20,742
at the Emirates Literature
Foundation in Dubai.

32
00:01:20,742 --> 00:01:23,096
For my audio description,

33
00:01:23,120 --> 00:01:26,096
I am a dark-skinned Black woman

34
00:01:26,120 --> 00:01:28,936
with black locs
tied up in a bun.

35
00:01:28,960 --> 00:01:32,496
I'm wearing bright
green and brown glasses,

36
00:01:32,520 --> 00:01:34,879
and I'm wearing a navy blue,

37
00:01:34,903 --> 00:01:37,742
nearly black shirt
with short sleeves.

38
00:01:37,742 --> 00:01:39,336
Gemma, could you share

39
00:01:39,360 --> 00:01:41,469
your audio description, please?

40
00:01:41,749 --> 00:01:44,016
-My audio description is

41
00:01:44,040 --> 00:01:45,896
I am...

42
00:01:45,920 --> 00:01:49,530
in a very busy part of my life,

43
00:01:49,554 --> 00:01:52,616
just to preamble and
explain that I usually

44
00:01:52,640 --> 00:01:54,541

like to put on
a bit of lipstick,

45
00:01:54,565 --> 00:01:57,256
but have a natural face today.

46
00:01:57,280 --> 00:01:58,742
[laughter]

47
00:01:58,742 --> 00:01:59,742
-Beautiful.

48
00:01:59,742 --> 00:02:02,376
-And natural afro

49
00:02:02,400 --> 00:02:06,016
with slightly lighter tips

50
00:02:06,040 --> 00:02:08,296
and a dark brown root.

51
00:02:09,169 --> 00:02:10,811
I have a jumper on

52

00:02:10,835 --> 00:02:13,096
that says Better Future,

53
00:02:13,120 --> 00:02:14,816
which I very much believe in.

54
00:02:14,840 --> 00:02:15,976
[laughs]

55
00:02:16,000 --> 00:02:18,416
And I'm really excited
to be here today.

56
00:02:18,440 --> 00:02:20,529
I am a broadcaster,

57
00:02:20,553 --> 00:02:24,056
connector,
communicator, and writer.

58
00:02:24,080 --> 00:02:25,896
And my latest project,

59
00:02:25,920 --> 00:02:27,496
The Immortal Sisterhood,

60
00:02:27,520 --> 00:02:30,296
has been birthed into
the world this summer

61
00:02:30,320 --> 00:02:32,742
and I can't wait to speak
to Micallar all about it.

62
00:02:32,742 --> 00:02:34,742
-Lovely.

63
00:02:34,742 --> 00:02:38,056
Hi, Elaine. Elaine's
joining from Hillingdon.

64
00:02:38,080 --> 00:02:40,322
Hi, Tatum, South London

65
00:02:40,346 --> 00:02:42,776
I'm from South London too,

66
00:02:42,800 --> 00:02:44,456
so love it.

67
00:02:44,480 --> 00:02:46,742
[laughter]

68
00:02:46,742 --> 00:02:49,536
This online
event is free to all,

69
00:02:49,560 --> 00:02:50,912
but if you can afford to,

70
00:02:50,936 --> 00:02:52,536
please consider donating

71
00:02:52,560 --> 00:02:54,496
to the SoA's Access Fund,

72
00:02:54,520 --> 00:02:56,336
which provides grants to authors

73
00:02:56,360 --> 00:03:00,616
so that travel, subsistence,
childcare costs, and access needs

74
00:03:00,640 --> 00:03:01,831

aren't barriers

75
00:03:01,855 --> 00:03:03,813
to authors taking part in

76
00:03:03,837 --> 00:03:06,736
events, residencies,
and retreats.

77
00:03:06,760 --> 00:03:10,742
We suggest a minimum
donation of £5, please.

78
00:03:10,742 --> 00:03:14,096
You can help the Society
of Authors Access Fund

79
00:03:14,120 --> 00:03:17,856
by making a purchase
on their virtual book store

80
00:03:17,880 --> 00:03:19,496
on Bookshop.org,

81
00:03:19,520 --> 00:03:22,176

where you can find
books by writers

82
00:03:22,200 --> 00:03:26,062
taking part in the SoA's
brilliant Events programme.

83
00:03:26,742 --> 00:03:29,296
This session will be
about 45 minutes

84
00:03:29,320 --> 00:03:31,282
and we're going to have
10 minutes at the end

85
00:03:31,306 --> 00:03:33,016
for audience questions.

86
00:03:33,040 --> 00:03:34,976
So if you've got any questions,

87
00:03:35,000 --> 00:03:38,096
please pop them in the Q&A box

88
00:03:38,120 --> 00:03:41,435

and you can do that
anonymously if you prefer.

89
00:03:41,459 --> 00:03:44,718
And then, if you have any general
comments throughout the chat,

90
00:03:44,742 --> 00:03:47,216
and we want to hear from
you, so please don't be shy.

91
00:03:47,240 --> 00:03:48,296
Just join in.

92
00:03:48,320 --> 00:03:50,296
You can do that in the chat box.

93
00:03:50,320 --> 00:03:52,616
So questions in the Q&A box,

94
00:03:52,640 --> 00:03:54,682
comments in the chat box.

95
00:03:55,742 --> 00:03:57,096
Captions...

96
00:03:57,120 --> 00:03:58,536
If you do turn on--

97
00:03:58,560 --> 00:04:01,016
If you want to, you can
turn on closed captions

98
00:04:01,040 --> 00:04:03,742
and you'll get live subtitles.

99
00:04:03,742 --> 00:04:05,624
The recording of this event

100
00:04:05,648 --> 00:04:08,536
will be available on
the SoA's website,

101
00:04:08,560 --> 00:04:11,856
which can be accessed by
logging into the members area

102
00:04:11,880 --> 00:04:14,256
and going to the resources page.

103
00:04:14,280 --> 00:04:16,009
And you'll be emailed--

104
00:04:16,033 --> 00:04:19,818
It'll be emailed to registered
attendees shortly after,

105
00:04:19,842 --> 00:04:22,009
along with the captions

106
00:04:23,055 --> 00:04:25,676
So now I'm going to
introduce our brilliant guest,

107
00:04:25,700 --> 00:04:26,725
Gemma Cairney.

108
00:04:26,749 --> 00:04:30,769
Gemma is a
multi-award-winning broadcaster,

109
00:04:30,793 --> 00:04:32,456
published author,

110

00:04:32,480 --> 00:04:35,136
production company
founder, Magpie,

111
00:04:35,160 --> 00:04:37,096
and life enthusiast.

112
00:04:37,120 --> 00:04:40,896
Gemma is a former
Brit School pupil

113
00:04:40,920 --> 00:04:43,069
and fashion stylist.

114
00:04:43,093 --> 00:04:47,136
She's presented across
the breadth of the BBC,

115
00:04:47,160 --> 00:04:49,336
having been the
regular presenter of

116
00:04:49,360 --> 00:04:51,336
the 1Xtra Breakfast Show,

117

00:04:51,360 --> 00:04:54,136
1Xtra's 1-4 afternoon's slot...

118
00:04:54,160 --> 00:04:55,958
Yes, I'm going to
read them all out.

119
00:04:55,982 --> 00:04:59,056
he Radio 1 Weekend
Breakfast Show,

120
00:04:59,080 --> 00:05:02,856
Radio 1's Early Breakfast
Show, The Surgery,

121
00:05:02,880 --> 00:05:06,890
and is host-- and the host
of series The Leisure Society

122
00:05:06,914 --> 00:05:09,176
on BBC6 Music,

123
00:05:09,200 --> 00:05:10,896
and The Sound Odyssey,

124

00:05:10,920 --> 00:05:14,742
BBC Radio 4 and
BBC World Service.

125
00:05:14,742 --> 00:05:17,678
She has written for,
edited, and contributed

126
00:05:17,702 --> 00:05:20,296
to The Guardian,
Company Magazine,

127
00:05:20,320 --> 00:05:23,742
Red Glamour, and Cosmopolitan.

128
00:05:23,742 --> 00:05:27,336
She has won Sony awards
for her documentaries

129
00:05:27,360 --> 00:05:30,176
on subjects such
as domestic abuse

130
00:05:30,200 --> 00:05:33,216
and produced podcasts
and theatre productions.

131
00:05:33,240 --> 00:05:35,736
Her drive is humanity

132
00:05:35,760 --> 00:05:37,736
and communication

133
00:05:37,760 --> 00:05:40,849
in all areas of her
wide-spanning work.

134
00:05:41,202 --> 00:05:43,136
Gemma, welcome.

135
00:05:43,502 --> 00:05:44,771
-Thank you.

136
00:05:44,795 --> 00:05:47,336
-I want to get started
with finding out

137
00:05:47,360 --> 00:05:49,256
where you are geographically

138

00:05:49,280 --> 00:05:50,776
and where you are in,

139
00:05:50,800 --> 00:05:53,249
if you're at home, where
you are in your home.

140
00:05:53,849 --> 00:05:55,376
So, I'm in Edinburgh,

141
00:05:55,400 --> 00:05:56,896
in Scotland,

142
00:05:56,920 --> 00:05:59,776
and I've been
living in Edinburgh

143
00:05:59,800 --> 00:06:01,535
for the past five years.

144
00:06:02,149 --> 00:06:03,619
And in that time,

145
00:06:03,643 --> 00:06:05,256
I've had two small children.

146
00:06:05,280 --> 00:06:06,896
[laughs]

147
00:06:06,920 --> 00:06:11,416
So literally, my baby was
passed over to my partner

148
00:06:11,440 --> 00:06:13,616
before we went
live this afternoon,

149
00:06:13,640 --> 00:06:15,776
and he is three
and a half months.

150
00:06:15,800 --> 00:06:17,856
And my other baby,

151
00:06:17,880 --> 00:06:20,696
she's a toddler now, but
she still seems like a baby,

152
00:06:20,720 --> 00:06:22,936
is only two and is at nursery.

153
00:06:22,960 --> 00:06:24,776
So I found a corner

154
00:06:24,800 --> 00:06:26,816
in my lounge,

155
00:06:26,840 --> 00:06:29,750
where you can't see toys.

156
00:06:29,774 --> 00:06:30,858
[laughs]

157
00:06:30,882 --> 00:06:32,152
And...

158
00:06:32,176 --> 00:06:33,696
And yeah,

159
00:06:33,720 --> 00:06:36,416
it's a grey day outside
through my window.

160
00:06:36,440 --> 00:06:37,976

And if you do know Edinburgh,

161
00:06:38,000 --> 00:06:40,742
I live by the beach,
which is Portobello.

162
00:06:40,742 --> 00:06:42,096
Kind of an un...

163
00:06:42,120 --> 00:06:44,256
lesser known, not
necessarily unknown,

164
00:06:44,280 --> 00:06:45,976
but it's a lesser-known
part of Edinburgh,

165
00:06:46,000 --> 00:06:48,056
where we have a beach.

166
00:06:48,080 --> 00:06:50,382
And I love the secret of that.

167
00:06:50,406 --> 00:06:53,176
Though there's many

things unfolding in my world

168
00:06:53,200 --> 00:06:56,856
and we are planning a move back

169
00:06:56,880 --> 00:06:59,736
to the city of London very soon.

170
00:06:59,760 --> 00:07:01,262
But...

171
00:07:01,286 --> 00:07:02,609
More on that later.

172
00:07:02,633 --> 00:07:04,656
-Oh, wow, okay.

173
00:07:04,680 --> 00:07:06,049
Okay.

