

Ep. 122 | Farewell, Dear Listeners

[00:00:11] **Kendra** Hello, I'm Kendra Winchester. And this is Reading Women, a podcast inviting you to reclaim the bookshelf and read the world. Today, we're reminiscing about the past six seasons of the show. And this is our last episode. You can find a complete transcript of this episode over on our website, readingwomenpodcast.com.

[00:00:28] **Kendra** So today is our last episode, like I said. And if you're seeing the title of this, you also probably see that. And I . . . man. . . . How . . . how do you summarize something like this? I don't know. I've been thinking about this for a long time. And I, you know, went over a lot of different options for this last episode. And I was thinking of having someone on to talk about it. And so I was like, we could do a past author that we've interviewed or someone special in bookish media. And I really didn't know like what exactly I wanted to do. And then I . . . then I realized that there was a member of our Reading Women team that I had never interviewed on the main podcast, who is probably been here almost as long as I have, I would say. So I realized that you all had never actually heard from my mom, who actually has been volunteering for Reading Women. And I thought that this would be a great opportunity. I think it's very on brand for a podcast about women. So welcome, Mom, to the podcast.

[00:01:39] **Mom** Thanks. It's good to be here.

[00:01:42] **Kendra** So I am excited to have you on. How are you feeling right now? I think this is your first main podcast feed episode.

[00:01:51] **Mom** Yes, it is. I am feeling better. I am feeling better. And currently I am not coughing up a storm and scaring everyone. So we're doing well. We're doing well. The royal "we," right?

[00:02:06] **Kendra** Yeah.

[00:02:06] **Mom** I am doing well.

[00:02:09] **Kendra** For those who don't know, you had COVID earlier this year.

[00:02:13] **Mom** Yes, I did. And it kind of hung around for quite a while. The fatigue lasted for months. And it flared up my asthma even more, so we're still working to get that under control. But I'm currently in a good space.

[00:02:28] **Kendra** Well, I'm very glad about that. There's nothing—I mean, besides having COVID, which would . . . definitely is worse—but besides having COVID, being far away from your family while they're having COVID—and obviously you can't go visit them while they have COVID is—it's very stressful. And I honestly don't know how I still did the podcast with all of that going on. And I don't share a lot about my personal life on the show, about the immediate personal life. I'm fine with talking about it in the past tense. So I guess I'm doing that again. But I'm so glad you're here on the podcast to chat. And yeah, I know you've been on the Patreon podcast before. And today we're going to chat about the podcast a little bit from your perspective. It's a little bit on the outside, but also with like an insider track. But I thought we could chat a little bit first. You also love to read. I would say that's probably. . . . You know, both my parents read. But you know, I was homeschooled, so you taught my brother and I. So what are you reading right now? And what has reading meant to you, I guess, over the last couple years?

[00:03:33] **Mom** I am currently reading THE PLUM PUDDING MURDER by Joanne Fluke. And she writes a whole series. I think it's up to at least twenty-eight books. I haven't read the very newest one, but I am actually on my second round through all of them. I listen mostly audiobook on errands and whatnot and going to work. On the way home from work, your dad and I catch up on each other's days. So I read on the way to work, sometimes on the way to work, and then when I'm driving around town. Sometimes when I'm playing Animal Crossing, I'm listening or whatever. But anyway, they are, I think you told me they're called "cozy mysteries."

[00:04:10] **Kendra** Yes.

[00:04:10] **Mom** And they include lots of . . . lots of recipes. The main character—and this isn't a spoiler—the main character owns a cookie shop, and so she includes lots of recipes in her books. And I actually bought a bunch of the paperbacks just so I can have the recipes. And I've tried them. Good. So. And I discovered this series in one of the Reading Women Challenges. I think it was the very first one you had. You had to . . . oh, no, no, no, it was a . . . it was a scavenger hunt you did for Reading Women, I think maybe for one of their birthdays, your birthdays, or something.

[00:04:43] **Kendra** Yeah.

[00:04:44] **Mom** Anyway, you had to find a book with food in the title. So here I am at the library, scouring the bookshelves, trying to find. And I found one of these, this series. And when I posted it on Instagram per the scavenger hunt rules, several of my friends said, "Oh, I've read those books. They're so good, and the recipes are fantastic." So I started reading them. And now I'm hooked. And 2021—2020, but especially 2021—this has been a hard year healthwise for all of us.

[00:05:16] **Kendra** "Dumpster fire" would be a good description.

[00:05:18] **Mom** Yes, it has. Yes, absolutely. So it is all about comfort reading. And so I go back to books that. . . I'm rereading books or re-listening to books in this case because I think I've only read one physical book this year. I've read. . . All my reading has actually been audiobook, which is fine. But it's all about comfort reading. You have comfort foods. And you have comfort reading. And you know, that's what this year is. So I went back and read. And I'm rereading these and enjoying it. You know, I still. . . I still keep, you know, plugging on for her to do the same thing I did the first time around. You know? And sometimes I forget who the . . . who the killer is, you know, the murder mystery. So I sometimes forget who the killer is. And then, you know, it's a surprise all over again. But that doesn't happen very often.

