

#SoAatHome | How I write – in conversation with Lorraine Wilson
Thursday 20 March 2025



1

00:00:01,000--> 00:00:03,748

Hello, welcome

everyone to today's event,

2

00:00:03,772--> 00:00:09,000

How I Write- In conversation

with the marvellous Lorraine Wilson.

3

00:00:09,000--> 00:00:10,548

I'm Penny Batchelor

4

00:00:10,572--> 00:00:13,028

and I'm the author of

three psychological thrillers

5

00:00:13,052--> 00:00:15,000

published by Embla Books:

6

00:00:15,000--> 00:00:20,188

My Perfect Sister, Her New

Best Friend, The Reunion Party,

7

00:00:20,212--> 00:00:24,228

and my fourth will be
published on May 5th

8

00:00:24,252--> 00:00:27,000

and that is The Woman Next Door.

9

00:00:27,000--> 00:00:33,000

I'm a co-founder and judge of the
ADCI Literary Prize for Adult Fiction

10

00:00:33,000--> 00:00:34,668

by a disabled or
chronically ill novelist,

11

00:00:34,692--> 00:00:37,676

which is why I'm here
today chatting to Lorraine.

12

00:00:37,700--> 00:00:40,228

I'm a disability campaigner,
a columnist for The Bookseller,

13

00:00:40,252--> 00:00:43,000

and I speak regularly
at literary festivals.

14

00:00:43,000--> 00:00:51,000

And this event is part of our #SoAatHome
Spring/Summer 2025 programme.

15

00:00:51,000--> 00:00:56,000

This SoA at Home event is free to
SOA members, but if you can afford to,

16

00:00:56,000--> 00:01:00,548

please consider donating to the
Society of Authors Access Fund,

17

00:01:00,572--> 00:01:06,000

which provides grants to
authors so that travel, substance--

18

00:01:06,000--> 00:01:07,188

Subsistence, sorry!

19

00:01:07,212--> 00:01:10,028

Childcare costs and access needs

20

00:01:10,052--> 00:01:13,108

needn't be barriers to authors

21

00:01:13,132--> 00:01:17,000

taking part in events,

residences and retreats.

22

00:01:17,000--> 00:01:22,000

We suggest a minimum

donation of £5 if you're able to.

23

00:01:22,000--> 00:01:24,828

You can help the Society

of Authors Access Fund

24

00:01:24,852--> 00:01:29,000

by making a purchase

on our virtual bookstore

25

00:01:29,000--> 00:01:32,868

on bookshop.org where you can
find books by writers taking part

26

00:01:32,892--> 00:01:35,908

in the SoA at Home programme.

27

00:01:35,932--> 00:01:38,708

And this session,
well, that's 45 minutes,

28

00:01:38,732--> 00:01:43,108

including a 10 to 15
minute Q&A at the end.

29

00:01:43,132--> 00:01:44,788

I'm sure you've got
lots of questions,

30

00:01:44,812--> 00:01:49,000

so we're really looking forward
to finding out what they are.

31

00:01:49,000--> 00:01:50,948

With regards to captions,

32

00:01:50,972--> 00:01:55,428

please do turn on the
closed captions at the bottom

33

00:01:55,452--> 00:01:57,788

if you would
like live subtitles.

34

00:01:57,812--> 00:02:03,308

The recording of this event will be
available on the SoA's website for members,

35

00:02:03,332--> 00:02:06,628

which can be accessed by
logging into the members area

36

00:02:06,652--> 00:02:10,000

and going to our resources page.

37

00:02:10,000--> 00:02:17,000

And for non-members, this will be
available via the SoA's Vimeo channel.

38

00:02:17,000--> 00:02:18,348

If you have any questions,

39

00:02:18,372--> 00:02:20,708

please do post
them in the Q&A box.

40

00:02:20,732--> 00:02:24,000

You can post them
anonymously if you prefer,

41

00:02:24,000--> 00:02:27,108

but do post your general
comments in the chat box.

42

00:02:27,132--> 00:02:32,228

Right now, all that is
over. All the introduction.

43

00:02:32,252--> 00:02:35,908

Now I get to introduce
you to today's guest,

44

00:02:35,932--> 00:02:37,548

Lorraine Wilson.

45

00:02:37,572--> 00:02:39,748

She's a conservation scientist

46

00:02:39,772--> 00:02:41,228

and third-culture Scot.

47

00:02:41,252--> 00:02:43,428

And Lorraine lives by the sea,

48

00:02:43,452--> 00:02:49,000

writing speculative fiction influenced

by folklore and the wilderness.

49

00:02:49,000--> 00:02:51,868

She is the multi-winning
author of several books,

50

00:02:51,892--> 00:02:55,708

most recently the climate
fiction novel, Mother Sea,

51

00:02:55,732--> 00:02:59,748

and Icelandic ghost
story, The Last to Drown.

52

00:02:59,772--> 00:03:03,748

And it's Mother Sea that won
the ADCI Literary Prize last year,

53

00:03:03,772--> 00:03:07,000

and I was one of the
judges and I was blown away

54

00:03:07,000--> 00:03:10,628

by... I thought it hit
that that sweet spot

55

00:03:10,652--> 00:03:14,748

of literary fiction and
being a real page turner.

56

00:03:14,772--> 00:03:17,068

So I would definitely
recommend everybody,

57

00:03:17,092--> 00:03:21,000

if you haven't already,
to give it a read.

58

00:03:21,000--> 00:03:22,508

So, welcome, Lorraine.

59

00:03:22,532--> 00:03:25,000

third-culture Scot,
what does that mean?

60

00:03:25,000--> 00:03:27,348

-Yeah, it just means--

It's a wonderful phrase

61

00:03:27,372--> 00:03:29,808

that I was introduced to a

few years ago and it's... It's...

62

00:03:29,832--> 00:03:33,668

It means you've grown up in a different
culture to your parents, basically.

63

00:03:33,692--> 00:03:36,428

So it kind of covers

people who are immigrants,

64

00:03:36,452--> 00:03:38,908

who are diasporic,

who are mixed race,

65

00:03:38,932--> 00:03:41,000

who are whatever and it kind of

66

00:03:41,000--> 00:03:43,068

gets away from
like the racial thing

67

00:03:43,092--> 00:03:46,228

to just encapsulating that
sense of slight dislocation

68

00:03:46,252--> 00:03:48,068

that you might have
in your family tree.

69

00:03:48,092--> 00:03:50,788

And both my parents
are immigrants to the UK

70

00:03:50,812--> 00:03:53,628

and all four of my grandparents
migrated somewhere

71

00:03:53,652--> 00:03:57,000

in some direction or
another across the globe.

72

00:03:57,000--> 00:04:02,000

So, I just feel like third-culture
Scot just kind of sums me up.

73

00:04:02,000--> 00:04:04,988

-And so whereabouts in
Scotland are you now?

74

00:04:05,012--> 00:04:10,000

And how did you end up there
from the culture where you grew up?

75

00:04:10,000--> 00:04:12,068

-So I'm on the East Coast.

76

00:04:12,092--> 00:04:16,468

I'm in Fife in Scotland,
just up the road from the sea

77

00:04:16,492--> 00:04:19,988

which is where I did my...

78

00:04:20,012--> 00:04:22,628

I came here to St

Andrews for my PhD.

79

00:04:22,652--> 00:04:27,000

I did my first degree up in Aberdeen

and then came here for my PhD,

80

00:04:27,000--> 00:04:30,308

and kind of just fell in

love with this whole area.

81

00:04:30,332--> 00:04:34,000

I grew up in Wiltshire

in Southwest England

82

00:04:34,000--> 00:04:35,708

which is... It's...

83

00:04:35,732--> 00:04:39,828

It's nice, it's a lovely area
to grow up in and I love Bath

84

00:04:39,852--> 00:04:42,228

and that kind
of-- That sort of--

85

00:04:42,252--> 00:04:45,708

The vibe of Wiltshire in
the Southwest of England,

86

00:04:45,732--> 00:04:48,108

but I don't know. I just...

87

00:04:48,132--> 00:04:51,000

The moment I moved to
Scotland, I was like, no, this is...

88

00:04:51,000--> 00:04:52,988

This is it. This is
where I belong.

89

00:04:53,012--> 00:04:55,548

And I've never
looked back, really.

90

00:04:55,572--> 00:05:01,828

I just... I really enjoy it here and it's a
lovely place to have brought up a child.

91

00:05:01,852--> 00:05:04,428

And yeah, it's a...

92

00:05:04,452--> 00:05:08,000

Everybody should move to Scotland, although
you shouldn't because then it would be full,

93

00:05:08,000--> 00:05:10,000

but, you know,
come for holidays.

94

00:05:10,000--> 00:05:15,000

-How much influence does your
environment have on your writing?

95

00:05:15,000--> 00:05:17,948

-Well, living by
the sea, obviously,

96

00:05:17,972--> 00:05:20,948

might have slightly
influenced this particular book.

97

00:05:20,972--> 00:05:23,588

I mean, I think...

98

00:05:23,612--> 00:05:29,708

It does... The Scottish folklore and I
think I was brought up on folklore reading.

99

00:05:29,732--> 00:05:33,828

You know, ghost stories and folkloric
kind of legends from when I was little.

100

00:05:33,852--> 00:05:36,668

And I think one of the things

that draws me to Scotland

101

00:05:36,692--> 00:05:39,000

is that the folklore is
still so alive here still.

102

00:05:39,000--> 00:05:42,628

And there's a real
sense of the folklore

103

00:05:42,652--> 00:05:46,628

still being very much intertwined with
how Scotland sees itself as a country,

104

00:05:46,652--> 00:05:48,308

and I just, I really love that.

105

00:05:48,332--> 00:05:51,508

There's so much kind
of depth and darkness

106

00:05:51,532--> 00:05:55,828

and just intrigue and interest

107

00:05:55,852--> 00:05:58,988

in how those stories

have shaped the culture

108

00:05:59,012--> 00:06:00,388

and shaped the country

109

00:06:00,412--> 00:06:02,788

and how they intersect

with the landscape

110

00:06:02,812--> 00:06:05,000

and the seascape as well.