174
00:07:07,469 --> 00:07:09,016
I just wondered...

175
00:07:09,040 --> 00:07:10,384

So you're not where you...

176
00:07:10,408 --> 00:07:12,582
You're not sat where
you usually write?

177
00:07:13,469 --> 00:07:14,469
-Mmm.

178
00:07:14,493 --> 00:07:17,216
So, I mean, the magpie

179
00:07:17,240 --> 00:07:19,762
that, you know, you mentioned...

180
00:07:20,375 --> 00:07:23,256
A magpie, like,
represents a lot of things.

181
00:07:23,280 --> 00:07:26,376
You know, magpies
are quite big in folklore.

182
00:07:26,400 --> 00:07:28,742
You've got the whole kind of

183
00:07:28,742 --> 00:07:30,416
idea that

184
00:07:30,440 --> 00:07:33,994
they represent sorrow,
or joy, or abundance of...

185
00:07:34,018 --> 00:07:36,075
of money, or...

186
00:07:36,099 --> 00:07:38,698
Babies, a baby boy, a baby
girl, whatever, you know.

187
00:07:38,722 --> 00:07:40,742
Like, magpies are magic.

188
00:07:40,742 --> 00:07:43,936
And, I also imagine, you know,

189
00:07:43,960 --> 00:07:46,416
in terms of my life and
my creative practice,

190
00:07:46,440 --> 00:07:47,976
I...

191
00:07:48,000 --> 00:07:51,096
sort of end up in
different places.

192
00:07:51,120 --> 00:07:53,656
So whenever I try to have,

193
00:07:53,680 --> 00:07:55,336
you know, the room to write,

194
00:07:55,360 --> 00:07:58,336
the studio,

195
00:07:58,360 --> 00:08:01,456
the spot, that foundation,

196
00:08:01,480 --> 00:08:02,976
something happens in life

197
00:08:03,000 --> 00:08:05,249
and then I have

to kind of move it

198
00:08:05,273 --> 00:08:08,216
And I love that
about life, really.

199
00:08:08,240 --> 00:08:11,136
Like, I'm sort of
unapologetically tidal.

200
00:08:11,160 --> 00:08:12,576
I go with the waves,

201
00:08:12,600 --> 00:08:15,496
I go with the mood, I
let the season change.

202
00:08:15,520 --> 00:08:18,742
So there's not one
specific place I write.

203
00:08:18,742 --> 00:08:20,536
I've travelled a lot.

204
00:08:20,560 --> 00:08:23,136

I'm now a working
mama, as I said.

205
00:08:23,160 --> 00:08:25,056
So, you know, like, I'm...

206
00:08:25,080 --> 00:08:27,309
I can be in hotel rooms

207
00:08:27,333 --> 00:08:29,976
with my baby, like,

208
00:08:30,000 --> 00:08:31,722
with my laptop,

209
00:08:31,746 --> 00:08:33,296
finishing an edit

210
00:08:33,320 --> 00:08:35,656
as much as I can be

211
00:08:35,680 --> 00:08:38,576
here, like, on my table

212

00:08:38,600 --> 00:08:41,085
in the front of my
house in my lounge.

213
00:08:41,109 --> 00:08:43,424
-And there's something
really beautiful about that

214
00:08:43,448 --> 00:08:44,742
because it's like...

215
00:08:44,742 --> 00:08:47,496
Yeah, you're writing is you,

216
00:08:47,520 --> 00:08:49,126
so wherever you
are, that's where it is.

217
00:08:49,150 --> 00:08:52,656
It's not tied to, like, a
specific place or space.

218
00:08:52,680 --> 00:08:55,096
I love that it... You
sort of take it with you

219
00:08:55,120 --> 00:08:56,742
wherever you are.

220
00:08:56,742 --> 00:08:58,736
-Yeah, and I...

221
00:08:58,760 --> 00:09:01,256
I've spent a lot of
time with people who

222
00:09:01,280 --> 00:09:03,056
travel a lot.

223
00:09:03,080 --> 00:09:06,136
I sort of... I gravitate towards,

224
00:09:06,160 --> 00:09:08,555
like, creating
relationships with...

225
00:09:08,579 --> 00:09:11,936
You know, like, I call my partner
a beatnik, for example, because

226

00:09:11,960 --> 00:09:14,856
I met him up a
mountain in Malawi,

227
00:09:14,880 --> 00:09:16,731
where he was living off-grid.

228
00:09:17,042 --> 00:09:18,462
And I found

229
00:09:18,486 --> 00:09:20,536
his lifestyle to be

230
00:09:20,560 --> 00:09:24,616
very, like, beautiful and
different to what I'd experienced.

231
00:09:24,640 --> 00:09:26,616
But at the same time,
loads of my friends...

232
00:09:26,640 --> 00:09:29,242
Like, one of my
friends is a travel writer.

233

00:09:29,266 --> 00:09:32,096
So I'm talking
to a lot of people

234
00:09:32,120 --> 00:09:34,416
a lot about creativity,

235
00:09:34,440 --> 00:09:37,096
writing, communication,

236
00:09:37,120 --> 00:09:39,776
loving, living, you know, like,

237
00:09:39,800 --> 00:09:41,095
creating relationships.

238
00:09:41,119 --> 00:09:43,119
But in movement.

239
00:09:43,143 --> 00:09:45,816
And I remember
my friend, Anna Hart,

240
00:09:45,840 --> 00:09:47,856
who is a great travel writer,

241
00:09:47,880 --> 00:09:49,336
she's got a book
called Departures

242
00:09:49,360 --> 00:09:51,742
about travelling and writing,

243
00:09:51,742 --> 00:09:53,576
saying that, you know,

244
00:09:53,600 --> 00:09:55,176
how do we find home

245
00:09:55,200 --> 00:09:56,389
if we are

246
00:09:56,413 --> 00:09:57,576
these, like,

247
00:09:57,600 --> 00:10:02,376
these troubadour types
that want to explore.

248

00:10:02,400 --> 00:10:03,776
And...

249
00:10:03,800 --> 00:10:07,136
I think, you know, the conversation
took a really beautiful turn to

250
00:10:07,160 --> 00:10:10,176
think about what
anchors us in our body

251
00:10:10,200 --> 00:10:12,005
and...

252
00:10:12,029 --> 00:10:15,216
how we can find
home in different places

253
00:10:15,240 --> 00:10:17,056
and how I

254
00:10:17,080 --> 00:10:21,456
feel like home is in my body

255
00:10:21,480 --> 00:10:23,149

and...

256
00:10:23,742 --> 00:10:26,536
And I think that comes
through in the writing, actually.

257
00:10:26,560 --> 00:10:28,696
You know? And actually,

258
00:10:28,720 --> 00:10:32,496
writing whilst moving
different places

259
00:10:32,520 --> 00:10:34,991
and even the embodiment of

260
00:10:35,015 --> 00:10:36,843
actual physical movement,
which is what I did

261
00:10:36,867 --> 00:10:38,696
when I was writing the
Immortal Sisterhood,

262
00:10:38,720 --> 00:10:41,289

which I can talk to you
about at a different point,

263
00:10:41,313 --> 00:10:45,376
did bring me home every time.

264
00:10:45,400 --> 00:10:48,176
So if I'm like
working in Colombia,

265
00:10:48,200 --> 00:10:50,376
which I'm lucky
enough to have done,

266
00:10:50,400 --> 00:10:53,976
or working in Malawi,

267
00:10:54,000 --> 00:10:56,776
you know, like
falling in love with...

268
00:10:56,800 --> 00:10:58,452
with somebody,

269
00:10:58,476 --> 00:11:01,416

If I am able to write

270
00:11:01,440 --> 00:11:03,136
through that experience

271
00:11:03,160 --> 00:11:04,856
and with that experience,

272
00:11:04,880 --> 00:11:08,416
I often do find a sense of--

273
00:11:08,440 --> 00:11:11,215
like, being grounded.

274
00:11:11,239 --> 00:11:12,906
-Mmm...

275
00:11:12,930 --> 00:11:14,370
You... You...

276
00:11:14,394 --> 00:11:18,256
You said that-- The book
is absolutely beautiful.

277

00:11:18,280 --> 00:11:19,482
I...

278
00:11:19,506 --> 00:11:21,096
I love this book.

279
00:11:22,295 --> 00:11:25,496
And in one of the chapters,
you mentioned that,

280
00:11:25,520 --> 00:11:27,856
you know, radical act of love.

281
00:11:27,880 --> 00:11:29,949
You said that you
and your partner

282
00:11:29,973 --> 00:11:31,936
both found deep solace

283
00:11:31,960 --> 00:11:35,049
in epic and monumental nature.

284
00:11:35,073 --> 00:11:36,216
-Mmm.

285
00:11:36,240 --> 00:11:39,536
-And that was in relation
to your move to Scotland.

286
00:11:39,560 --> 00:11:42,382
So I wondered if you
could talk a little bit about

287
00:11:42,406 --> 00:11:44,096
the move to Scotland.

288
00:11:44,120 --> 00:11:47,376
And the writing of this...
of this incredible book.

289
00:11:47,400 --> 00:11:49,576
And actually, just
before we do that,

290
00:11:49,600 --> 00:11:50,976
could you just tell us your...

291
00:11:51,000 --> 00:11:54,496
Give us the elevator

pitch for The Immortal Sisterhood.

292
00:11:54,520 --> 00:11:56,056
Tell us what this is all about,

293
00:11:56,080 --> 00:11:58,742
and then if you could
tell us a little bit about

294
00:11:58,742 --> 00:12:00,776
the move to Scotland

295
00:12:00,800 --> 00:12:03,136
and how that sort of impacted

296
00:12:03,160 --> 00:12:05,195
the writing of this book.

297
00:12:05,219 --> 00:12:08,219
-Oh, that's so lovely.

298
00:12:08,742 --> 00:12:10,416
So The Immortal Sisterhood

299

00:12:10,440 --> 00:12:12,936
is a part of me, really,

300
00:12:12,960 --> 00:12:14,336
and has been part

301
00:12:14,360 --> 00:12:16,129
of a huge

302
00:12:16,153 --> 00:12:18,486
growth period in my life.

303
00:12:20,010 --> 00:12:23,056
I think I sort of grew up

304
00:12:23,080 --> 00:12:24,696
with this book.

305
00:12:24,720 --> 00:12:26,856
It's about 12 women,

306
00:12:26,880 --> 00:12:28,194
real women,

307

00:12:28,218 --> 00:12:30,742
who have lived or are living.

308
00:12:30,742 --> 00:12:32,576
And it spans,

309
00:12:32,600 --> 00:12:34,936
like, the historical context

310
00:12:34,960 --> 00:12:38,742
of... I don't know, even,
you know, like the brief

311
00:12:38,742 --> 00:12:40,536
of an elevator pitch

312
00:12:40,560 --> 00:12:42,856
everybody in,

313
00:12:42,880 --> 00:12:45,816
particularly like a modern
society, like, wants to know why.

314
00:12:45,840 --> 00:12:47,936
Everybody wants

to know, like, who.

315
00:12:47,960 --> 00:12:50,976
Everyone wants to know
what thematically links them.

316
00:12:51,000 --> 00:12:52,742
You know, these 12

317
00:12:52,742 --> 00:12:54,376
in my sisterhood.

318
00:12:54,400 --> 00:12:55,576
And actually,

319
00:12:55,600 --> 00:12:58,896
like, they came to me so much
more esoterically than that.

320
00:13:00,242 --> 00:13:02,936
And they became 12.