[00:06:14] **Kendra** You'll take it. You'll take it.

[00:06:16] **Mom** I'll take it. Take it. Yes. And she has a cat. I mean, you know, she has a cat named "Moishe." What can be better? A big, yellow tomcat. Reminds me of your cat, Sam, as we call them four-legged Sam.

[00:06:30] **Kendra** Versus my spouse, who is two-legged Sam.

[00:06:35] **Mom** Yes. Yes, it's complicated things.

[00:06:37] **Kendra** It did.

[00:06:37] **Mom** But anyway, that's a big, yellow tomcat that weighs like twenty-five pounds. And, you know, so it reminds me of four-legged Sam.

[00:06:47] **Kendra** Well, I wanted to have you on today because, you know, I wanted someone that was close to the podcast, but still had a sense of removed to chat with about the show and to reminisce about our different themes and just someone who would follow along with the show. And a lot of people came in at certain time periods. And some of you have been here, you know, listeners have been from the beginning. But I wanted someone who had that broad perspective who came on the show. But before we jump in, Mom, what do you . . . what do you do for the podcast, for listeners who may not be aware?

[00:07:20] **Mom** I am a proofreader for the newsletters. And I proofread. And then I have filled in as a transcriptionist at times, but mostly I proofread for the newsletters and whatever.

[00:07:38] **Kendra** Some of our challenges and like Reading Women months and like those big posts or pages that we do, you've proofread those.

[00:07:45] **Mom** Yes, I'm your proofreader.

[00:07:46] **Kendra** Yeah, which is very helpful, especially as my ability to read text has deteriorated.

[00:07:50] **Mom** Yes.

[00:07:50] **Kendra** It's been very helpful.

[00:07:56] **Mom** There are times I can tell how bad you're feeling by what you send me.

[00:08:00] **Kendra** This very true. Sam says the same thing. And I'm like, you know, I am just happy that I got something done, you know? And he's just like, "Oh my word, Kendra." So you were here from the beginning of the podcast. Do you remember when you first heard that we were starting a podcast?

[00:08:21] **Mom** I think you were home for Christmas. And you talked about, you know, that it was something that you wanted to do. And then, you know, it progressed. And then later in the year, you told me it was coming. And I anxiously awaited the first episode to drop.

[00:08:39] **Kendra** I didn't remember mentioning that at Christmas because I thought we started planning in March. But we started thinking about it in Christmas of 2015?

[00:08:49] **Mom** Maybe not. Maybe that was your. . . . Maybe that was your YouTube channel.

[00:08:53] **Kendra** It's possible. I mean. . . .

[00:08:56] **Mom** I don't know.

[00:08:57] **Kendra** Yeah, I mean, it all runs together.

[00:08:58] **Mom** But I remember you talking about it, whether it was a Christmas or, you know, in the spring. No, it was . . . it was your YouTube channel that you were talking about at Christmas. Anyway. I remember you talking about it, that you guys were hoping to do it and then, you know, waiting for the first episode because at that point I had to ask you what a podcast was. You explained it to me as a radio show, modern-day radio show. It's like, oh, okay, I know what that is.

[00:09:26] **Kendra** On demand, like Netflix.

[00:09:28] **Mom** Yes, you don't have to wait for it to come. You can just, you know, anytime you want it. So now your dad and I have this active list of podcasts we go through.

[00:09:37] **Kendra** I'm so proud. I converted both of you.

[00:09:41] **Mom** He actually listens to more than I do, but anyway.

[00:09:45] **Kendra** So we didn't have a newsletter at first. You remember when you started proofing for Reading Women?

[00:09:50] **Mom** Hmm. I think I started proofing like when you were setting up your web page or whatever. You would send me, you know, "Hey, can you look at this?" Or, you know, "Here's what we're ____" because you were able to read and write, you know, with text more than. And you would say, "Hey, this is what I'm planning to put up. Could you look at, you know, look it over for me. Does this make sense or typos or whatever?" And then as you . . . as Reading Women progressed and you put more things into print, you would have me proof, you know, like posts on Facebook or posts on Instagram once you got over there. And you know, I started out that way. And then when you started doing the newsletter, then you would have me proof. When you went to Patreon, you would have me read, you know, proof that one as well. I kind of have an insider's view of what's coming up because I get to do the newsletters.

[00:10:46] **Kendra** That's been really helpful because I just, you know, proofing is not my strong suit. I mean, it really wasn't even when I could read-read. But like now, it's just like not even happening because you have to have that attention and focus to detail that's not great for me. But I . . . So we started the podcast in 2016 on June 1st. Do you remember any particular early episodes that you really enjoyed, or maybe themes?

[00:11:18] **Mom** I really liked when you talked about MY BRILLIANT FRIEND. I think that was, according to my notes, I wrote down, that's episode 12. But I really like that it. . . . One thing your podcast has done is it has introduced me to a lot of writers and even genres that I never experienced before. You know? And I probably would have not known to read them, but that was one of your early, you know, books that were translated. You were promoting translation of works that have been written . . . first written in a different language, have been translated to English. And that was one I read. So I remember that one from, you know, your first season.