111

00:06:05,000--> 00:06:08,908

So I think that's a

really big thing for me

112

00:06:08,932--> 00:06:10,668

of why I love Scotland so much

113

00:06:10,692--> 00:06:15,000

because it's such a big part of my
writing and how I approach storytelling.

114

00:06:15,000--> 00:06:20,148

Yeah, and Scotland has a
wonderful writing community as well.

115

00:06:20,172--> 00:06:24,388

It's always been very strong
in terms of writing, creative arts,

116

00:06:24,412--> 00:06:28,268

but it has, away from the sort
of publishing hub of London,

117

00:06:28,292--> 00:06:32,000

it has a really vibrant
publishing and writing community

118

00:06:32,000--> 00:06:35,428

which is wonderful to be a part of
and I feel very lucky to have that.

119

00:06:35,452--> 00:06:40,000

You know, those kinds of
authors in my bubble up here.

120

00:06:40,000--> 00:06:43,828

-And you were saying that how
much you like folklore and by the sea.

121

00:06:43,852--> 00:06:47,308

That-- Those are very
strong themes in Mother Sea.

122

00:06:47,332--> 00:06:50,481

Would you like to give people
just a very quick plug of your book?

123

00:06:50,505--> 00:06:53,508

The overview of what to expect?

124

00:06:53,532--> 00:06:56,228

-Yes, I will even

show you the cover,

125

00:06:56,252--> 00:06:58,388

which might be slightly
reversed, I don't know.

126

00:06:58,412--> 00:07:02,588

So Mother Sea is a
contemporary novel.

127

00:07:02,612--> 00:07:06,000

It's set on a fictitious
island in the Indian Ocean

128

00:07:06,000--> 00:07:09,748

that is being hit by
two crises at once.

129

00:07:09,772--> 00:07:14,788

The rising sea levels influencing
the viability of the community there

130

00:07:14,812--> 00:07:20,388

and also a neonatal tetanus epidemic
which is killing the infants on the island,

131

00:07:20,412--> 00:07:22,748

which is actually
something that I took from...

132

00:07:22,772--> 00:07:27,000

I was inspired by the history of St
Kilda off the west coast of Scotland

133

00:07:27,000--> 00:07:32,588

which also had... In the run-up to the
islanders having to abandon St Kilda,

134

00:07:32,612--> 00:07:36,068

they were impacted by a
neonatal tetanus epidemic as well

135

00:07:36,092--> 00:07:40,428

and they also went through
a kind of deepening fervour

136

00:07:40,452--> 00:07:42,108

in their Christianity
and their religion,

137

00:07:42,132--> 00:07:44,748

and a hostility to outsiders,

138

00:07:44,772--> 00:07:48,388

which was really the root
of this book in Mother Sea,

139

00:07:48,412--> 00:07:50,000

because in Mother Sea,

140

00:07:50,000--> 00:07:53,908

my main character,
Sisi, is the island scientist

141

00:07:53,932--> 00:07:57,908

and she finds herself
widowed and pregnant,

142

00:07:57,932--> 00:08:04,908

and torn between her the deepening
religious fervour of her community

143

00:08:04,932--> 00:08:07,308

and her own scientific beliefs

144

00:08:07,332--> 00:08:10,748

trying to find a
way through that

145

00:08:10,772--> 00:08:15,000

to protect both her
unborn child and her home.

146

00:08:15,000--> 00:08:19,748

Which is... It very much came
from both the history of St Kilda

147

00:08:19,772--> 00:08:22,128

and the events that led up to
the abandonment of St Kilda,

148

00:08:22,152--> 00:08:25,348

and also my knowledge
as a climate scientist

149

00:08:25,372--> 00:08:31,000

of the challenges that are facing a lot
of low-lying nations around the world.

150

00:08:31,000--> 00:08:32,668

And in the face
of climate change

151

00:08:32,692--> 00:08:35,108

and how they are trying to
mitigate against climate change

152

00:08:35,132--> 00:08:40,000

and provide their own communities
with a sense of future within their homes.

153

00:08:40,000--> 00:08:42,508

So yeah, that was
where it came from.

154

00:08:42,532--> 00:08:47,308

And, for me, it's very
much about motherhood

155

00:08:47,332--> 00:08:51,000

and about that tension between
traditional knowledge and Western science.

156

00:08:51,000--> 00:08:55,308

And about kind of post-colonialism and
climate change and how they intersect.

157

00:08:55,332--> 00:08:56,828

And it was a really...

158

00:08:56,852--> 00:08:59,508

It was a really important

book for me to write.

159

00:08:59,532--> 00:09:01,988

It's something that matters a
lot to me, all of those themes.

160

00:09:02,012--> 00:09:03,788

So I'm really glad
I got it out there

161

00:09:03,812--> 00:09:08,000

and that that story has
hopefully resonated with readers.

162

00:09:08,000--> 00:09:12,588

-I think that's probably a good time for you
to do your short reading, if that's okay?

163

00:09:12,612--> 00:09:16,000

And then I'll get on to all the
questions about how you write.

164

00:09:16,000--> 00:09:17,268

-Cool, that sounds good.

165

00:09:17,292--> 00:09:20,948

So I've introduced my main
character, Sisi, very briefly.

166

00:09:20,972--> 00:09:23,668

And she-- I'm going to
read to you a little scene

167

00:09:23,692--> 00:09:27,748

where Sisi is sitting with
her best friend, Manon,

168

00:09:27,772--> 00:09:29,668

who is also heavily pregnant.

169

00:09:29,692--> 00:09:33,828

And they're talking just
after the arrival on the island

170

00:09:33,852--> 00:09:35,428

of some Westerner doctors

171

00:09:35,452--> 00:09:39,428

who are seeking to help address
the neonatal tetanus epidemic.

172

00:09:39,452--> 00:09:42,228

But the communities' leaders,

173

00:09:42,252--> 00:09:46,868

the (inaudible) and the mothers are
hostile to the intrusion of these outsiders

174

00:09:46,892--> 00:09:49,548

who are seen as
a threat, basically.

175

00:09:49,572--> 00:09:53,908

And this is Sisi and
Manon sitting in the evening

176

00:09:53,932--> 00:09:57,000

outside Sisi's
house eating dinner.

177

00:09:57,000--> 00:09:59,588

'Manon', Sisi said.

178

00:09:59,612--> 00:10:02,148

Voices were audible
from other houses

179

00:10:02,172--> 00:10:07,000

but their little circle of light was a
small private star in the wide night.

180

00:10:07,000--> 00:10:08,000

'Yes?'

181

00:10:08,024--> 00:10:10,388

Manon was toying
with the last of her food,

182

00:10:10,412--> 00:10:13,588

breaking the chicken into
smaller pieces with her fork.

183

00:10:13,612--> 00:10:18,000

Full but not full,
tired but not sleepy.

184

00:10:18,000--> 00:10:20,628

'I was thinking of going
to the doctors', Sisi said.

185

00:10:20,652--> 00:10:25,000

'But the (inaudible) say
no, Sisi, you must not.'

186

00:10:25,000--> 00:10:29,000

Sisi spread her hands on the
mat in front of her, thumbs touching.

187

00:10:29,000--> 00:10:30,468

'And if the doctors can help?'

188

00:10:30,492--> 00:10:34,788

'This time, yes, Manon,
if they can help this time.'

189

00:10:34,812--> 00:10:37,548

She looked up from her
knuckles to her friend.

190

00:10:37,572--> 00:10:40,000

'Would that not
be worth anything?'

191

00:10:40,000--> 00:10:42,628

'And if the doctors cannot
help but only interfere,

192

00:10:42,652--> 00:10:46,000

Nuru says that they
cannot be trusted.'

193

00:10:46,000--> 00:10:50,000

'I think they can help. The

(inaudible) are not always right, Manon.'

194

00:10:50,000--> 00:10:52,628

Manon did not answer,
one hand on her belly,

195

00:10:52,652--> 00:10:56,000

and for once no
laughter at all in her face.

196

00:10:56,000--> 00:10:59,428

Her mind, Sisi knew,
drifting up the red cliffs

197

00:10:59,452--> 00:11:02,348

to a tiny shroud on a
bed of grasses and rock,

198

00:11:02,372--> 00:11:05,428

the imprint of heartbreak
on every part of her soul.

199

00:11:05,452--> 00:11:10,000

And Sisi would honestly do
anything to spare Manon that again.

200

00:11:10,000--> 00:11:13,588

She would give her whole
heart for Manon to wake ten days

201

00:11:13,612--> 00:11:17,000

after her child was
born and hear it crying.

202

00:11:17,000--> 00:11:18,628

What an exquisite thing it was,

203

00:11:18,652--> 00:11:20,748

a child's cry.

204

00:11:20,772--> 00:11:23,000

'Come with me', she said.

205

00:11:23,000--> 00:11:26,788

Probably Sisi could bully
Manon into anything if she chose.

206

00:11:26,812--> 00:11:31,000

And she thought this
was worth bullying for.

207

00:11:31,000--> 00:11:33,108

'But the mothers
agree', Sisi interrupted.

208

00:11:33,132--> 00:11:36,828

'With the (inaudible), yes, I
know, but it is not enough Manon.

209

00:11:36,852--> 00:11:39,748

We have carried this
thing for nearly 10 years

210

00:11:39,772--> 00:11:42,000

and nothing we
have done is enough.

211

00:11:42,000--> 00:11:44,628

Now the sea brings
us a new thing to try,

212

00:11:44,652--> 00:11:48,000

should we not think
about it at least?'

213

00:11:48,000--> 00:11:49,828

'Sisi...!', Manon hesitated.

214

00:11:49,852--> 00:11:51,788

'They failed us before

215

00:11:51,812--> 00:11:54,428

and they are outsiders.'

216

00:11:54,452--> 00:12:00,000

The word encapsulating so much
more than just the miles of water.

217

00:12:00,000--> 00:12:02,348

'So were our ancestors
once', Cece said,

218

00:12:02,372--> 00:12:06,000

smiling a little to try to
soften her desperation.

219

00:12:06,000--> 00:12:10,068

'Why are we so distrustful of people
who we lived alongside in high school?

220

00:12:10,092--> 00:12:12,000

It makes no sense.'

221

00:12:12,000--> 00:12:13,788

'This is different.