321
00:13:02,960 --> 00:13:05,496
From as far back
as ancient Egypt,

322
00:13:05,520 --> 00:13:06,976
we have Hatshepsut,

323
00:13:07,000 --> 00:13:08,656
who was a genderless pharaoh,

324
00:13:08,680 --> 00:13:10,656
you know, a LONG time ago.

325
00:13:10,680 --> 00:13:12,256
[laughs]

326
00:13:12,280 --> 00:13:13,976
All the way through

327
00:13:14,000 --> 00:13:15,256
to Grace Jones,

328
00:13:15,280 --> 00:13:17,742
who is our only living sister.

329
00:13:17,742 --> 00:13:18,742
-Yeah.

330
00:13:18,742 --> 00:13:21,096
-Who I was lucky enough to
meet in my broadcast work

331
00:13:21,120 --> 00:13:23,016
and interview over dinner,

332
00:13:23,040 --> 00:13:24,684
of which I won an award for.

333
00:13:24,708 --> 00:13:27,742
I won a couple of awards
for interviewing Grace.

334
00:13:27,742 --> 00:13:31,442
But at the same time,
I really wanted to offer

335
00:13:31,466 --> 00:13:35,362
a sort of sense of
thanks or reverence

336
00:13:35,386 --> 00:13:36,936
to Grace,

337
00:13:36,960 --> 00:13:39,696
because being in her company
kind of changed my life.

338
00:13:39,720 --> 00:13:40,856
[laughs]

339
00:13:40,880 --> 00:13:43,373
And this book was the
perfect portal for that.

340
00:13:43,397 --> 00:13:45,716
The Immortal
Sisterhood is an offering.

341
00:13:45,740 --> 00:13:46,749
It's...

342
00:13:46,773 --> 00:13:48,296
It's storytelling,

343
00:13:48,320 --> 00:13:49,742
it's deep thanks.

344
00:13:49,742 --> 00:13:50,742
-Yes.

345
00:13:50,742 --> 00:13:53,176
-But there's not
obvious connection

346
00:13:53,200 --> 00:13:55,256
as to why I've chosen them,

347
00:13:55,280 --> 00:13:58,616
except for over six
years of writing it

348
00:13:58,640 --> 00:14:01,195
and moving to Scotland

349
00:14:01,219 --> 00:14:03,219
in that time,

350
00:14:03,243 --> 00:14:05,869
going through a global
pandemic, of which we all did,

351

00:14:05,893 --> 00:14:07,816
which was seismic
in so many ways,

352
00:14:07,840 --> 00:14:10,229
even if we don't talk
about it so much now.

353
00:14:10,253 --> 00:14:12,776
And then in my
personal life, like,

354
00:14:12,800 --> 00:14:14,816
meeting my partner,

355
00:14:14,840 --> 00:14:17,016
deciding to do
that move with us,

356
00:14:17,040 --> 00:14:18,243
you know, together.

357
00:14:18,267 --> 00:14:19,387
And then,

358

00:14:19,411 --> 00:14:22,742
two babies coming
along, which has just been...

359
00:14:22,742 --> 00:14:25,416
you know, quite epic

360
00:14:25,440 --> 00:14:26,735
and also...

361
00:14:27,492 --> 00:14:29,816
Also like symbolic

362
00:14:29,840 --> 00:14:33,742
to the experience of

363
00:14:33,742 --> 00:14:36,056
finding the sisterhood,

364
00:14:36,080 --> 00:14:40,782
who are essentially, like, a
constellation or a fellowship, or sorority.

365
00:14:40,806 --> 00:14:43,982
You know, I've seen it described

as different things. A circle

366
00:14:44,006 --> 00:14:46,006
of women

367
00:14:46,030 --> 00:14:49,030
who... the more I researched

368
00:14:49,054 --> 00:14:51,054
and wrote about,

369
00:14:51,078 --> 00:14:54,078
the more I felt like
they were offering me

370
00:14:54,102 --> 00:14:56,496
almost like friendship,

371
00:14:56,520 --> 00:14:58,576
like having an imaginary
friend, you know.

372
00:14:58,600 --> 00:15:02,102
Like, there's something
about this particular act of

373
00:15:02,126 --> 00:15:03,953
scholarly or...

374
00:15:04,704 --> 00:15:07,616
or written work,
the written word,

375
00:15:07,640 --> 00:15:09,416
that was giving me

376
00:15:09,440 --> 00:15:10,456
so much.

377
00:15:10,480 --> 00:15:12,277
And in some ways,

378
00:15:12,301 --> 00:15:14,136
healing

379
00:15:14,160 --> 00:15:16,776
parts of me in order to to grow

380
00:15:16,800 --> 00:15:19,456

and in order for me
to make decisions

381
00:15:19,480 --> 00:15:20,856
like to follow nature

382
00:15:20,880 --> 00:15:22,742
for a period of time.

383
00:15:22,742 --> 00:15:23,742
-I love that.

384
00:15:23,742 --> 00:15:27,369
-To try things, to accept that,

385
00:15:27,393 --> 00:15:30,336
actually, I love to communicate

386
00:15:30,360 --> 00:15:31,696
in the written word,

387
00:15:31,720 --> 00:15:34,225
even if I'm known
as a radio presenter.

388
00:15:34,249 --> 00:15:35,249
-Hmm...

389
00:15:35,273 --> 00:15:36,273
-Perhaps...

390
00:15:36,297 --> 00:15:40,056
I can have a body of work
that is published books.

391
00:15:40,080 --> 00:15:41,376
All these things.

392
00:15:41,400 --> 00:15:43,616
So I'm really, really
thankful of the project,

393
00:15:43,640 --> 00:15:45,718
and I'm really, really
thankful of the sisterhood.

394
00:15:45,742 --> 00:15:47,896
-Do you think the outdoorsiness

395

00:15:47,920 --> 00:15:49,856
and the nature of Scotland

396
00:15:49,880 --> 00:15:52,416
enabled you to
write in a way that,

397
00:15:52,440 --> 00:15:54,975
if you'd been in London,
you wouldn't have?

398
00:15:55,702 --> 00:15:56,702
-Definitely.

399
00:15:56,726 --> 00:15:59,496
So now that our time
is coming to an end,

400
00:15:59,520 --> 00:16:01,959
like being based
here in Edinburgh,

401
00:16:02,369 --> 00:16:05,296
because I have a new job
in London, so I'm moving.

402
00:16:06,742 --> 00:16:08,742
I...

403
00:16:08,742 --> 00:16:10,696
I'm in deep awe

404
00:16:10,720 --> 00:16:13,496
of what this experience
has given me.

405
00:16:13,520 --> 00:16:14,616
It's been mixed.

406
00:16:14,640 --> 00:16:16,595
Nothing is the film, you know.

407
00:16:16,619 --> 00:16:19,136
Like, nothing is, like,
completely plain sailing.

408
00:16:19,160 --> 00:16:23,136
When I was in the, like, the
deepest throes of early romance,

409

00:16:23,160 --> 00:16:25,776
like, it did feel like
a film, you know?

410
00:16:25,800 --> 00:16:28,976
Like, heading north
with my mountain man,

411
00:16:29,000 --> 00:16:30,736
we've both got
Scottish heritage.

412
00:16:30,760 --> 00:16:33,096
He's McAllister, I'm McCairney.

413
00:16:34,167 --> 00:16:37,016
He's a very outdoorsy person,

414
00:16:37,040 --> 00:16:39,376
so we did go camping on a beach

415
00:16:39,400 --> 00:16:41,536
in the most northern tip,

416
00:16:41,560 --> 00:16:43,136

and I swam in the sea,

417
00:16:43,160 --> 00:16:45,256
because I was a big
cold water swimmer

418
00:16:45,280 --> 00:16:46,971
down south already.

419
00:16:46,995 --> 00:16:49,856
And we've been on
so many adventures

420
00:16:49,880 --> 00:16:51,736
where I would always be writing,

421
00:16:51,760 --> 00:16:53,416
always doing the research,

422
00:16:53,440 --> 00:16:55,296
and then finding that

423
00:16:55,320 --> 00:16:58,816
Scotland is a
place that nurtures

424
00:16:58,840 --> 00:17:00,576
literature

425
00:17:00,600 --> 00:17:02,929
and respects the written words.

426
00:17:02,953 --> 00:17:05,256
And has this heritage

427
00:17:05,280 --> 00:17:07,946
of arts and...

428
00:17:09,035 --> 00:17:11,336
And it's kind of like a sort of

429
00:17:11,360 --> 00:17:13,056
oscillation between

430
00:17:13,080 --> 00:17:15,482
the politics, the land,

431
00:17:15,506 --> 00:17:18,376
clan-based society,

432
00:17:18,400 --> 00:17:21,416
nurture the arts and culture.

433
00:17:21,440 --> 00:17:23,415
There's, like, a
really beautiful

434
00:17:23,439 --> 00:17:25,576
intuition of those things.

435
00:17:25,600 --> 00:17:27,536
You could even
see it as a, like, a...

436
00:17:27,560 --> 00:17:30,439
like, you know, how
tartan or tweed is made.

437
00:17:30,463 --> 00:17:31,463
-Yeah.

438
00:17:31,487 --> 00:17:33,487
-There's this, like, craft

439
00:17:33,511 --> 00:17:34,856
and respect

440
00:17:34,880 --> 00:17:37,511
that I have really been able to

441
00:17:37,535 --> 00:17:38,936
think about.

442
00:17:38,960 --> 00:17:42,456
And it's been available to me

443
00:17:42,480 --> 00:17:44,535
to feel like

444
00:17:44,559 --> 00:17:46,679
I can be...

445
00:17:47,489 --> 00:17:48,736
an artist,

446
00:17:48,760 --> 00:17:50,896
which I don't think I could feel

447
00:17:50,920 --> 00:17:52,136
when I was down south.

448
00:17:52,160 --> 00:17:53,496
I was always shapeshifting.

449
00:17:53,520 --> 00:17:55,816
I became a mermaid in Margate.

450
00:17:55,840 --> 00:17:57,776
Like, in East London in my 20s,

451
00:17:57,800 --> 00:18:00,896
I was like out there
on the cutting edge,

452
00:18:00,920 --> 00:18:03,111
being around
different artists and

453
00:18:03,135 --> 00:18:06,016
loving music, and that's
when I started radio and

454

00:18:06,040 --> 00:18:07,776
fashion and all
those things, but

455
00:18:07,800 --> 00:18:09,789
here, yes.

456
00:18:10,262 --> 00:18:13,282
The romance and the nature

457
00:18:13,306 --> 00:18:15,010
and the history

458
00:18:15,034 --> 00:18:19,696
did speak to me
and it is imbibed into

459
00:18:19,720 --> 00:18:22,176
what The Immortal
Sisterhood became.

460
00:18:22,200 --> 00:18:24,256
But at the same time,

461
00:18:24,280 --> 00:18:25,656

it's cold.

462
00:18:25,680 --> 00:18:27,016
[laughs]

463
00:18:27,040 --> 00:18:29,816
So you are in, you're
indoors, you know,

464
00:18:29,840 --> 00:18:32,416
like thinking and

465
00:18:32,440 --> 00:18:35,013
poeticising life, and...

466
00:18:35,742 --> 00:18:37,656
Nowhere is perfect.

467
00:18:37,680 --> 00:18:42,696
Even if you can run away to
the most beautiful landscape,

468
00:18:42,720 --> 00:18:44,816
you might feel very alone.

469
00:18:44,840 --> 00:18:47,109
You know, if there's no people.

470
00:18:48,242 --> 00:18:50,736
Tell us a bit about

471
00:18:50,760 --> 00:18:53,656
motherhood and... and writing

472
00:18:53,680 --> 00:18:54,782
and how that...

473
00:18:55,053 --> 00:18:56,176
How you've...

474
00:18:56,200 --> 00:18:58,656
How you manage to
fit that all in. I mean,

475
00:18:58,680 --> 00:19:01,393
I have absolutely
no idea how you

476
00:19:01,417 --> 00:19:03,096

could find the time to write

477
00:19:03,120 --> 00:19:04,616
with two young children, but

478
00:19:04,640 --> 00:19:07,170
tell us a bit about how you

479
00:19:07,194 --> 00:19:09,194
piece that all together.

480
00:19:09,742 --> 00:19:12,096
It's a bit of a trust situation,

481
00:19:12,120 --> 00:19:14,856
you know, and like
letting the moment

482
00:19:14,880 --> 00:19:16,962
just unfold as is.

483
00:19:17,322 --> 00:19:19,694
There's so many

484

00:19:19,718 --> 00:19:21,650
messages

485
00:19:21,674 --> 00:19:23,936
of feeling guilty.

486
00:19:23,960 --> 00:19:26,718
Like I should feel guilty if

487
00:19:26,742 --> 00:19:28,256
dot, dot, dot.

488
00:19:28,280 --> 00:19:30,456
You know, anyone
that's watching this

489
00:19:30,480 --> 00:19:32,976
that has thought
about motherhood,

490
00:19:33,000 --> 00:19:34,976
like knows a
mother, is a mother,

491
00:19:35,000 --> 00:19:36,616

will know what I mean. It's like

492
00:19:36,640 --> 00:19:38,656
there's just these
different messages.

493
00:19:38,680 --> 00:19:41,416
Like, breastfeeding
is absolutely crucial.

494
00:19:41,440 --> 00:19:44,742
You know, make sure
that you are wonderful at it!

495
00:19:44,742 --> 00:19:45,742
-Yeah.

496
00:19:45,742 --> 00:19:47,976
-Like, and it's like, okay,
great, trying my best.

497
00:19:48,000 --> 00:19:49,329
Like, let's go.

498
00:19:50,742 --> 00:19:53,216

There's a lot of
kind of like metrics

499
00:19:53,240 --> 00:19:54,952
that don't necessarily
make sense.

500
00:19:54,976 --> 00:19:58,376
And then if you don't
actually meet that

501
00:19:58,400 --> 00:20:00,336
like gospel,

502
00:20:00,360 --> 00:20:03,742
then the go-to is to feel guilty

503
00:20:03,742 --> 00:20:06,322
And I think, like, with my first

504
00:20:06,346 --> 00:20:08,296
I was so overjoyed

505
00:20:08,320 --> 00:20:11,736
that I decided to

just shake out, like,

506
00:20:11,760 --> 00:20:13,576
that kind of guilt-mongering.

507
00:20:13,600 --> 00:20:15,816
And to just do my best,

508
00:20:15,840 --> 00:20:17,742
and listen to my intuition,

509
00:20:17,742 --> 00:20:19,976
surround myself in people,

510
00:20:20,000 --> 00:20:22,576
keep practising and
asking for support.

511
00:20:22,600 --> 00:20:25,336
Communicating, always, always.

512
00:20:25,360 --> 00:20:27,056
Like, it's probably boring,

513

00:20:27,080 --> 00:20:29,742
but like with my
partner being like, okay,

514
00:20:29,742 --> 00:20:31,536
I'm just going to say again,

515
00:20:31,560 --> 00:20:32,696
like...

516
00:20:32,720 --> 00:20:37,776
You probably really need to take
him for a walk at 2 o'clock on Thursday,

517
00:20:37,800 --> 00:20:39,456
because I'm doing,
you know... And just,

518
00:20:39,480 --> 00:20:42,035
like, we're just constantly

519
00:20:42,059 --> 00:20:43,856
in that rhythm.

520
00:20:43,880 --> 00:20:46,016

So lots of communication

521
00:20:46,040 --> 00:20:47,718
and a lot of support.

522
00:20:47,742 --> 00:20:49,877
Even if it's unconventional.

523
00:20:49,901 --> 00:20:52,309
Like, we don't have, like, the
grandparents here or anything.

524
00:20:52,333 --> 00:20:54,056
That would be the
dream. We don't have that.

525
00:20:54,080 --> 00:20:56,416
So therefore, I'm sourcing
support in different ways.

526
00:20:57,933 --> 00:20:59,536
And...

527
00:20:59,560 --> 00:21:02,576
Like, having a bit of

528
00:21:02,600 --> 00:21:04,600
joy permeate it.

529
00:21:04,624 --> 00:21:07,136
Like, it's actually quite fun

530
00:21:07,160 --> 00:21:10,176
and it's pretty hilarious

531
00:21:10,200 --> 00:21:11,742
at points.

532
00:21:11,742 --> 00:21:14,176
Just that the situations
that we'll all be in

533
00:21:14,200 --> 00:21:15,575
as this little pack.

534
00:21:15,599 --> 00:21:18,016
-I think, yeah, there's joy in
the chaos though, isn't there,

535

00:21:18,040 --> 00:21:19,536
Don't you think?
It's just, like,

536
00:21:19,560 --> 00:21:21,336
finding the funny mo--

537
00:21:21,360 --> 00:21:23,136
Like, it is bonkers

538
00:21:23,160 --> 00:21:24,456
trying to work

539
00:21:24,480 --> 00:21:26,269
and having a young family.

540
00:21:26,742 --> 00:21:28,742
-100%

541
00:21:28,742 --> 00:21:29,742
-Yeah.

542
00:21:29,742 --> 00:21:33,336
-And I would just be
doing a disservice if I was

543
00:21:33,360 --> 00:21:36,856
like saying that that's just all

544
00:21:36,880 --> 00:21:38,742
really hard.

545
00:21:38,742 --> 00:21:40,742
Because it's, like...

546
00:21:40,742 --> 00:21:42,576
Essentially, at points,

547
00:21:42,600 --> 00:21:43,897
so rewarding.

548
00:21:43,921 --> 00:21:45,656
If I've managed to

549
00:21:45,680 --> 00:21:47,475
finish the edit...

550
00:21:47,499 --> 00:21:50,616
And, I mean, I was

pregnant during the...

551
00:21:50,640 --> 00:21:52,483
the completion of this book.

552
00:21:52,507 --> 00:21:53,507
-Wow.

553
00:21:53,531 --> 00:21:56,195
-I was getting more and
more and more pregnant

554
00:21:56,219 --> 00:21:58,219
with my toddler.

555
00:21:58,243 --> 00:22:00,136
And it was, like...

556
00:22:00,160 --> 00:22:01,656
It was kind of funny.

557
00:22:01,680 --> 00:22:04,736
Like, I did the audio book

558

00:22:04,760 --> 00:22:07,243
four days before my due date

559
00:22:07,267 --> 00:22:09,108
in the middle of Edinburgh.

560
00:22:09,132 --> 00:22:11,576
Like, on the Royal Mile,
where the studio was.

561
00:22:11,600 --> 00:22:13,136
It was hot, the heat wave

562
00:22:13,160 --> 00:22:14,718
even hit Edinburgh.

563
00:22:14,742 --> 00:22:17,136
And I was walking
up flights of stairs

564
00:22:17,160 --> 00:22:18,976
of this old Gothic building

565
00:22:19,000 --> 00:22:20,835
to get to this lovely studio.

566
00:22:21,742 --> 00:22:23,376
Just, like, out of breath.

567
00:22:23,400 --> 00:22:26,176
They were like, can we give
you anything to make you feel

568
00:22:26,200 --> 00:22:28,136
like calm and centred

569
00:22:28,160 --> 00:22:30,176
to be able to read your work

570
00:22:30,200 --> 00:22:31,742
back to back

571
00:22:31,742 --> 00:22:32,896
for hours.

572
00:22:32,920 --> 00:22:35,709
And I was just like a
whole massive plate of fruit.

573

00:22:35,733 --> 00:22:37,336
And let's go.

574
00:22:37,360 --> 00:22:39,876
And I know that, like, that...

575
00:22:39,900 --> 00:22:41,776
That's now archived.

576
00:22:41,800 --> 00:22:45,005
Like, the audio book, I
know if I ever listen to it,

577
00:22:45,029 --> 00:22:48,029
just how close to
giving birth I was.

578
00:22:49,115 --> 00:22:51,115
I can't believe it.

579
00:22:51,139 --> 00:22:52,627
-I have to say,

580
00:22:52,651 --> 00:22:54,136
it's a great audiobook.

581
00:22:54,160 --> 00:22:55,329
It's... I... I...

582
00:22:55,742 --> 00:22:58,336
This book feels very much...

583
00:22:58,360 --> 00:23:00,896
It's very... I don't
know, I find that books

584
00:23:00,920 --> 00:23:03,128
always find me at the right time

585
00:23:03,509 --> 00:23:04,509
-Yeah.

586
00:23:04,533 --> 00:23:07,016
-And just a really quick story.

587
00:23:07,040 --> 00:23:08,040
I...

588
00:23:08,064 --> 00:23:09,736

I had a party in August

589
00:23:09,760 --> 00:23:11,216
and there was a table with

590
00:23:11,240 --> 00:23:12,376
gifts on it.

591
00:23:12,400 --> 00:23:14,376
And somebody

592
00:23:14,400 --> 00:23:16,946
brought me this book

593
00:23:16,970 --> 00:23:19,936
and had put Micallar on a
post-it note and stuck it on.

594
00:23:19,960 --> 00:23:21,256
And I do not...

595
00:23:21,280 --> 00:23:22,757
I cannot for the life of me

596

00:23:22,781 --> 00:23:24,415
find out who gave me this book.

597
00:23:24,439 --> 00:23:27,336
But I... Yeah, so I feel
like this conversation is

598
00:23:27,360 --> 00:23:29,296
meant to happen.

599
00:23:29,320 --> 00:23:31,256
And...

600
00:23:31,280 --> 00:23:32,742
It's...

601
00:23:32,742 --> 00:23:34,061
I put it on Instagram.

602
00:23:34,085 --> 00:23:37,286
I was like, who brought me this book? I
have no idea, but they know me very well,

603
00:23:37,310 --> 00:23:39,456
because it just... it

really spoke to me.

604
00:23:40,718 --> 00:23:42,349
I'm conscious of time,

605
00:23:42,373 --> 00:23:43,496
but I wanted...

606
00:23:43,520 --> 00:23:46,465
I've absolutely
loved the Grace Jones

607
00:23:46,489 --> 00:23:47,636
chapter,

608
00:23:47,660 --> 00:23:50,616
and I wonder if you could
share a little bit about

609
00:23:50,640 --> 00:23:53,096
your meeting with her and

610
00:23:53,120 --> 00:23:57,376
the little story we were talking
about before we came online today

611
00:23:57,400 --> 00:23:59,898
about the photograph, because...

612
00:23:59,922 --> 00:24:00,932
-Yeah.

613
00:24:00,956 --> 00:24:01,965
-Yeah.

614
00:24:01,989 --> 00:24:03,976
-So I would love for this

615
00:24:04,000 --> 00:24:06,776
project to reach
Grace in some way.