222

00:12:13,812--> 00:12:15,948

Manon, I do not care if
they come from the moon

223

00:12:15,972--> 00:12:19,000

if they can help you.'

224

00:12:19,000--> 00:12:20,308

'And you also', Manon said.

225

00:12:20,332--> 00:12:26,000

Looking down, Sisi failed to see her
flesh grown and fecund the way Manon's was.

226

00:12:26,000--> 00:12:28,988

Failing to see the life within
her womb as anything other

227

00:12:29,012--> 00:12:34,000

than the vestiges of a marriage
that had been a firmly closed door.

228

00:12:34,000--> 00:12:36,628

This thing nestling in the
cup of her bones like treasure

229

00:12:36,652--> 00:12:41,000

and yet she didn't treasure
it even though she ought.

230

00:12:41,000--> 00:12:42,868

'This is not for
me'. She said, 'it is'.

231

00:12:42,892--> 00:12:45,028

'Manon, you let
yourself love them.

232

00:12:45,052--> 00:12:47,228

So let yourself
fight for them, also.'

233

00:12:47,252--> 00:12:50,000

'You are being cruel.'

234

00:12:50,000--> 00:12:51,108

It was true.

235

00:12:51,132--> 00:12:53,908

Sisi laid her palms
skyward on her knees.

236

00:12:53,932--> 00:12:57,108

'I only want us to fight
for the things we need,

237

00:12:57,132--> 00:13:00,000

for answers and our
children and our home.

238

00:13:00,000--> 00:13:01,868

Mother Sea accepted
us as her children

239

00:13:01,892--> 00:13:03,348

because we fought for ourselves,

240

00:13:03,372--> 00:13:07,000

so how could she begrudge
us doing the same now?'

241

00:13:07,000--> 00:13:08,228

A small smile.

242

00:13:08,252--> 00:13:09,668

'Have you said this to Nuru?'

243

00:13:09,692--> 00:13:11,188

'Yes.'

244

00:13:11,212--> 00:13:13,000

'And what did they say?'

245

00:13:13,000--> 00:13:16,028

Cece could have prevaricated,
but Manon would know.

246

00:13:16,052--> 00:13:19,000

'They said I lack faith.'

247

00:13:19,000--> 00:13:23,000

That earned a huff of laughter, a

passing smile as beautiful as the stars.

248

00:13:23,000--> 00:13:26,188

'You do', Manon said

without condemnation.

249

00:13:26,212--> 00:13:31,000

'The you that is a scientist

deconstructs our stories like algebra.'

250

00:13:31,000--> 00:13:32,108

Was that it?

251

00:13:32,132--> 00:13:34,908

She, two distinct

people in one flesh?

252

00:13:34,932--> 00:13:37,068

Not one complex person,

253

00:13:37,092--> 00:13:40,068

but instead one

perfect islander content

254

00:13:40,092--> 00:13:43,988

and one wilfully separate,
tainted by expertise.

255

00:13:44,012--> 00:13:51,000

'The scientist in me knows the doctors
are our best chance', she said eventually.

256

00:13:51,000--> 00:13:55,000

'The islander believes that Mother Sea
wishes us to fight for ourselves again.

257

00:13:55,000--> 00:13:57,308

I will go tomorrow.
Will you come?'

258

00:13:57,332--> 00:14:03,000

'Sisi...', pleading or
remonstration or both.

259

00:14:03,000--> 00:14:04,388

'Please', she said.

260

00:14:04,412--> 00:14:06,668

The night carried

on around them.

261

00:14:06,692--> 00:14:11,828

Bats flying in or away, the sea reaching

high tide as close as a second skin

262

00:14:11,852--> 00:14:14,268

breathing longer

than their own breaths.

263

00:14:14,292--> 00:14:16,508

It was almost cold now.

264

00:14:16,532--> 00:14:20,000

The warm air beneath the trees

slipped away towards the stars.

265

00:14:20,000--> 00:14:22,908

The shadows smelling
of iodine and mystery.

266

00:14:22,932--> 00:14:25,000

'Manon, please.'

267

00:14:25,000--> 00:14:28,068

'Alors', Manon said
after the longest time,

268

00:14:28,092--> 00:14:31,000

'Yes, I will.'

269

00:14:31,000--> 00:14:33,668

And Sisi's relief was so
strong she could taste it.

270

00:14:33,692--> 00:14:37,000

There you go.
We'll leave it there.

271

00:14:37,000--> 00:14:39,628

-Thank you. Very,
very powerful writing.

272

00:14:39,652--> 00:14:42,348

And we can see
why it won the prize.

273

00:14:42,372--> 00:14:45,000

What did winning mean to you?

274

00:14:45,000--> 00:14:46,708

-Oh, gosh...

275

00:14:46,732--> 00:14:50,508

It was an incredible moment.

276

00:14:50,532--> 00:14:53,028

It was... I think
for two reasons.

277

00:14:53,052--> 00:14:57,348

I mean, it's always wonderful to
get awards, short-listings or wins,

278

00:14:57,372--> 00:15:00,376

just to simply know that your
book has resonated with someone.

279

00:15:00,400--> 00:15:01,948

Because that's
why we write, right?

280

00:15:01,972--> 00:15:03,908

We write to try and
connect with somebody else.

281

00:15:03,932--> 00:15:06,308

And if you get any kind
of award recognition,

282

00:15:06,332--> 00:15:09,028

it's proof positive that
you've managed to do that.

283

00:15:09,052--> 00:15:13,148

So from that level, it
was just incredibly moving

284

00:15:13,172--> 00:15:15,468

to know that this book,
which was so important to me,

285

00:15:15,492--> 00:15:18,000

was striking a chord
with other people.

286

00:15:18,000--> 00:15:21,268

But also, with the
ADCI Prize in particular,

287

00:15:21,292--> 00:15:22,668

it was just...

288

00:15:22,692--> 00:15:26,668

I'm so grateful for the work
people like you yourself, Penny,

289

00:15:26,692--> 00:15:28,748

have done to
build these these...

290

00:15:28,772--> 00:15:34,188

The prize and just other
parts of the community.

291

00:15:34,212--> 00:15:40,000

Like the... the campaign to make events
hybrid and stuff like that, and it's...

292

00:15:40,000--> 00:15:45,468

They have been such
important points in our community

293

00:15:45,492--> 00:15:48,868

as a-- the Authors with
Disabilities and Chronic Illnesses.

294

00:15:48,892--> 00:15:50,628

So I'm so proud--

295

00:15:50,652--> 00:15:54,308

Proud is the wrong word, but I'm so
proud of the work you people have done

296

00:15:54,332--> 00:15:57,000

and I'm so grateful to be
a part of that community.

297

00:15:57,000--> 00:15:59,988

And so to win the
prize was just, kind of,

298

00:16:00,012--> 00:16:04,468

just to be a part of that
community in such a concrete way

299

00:16:04,492--> 00:16:10,748

and feel like I am part of
this wave of raising our voices

300

00:16:10,772--> 00:16:14,828

and saying that, you know, look,
these stories coming from this community

301

00:16:14,852--> 00:16:17,508

are resonant and
important and powerful.

302

00:16:17,532--> 00:16:19,908

And, actually, they're
not just for us either.

303

00:16:19,932--> 00:16:23,028

They're for anybody, whether
they are disabled or not.

304

00:16:23,052--> 00:16:26,948

You know these stories
matter and they have a richness

305

00:16:26,972--> 00:16:31,000

that isn't just about the
disability of the author.

306

00:16:31,000--> 00:16:35,148

And I think it's a real testament
to the work you've done

307

00:16:35,172--> 00:16:38,868

and to the stories coming
out of this community as well

308

00:16:38,892--> 00:16:42,948

that this prize is getting
the kind of recognition it has.

309

00:16:42,972--> 00:16:48,000

And, yeah, it's just a real it's a
real honour to be a part of that.

310

00:16:48,000--> 00:16:51,588

And to have that, you know, my agent
loves being able to go to publishers

311

00:16:51,612--> 00:16:55,828

and sort of go, 'she's
won a prize. Ta-da!'

312

00:16:55,852--> 00:16:59,108

-And I'll just add that in July,

313

00:16:59,132--> 00:17:03,508

we will know who the winners
of this year's prize will be.

314

00:17:03,532--> 00:17:05,668

So I would just say-- What
would you say to anybody

315

00:17:05,692--> 00:17:09,000

thinking of submitting?

316

00:17:09,000--> 00:17:10,468

-Oh my gosh, do it.

317

00:17:10,492--> 00:17:12,268

I think do it for two reasons.

318

00:17:12,292--> 00:17:13,548

Do it for the community

319

00:17:13,572--> 00:17:17,068

because these prizes only work
as well as they are supported.

320

00:17:17,092--> 00:17:19,028

You know, so do it because

321

00:17:19,052--> 00:17:23,348

you are helping to uplift this
community and this prize by entering,

322

00:17:23,372--> 00:17:26,000

but do it for yourself
because it's...

323

00:17:26,000--> 00:17:28,228

Whether you get shortlisted
or whether you don't,

324

00:17:28,252--> 00:17:31,748

you have still shown

faith in your own writing

325

00:17:31,772--> 00:17:33,308

by putting your story forward.

326

00:17:33,332--> 00:17:36,508

You've said, you know, my story

matters and my voice matters.

327

00:17:36,532--> 00:17:39,668

And that's a win.

328

00:17:39,692--> 00:17:42,308

Just, you know, having the

faith in yourself to say that.

329

00:17:42,332--> 00:17:44,988

And if you get listed

then that's amazing

330

00:17:45,012--> 00:17:48,708

and it's a fantastic thing to boost to
your career and to your confidence.

331

00:17:48,732--> 00:17:52,948

But if you don't get listed, you've
still shown that faith in yourself

332

00:17:52,972--> 00:17:57,000

and shown that faith in your
community by being part of this prize.

333

00:17:57,000--> 00:18:01,228

And I would also say don't be
shy about saying to your publisher,

334

00:18:01,252--> 00:18:03,588

'hey, submit me for
this thing, would you?'

335

00:18:03,612--> 00:18:07,988

Because publishers... I mean, they
do try and submit people for awards,

336

00:18:08,012--> 00:18:10,468

but they're also only human
and they forget deadlines,

337

00:18:10,492--> 00:18:12,668

and they... You know,
things slip under their radar.