616
00:24:06,800 --> 00:24:08,016
I have been

617
00:24:08,040 --> 00:24:09,816
nervous up until now

618
00:24:09,840 --> 00:24:12,442

because I wanted
it to be a whole

619
00:24:12,466 --> 00:24:14,296
piece of work before.

620
00:24:14,320 --> 00:24:15,576
You know? Like,

621
00:24:15,600 --> 00:24:17,569
it's all very well

622
00:24:17,593 --> 00:24:19,136
being able to say to

623
00:24:19,160 --> 00:24:21,216
a living goddess,

624
00:24:21,240 --> 00:24:24,994
you know, I'm writing a chapter on
you in my book, The Immortal Sisterhood.

625
00:24:25,018 --> 00:24:26,018
-Yeah.

626
00:24:26,942 --> 00:24:28,136
-But now

627
00:24:28,160 --> 00:24:29,896
that it's affecting people

628
00:24:29,920 --> 00:24:31,536
and people are responding to it,

629
00:24:31,560 --> 00:24:33,216
I would love, like,

630
00:24:33,240 --> 00:24:34,742
to get the book to her

631
00:24:34,742 --> 00:24:36,742
because...

632
00:24:36,742 --> 00:24:38,216
I met her

633
00:24:38,240 --> 00:24:41,096
and I interviewed her
when her memoir came out,

634
00:24:41,120 --> 00:24:43,300
and she said yes to
hardly any interviews.

635
00:24:43,324 --> 00:24:44,662
It was a big deal.

636
00:24:45,742 --> 00:24:48,085
And she agreed to

637
00:24:48,109 --> 00:24:50,742
interview with me, as
long as it was over dinner.

638
00:24:50,742 --> 00:24:52,303
So we went to the
restaurant of her--

639
00:24:52,327 --> 00:24:53,889
-A restaurant of her choice!

640
00:24:53,913 --> 00:24:55,071
[laughter]

641
00:24:55,742 --> 00:24:57,896
When I read that, I was like...

642
00:24:57,920 --> 00:24:58,995
Yes!

643
00:24:59,633 --> 00:25:00,718
I love that!

644
00:25:00,742 --> 00:25:02,016
-They just don't...

645
00:25:02,040 --> 00:25:03,040
Like, they don't...

646
00:25:03,064 --> 00:25:04,256
They're not-- You know,

647
00:25:04,280 --> 00:25:06,742
huge icons

648
00:25:06,742 --> 00:25:08,296
like Grace Jones,

649
00:25:08,320 --> 00:25:10,742
you know, are few and
far between these days.

650
00:25:10,742 --> 00:25:11,742
-Yeah.

651
00:25:11,742 --> 00:25:13,576
-Like the audacity

652
00:25:13,600 --> 00:25:15,742
and the beauty of that...

653
00:25:15,742 --> 00:25:17,255
Like, pleasure!

654
00:25:17,279 --> 00:25:18,742
The pleasure of that...

655
00:25:18,742 --> 00:25:19,742
-Yeah.

656
00:25:19,742 --> 00:25:22,056
-Is something

that I learned from.

657
00:25:22,080 --> 00:25:24,776
And I remember just before

658
00:25:24,800 --> 00:25:27,229
we were about to
start the interview,

659
00:25:27,815 --> 00:25:30,896
somebody offered
me a glass of Prosecco

660
00:25:30,920 --> 00:25:32,136
from the restaurant,

661
00:25:32,160 --> 00:25:35,576
and I was like really nervous and trying
to be really professional. And I was like,

662
00:25:35,600 --> 00:25:37,256
no, no, I'm like working.

663
00:25:37,280 --> 00:25:41,231
Like, I can't have Prosecco. Like, I'm

going to be interviewing Grace Jones.

664
00:25:41,255 --> 00:25:43,176
And then by the time I...

665
00:25:43,200 --> 00:25:44,656
By the time I sat down,

666
00:25:44,680 --> 00:25:46,742
she was just like

667
00:25:46,742 --> 00:25:48,896
pouring me a
wine, like, naturally.

668
00:25:48,920 --> 00:25:50,742
Just like as a host, you know.

669
00:25:50,742 --> 00:25:52,776
And I said, oh, no,

670
00:25:52,800 --> 00:25:54,936
I'm working, I
can't have any wine.

671
00:25:54,960 --> 00:25:56,289
And she's like, "Darling...

672
00:25:56,313 --> 00:25:58,313
[laughter]

673
00:25:58,742 --> 00:26:00,936
She's like, white
to be all right,

674
00:26:00,960 --> 00:26:02,175
red before bed.

675
00:26:02,199 --> 00:26:03,718
[laughter]

676
00:26:03,742 --> 00:26:05,176
And I was like, I... I...

677
00:26:05,200 --> 00:26:07,976
How can I turn down
that delicious moment

678
00:26:08,000 --> 00:26:10,536

of having and sharing

679
00:26:10,560 --> 00:26:13,742
a glass of wine with
Grace Jones, you know?

680
00:26:13,742 --> 00:26:14,742
-Beautiful, yeah.

681
00:26:14,742 --> 00:26:17,136
-And then she was just so

682
00:26:17,160 --> 00:26:19,742
generous with her

683
00:26:19,742 --> 00:26:21,776
stories and

684
00:26:21,800 --> 00:26:24,742
her, like, exuberance and...

685
00:26:24,742 --> 00:26:26,656
I just came away thinking,

686

00:26:26,680 --> 00:26:28,416
God, I don't know if I
did a good interview,

687
00:26:28,440 --> 00:26:30,471
but I loved meeting her.

688
00:26:30,495 --> 00:26:31,495
-Yeah.

689
00:26:31,519 --> 00:26:34,576
-And she was a special person,
and I've got Jamaican heritage as well,

690
00:26:34,600 --> 00:26:37,056
and we spoke about
growing up in Jamaica

691
00:26:37,080 --> 00:26:38,936
from, like, a nature perspective

692
00:26:38,960 --> 00:26:42,176
and like an earthly perspective,
which was so beautiful.

693

00:26:42,200 --> 00:26:44,096
She loves sea swimming,
all these things.

694
00:26:44,120 --> 00:26:45,931
So I love Sister Grace.

695
00:26:45,955 --> 00:26:49,136
And then I said, oh, you know,
we must get a photograph.

696
00:26:49,160 --> 00:26:51,496
And this is kind...
This is 2017 as well,

697
00:26:51,520 --> 00:26:53,536
so it's kind of before

698
00:26:53,560 --> 00:26:57,616
it was, like, a definite, like, we've
got to get a selfie on my phone, really.

699
00:26:57,640 --> 00:27:00,376
You know how, like, we are... all of
our phones are just exploding now,

700
00:27:00,400 --> 00:27:02,361
because we're just taking
a picture of everything.

701
00:27:02,385 --> 00:27:04,176
It was kind of like before that.

702
00:27:04,200 --> 00:27:07,796
I mean, there was camera phones
but we just didn't rely on them as much,

703
00:27:07,820 --> 00:27:10,896
I think my producer had a digital
camera and was like, can we just get one

704
00:27:10,920 --> 00:27:12,536
to go up on the show page

705
00:27:12,560 --> 00:27:15,742
for this... for this
piece of work? And...

706
00:27:15,742 --> 00:27:17,178
she was just like, "Oh, no",

707
00:27:17,202 --> 00:27:19,396
like, "We can't have a picture."

708
00:27:19,420 --> 00:27:21,395
Like, "I'm not camera ready."

709
00:27:21,419 --> 00:27:22,558
-I love that.

710
00:27:22,582 --> 00:27:26,256
-It was like that... that much
of a kind of informal experience

711
00:27:26,280 --> 00:27:30,096
for her to meet with me, to talk with
me, for us to record the conversation,

712
00:27:30,120 --> 00:27:32,136
to do what we
will with the audio,

713
00:27:32,160 --> 00:27:34,742
to talk about her memoir,
which is also great. Like...

714
00:27:34,742 --> 00:27:35,742
-Yeah.

715
00:27:35,742 --> 00:27:38,776
-But she was like, "You're
not documenting it visually."

716
00:27:38,800 --> 00:27:42,496
"I'm, like, in my", like, she
said, "I'm in my flying clothes."

717
00:27:42,520 --> 00:27:45,736
And, you know, and
she actually didn't

718
00:27:45,760 --> 00:27:48,616
look like the Grace Jones
that we are presented with,

719
00:27:48,640 --> 00:27:51,742
because she is art,
she is fashion, she is

720
00:27:51,742 --> 00:27:53,336
like the portrait.

721
00:27:53,360 --> 00:27:56,136
Like, that's how she
presents herself publicly.

722
00:27:56,160 --> 00:27:58,496
And then I saw, like...

723
00:27:58,520 --> 00:28:00,096
another Grace

724
00:28:00,120 --> 00:28:02,416
who was,

725
00:28:02,440 --> 00:28:04,832
you know, a mother

726
00:28:04,856 --> 00:28:08,742
and a very funny
friend over dinner.

727
00:28:08,742 --> 00:28:12,742
So it was very special that
she said no to the picture.

728
00:28:12,742 --> 00:28:13,742
-Yeah.

729
00:28:13,742 --> 00:28:15,742
-And I learned a
lot that day, yeah.

730
00:28:15,742 --> 00:28:16,776
-I love that.

731
00:28:18,002 --> 00:28:21,369
Last question
before we go over to

732
00:28:21,393 --> 00:28:23,016
audience questions.

733
00:28:23,040 --> 00:28:25,016
So if you do have
any, please pop them

734
00:28:25,040 --> 00:28:26,616
in the Q&A

735

00:28:26,640 --> 00:28:28,656
box, everyone.

736
00:28:29,673 --> 00:28:32,789
Gemma I wondered, the book is...

737
00:28:33,715 --> 00:28:35,816
It's across many forms.

738
00:28:35,840 --> 00:28:37,455
There's sort of like

739
00:28:37,479 --> 00:28:40,416
poetry and memoir

740
00:28:40,440 --> 00:28:42,376
and fable and...

741
00:28:42,400 --> 00:28:45,376
There's lots of different forms

742
00:28:45,400 --> 00:28:47,742
and I wondered... I
loved that because

743
00:28:47,742 --> 00:28:49,742
you don't know what...

744
00:28:49,742 --> 00:28:51,576
It's not formulaic

745
00:28:51,600 --> 00:28:53,496
and you don't know what
you're going to get next

746
00:28:53,520 --> 00:28:55,976
and that keeps you interested.

747
00:28:56,000 --> 00:29:00,576
It's not the kind of book that you have to
read from start to finish either. You can

748
00:29:00,600 --> 00:29:02,376
go through the chapters and pick

749
00:29:02,400 --> 00:29:04,736
which women is calling you.

750
00:29:04,760 --> 00:29:06,976

And I also really enjoyed that.

751
00:29:07,000 --> 00:29:08,936
But could you
talk to us a little bit

752
00:29:08,960 --> 00:29:11,496
about writing across
different forms?

753
00:29:12,595 --> 00:29:15,133
-Yeah, I think it
took me a lot longer

754
00:29:15,157 --> 00:29:17,376
than maybe the
publishers would have liked

755
00:29:17,400 --> 00:29:20,536
or my...

756
00:29:20,560 --> 00:29:22,336
bank account would have liked

757
00:29:22,360 --> 00:29:24,416

from that perspective. You know?

758
00:29:24,440 --> 00:29:27,216
Because there is
nothing formulaic

759
00:29:27,240 --> 00:29:28,865
to the way that I write.

760
00:29:28,889 --> 00:29:32,936
And it started to inform itself

761
00:29:32,960 --> 00:29:36,456
I would learn about a sister,

762
00:29:36,480 --> 00:29:38,216
and then I would
start to write up,

763
00:29:38,240 --> 00:29:40,216
like, what I was learning.

764
00:29:40,240 --> 00:29:41,896
And then, you know,
in some instances,

765
00:29:41,920 --> 00:29:43,856
some of the sisters in here,

766
00:29:43,880 --> 00:29:46,256
there wasn't loads
of research on them.

767
00:29:46,280 --> 00:29:48,776
So then what... what...
You know, I was presented

768
00:29:48,800 --> 00:29:50,742
with, like, a deep thought of

769
00:29:50,742 --> 00:29:52,656
say, Jeanne Duval,

770
00:29:52,680 --> 00:29:56,416
who was a Haitian-French woman

771
00:29:56,440 --> 00:29:59,216
and was the
mistress and lover of

772
00:29:59,240 --> 00:30:02,749
Charles Baudelaire,
who is a revered poet.

773
00:30:03,742 --> 00:30:06,416
And everybody talks about
him and learns about him

774
00:30:06,440 --> 00:30:08,496
and learns about
him and his work,

775
00:30:08,520 --> 00:30:11,096
and he has a body
of work in his legacy.

776
00:30:11,120 --> 00:30:14,089
But with her, she
was this sort of...

777
00:30:14,742 --> 00:30:16,496
intriguing figure

778
00:30:16,520 --> 00:30:19,875
of which, you know, was

almost erased out of history.

779
00:30:20,382 --> 00:30:22,056
So at that point,

780
00:30:22,080 --> 00:30:24,696
I would be confronted,
let's say, in the process

781
00:30:24,720 --> 00:30:27,195
with do I continue to keep

782
00:30:27,219 --> 00:30:29,136
this sister in the sisterhood,

783
00:30:29,160 --> 00:30:31,856
because I'm coming
up against, like, a barrier

784
00:30:31,880 --> 00:30:33,536
of being able to
find out about them.

785
00:30:33,560 --> 00:30:35,096
What I was finding,

786
00:30:35,120 --> 00:30:36,856
and her being an example,

787
00:30:36,880 --> 00:30:38,975
was a lot of artists

788
00:30:38,999 --> 00:30:40,296
or writers

789
00:30:40,320 --> 00:30:42,736
felt inspired by her,

790
00:30:42,760 --> 00:30:45,696
which was very interesting to me
because it's like this ripple effect.

791
00:30:45,720 --> 00:30:47,689
So I'd be like, okay...

792
00:30:48,742 --> 00:30:51,616
Lorraine Grant, I
think her name is,

793

00:30:51,640 --> 00:30:53,376
who's a visual
artist in New York

794
00:30:53,400 --> 00:30:56,576
who passed away in the past
couple of years. She was incredible.

795
00:30:56,600 --> 00:30:58,456
She, you know,

796
00:30:58,480 --> 00:31:00,816
did all of this
visual work about

797
00:31:00,840 --> 00:31:02,416
Jeanne Duval.

798
00:31:02,440 --> 00:31:04,816
And I was like, okay,
so that's language

799
00:31:04,840 --> 00:31:06,136
being created,

800

00:31:06,160 --> 00:31:08,936
and therefore we
are, like, invoking

801
00:31:08,960 --> 00:31:11,382
the spirit of Jeanne.

802
00:31:11,406 --> 00:31:14,536
in a... in a non-linear way.

803
00:31:14,560 --> 00:31:17,256
So keep going, you know.

804
00:31:17,280 --> 00:31:19,776
And so then I would
start to imagine,

805
00:31:19,800 --> 00:31:22,736
like, what the experience
might have been

806
00:31:22,760 --> 00:31:26,056
for Jeanne Duval. And then at
the whole time trepidatious, like.

807

00:31:26,080 --> 00:31:29,776
Should I be writing,
like, speculative fiction

808
00:31:29,800 --> 00:31:31,951
about somebody who's lived?

809
00:31:31,975 --> 00:31:34,496
Who am I to be really, actually...

810
00:31:34,520 --> 00:31:36,111
And that's only in small parts,

811
00:31:36,135 --> 00:31:39,176
only tiny bits of imaginings
of what it would have been like

812
00:31:39,200 --> 00:31:41,896
for them. It's not throughout
every chapter or anything.

813
00:31:41,920 --> 00:31:44,376
But then it would just
sort of happen, you know?

814

00:31:44,400 --> 00:31:46,776
And then I would just
experiment and put it in

815
00:31:46,800 --> 00:31:48,395
and see what the editor thought.

816
00:31:48,419 --> 00:31:51,856
And then, when I was, like,
actually putting it all out,

817
00:31:51,880 --> 00:31:53,856
I was like, okay,

818
00:31:53,880 --> 00:31:56,456
this poem needs to be in there.

819
00:31:56,480 --> 00:32:00,656
So therefore snake beat a poem
that goes throughout the entire book.

820
00:32:00,680 --> 00:32:04,062
Like a snake in the form
of a shape of a snake

821

00:32:04,086 --> 00:32:06,536
had to be in there. That
was part of my process

822
00:32:06,560 --> 00:32:08,416
because I was coming across

823
00:32:08,440 --> 00:32:10,376
realisations about history,

824
00:32:10,400 --> 00:32:11,936
about Black history

825
00:32:11,960 --> 00:32:13,576
that were making me mad

826
00:32:13,600 --> 00:32:14,936
and full of rage.

827
00:32:14,960 --> 00:32:16,216
And I was like,

828
00:32:16,240 --> 00:32:18,364
how do I transmute this rage?

829
00:32:18,388 --> 00:32:20,978
It's to stand up in
my writing studio.

830
00:32:21,002 --> 00:32:23,056
And, like, make
some beat poetry,

831
00:32:23,080 --> 00:32:25,776
like Benjamin Zephaniah
would, you know?

832
00:32:25,800 --> 00:32:27,176
So there's that.

833
00:32:27,200 --> 00:32:30,336
And then I wanted to
write them letters as well.

834
00:32:30,360 --> 00:32:32,576
So it just all started

835
00:32:32,600 --> 00:32:34,216
to become into

836
00:32:34,240 --> 00:32:35,976
almost, like

837
00:32:36,000 --> 00:32:38,416
as a practice of zine making.

838
00:32:38,440 --> 00:32:41,136
You know, that kind
of like radical sensibility

839
00:32:41,160 --> 00:32:44,056
of just like try and
put it together like this

840
00:32:44,080 --> 00:32:46,816
and like, how does that
feel? What is that flow?

841
00:32:46,840 --> 00:32:48,969
And not sticking to this...

842
00:32:48,993 --> 00:32:50,536
what I realised

843

00:32:50,560 --> 00:32:53,135
again on big thought.

844
00:32:53,742 --> 00:32:55,776
It's probably quite colonial

845
00:32:55,800 --> 00:32:58,683
to be strict with my genre.

846
00:32:58,707 --> 00:32:59,742
[laughter]

847
00:32:59,742 --> 00:33:00,742
-Yeah, and...

848
00:33:00,742 --> 00:33:02,096
-I started to...

849
00:33:02,120 --> 00:33:03,742
to shake that out.

850
00:33:03,742 --> 00:33:05,496
-You certainly did.

851

00:33:05,800 --> 00:33:07,480
[laughter]

852
00:33:07,504 --> 00:33:09,856
And I also love
the chapter threads.

853
00:33:09,880 --> 00:33:11,776
At the end of every
chapter, there's, like,

854
00:33:11,800 --> 00:33:13,125
lovely...

855
00:33:13,149 --> 00:33:16,936
almost like glossaries, but not.

856
00:33:16,960 --> 00:33:19,376
I thought that was a
really beaut-- really...

857
00:33:19,400 --> 00:33:21,742
clever addition

858
00:33:21,742 --> 00:33:22,982

to the book.

859
00:33:23,742 --> 00:33:28,016
-Thank you. And that's testament
to really listening and leaning into

860
00:33:28,040 --> 00:33:30,742
the editing process too.

861
00:33:30,766 --> 00:33:32,509
Because, you know,
those chapter threads

862
00:33:32,533 --> 00:33:36,056
were really eked out
with my copy editor.

863
00:33:36,080 --> 00:33:37,896
So that was a whole
process in itself.

864
00:33:37,920 --> 00:33:40,616
That's not even the same
person that is the editor. So, like,

865

00:33:40,640 --> 00:33:43,176
it's just been, like, that
journey, and being like,

866
00:33:43,200 --> 00:33:45,889
how do we let this land,

867
00:33:45,913 --> 00:33:49,016
like, in people's
hearts and minds

868
00:33:49,040 --> 00:33:51,056
in a way that
doesn't alienate them,

869
00:33:51,080 --> 00:33:53,416
but still feels really,

870
00:33:53,440 --> 00:33:56,218
like, excitingly
like genre-less.

871
00:33:56,242 --> 00:33:58,216
-Yeah, that's great.

872

00:33:59,513 --> 00:34:01,482
Would you do a reading for us?

873
00:34:01,506 --> 00:34:02,656
Give us a little--

874
00:34:02,680 --> 00:34:04,936
-Yeah, I haven't... I've only
ever done one reading before,

875
00:34:04,960 --> 00:34:06,535
so it's my second
and I'm nervous.

876
00:34:06,559 --> 00:34:07,559
[laughs]

877
00:34:07,583 --> 00:34:08,896
-Tell us what

878
00:34:08,920 --> 00:34:10,296
section you're going to read

879
00:34:10,320 --> 00:34:12,962
and why you've chosen

880
00:34:12,986 --> 00:34:14,599
this piece.

881
00:34:14,623 --> 00:34:17,416
-Yeah, I'm going to read
from the Audre Lorde chapter

882
00:34:17,440 --> 00:34:19,742
because we're talking
about writing and

883
00:34:19,742 --> 00:34:23,216
she was a great writer.

884
00:34:23,240 --> 00:34:25,703
And kind of... Like, I say was

885
00:34:25,727 --> 00:34:29,216
carefully because I think
really IS a great writer

886
00:34:29,240 --> 00:34:31,005
because when somebody writes,

887
00:34:31,029 --> 00:34:32,736
their legacy stays

888
00:34:32,760 --> 00:34:35,136
and she continues to inspire us.

889
00:34:39,155 --> 00:34:42,776
Harlem was where Audrey
Geraldine Lorde's parents

890
00:34:42,800 --> 00:34:45,096
came to when they
arrived from the Caribbean.

891
00:34:45,120 --> 00:34:47,256
Her mother was
born in Carriacou,

892
00:34:47,280 --> 00:34:50,856
one of the islands that make up what
we know to be called the Grenadines,

893
00:34:50,880 --> 00:34:52,942
and her father in Barbados.

894
00:34:53,289 --> 00:34:54,976
Her exceptional talent

895
00:34:55,000 --> 00:34:57,742
was obvious from a young age.

896
00:34:57,742 --> 00:35:01,496
She had such precision
in her skill as a wordsmith

897
00:35:01,520 --> 00:35:04,016
that as a child,
she removed the Y

898
00:35:04,040 --> 00:35:05,336
from her first name

899
00:35:05,360 --> 00:35:08,536
to give it more written,
artistic symmetry

900
00:35:08,560 --> 00:35:10,829
when she wrote it in full.

901

00:35:11,195 --> 00:35:13,195
Audre Lorde.

902
00:35:13,742 --> 00:35:15,742
Audre Lorde.