338

00:18:12,692--> 00:18:15,308

So don't be shy about
sending a quick email going,

339

00:18:15,332--> 00:18:17,948

'hey, this deadline's
coming up for the ADCI Prize.

340

00:18:17,972--> 00:18:21,000

Have you sent my book in
and could you if you haven't?'

341

00:18:21,000--> 00:18:23,668

And they also,
particularly for awards

342

00:18:23,692--> 00:18:25,428

that are for
marginalised identities,

343

00:18:25,452--> 00:18:28,308

they might not be sure
whether you want to be submitted

344

00:18:28,332--> 00:18:31,568

because some people are more willing to
be open about their identity than others,

345

00:18:31,592--> 00:18:34,000

which is absolutely valid either way.

346

00:18:34,000--> 00:18:37,028

So they might, unless you've
had those conversations with them,

347

00:18:37,052--> 00:18:38,508

they might not want to presume.

348

00:18:38,532--> 00:18:41,308

So say, you know, by putting
yourself forward and say,

349

00:18:41,332--> 00:18:43,548

'hey, can you send me in
for that? Put me in for that.'

350

00:18:43,572--> 00:18:46,668

That allows them to... You
know, it gives them the permission

351

00:18:46,692--> 00:18:48,708

that they perhaps didn't
know they had to do that.

352

00:18:48,732--> 00:18:51,908

So never be shy about

checking in with your publisher

353

00:18:51,932--> 00:18:54,000

and putting yourself
forward for stuff.

354

00:18:54,000--> 00:18:55,828

-That's a very good
point about identity

355

00:18:55,852--> 00:19:01,588

and also being confident in your identity
as a disabled or chronically ill person.

356

00:19:01,612--> 00:19:06,976

We're a very supportive group
within the Society of Authors.

357

00:19:07,000--> 00:19:08,000

-Yeah.

358

00:19:08,000--> 00:19:12,748

-How does your condition
affect your writing?

359

00:19:12,772--> 00:19:15,068

This is your-- Lovely
office it looks like you're in.

360

00:19:15,092--> 00:19:17,388

Is that your normal
writing space?

361

00:19:17,412--> 00:19:19,000

What's your writing routine?

362

00:19:19,000--> 00:19:22,908

-This isn't. I've stolen my husband's
office because he's away today.

363

00:19:22,932--> 00:19:26,668

I have a desk in the
dining room downstairs.

364

00:19:26,692--> 00:19:32,068

My... So the main

limitation with my disability

365

00:19:32,092--> 00:19:36,000

is energy and pain levels,

and they are variable.

366

00:19:36,000--> 00:19:39,628

So the biggest thing for me

has been to learn to be flexible

367

00:19:39,652--> 00:19:44,428

within my writing routine

and my timetable every day.

368

00:19:44,452--> 00:19:51,068

To try to set myself soft

goals that are reachable for me

369

00:19:51,092--> 00:19:54,000

but also to forgive myself

the days when I just can't,

370

00:19:54,000--> 00:19:57,428

you know, be at a screen or
I can't be sitting at my desk.

371

00:19:57,452--> 00:20:00,748

So I try, on a
sort of daily basis,

372

00:20:00,772--> 00:20:05,000

I consider my writing time to
be when my daughter's at school.

373

00:20:05,000--> 00:20:07,148

Although she only has
two weeks of school left.

374

00:20:07,172--> 00:20:14,776

So I'm going to have to find some other
way of structuring my day in two weeks.

375

00:20:14,800--> 00:20:16,588

So I'm not sure what's
going to happen then.

376

00:20:16,612--> 00:20:18,000

It'll all go to pot.

377

00:20:18,000--> 00:20:21,388

But at the moment, my writing
day is while she's at school.

378

00:20:21,412--> 00:20:27,000

And then within that, it very much depends
on my energy levels and my pain levels

379

00:20:27,000--> 00:20:29,508

at any particular time. And
some days I can get, you know,

380

00:20:29,532--> 00:20:31,588

a good solid few hours in

381

00:20:31,612--> 00:20:33,988

and other days I just
don't have that capacity.

382

00:20:34,012--> 00:20:36,708

And I think one of the
things, as a disabled author,

383

00:20:36,732--> 00:20:39,148

is that you have to give
yourself that flexibility.

384

00:20:39,172--> 00:20:41,508

You have to learn
your own balance

385

00:20:41,532--> 00:20:44,068

and when you can
afford to push yourself

386

00:20:44,092--> 00:20:45,308

and when you really can't.

387

00:20:45,332--> 00:20:47,828

And you need to pace
yourself and to forgive yourself

388

00:20:47,852--> 00:20:49,228

for things you can't do,

389

00:20:49,252--> 00:20:51,228

and trust that you
will get there anyway,

390

00:20:51,252--> 00:20:55,000

even though your rhythm might be
slightly different to somebody else's.

391

00:20:55,000--> 00:21:01,000

-And also, I mean, I completely
identify with what you were just saying.

392

00:21:01,000--> 00:21:04,708

You might not perhaps
be up to writing that day,

393

00:21:04,732--> 00:21:06,428

but you can have
thinking time as well.

394

00:21:06,452--> 00:21:10,228

So that can be very useful
just to think through plots

395

00:21:10,252--> 00:21:13,628

and any sort of difficulties

396

00:21:13,652--> 00:21:16,748

that you've got with your
manuscript at the moment.

397

00:21:16,772--> 00:21:20,148

But when you are writing,
do you have any rituals?

398

00:21:20,172--> 00:21:21,372

What do you have on your desk?

399

00:21:21,396--> 00:21:24,000

What do you like
to have next to you?

400

00:21:24,000--> 00:21:27,548

-I think my ritual is probably
getting a cup of tea and tidying.

401

00:21:27,572--> 00:21:29,428

I like to have a tidy desk.

402

00:21:29,452--> 00:21:30,988

Apart from-- Well, I say that.

403

00:21:31,012--> 00:21:34,000

It's covered in
plants and cat boxes

404

00:21:34,000--> 00:21:35,468

because-- So it
looks very cluttered.

405

00:21:35,492--> 00:21:40,000

But between the plants
and the cat box, it's tidy.

406

00:21:40,000--> 00:21:44,468

So, and I like to have that kind
of tidy and my cup of tea and that,

407

00:21:44,492--> 00:21:45,628

and my music on.

408

00:21:45,652--> 00:21:48,908

And I know not everybody
likes writing to music, but I do.

409

00:21:48,932--> 00:21:51,508

So I get all of that sorted out

410

00:21:51,532--> 00:21:56,000

and then inevitably get
interrupted by a cat, and...

411

00:21:56,000--> 00:21:58,868

And that's sort of, I guess,
that's part of the routine as well

412

00:21:58,892--> 00:22:02,000

is getting shouted at by
cats at regular intervals.

413

00:22:02,000--> 00:22:07,788

Yeah, so... I like having
the peace and quiet.

414

00:22:07,812--> 00:22:10,508

I'm not one of these people who
can go and sit in a cafe and write.

415

00:22:10,532--> 00:22:12,388

I like being at home
with my music on

416

00:22:12,412--> 00:22:15,268

and preferably my

husband not interrupting me

417

00:22:15,292--> 00:22:18,000

between every meeting of his
to tell me how his meeting went.

418

00:22:18,000--> 00:22:21,000

But that's a work in progress.

419

00:22:21,000--> 00:22:22,948

-And how do you
structure your writing?

420

00:22:22,972--> 00:22:24,868

Do you like to write
in a linear fashion?

421

00:22:24,892--> 00:22:31,000

Or do you sort of write whatever
is in your imagination on that day?

422

00:22:31,000--> 00:22:34,068

I'm pretty linear and I can't...

423

00:22:34,092--> 00:22:38,000

I can't understand these people who
sort of hop to the scene they want to write

424

00:22:38,000--> 00:22:43,000

and backtrack.

-Oh, you can't understand me then!

425

00:22:43,000--> 00:22:45,308

-It's just-- That
seems crazy to me.

426

00:22:45,332--> 00:22:48,348

Like how do you ever
tie the threads together?

427

00:22:48,372--> 00:22:53,108

But no, so I'm pretty
linear and I plan a bit,

428

00:22:53,132--> 00:22:57,188

but I mostly plan
about building the world

429

00:22:57,212--> 00:23:00,000

and building my
understanding of the characters.

430

00:23:00,000--> 00:23:02,828

And I let the plot
happen more organically.

431

00:23:02,852--> 00:23:08,000

I let that kind of
unfurl as I write it.

432

00:23:08,000--> 00:23:13,428

But yeah, I have to write it-- At
the moment, I'm writing linearly.

433

00:23:13,452--> 00:23:15,734

Whether that will change in
the future and I will discover

434

00:23:15,758--> 00:23:19,976

writing like a
mosaic, I don't know.

435

00:23:20,000--> 00:23:21,828

-And how about research?

436

00:23:21,852--> 00:23:26,000

At what point do you do
your research with your novel?

437

00:23:26,000--> 00:23:30,668

-Like I say, I do a lot of work on
the world building before I start.

438

00:23:30,692--> 00:23:32,948

So there's quite a bit
of reading and research,

439

00:23:32,972--> 00:23:35,000

and sort of planning

goes into that.

440

00:23:35,000--> 00:23:37,108

And then as I write,

441

00:23:37,132--> 00:23:44,000

if I hit a plot point or a revelation
about a character that I hadn't realized,

442

00:23:44,000--> 00:23:46,428

I might then stop
and go, actually,

443

00:23:46,452--> 00:23:48,776

I need to know what
I'm talking about here.

444

00:23:48,800--> 00:23:51,188

And then go away and do a
quick bit of reading and stuff.

445

00:23:51,212--> 00:23:54,388

Or I might just put a big
square brackets, 'check this',

446

00:23:54,412--> 00:23:59,000

and carry on writing to sort
of come back to later in edits.

447

00:23:59,000--> 00:24:01,000

It depends how
well it's flowing.

448

00:24:01,000--> 00:24:04,348

-Do you find when you're
researching with writing

449

00:24:04,372--> 00:24:06,188

that you can end up
going down a rabbit hole

450

00:24:06,212--> 00:24:12,000

and it's all a bit of a-- Quite hard
to stop yourself being distracted?