903
00:35:15,742 --> 00:35:17,935
Audre Lorde.

904
00:35:17,959 --> 00:35:20,959
Lyrical and harmonic.

905
00:35:21,742 --> 00:35:23,656
Her choice makes me think

906
00:35:23,680 --> 00:35:26,742
hard about the
power of one's name.

907
00:35:26,742 --> 00:35:29,056
All of the sisters' names,

908
00:35:29,080 --> 00:35:32,115
I love to write down
and say out loud.

909
00:35:32,139 --> 00:35:35,896
What's in the magic of the
letters making up our names

910
00:35:35,920 --> 00:35:39,176
and how do we redefine
what our parents gave us

911
00:35:39,200 --> 00:35:44,075
if we did or do not feel like it
represents our truth somehow?

912
00:35:44,742 --> 00:35:48,056
If I didn't define
myself for myself,

913
00:35:48,080 --> 00:35:51,216
I would be crunched into
other people's fantasies

914
00:35:51,240 --> 00:35:53,742
for me and eaten alive

915
00:35:53,742 --> 00:35:55,132

Audre Lorde,

916
00:35:55,156 --> 00:35:59,742
during a speech at
Harvard University in 1982.

917
00:35:59,742 --> 00:36:02,742
Sister synchronicity.

918
00:36:02,742 --> 00:36:05,456
New wave humility

919
00:36:05,480 --> 00:36:07,742
versus assertiveness.

920
00:36:08,449 --> 00:36:10,496
The writers and thinkers

921
00:36:10,520 --> 00:36:13,363
whom we choose to
open our hearts and minds

922
00:36:13,387 --> 00:36:16,696
to represent an ever
interesting path of discovery,

923
00:36:16,720 --> 00:36:19,742
not just for the work
that they produce,

924
00:36:19,742 --> 00:36:23,376
but for how they
want their own identity

925
00:36:23,400 --> 00:36:26,375
and status to be perceived.

926
00:36:26,399 --> 00:36:29,696
I was really drawn to the
writer Bell Hooks' decision

927
00:36:29,720 --> 00:36:32,096
to drop the
capitalisation of her name

928
00:36:32,120 --> 00:36:33,576
on her book covers,

929
00:36:33,600 --> 00:36:36,616
and then found out

that many feminist writers

930
00:36:36,640 --> 00:36:37,976
in the 1970s

931
00:36:38,000 --> 00:36:40,016
were choosing
to lose the capital

932
00:36:40,040 --> 00:36:43,202
at the time in order to
decentralise themselves

933
00:36:43,226 --> 00:36:45,742
from their theory and work.

934
00:36:45,742 --> 00:36:47,462
It wasn't that the writer

935
00:36:47,486 --> 00:36:48,696
who was important,

936
00:36:48,720 --> 00:36:50,055
more the message.

937
00:36:50,742 --> 00:36:54,376
It was a way of challenging
conventional hierarchy

938
00:36:54,400 --> 00:36:57,742
and opening up
humility as an invention.

939
00:36:57,742 --> 00:36:59,256
Conversely,

940
00:36:59,280 --> 00:37:01,536
I've noticed that Audrey's name

941
00:37:01,560 --> 00:37:05,262
often appears in all
capitals on her book covers,

942
00:37:05,286 --> 00:37:08,742
even in her own biomythography.

943
00:37:08,742 --> 00:37:11,936
She had spent time
building a career in spaces

944
00:37:11,960 --> 00:37:14,496
where Black women
were often ignored,

945
00:37:14,520 --> 00:37:16,742
especially queer ones.

946
00:37:16,742 --> 00:37:20,256
Was the symmetry and
shape of her own name

947
00:37:20,280 --> 00:37:24,096
adaptation so early
in her life, a prophecy

948
00:37:24,120 --> 00:37:27,616
and an exercise in
having to learn resilience

949
00:37:27,640 --> 00:37:28,911
and pride

950
00:37:28,935 --> 00:37:31,096
in her very own written word

951
00:37:31,120 --> 00:37:32,736
in preparation
for the knockbacks

952
00:37:32,760 --> 00:37:34,742
that she would go on to face?

953
00:37:34,742 --> 00:37:37,016
Like spells and wishes

954
00:37:37,040 --> 00:37:38,815
of enduring wisdom,

955
00:37:38,839 --> 00:37:40,856
does capitalised

956
00:37:40,880 --> 00:37:42,416
a printed name

957
00:37:42,440 --> 00:37:44,616
remind us to recognise

958
00:37:44,640 --> 00:37:46,736
the writer's importance?

959
00:37:49,366 --> 00:37:50,485
-That was great.

960
00:37:50,509 --> 00:37:51,742
-Thank you.

961
00:37:51,742 --> 00:37:53,536
Smiling through reading that,

962
00:37:53,560 --> 00:37:56,296
you were really enjoying.
That's lovely to see.

963
00:37:56,320 --> 00:37:57,735
Thank you for that.

964
00:37:59,102 --> 00:38:01,056
We've got a question

965
00:38:01,080 --> 00:38:03,155
from Cicelia

966
00:38:03,179 --> 00:38:04,776

in the chat.

967
00:38:04,800 --> 00:38:08,966
Cicelia is asking, "Gemma, are you
able to shut everything out around you

968
00:38:08,990 --> 00:38:13,782
"u to focus and switch into
writer mode quite easily?"

969
00:38:15,155 --> 00:38:19,142
-I think that's something that I'm
just still always learning, you know?

970
00:38:20,009 --> 00:38:21,963
Like I said, I do
love to go places.

971
00:38:21,987 --> 00:38:24,595
I love to be by the sea to write.

972
00:38:25,129 --> 00:38:27,336
And therefore,

973
00:38:27,360 --> 00:38:29,129

I probably can

974
00:38:29,153 --> 00:38:31,205
shut out the rest of the world.

975
00:38:31,229 --> 00:38:32,875
-Sure.

976
00:38:32,899 --> 00:38:35,376
-But it's not that easy,

977
00:38:35,400 --> 00:38:38,018
especially now that
there are babies.

978
00:38:38,042 --> 00:38:39,266
[laughs]

979
00:38:39,418 --> 00:38:41,873
Can you tell us about
this move back to London

980
00:38:41,897 --> 00:38:43,718
or is it top secret? What's...?

981
00:38:43,742 --> 00:38:45,416
-No, I'm sort of telling people,

982
00:38:45,440 --> 00:38:48,376
but yeah, it's like...

983
00:38:48,400 --> 00:38:50,776
I'm still getting
used to it myself.

984
00:38:50,800 --> 00:38:52,656
So I'm doing a radio show

985
00:38:52,680 --> 00:38:54,642
on Sundays on Virgin Radio

986
00:38:54,666 --> 00:38:56,216
in the afternoons.

987
00:38:56,240 --> 00:38:57,496
Which is really exciting,

988
00:38:57,520 --> 00:38:59,012
because I haven't

done a regular radio

989
00:38:59,036 --> 00:39:01,566
for actually for 10 years, even
though I've made a lot of radio.

990
00:39:01,590 --> 00:39:03,016
Like, having a regular show.

991
00:39:03,040 --> 00:39:05,496
It'll be, like, the first
time in a long time.

992
00:39:05,520 --> 00:39:06,648
So,

993
00:39:06,672 --> 00:39:08,568
I'm trying to get
everyone to listen in,

994
00:39:08,592 --> 00:39:10,736
have a nice time with
me on a Sunday afternoon,

995
00:39:10,760 --> 00:39:14,176

and I'm excited to
move back to the big city,

996
00:39:14,200 --> 00:39:16,256
because I'm gonna
be near family,

997
00:39:16,280 --> 00:39:17,816
like, which will be great.

998
00:39:17,840 --> 00:39:20,496
Like, the cousins can
hang out together,

999
00:39:20,520 --> 00:39:22,616
and my daughter will be
at nursery with my niece.

1000
00:39:22,640 --> 00:39:24,222
And, like, it's good vibes.

1001
00:39:24,246 --> 00:39:26,246
But it's a big move.

1002
00:39:26,270 --> 00:39:28,322

When does the show start?

1003
00:39:28,346 --> 00:39:30,816
So it's kind of already started.

1004
00:39:30,840 --> 00:39:32,576
But in my mind,

1005
00:39:32,600 --> 00:39:35,033
it starts pretty
much this weekend

1006
00:39:35,057 --> 00:39:36,936
because I'll be going in live

1007
00:39:36,960 --> 00:39:39,742
and I would have
moved the family down.

1008
00:39:39,742 --> 00:39:41,296
-Okay, wow. Okay.

1009
00:39:42,453 --> 00:39:43,936
Tatum says,

1010
00:39:43,960 --> 00:39:46,336
"Gemma, thanks for
a fantastic reading.

1011
00:39:46,360 --> 00:39:49,456
"You've mentioned
so many of my heroes.

1012
00:39:49,480 --> 00:39:51,742
"Bell Hooks, Audre Lorde.

1013
00:39:51,742 --> 00:39:53,546
"Can you talk more about

1014
00:39:53,570 --> 00:39:55,855
"how you chose the sisters?"

1015
00:39:58,742 --> 00:40:00,936
-Again, it was a long process

1016
00:40:00,960 --> 00:40:03,296
and I had to define a number.

1017
00:40:03,320 --> 00:40:06,096

So I decided to go with 12.

1018
00:40:06,120 --> 00:40:07,816
And I literally went for that

1019
00:40:07,840 --> 00:40:10,656
because there's
12 months in a year.

1020
00:40:10,680 --> 00:40:12,816
I was like, okay,
there's 12 star signs.

1021
00:40:12,840 --> 00:40:14,056
Here we go. Like,

1022
00:40:14,080 --> 00:40:15,176
let me see.

1023
00:40:15,200 --> 00:40:18,367
Not that everyone, like, is a
different star signer or anything.

1024
00:40:18,391 --> 00:40:20,783
There's actually more

Aquariuses in this book than...

1025
00:40:20,807 --> 00:40:21,896
than not.

1026
00:40:21,920 --> 00:40:24,136
I don't know what astrological
people make of that.

1027
00:40:25,135 --> 00:40:26,387
But yeah,

1028
00:40:26,411 --> 00:40:28,256
I had the number 12

1029
00:40:28,280 --> 00:40:30,269
and then I had a long list.

1030
00:40:30,293 --> 00:40:32,376
And I just sort of waited

1031
00:40:32,400 --> 00:40:34,416
patiently and impatiently to

1032

00:40:34,440 --> 00:40:37,536
see which of them
really spoke to me

1033
00:40:37,560 --> 00:40:39,742
by doing different
bits of research.

1034
00:40:39,742 --> 00:40:40,824
And all of a sudden,

1035
00:40:40,848 --> 00:40:42,816
once it became the
12, they were like

1036
00:40:42,840 --> 00:40:44,256
so...

1037
00:40:44,280 --> 00:40:46,576
in my world and in my mind.

1038
00:40:46,600 --> 00:40:48,816
Like, I would dream about them,

1039
00:40:48,840 --> 00:40:50,336

and it was like, okay,

1040
00:40:50,360 --> 00:40:51,456
there's no turning back.

1041
00:40:51,480 --> 00:40:53,096
I love this group,

1042
00:40:53,120 --> 00:40:54,755
I love the sisterhood.

1043
00:40:55,809 --> 00:40:56,976
-Thank you.

1044
00:40:57,000 --> 00:40:59,136
Are there any other questions?

1045
00:40:59,160 --> 00:41:00,656
Don't be shy.