451

00:24:12,000--> 00:24:15,588

-Yeah, it is. I mean, the internet's
just one big distraction, isn't it?

452

00:24:15,612--> 00:24:18,908

So the moment you venture into
the internet to look anything up,

453

00:24:18,932--> 00:24:20,388

it's a bit dangerous.

454

00:24:20,412--> 00:24:23,000

It kind of has you in its claws.

455

00:24:23,000--> 00:24:25,300

-Do you have any tips for
getting back to the point then?

456

00:24:25,324--> 00:24:29,428

-I actually find, and it's
annoying how well they work,

457

00:24:29,452--> 00:24:35,000

but I find writing sprints very effective
for getting me to concentrate again.

458

00:24:35,000--> 00:24:38,628

And so I will set a timer, and I
sometimes do it with friends online as well

459

00:24:38,652--> 00:24:40,000

for a bit of accountability.

460

00:24:40,000--> 00:24:43,148

And I know I do
sort of 20, 25 minutes

461

00:24:43,172--> 00:24:45,828

and I set the timer
and I go and I just write.

462

00:24:45,852--> 00:24:48,388

And if I have been
quite distracted that day,

463

00:24:48,412--> 00:24:50,828

I find that really useful.

464

00:24:50,852--> 00:24:53,748

It's annoyingly

useful having the timer

465

00:24:53,772--> 00:24:57,228

as a kind of just thing

to make me focus.

466

00:24:57,252--> 00:24:59,228

And I can't do too many of them.

467

00:24:59,252--> 00:25:02,468

I can only do a couple and

then I start to feel a little bit

468

00:25:02,492--> 00:25:06,468

sort of scooped out by

the whole writing thing.

469

00:25:06,492--> 00:25:09,000

But yeah, I do

find writing sprints,

470

00:25:09,000--> 00:25:15,000

particularly with friends, quite

a useful kick when I need one.

471

00:25:15,000--> 00:25:19,188

-Just a reminder to everybody that

I'm sure you've all got lots of questions.

472

00:25:19,212--> 00:25:23,000

Hope we're sparking

lots of them in your mind.

473

00:25:23,000--> 00:25:26,188

So please do put any questions

for Lorraine in the Q&A section

474

00:25:26,212--> 00:25:32,000

and we'll get onto
them quite shortly.

475

00:25:32,000--> 00:25:33,628

What about editing?

476

00:25:33,652--> 00:25:37,548

Do you wait till the
end of your manuscript

477

00:25:37,572--> 00:25:40,000

or do you tend to
edit as you go along?

478

00:25:40,000--> 00:25:42,348

-I tend to wait until the end.

479

00:25:42,372--> 00:25:46,148

So as I'm writing, I will make a note of
things that I want to go back and change

480

00:25:46,172--> 00:25:48,000

if something occurs to me.

481

00:25:48,000--> 00:25:50,028

But I will tend to
try and just carry on

482

00:25:50,052--> 00:25:51,948

and get to the end
of the first draft.

483

00:25:51,972--> 00:25:53,788

And then when I
finish my first draft,

484

00:25:53,812--> 00:25:57,000

I'll incorporate those changes,
the ones I already know about,

485

00:25:57,000--> 00:25:59,228

and then I will do
what I call my 'big edit',

486

00:25:59,252--> 00:26:02,068

which is... It

involves index cards

487

00:26:02,092--> 00:26:03,828

and like six

different colour pens

488

00:26:03,852--> 00:26:06,000

and the entire lounge

floor covered in cards.

489

00:26:06,000--> 00:26:11,068

-That's interesting because I

know there are lots of authors

490

00:26:11,092--> 00:26:13,068

who I've spoken

to that do have--

491

00:26:13,092--> 00:26:16,388

Yeah, lots of post-it

notes and whiteboards

492

00:26:16,412--> 00:26:19,000

and bits of string

connecting everything.

493

00:26:19,000--> 00:26:22,000

So you're more that kind

of visual editing person?

494

00:26:22,000--> 00:26:25,948

-Yeah, and I think some people

call it reverse outlining, don't they?

495

00:26:25,972--> 00:26:29,828

Where you use those kind of the

index cards or the post-it notes at the end

496

00:26:29,852--> 00:26:32,348

to kind of to check your plot

497

00:26:32,372--> 00:26:34,188

and to check the tension levels,

498

00:26:34,212--> 00:26:35,708

and the various subplot threads,

499

00:26:35,732--> 00:26:38,468

and make sure your

pacing's working,

500

00:26:38,492--> 00:26:43,628

and your voices are constant through the
different sections of your novel and stuff.

501

00:26:43,652--> 00:26:47,588

So that is... That is
a big task, that edit.

502

00:26:47,612--> 00:26:50,948

But I find it quite exciting
and quite rewarding

503

00:26:50,972--> 00:26:54,188

to take this kind of rough gem

504

00:26:54,212--> 00:26:56,628

and start to, you
know, polish it up

505

00:26:56,652--> 00:26:59,188

and and chisel off
the edges and stuff.

506

00:26:59,212--> 00:27:02,000

It's quite a good stage.

507

00:27:02,000--> 00:27:06,000

-Where are you now on your latest
work and what are you working on?

508

00:27:06,000--> 00:27:09,748

-Oh, gosh, I'm between
books at the moment.

509

00:27:09,772--> 00:27:12,948

I've been editing two books

simultaneously the last couple of months.

510

00:27:12,972--> 00:27:13,972

-Wow!

511

00:27:13,996--> 00:27:16,388

-Which has been

less fun than it sounds.

512

00:27:16,412--> 00:27:22,000

-You'll need a lot of post-it notes
to remember what's which one.

513

00:27:22,000--> 00:27:25,068

-Yeah, so one of those is
with my editor at the moment,

514

00:27:25,092--> 00:27:27,068

and that's the book that's
coming out in November

515

00:27:27,092--> 00:27:29,000

called The Salt Oracle.

516

00:27:29,000--> 00:27:32,188

And then I have another book
that's just about, next week,

517

00:27:32,212--> 00:27:36,000

going out on submission
with my agent to publishers.

518

00:27:36,000--> 00:27:40,148

And that is a book called
A Lake of Small Fires,

519

00:27:40,172--> 00:27:44,228

which is a braided cyclic
story, future climate fiction story.

520

00:27:44,252--> 00:27:46,868

So I've been
editing both of those.

521

00:27:46,892--> 00:27:49,908

And then at some point, hopefully,
I will get back to finishing a book

522

00:27:49,932--> 00:27:51,588

that I was drafting
before Christmas

523

00:27:51,612--> 00:27:55,148

that is sitting waiting for
me at kind of 80,000 words,

524

00:27:55,172--> 00:27:57,348

so really close to the end,

525

00:27:57,372--> 00:27:59,828

but I had to shelve it to
edit because of deadlines.

526

00:27:59,852--> 00:28:02,000

So can't wait to
get back to that.

527

00:28:02,000--> 00:28:03,548

-You've got three
books on the go?

528

00:28:03,572--> 00:28:08,000

And then I guess you're probably
thinking about the one after that, are you?

529

00:28:08,000--> 00:28:09,668

-Yeah, yes.

530

00:28:09,692--> 00:28:12,308

So I have a couple of pitches

531

00:28:12,332--> 00:28:14,588

that I'm supposed to be
writing up for my agent as well,

532

00:28:14,612--> 00:28:18,000

ready for these next books
going out on submission.

533

00:28:18,000--> 00:28:21,228

My agent actually has another book
that she's editing at the moment for me

534

00:28:21,252--> 00:28:25,000

and it will come back to me in
the next couple of weeks. So...

535

00:28:25,000--> 00:28:29,000

Too many spinning
plates. It's ridiculous.

536

00:28:29,000--> 00:28:30,468

(laughter)

537

00:28:30,492--> 00:28:33,348

-Well, what are your goals
for your writing career?

538

00:28:33,372--> 00:28:36,108

Is there anything that you
haven't achieved yet Lorraine?

539

00:28:36,132--> 00:28:38,200

I mean, it sounds like
you've achieved a great deal.

540

00:28:38,224--> 00:28:42,000

But is there anything that
you're aiming for in the future?

541

00:28:42,000--> 00:28:45,388

-I don't know, because I think
the weird thing about publishing

542

00:28:45,412--> 00:28:47,468

is that there are so
many markers of success,

543

00:28:47,492--> 00:28:51,348

like whether that's prizes or
bestseller lists or book boxes

544

00:28:51,372--> 00:28:55,268

or trade reviews or getting
your book optioned for film.

545

00:28:55,292--> 00:28:59,228

There's... There are so many markers
of success and they're all so subjective

546

00:28:59,252--> 00:29:03,000

that I think it's really easy to be
constantly moving your goalposts

547

00:29:03,000--> 00:29:06,268

and shifting your ambitions,

548

00:29:06,292--> 00:29:08,628

which is healthy because
you want to keep moving

549

00:29:08,652--> 00:29:13,588

but also it can stop you
being proud of where you are

550

00:29:13,612--> 00:29:17,000

if you're always looking at
the next thing down the road.

551

00:29:17,000--> 00:29:19,628

And I started publishing
with a very small--

552

00:29:19,652--> 00:29:21,868

So my first two books
with a very small indie press

553

00:29:21,892--> 00:29:24,228

and I've slowly kind
of gained momentum

554

00:29:24,252--> 00:29:28,000

and gained reach with each
of my subsequent publishers.

555

00:29:28,000--> 00:29:32,068

And I actually kind of feel like
that's a really healthy trajectory for me

556

00:29:32,092--> 00:29:35,988

and I want to just feel like I am
continuing to reach new readers

557

00:29:36,012--> 00:29:39,188

with each book and just
steadily gaining momentum.

558

00:29:39,212--> 00:29:44,308

And I don't need to be on the sort
of firework trajectory to the stars.

559

00:29:44,332--> 00:29:48,000

I just... I just want
to feel like I am

560

00:29:48,000--> 00:29:50,428

building something
sustainable for me health-wise

561

00:29:50,452--> 00:29:54,908

and also continuing to just
reach, you know, gain readers

562

00:29:54,932--> 00:29:58,188

who trust me, to follow
me in my future books.

563

00:29:58,212--> 00:30:03,948

Yeah, and I feel like that's, you know, a
trajectory that my agent really supports

564

00:30:03,972--> 00:30:06,000

and my editor and stuff, so...

565

00:30:06,000--> 00:30:10,348

Fingers crossed I can just
continue to sell and write stories

566

00:30:10,372--> 00:30:12,348

that I can be proud of and...

567

00:30:12,372--> 00:30:16,428

And when the winds come, when
publishing does give me a win,

568

00:30:16,452--> 00:30:20,348

I will make sure to celebrate them,
but not pin too much of my identity,

569

00:30:20,372--> 00:30:22,000

my sense of self

570

00:30:22,000--> 00:30:24,000

on those, if that makes sense.

571

00:30:24,000--> 00:30:25,000

-Yes, it does.

572

00:30:25,024--> 00:30:28,708

This obviously is a
Society of Authors event.

573

00:30:28,732--> 00:30:31,028

How is being a member helped you

574

00:30:31,052--> 00:30:35,000

and supported you during
your career, do you think?

575

00:30:35,000--> 00:30:36,628

-I think, particularly
at the outset,

576

00:30:36,652--> 00:30:39,588

it was really useful for
being able to check contracts

577

00:30:39,612--> 00:30:43,068

and look through the guides
on what to look for in contracts.

578

00:30:43,092--> 00:30:45,000

And that was such
a valuable thing.

579

00:30:45,000--> 00:30:48,068

The Society of Authors
contract checking service

580

00:30:48,092--> 00:30:51,868

is invaluable for, I think,
early career authors

581

00:30:51,892--> 00:30:55,000

or authors who are going direct
to publishers and not via agents.

582

00:30:55,000--> 00:31:00,508

So I'm really grateful to have had
that resource in my back pocket

583

00:31:00,532--> 00:31:02,108

and they have definitely...

584

00:31:02,132--> 00:31:04,828

I learned a lot from
reading those resources

585

00:31:04,852--> 00:31:07,000

and from having the
advice from those people.

586

00:31:07,000--> 00:31:10,868

And I think, also,
you know, it is a union

587

00:31:10,892--> 00:31:12,468

and I think...

588

00:31:12,492--> 00:31:15,588

There's always more you
want to see your union do,

589

00:31:15,612--> 00:31:18,388

but I'm really glad to have
this voice within publishing

590

00:31:18,412--> 00:31:19,948

and to be part of this voice.

591

00:31:19,972--> 00:31:22,908

And I think, you know, we are...

592

00:31:22,932--> 00:31:25,268

The power dynamics
within publishing

593

00:31:25,292--> 00:31:29,348

are a bit skewed towards the bigger
publishers and away from the authors.

594

00:31:29,372--> 00:31:32,308

And I think that having
this, the union voice,

595

00:31:32,332--> 00:31:35,348

is so important to us as
authors to be able to fight

596

00:31:35,372--> 00:31:37,548

for, you know,
better contract terms

597

00:31:37,572--> 00:31:42,708

and defence against things like the
intrusion of AI and all that kind of stuff.

598

00:31:42,732--> 00:31:47,468

And I'm just really glad that we
have we have this collective voice

599

00:31:47,492--> 00:31:50,468

with some sway
within the industry.

600

00:31:50,492--> 00:31:52,488

And I think it's really
important to support that

601

00:31:52,512--> 00:31:54,788

and to keep sort of
pushing to have that voice

602

00:31:54,812--> 00:31:59,000

raised at the right moments.

603

00:31:59,000--> 00:32:02,148

-I'm based in England, so I
don't really know anything about

604

00:32:02,172--> 00:32:05,028

the Scottish section of
the Society of Authors.

605

00:32:05,052--> 00:32:08,000

Are you involved with
that and what does it do?

606

00:32:08,000--> 00:32:10,628

-A little bit, only
really sort of online.

607

00:32:10,652--> 00:32:13,388

I've not been able to make
any of the in-person events

608

00:32:13,412--> 00:32:17,188

but there is a really active Society
of Authors in Scotland chapter

609

00:32:17,212--> 00:32:21,148

and quite a few local groups
around Scotland as well,

610

00:32:21,172--> 00:32:23,628

which is really nice to see.

611

00:32:23,652--> 00:32:27,268

And I... Sadly, it's a little
bit of a struggle for me

612

00:32:27,292--> 00:32:30,148

to get to evening events in the
central belt in Edinburgh and Glasgow.

613

00:32:30,172--> 00:32:32,000

So I don't really
tend to make them.

614

00:32:32,000--> 00:32:34,108

But it's lovely just to
know that they're there.

615

00:32:34,132--> 00:32:36,528

And I know some of the people
who are involved in the board

616

00:32:36,552--> 00:32:38,788

and I know that they
are brilliant people

617

00:32:38,812--> 00:32:41,468

championing really important
causes within the Society of Authors.

618

00:32:41,492--> 00:32:44,068

So it's lovely, yeah.

619

00:32:44,092--> 00:32:45,388

-I've seen you on Twitter.

620

00:32:45,412--> 00:32:50,748

-(Inaudible) with other Scottish authors as
well, praising their work and what have you.

621

00:32:50,772--> 00:32:52,228

That's really
important, isn't it?

622

00:32:52,252--> 00:32:55,948

For authors to
support each other

623

00:32:55,972--> 00:32:58,268

and give each other
a pat on the back

624

00:32:58,292--> 00:33:00,100

because sometimes
there aren't many of those.

625

00:33:00,124--> 00:33:02,228

-Yeah, exactly.

626

00:33:02,252--> 00:33:04,908

(laughter)

627

00:33:04,932--> 00:33:06,668

-We've had a few questions in.

628

00:33:06,692--> 00:33:09,268

One anonymous attendee asks,

629

00:33:09,292--> 00:33:12,988

what your main inspiration
was for writing Mother Sea?

630

00:33:13,012--> 00:33:14,788

I know you've talked
about your environment,

631

00:33:14,812--> 00:33:20,000

but what about that
particular story and characters?

632

00:33:20,000--> 00:33:25,588

-I think it did start from-- The
initial seed was, like I said,

633

00:33:25,612--> 00:33:27,428

with St Kilda and
the history of St Kilda.

634

00:33:27,452--> 00:33:31,068

And it came from thinking about,

635

00:33:31,092--> 00:33:35,948

because the islanders and St.
Kilda turned against outside help,

636

00:33:35,972--> 00:33:38,868

they rejected outside help
and this neonatal epidemic

637

00:33:38,892--> 00:33:42,000

started to sweep
through the population.

638

00:33:42,000--> 00:33:44,748

And when midwives
came to the island,

639

00:33:44,772--> 00:33:46,748

they were not allowed
into the birthing houses.

640

00:33:46,772--> 00:33:50,000

They weren't allowed to see the
new mothers or the new babies.

641

00:33:50,000--> 00:33:51,728

Doctors weren't allowed
on the island at all

642

00:33:51,752--> 00:33:55,428

and it really, as a mum myself,

643

00:33:55,452--> 00:33:59,348

I couldn't get past the thought
of what it would have felt like

644

00:33:59,372--> 00:34:02,668

to be a pregnant woman if you
didn't, on that island, in that community,

645

00:34:02,692--> 00:34:05,776

if you didn't 100%
agree with that approach

646

00:34:05,800--> 00:34:07,328

if perhaps you did
want to see a doctor

647

00:34:07,352--> 00:34:11,468

or if you didn't believe that this version
of Christianity that took over the island

648

00:34:11,492--> 00:34:13,308

was going to save your baby.

649

00:34:13,332--> 00:34:17,908

And just the torture of being in

that position as a pregnant mother

650

00:34:17,932--> 00:34:22,428

and the... You know, the relationship
you would have with your unborn child

651

00:34:22,452--> 00:34:25,228

knowing there was a very
strong chance of it not surviving.

652

00:34:25,252--> 00:34:28,228

And that just... It just
got under my skin.

653

00:34:28,252--> 00:34:29,668

It just sank its hooks into me

654

00:34:29,692--> 00:34:32,468

and I couldn't... I couldn't
get past that voice,

655

00:34:32,492--> 00:34:36,000

and that was really where
the whole thing started for me.

656

00:34:36,000--> 00:34:40,148

-And how did you think
about transporting that to...?

657

00:34:40,172--> 00:34:43,708

it's sort of set somewhere quite
tropical, isn't it? Rather than Scotland.

658

00:34:43,732--> 00:34:45,188

How did that come about?

659

00:34:45,212--> 00:34:47,748

-Yeah... I don't
really-- I haven't...

660

00:34:47,772--> 00:34:49,988

I have a friend in Barbados,
a writer in Barbados,

661

00:34:50,012--> 00:34:52,000

Nikki Laurel, who's amazing.

662

00:34:52,000--> 00:34:56,628

But she told me that she thought it
was easier to write atmospheric books

663

00:34:56,652--> 00:34:59,028

based in somewhere like
Scotland than in the tropics.

664

00:34:59,052--> 00:35:01,748

And I was like,
no, that's not true.

665

00:35:01,772--> 00:35:03,628

So I kind of...

666

00:35:03,652--> 00:35:05,388

It was like she'd sent me a dare

667

00:35:05,412--> 00:35:07,508

and I spent a lot of time,

668

00:35:07,532--> 00:35:10,468

when I was working as a conservation
scientist, in the Indian Ocean...

669

00:35:10,492--> 00:35:12,000

Not in the ocean,

670

00:35:12,000--> 00:35:17,000

But in Madagascar and the Seychelles and
various islands working in conservation.

671

00:35:17,000--> 00:35:18,188

And so I really...

672

00:35:18,212--> 00:35:22,548

I have a strong sort of emotional
memory connection with that place

673

00:35:22,572--> 00:35:26,868

and that area, and it

feels... It just felt right.

674

00:35:26,892--> 00:35:28,668

It felt right for
that, for the book.

675

00:35:28,692--> 00:35:32,000

And I'd read a history of
about an island called Tromelin

676

00:35:32,000--> 00:35:36,188

which had the same
origin story as Mother Seas.