1046
00:41:02,742 --> 00:41:04,416
I always feel like

1047
00:41:04,440 --> 00:41:08,016

books exist in like
this cultural ecosystem

1048
00:41:08,040 --> 00:41:11,176
and that books
are in conversation

1049
00:41:11,200 --> 00:41:12,816
with different forms

1050
00:41:12,840 --> 00:41:15,742
of culture, music, art

1051
00:41:15,742 --> 00:41:17,742
film. And I wondered,

1052
00:41:17,742 --> 00:41:20,229
if you had to pick

1053
00:41:20,762 --> 00:41:23,182
different form, different...

1054
00:41:23,742 --> 00:41:26,216
things that were part of

1055
00:41:26,240 --> 00:41:28,536
the ecosystem for your book,

1056
00:41:28,560 --> 00:41:30,616
is there a film that
comes to mind,

1057
00:41:30,640 --> 00:41:32,875
or music or...?

1058
00:41:33,569 --> 00:41:34,569
Anything like that.

1059
00:41:34,593 --> 00:41:35,593
-Yeah.

1060
00:41:35,617 --> 00:41:37,336
That's a lovely question

1061
00:41:37,360 --> 00:41:40,416
because I'm always thinking
in different forms too.

1062
00:41:41,573 --> 00:41:43,656

And I made a live piece

1063
00:41:43,680 --> 00:41:46,277
with interdisciplinary artists,

1064
00:41:46,301 --> 00:41:48,296
which is in response
to the book,

1065
00:41:48,320 --> 00:41:50,256
called The Immortal
Sisterhood Live,

1066
00:41:50,280 --> 00:41:53,896
where we would often
do, like, in workshop

1067
00:41:53,920 --> 00:41:55,016
and in devising,

1068
00:41:55,040 --> 00:41:57,696
we would like
listen to Betty Davis

1069
00:41:57,720 --> 00:42:01,256

like for a good amount
of time in a big space.

1070
00:42:01,280 --> 00:42:02,296
And, like,

1071
00:42:02,320 --> 00:42:05,976
let our own, like, original
composition come

1072
00:42:06,000 --> 00:42:08,856
from, like, thinking about

1073
00:42:08,880 --> 00:42:10,496
funk and

1074
00:42:10,520 --> 00:42:13,056
the aesthetic and the sound

1075
00:42:13,080 --> 00:42:14,736
and the vibration. So,

1076
00:42:14,760 --> 00:42:17,422
there's a lot of
songs that come from

1077
00:42:17,446 --> 00:42:20,216
the sisterhood's ecosystem.

1078
00:42:20,240 --> 00:42:22,189
I've actually got a playlist,

1079
00:42:22,213 --> 00:42:23,738
which I'll happily
share with someone.

1080
00:42:23,762 --> 00:42:26,096
If someone messaged me on
Instagram after this or whatever,

1081
00:42:26,120 --> 00:42:27,936
I'd love to send the
playlist, because it's

1082
00:42:27,960 --> 00:42:29,456
very wide-spanning.

1083
00:42:29,480 --> 00:42:32,416
But in terms of film...

1084
00:42:33,575 --> 00:42:35,326
Alma's Rainbow came to mind.

1085
00:42:35,350 --> 00:42:37,176
I don't know if
anybody's seen that.

1086
00:42:37,200 --> 00:42:38,736
-Yes.
-It's a really great classic.

1087
00:42:38,760 --> 00:42:40,736
Yeah, I love that film.

1088
00:42:40,760 --> 00:42:42,416
I only watched it recently

1089
00:42:42,440 --> 00:42:45,162
and I was like,
oh my God! Like...

1090
00:42:45,186 --> 00:42:47,976
The clothes, the outfits

1091

00:42:48,000 --> 00:42:51,322
are so, like, amazing.

1092
00:42:51,346 --> 00:42:54,216
I think, you know,
just like any space

1093
00:42:54,240 --> 00:42:56,669
or time where...

1094
00:42:57,742 --> 00:43:01,536
we are in this kind of
like multiculturalist utopia

1095
00:43:01,560 --> 00:43:03,496
where we get to be ourselves

1096
00:43:03,520 --> 00:43:05,096
and we get to shine

1097
00:43:05,120 --> 00:43:08,575
and we get to have fun
and we get to be romantic.

1098
00:43:08,905 --> 00:43:09,905

-Mmm...

1099
00:43:09,929 --> 00:43:11,816
Which unfortunately, you know,

1100
00:43:11,840 --> 00:43:14,416
isn't in loads of places.

1101
00:43:14,440 --> 00:43:17,856
But when I find them, I...

1102
00:43:17,880 --> 00:43:22,015
It becomes part of my,
like, ecosystem, for sure.

1103
00:43:23,042 --> 00:43:24,616
-Wow. I think...

1104
00:43:24,640 --> 00:43:25,736
Thank you, Gemma.

1105
00:43:25,760 --> 00:43:27,022
I think we've

1106

00:43:27,046 --> 00:43:28,718
come to the end.

1107
00:43:28,742 --> 00:43:30,002
-Yes.

1108
00:43:30,026 --> 00:43:32,026
-That went really quick.

1109
00:43:32,050 --> 00:43:33,360
[laughter]

1110
00:43:33,384 --> 00:43:37,202
That really sped by. I've
got so many more questions.

1111
00:43:37,742 --> 00:43:39,229
Yes, Dee is--

1112
00:43:39,253 --> 00:43:41,656
-Oh, let me-- Let
me get back to Dee.

1113
00:43:41,680 --> 00:43:44,416
So a lot of people

like... Betty Davis,

1114
00:43:44,440 --> 00:43:47,496
and they think it's
"Bette" as in B-E-T-T-E.

1115
00:43:47,520 --> 00:43:49,482
So not Betty, that Betty Davis.

1116
00:43:49,506 --> 00:43:51,235
Betty with a Y.

1117
00:43:51,962 --> 00:43:53,029
Her tunes

1118
00:43:53,053 --> 00:43:54,718
are the ones

1119
00:43:54,742 --> 00:43:56,115
-Okay, okay.

1120
00:43:56,139 --> 00:43:59,016
Yeah, please do share that.

1121

00:43:59,040 --> 00:44:01,742
Yeah, let's DM you
and get that link.

1122
00:44:01,742 --> 00:44:03,195
-Yeah.

1123
00:44:03,219 --> 00:44:04,576
-For the playlist.

1124
00:44:04,600 --> 00:44:07,256
So, yes, I just want to
say thank you, Gemma,

1125
00:44:07,280 --> 00:44:09,856
for... for joining me today.
This has been amazing.

1126
00:44:10,769 --> 00:44:13,736
Everyone, I cannot
recommend this book enough.

1127
00:44:13,760 --> 00:44:16,056
I feel like it's such a tonic.

1128

00:44:16,080 --> 00:44:19,176
It's... In these
crazy, crazy times,

1129
00:44:19,200 --> 00:44:21,576
I've found real comfort

1130
00:44:21,600 --> 00:44:24,936
in picking chapters that

1131
00:44:24,960 --> 00:44:28,376
have spoken to me. So yeah,
you guys should definitely

1132
00:44:28,400 --> 00:44:29,856
check it out.

1133
00:44:30,720 --> 00:44:32,536
I'd like to say thank you to

1134
00:44:32,560 --> 00:44:35,336
Sophia Jackson for moderating

1135
00:44:35,360 --> 00:44:36,896
this event today.

1136
00:44:38,227 --> 00:44:42,616
The SoA's next online event
takes place on Tuesday morning

1137
00:44:42,640 --> 00:44:44,536
with an Industry Insider,

1138
00:44:44,560 --> 00:44:47,136
How to write pantomime,

1139
00:44:47,160 --> 00:44:48,547
which is in conjunction--

1140
00:44:48,571 --> 00:44:50,056
-Woah!
-Yeah.

1141
00:44:50,080 --> 00:44:51,776
Which is in conjunction

1142
00:44:51,800 --> 00:44:54,435
with the SoA Scriptwriters Group.

1143

00:44:54,459 --> 00:44:58,096
For more, head to the
Society of Authors website

1144
00:44:58,120 --> 00:45:00,135
and go to their events page.

1145
00:45:01,382 --> 00:45:04,776
Please also do keep an eye
on their events programme.

1146
00:45:04,800 --> 00:45:06,829
The...

1147
00:45:07,829 --> 00:45:10,926
This SoA event
has been free for all,

1148
00:45:10,950 --> 00:45:15,016
but if you've got a spare little
bit of change knocking around,

1149
00:45:15,040 --> 00:45:17,256
please do consider donating

1150

00:45:17,280 --> 00:45:19,376
to their...

1151
00:45:19,400 --> 00:45:21,016
Access Fund.

1152
00:45:21,040 --> 00:45:25,222
They'd suggest a
minimum donation of £5.

1153
00:45:25,246 --> 00:45:29,297
You can help the Society of
Authors Access Fund by making a...

1154
00:45:29,321 --> 00:45:31,736
a purchase on their
virtual book store

1155
00:45:31,760 --> 00:45:33,256
on Bookshop.org,

1156
00:45:33,280 --> 00:45:35,095
where you can find...

1157
00:45:35,742 --> 00:45:38,976

this book and also

1158
00:45:39,000 --> 00:45:43,536
other books by writers taking
part in the SoA's events programme.

1159
00:45:43,560 --> 00:45:45,352
So just another big
thank you, Gemma.

1160
00:45:45,376 --> 00:45:47,816
This has been wonderful.
Thank you so much.

1161
00:45:47,840 --> 00:45:50,656
And yeah, if you enjoyed it,

1162
00:45:50,680 --> 00:45:53,096
please let the SoA know

1163
00:45:53,120 --> 00:45:55,176
and tag us on

1164
00:45:55,200 --> 00:45:57,975
#SoAatHome.

1165
00:45:59,742 --> 00:46:02,093
-Thank you so much, Micallar, honestly.
-Pleasure.

1166
00:46:02,117 --> 00:46:06,056
-Like, you sharing how you found
the book and somebody left it for you,

1167
00:46:06,080 --> 00:46:07,776
I just absolutely...

1168
00:46:07,800 --> 00:46:09,416
-Isn't that wild?
-I love that so much.

1169
00:46:09,440 --> 00:46:11,456
-It's so cool. I love it.

1170
00:46:11,480 --> 00:46:12,936
It's really, really meant to be,

1171
00:46:12,960 --> 00:46:14,318
and you've been a lovely host.

1172
00:46:14,342 --> 00:46:15,896
Your questions
have been gorgeous,

1173
00:46:15,920 --> 00:46:17,936
and thank you to
everybody that's come.

1174
00:46:17,960 --> 00:46:19,976
Do spread the word because,

1175
00:46:20,000 --> 00:46:22,496
you know, a book
that's quite weird

1176
00:46:22,520 --> 00:46:25,336
is not easily placed
in a bookshop, so,

1177
00:46:25,360 --> 00:46:29,296
you know, it relies on
us telling one another

1178
00:46:29,320 --> 00:46:31,065
if it speaks to you, you know.

1179

00:46:31,089 --> 00:46:32,296

-It really does.

1180

00:46:32,320 --> 00:46:34,336

I thoroughly recommend.

1181

00:46:34,360 --> 00:46:36,742

Thank you so much, Gemma.

1182

00:46:36,742 --> 00:46:37,742

Bye, everyone

1183

00:46:37,742 --> 00:46:40,602

-Thank you. Bye,

have a good day.!

1184

00:46:40,626 --> 00:46:42,626

-See ya.