677

00:35:36,212--> 00:35:39,628

So a shipwrecked
population living on the island

678

00:35:39,652--> 00:35:41,828

and they were...
After 15 years they left

679

00:35:41,852--> 00:35:43,428

and the island is
now abandoned again,

680

00:35:43,452--> 00:35:46,348

and there's a whole very
racist story behind that,

681

00:35:46,372--> 00:35:48,000

but I won't go into it.

682

00:35:48,000--> 00:35:49,000

But that kind of--

683

00:35:49,024--> 00:35:53,188

That island having that population
on for a few years after a shipwreck

684

00:35:53,212--> 00:35:55,748

provided that other seed.

685

00:35:55,772--> 00:35:58,662

So the two. The kind of the seed from
St Kilda and the seed from Tromelin

686

00:35:58,686--> 00:36:04,000

kind of just connected in
my mind and felt right, I think.

687

00:36:04,000--> 00:36:05,948

-I've had another question
that's come in saying,

688

00:36:05,972--> 00:36:09,148

'what inspires you
the most as an author?'

689

00:36:10,800--> 00:36:13,068

-Who inspires me
the most as an author?

690

00:36:13,092--> 00:36:16,228

Oh gosh, um...

691

00:36:16,252--> 00:36:17,668

I don't know.

692

00:36:17,692--> 00:36:21,228

As other authors, I think people
like Ursula Le Guin is an obvious one.

693

00:36:21,252--> 00:36:25,788

She was just such a
deeply thoughtful author,

694

00:36:25,812--> 00:36:29,228

whether she was writing more
fantastical or less fantastical.

695

00:36:29,252--> 00:36:31,108

Just so ahead of her time

696

00:36:31,132--> 00:36:33,708

in terms of her understanding
of gender and politics,

697

00:36:33,732--> 00:36:38,588

and the relationships between
socioeconomic influences

698

00:36:38,612--> 00:36:40,228

and marginalised identities

699

00:36:40,252--> 00:36:42,988

and the relationship with
the natural world as well.

700

00:36:43,012--> 00:36:45,348

And she was just so
incredibly thoughtful

701

00:36:45,372--> 00:36:49,268

that she... She's always been
a bit of an inspiration to me.

702

00:36:49,292--> 00:36:50,708

Um...

703

00:36:50,732--> 00:36:53,332

But yeah, I don't know.

704

00:36:53,356--> 00:36:54,356

In my real life...

705

00:36:54,380--> 00:36:55,630

-Sorry.

706

00:36:55,654--> 00:36:56,754

(laughter)

707

00:36:56,778--> 00:36:58,778

Hard question, isn't it?

708

00:36:58,802--> 00:37:00,868

-It is. It really is, yeah.

709

00:37:00,892--> 00:37:05,068

And I think in my real life, I'm very
much inspired by the women in my family.

710

00:37:05,092--> 00:37:12,948

My mum and my grandmother
are both extremely loving, loyal,

711

00:37:12,972--> 00:37:18,388

fiercely strong women who have
gone through quite extreme things,

712

00:37:18,412--> 00:37:21,000

particularly my grandmother.

713

00:37:21,000--> 00:37:24,228

And yeah, I think that that's...

714

00:37:24,252--> 00:37:26,508

They have given me, you know,

715

00:37:26,532--> 00:37:30,668

if I've got the sort of inspiration to
tell stories and the drive to do so,

716

00:37:30,692--> 00:37:34,000

I think that's probably
come from them.

717

00:37:34,000--> 00:37:36,148

-Back to your writing practice.

718

00:37:36,172--> 00:37:40,988

-Do you find it useful to print out
and read out loud a final draft?

719

00:37:41,012--> 00:37:43,308

Are you sort of more visual or...?

720

00:37:43,332--> 00:37:47,000

(Inaudible), is that the
right term?

721

00:37:47,000--> 00:37:48,000

I'm not quite sure.

722

00:37:48,024--> 00:37:49,024

(laughs)

723

00:37:49,048--> 00:37:50,708

-Yeah. I can't do reading aloud.

724

00:37:50,732--> 00:37:52,628

I know a lot of people
recommend it, don't they?

725

00:37:52,652--> 00:37:55,000

To read your work aloud.

726

00:37:55,000--> 00:37:56,188

I just can't do it.

727

00:37:56,212--> 00:37:59,268

But I do like to have the
paper copy printed out.

728

00:37:59,292--> 00:38:05,000

So in my big edit, once I've wrestled
my index cards across the lounge floor,

729

00:38:05,000--> 00:38:06,588

I will then print out my book

730

00:38:06,612--> 00:38:09,708

and I will mark it up on paper.

731

00:38:09,732--> 00:38:12,628

And that's... There's
something about that tactile form,

732

00:38:12,652--> 00:38:15,268

and just the pen and paper thing

733

00:38:15,292--> 00:38:19,068

releases a different part
of my editorial brain, I think.

734

00:38:19,092--> 00:38:21,000

So yeah, that's a really...

735

00:38:21,000--> 00:38:24,376

That's a really important step,
but I can't do the reading aloud.

736

00:38:24,400--> 00:38:26,928

I wish I could because I think
it's probably really important,

737

00:38:26,952--> 00:38:29,988

but I just... My...
I just freeze up.

738

00:38:30,012--> 00:38:34,028

-We all have different ways
of doing things, don't we?

739

00:38:34,052--> 00:38:38,068

I find it a bit cringy to
listen to my audio books,

740

00:38:38,092--> 00:38:39,348

even hearing somebody else.

741

00:38:39,372--> 00:38:44,148

Even if an actor does it brilliantly,
read my words aloud is so...

742

00:38:44,172--> 00:38:45,172

(laughs)

743

00:38:45,196--> 00:38:46,628

Difficult to do.

744

00:38:46,652--> 00:38:47,652

Hemmie asks,

745

00:38:47,676--> 00:38:50,228

'where do you get
your ideas from?

746

00:38:50,252--> 00:38:52,148

And do you ever start a novel,

747

00:38:52,172--> 00:38:55,508

decide it isn't working
and leave it in a drawer?'

748

00:38:55,532--> 00:38:57,348

I think we've all
been through that.

749

00:38:57,372--> 00:38:59,000

But have you? Are
you the lucky one?

750

00:38:59,000--> 00:39:02,708

-I think the thing with me is,

751

00:39:02,732--> 00:39:05,308

because I do quite a bit
of planning before I start,

752

00:39:05,332--> 00:39:10,000

I know before I start the story
whether it's got legs or not.

753

00:39:10,000--> 00:39:11,948

So I think what
happens is that I do...

754

00:39:11,972--> 00:39:17,000

The stories that don't have legs
die in the planning stage for me.

755

00:39:17,000--> 00:39:18,988

I mean, I do have a
couple that I've shelved

756

00:39:19,012--> 00:39:22,508

because they
haven't found a home

757

00:39:22,532--> 00:39:26,508

or they aren't right for my
trajectory that I'm on at the moment.

758

00:39:26,532--> 00:39:30,000

They're too kind of
out there genre wise.

759

00:39:30,000--> 00:39:32,748

But in terms of getting
halfway through a project,

760

00:39:32,772--> 00:39:37,828

not really because I think I
either break them or fix them

761

00:39:37,852--> 00:39:39,588

in planning enough to know

762

00:39:39,612--> 00:39:42,108

whether they'll survive
the drafting process.

763

00:39:42,132--> 00:39:44,608

Do you tend to write--

764

00:39:44,632--> 00:39:48,188

-You said you're out on sub,
write things and then send them out

765

00:39:48,212--> 00:39:52,268

or do you have a contract and you
discuss with your publisher and your agent

766

00:39:52,292--> 00:39:55,000

what that's going to
be and then write it?

767

00:39:55,000--> 00:39:56,468

-So my last contract,

768

00:39:56,492--> 00:39:58,948

the contract I'm in at the
moment, was a two book deal.

769

00:39:58,972--> 00:40:02,148

So the first book on that
came out last November,

770

00:40:02,172--> 00:40:04,068

which was We Are All

Ghosts in the Forest.

771

00:40:04,092--> 00:40:06,028

And then my next book
coming out this November

772

00:40:06,052--> 00:40:08,000

is the second book
in that contract.

773

00:40:08,000--> 00:40:09,000

-Yeah.

774

00:40:09,000--> 00:40:11,028

So obviously once, you
know, once that's out,

775

00:40:11,052--> 00:40:12,188

I'm out of contract again

776

00:40:12,212--> 00:40:13,788

so that's why we're

going out on sub now

777

00:40:13,812--> 00:40:15,348

to look for the next.

778

00:40:15,372--> 00:40:18,508

And that will probably, hopefully,

be another two book deal,

779

00:40:18,532--> 00:40:19,668

so...

780

00:40:19,692--> 00:40:21,468

And that's quite-- I

think that's quite good.

781

00:40:21,492--> 00:40:23,748

I like having the flexibility

782

00:40:23,772--> 00:40:26,000

of being able to

decide what I write next,

783

00:40:26,000--> 00:40:28,348

but also a little bit of
job security is nice too.

784

00:40:28,372--> 00:40:29,428

-Yes.

785

00:40:29,452--> 00:40:31,792

Do you think you'd ever like
to write in a different genre?

786

00:40:31,816--> 00:40:34,000

And if so, which one?

787

00:40:34,000--> 00:40:35,628

-So I did...

788

00:40:35,652--> 00:40:37,708

During lockdown when
my brain was not working,

789

00:40:37,732--> 00:40:40,628

I wrote a big historical epic

790

00:40:40,652--> 00:40:44,148

kind of inspired by Mansfield
Park and that kind of stuff

791

00:40:44,172--> 00:40:48,000

which is absolutely
out of my wheelhouse.

792

00:40:48,000--> 00:40:51,428

It terrified me because
historical fiction is hard.

793

00:40:51,452--> 00:40:54,948

And it was a romance
and romance is hard.

794

00:40:54,972--> 00:40:57,828

And I discovered that I'm not
natural at either of those things.

795

00:40:57,852--> 00:41:01,748

So I'm not sure that book
will ever see the light of day.

796

00:41:01,772--> 00:41:03,428

That's one of my
shelved projects

797

00:41:03,452--> 00:41:06,000

and I think that might
be where it's best left.

798

00:41:06,000--> 00:41:09,828

-But what did you learn
from that experience anyway,

799

00:41:09,852--> 00:41:12,000

from giving it a go?

800

00:41:12,000--> 00:41:13,268

-I think it was...

801

00:41:13,292--> 00:41:14,948

And I really enjoyed writing it.

802

00:41:14,972--> 00:41:20,068

It was such a blast to write and

I do love some good yearning.

803

00:41:20,092--> 00:41:23,908

I love reading romance and I

love some solid, unfulfilled longing.

804

00:41:23,932--> 00:41:26,348

So it was so much

fun to write that.

805

00:41:26,372--> 00:41:29,068

But I think my main thing

that I learned from that

806

00:41:29,092--> 00:41:33,000

was a healthy respect of

people who write historical fiction

807

00:41:33,000--> 00:41:36,148

because, my God, we were talking
about internet rabbit holes for research

808

00:41:36,172--> 00:41:38,548

and that's just...

That's just insane.

809

00:41:38,572--> 00:41:41,388

It's crazy. It's an
endless pit of research

810

00:41:41,412--> 00:41:44,268

that you can fall into when
you're writing historical books.

811

00:41:44,292--> 00:41:48,776

So much respect to
people who do that.

812

00:41:48,800--> 00:41:49,988

-Definitely.

813

00:41:50,012--> 00:41:52,068

And reading? Can you...

814

00:41:52,092--> 00:41:55,148

When you're writing, can you
read other people's novels?

815

00:41:55,172--> 00:41:57,108

Or do you stick to non-fiction?

816

00:41:57,132--> 00:42:01,228

And what genres do you
like reading just as a reader?

817

00:42:02,000--> 00:42:03,428

-I read quite widely

818

00:42:03,452--> 00:42:06,828

and I go through kind of fads

where I will read a lot of something,

819

00:42:06,852--> 00:42:09,548

a particular subgenre, and
then I'll move on to another one

820

00:42:09,572--> 00:42:14,148

but I read a lot of kind
of upmarket reading...

821

00:42:14,172--> 00:42:19,000

The reading club type
fictions, literary crossover fiction.

822

00:42:19,000--> 00:42:21,428

I love books that
play with genre

823

00:42:21,452--> 00:42:23,588

that blend different genres.

824

00:42:23,612--> 00:42:28,348

So people like Natasha

Pulley or Laura Purcell,

825

00:42:28,372--> 00:42:32,948

people like that who play with
the edges of genres a little bit.

826

00:42:32,972--> 00:42:34,548

So...

827

00:42:35,000--> 00:42:36,748

Yeah, but I'm reading...

828

00:42:36,772--> 00:42:38,828

At the moment, what am
I reading at the moment?

829

00:42:38,852--> 00:42:42,708

I'm reading Book
of Doors by Tan...

830

00:42:42,732--> 00:42:46,268

Tan Twan Eng, I think his
name is, I can't remember.

831

00:42:46,292--> 00:42:47,948

So just...

832

00:42:47,972--> 00:42:51,148

Anything that has a bit of a
folkloric or speculative edge

833

00:42:51,172--> 00:42:52,908

will always be
able to suck me in.

834

00:42:52,932--> 00:42:54,000

But I love...

835

00:42:54,000--> 00:42:58,428

I love things that play with form
or genre or voice in some way.

836

00:42:59,000--> 00:43:01,348

And as for when

I'm writing, yeah,

837

00:43:01,372--> 00:43:03,108

I do read fiction

when I'm writing.

838

00:43:03,132--> 00:43:08,000

I tend to try to avoid fiction

that's too close to what I'm doing.

839

00:43:08,000--> 00:43:09,508

So I will read in

a different genre.

840

00:43:09,532--> 00:43:14,668

And the harder, the more I'm

trying to immerse myself in my book,

841

00:43:14,692--> 00:43:17,348

the more popcorny

my reads will be.

842

00:43:17,372--> 00:43:20,908

So I'll look for something that's
really easy and light and escapist

843

00:43:20,932--> 00:43:23,676

and not going to
ask too much of me,

844

00:43:23,700--> 00:43:25,468

so that I can stay focused on my thing.

845

00:43:25,492--> 00:43:29,028

But other stages, when I'm not
quite so sucked into my book,

846

00:43:29,052--> 00:43:34,308

I will read anything that pops up
on my TBR, that grabs my fancy.

847

00:43:35,500--> 00:43:38,976

-I'm going to ask you a bit
of an out there question now.

848

00:43:39,000--> 00:43:42,028

Alright, imagine you could
never be an author again,

849

00:43:42,052--> 00:43:45,868

but you could choose to
do any job that you wanted.

850

00:43:45,892--> 00:43:49,428

You'd had no health
worries, money worries

851

00:43:49,452--> 00:43:52,000

or location difficulties
or whatever.

852

00:43:52,000--> 00:43:54,000

What would you do?

853

00:43:54,000--> 00:43:56,348

-Oh gosh, I don't know.

854

00:43:56,372--> 00:44:00,868

Can I have like a small holding

855

00:44:00,892--> 00:44:02,748

and just have a million
animals?

856

00:44:02,772--> 00:44:04,548

-Of course you can.

857

00:44:04,572--> 00:44:06,000

You can be a small
holding farmer.

858

00:44:06,000--> 00:44:09,788

-Yeah, just drown myself in
like abandoned cats and stuff

859

00:44:09,812--> 00:44:12,000

and yeah, we'd be quite happy.

860

00:44:12,000--> 00:44:16,800

-Can you imagine a world without
you scribbling something down?

861

00:44:16,824--> 00:44:18,238

-Not really.

862

00:44:18,262--> 00:44:23,000

-(inaudible) or something and never being
able to take a book or a notepad and pen.

863

00:44:23,000--> 00:44:26,348

-God, I know. That'd be torture.

864

00:44:26,372--> 00:44:29,000

(laughter)

865

00:44:29,000--> 00:44:30,100

-It would be, wouldn't it?

866

00:44:30,124--> 00:44:32,868

-It would. And to be
separated from books to read...

867

00:44:32,892--> 00:44:34,508

No, if I was separated
from my Kindle,

868

00:44:34,532--> 00:44:37,871

I think I would just shrivel
up into a husk and blow away.

869

00:44:37,895--> 00:44:39,000

(laughter)

870

00:44:39,000--> 00:44:42,000

-Do you keep a writing diary?

871

00:44:42,000--> 00:44:44,548

-No, I don't. I've never been--

872

00:44:44,572--> 00:44:47,228

I've sort of now and again, I

thought that seems like a good idea.

873

00:44:47,252--> 00:44:49,788

But it's just never, no...

874

00:44:49,812--> 00:44:51,628

I have notebooks full of ideas

875

00:44:51,652--> 00:44:55,000

and I think that's probably

the closest I get to that.

876

00:44:55,000--> 00:44:56,188

But, no.

877

00:44:58,000--> 00:45:00,828

-Well, I think sadly

our time is almost up.

878

00:45:00,852--> 00:45:04,388

It's such a shame.

879

00:45:04,412--> 00:45:06,828

I've really enjoyed
talking to you

880

00:45:06,852--> 00:45:10,308

and I hope everybody has
enjoyed very much listening to you,

881

00:45:10,332--> 00:45:15,000

hearing about Mother's Sea and
your work and your writing practice.

882

00:45:15,000--> 00:45:17,348

So I would say big thank you
to Lorraine for today's event

883

00:45:17,372--> 00:45:20,000

and everybody who's joined us,

884

00:45:20,000--> 00:45:23,988

and to Natalie Thorpe for
moderating today's event brilliantly.

885

00:45:24,012--> 00:45:28,000

Our next #SoAatHome

event takes place tomorrow

886

00:45:28,000--> 00:45:30,748

from 11 a.m with

a Feel Good Friday,

887

00:45:30,772--> 00:45:33,000

Making the time to write.

888

00:45:33,000--> 00:45:37,588

For more, head to

societyofauthors.org/events

889

00:45:37,612--> 00:45:40,468

to book or check out

our events programme.

890

00:45:40,492--> 00:45:47,000

A reminder that this SoA at Home

event is free to SOA members,

891

00:45:47,000--> 00:45:48,508

but if you can afford to,

892

00:45:48,532--> 00:45:53,000

please consider donating to our
Society of Authors Access Fund

893

00:45:53,000--> 00:45:56,068

where we suggest a
minimum donation of £5.

894

00:45:56,092--> 00:46:00,068

And you can also help the
Society of Authors Access Fund

895

00:46:00,092--> 00:46:05,588

by making a purchase on our
virtual bookstore on bookshop.org

896

00:46:05,612--> 00:46:08,188

where you can find

books by writers taking part

897

00:46:08,212--> 00:46:12,068

in the SoA at Home

Events programme.

898

00:46:12,092--> 00:46:15,268

So another final big

thank you to Lorraine

899

00:46:15,292--> 00:46:18,948

and to all of you who have

joined us today for this event,

900

00:46:18,972--> 00:46:22,148

and let's continue this

conversation on social media

901

00:46:22,172--> 00:46:24,788

with the festival hashtag...

902

00:46:24,812--> 00:46:27,788

Sorry.

903

00:46:27,812--> 00:46:29,908

#SoAatHome.

904

00:46:29,932--> 00:46:32,148

Are you on social
media, Lorraine?

905

00:46:32,172--> 00:46:35,000

If anybody wants to follow you?

906

00:46:35,000--> 00:46:37,828

-I am, yeah, I'm mostly on
Bluesky as @rainewilson.

907

00:46:37,852--> 00:46:39,748

I'm also on Instagram.

908

00:46:39,772--> 00:46:43,708

I have more or less abandoned

Twitter, I'm afraid, because it's... evil.

909

00:46:43,732--> 00:46:46,428

But yeah, Bluesky is great

910

00:46:46,452--> 00:46:48,000

so come and find me there.

911

00:46:48,000--> 00:46:50,388

-That's brilliant. Well,

thank you so much

912

00:46:50,412--> 00:46:53,948

and good afternoon, everybody.

Have a lovely rest of your day.

913

00:46:53,972--> 00:46:55,960

-Thank you. Thank you so much.