[00:12:03] **Kendra** Yeah, I remember the first season was just a lot of the things that we loved the most. And that was actually our first episode that kind of went viral because that episode got around, I think, 34,000 downloads within the first month. And that was really . . . I don't know. That started the process of thinking that this might be more than just

something with our friends. Do you remember when it became . . . went from a hobby to more of like a serious-esque business, I guess? It feels weird saying that.

[00:12:40] **Mom** Yeah. How early did you put things on Instagram?

[00:12:44] **Kendra** We . . . from the very beginning, we had an Instagram. And the first photo was of me editing.

[00:12:50] **Mom** Okay. Well, I remember on Instagram, I remember one time—and I wasn't sure if this was the first season or, you know, when—but I remember looking at the number of followers you had. And I remember saying to your dad, you know, this is expanded to more than just beyond her family or, you know, or the families and close friends. This is, you know, this is a lot more than, you know, just like, "Oh, Mom listens, or my aunts listen" or—which some of your aunts do listen. But, you know, it's expanded beyond that. And, you know, this . . . this is really becoming something.

[00:13:31] **Kendra** I remember I was laid off at the end of 2016 from, you know, I freelanced. So it was my biggest freelance job. And so I didn't really know what to do after that. And so I went full time with Reading Women. Just . . . I thought it was going to be just in the interim. And we just wanted to get some big things done, like getting the newsletter ready set up and all that stuff, getting our website, you know, we had a new website the beginning of the year. We had a new logo. The whole thing. And I remember you picked up the first Reading Women Challenge, which I believe was the year of 2017, I think. Is that right?

[00:14:11] **Mom** Hold on. I think it was '18.

[00:14:13] **Kendra** It was '18.

[00:14:14] **Mom** Yes, it was '18. You would have announced it at the end of '17 because that when I was able to complete.

[00:14:22] **Kendra** Yeah.

[00:14:22] **Mom** I didn't. I did, you know, part of other ones. But that one, I actually did the whole thing. And I did one of the bonus ones. I didn't get to Flannery O'Connor, but I did all the others and read MRS. DALLOWAY for the Woolf Project. So I was proud of me.

[00:14:43] **Kendra** Yeah, I forgot you read MRS. DALLOWAY. I just. . . My friend Laura was visiting. And she just gave me a special edition of MRS. DALLOWAY in this gorgeous cover. And it's like a book from the UK. And I was like, I don't own that edition of MRS. DALLOWAY because I have about—I don't know—at least six editions.

[00:15:04] **Mom** MRS. DALLOWAY Is going to get a shelf soon.

[00:15:07] **Kendra** I mean, Virginia already has her own shelf basically.

[00:15:10] **Mom** Right. But just that book will soon.

[00:15:14] **Kendra** That book. Yeah, I'm collecting the whole, like, edition of all of the books. But I just collect all the editions of MRS. DALLOWAY. I have a few of A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN. But I still, even as the podcast has moved to a more broader perspective of

literature, I still really love reading her just because it's like those comfort reads that you mentioned.

[00:15:38] **Mom** Yes.

[00:15:38] **Kendra** Just . . . she's just so familiar to me. And I remember I really loved. . . . I really loved grad school.

[00:15:46] **Mom** Yeah.

[00:15:46] **Kendra** Because I had a lot of friends and a lot of great classes, great teachers. I don't know. There's just something special about rereading books that you've loved.

[00:15:59] **Mom** And it's, I think, sometimes it's nice not to be surprised. You know, like especially with the last year and a half or so—and for us for this year—there have been so many surprises, and a lot of them haven't been nice. So having something where you knew what was coming and that it's a . . . you know, that . . . that sort of familiarity is part of what's comfortable and part of what's so appealing about rereading. I've always liked to reread books. But you know, some people say, "Oh, I never reread a book." And that always kind of makes me think, why? You know, if you've really enjoyed the book, you know, enjoy it again! You know. But. Because you always pick up something new, you know?

[00:16:48] **Kendra** Yeah.

[00:16:48] **Mom** When you go back, and you can find nuances in relationships and this, that, and the other when you know further down the road what happens. You know, you can pick up stuff. So anyway.

[00:17:01] **Kendra** Yeah.

[00:17:01] **Mom** You can also pick up more author inconsistencies when those happen. It's like, no, they didn't do that. This happened.

[00:17:07] **Kendra** That's very true. I'm about to start. . . . I have a bunch of reading plans. And we'll talk about that at the end. But I keep thinking about what I want to reread. But then I also have all these books I want to read. And I know, I don't know. I feel like that's definitely something that's very exciting. So we'll circle back up to that at the end. I don't want to spoil that segment or whatever. Like we're . . . like we're so formal. I feel like today, you know, we're breaking the mold because normally, you know, I was thinking about this. We have had the same structure on the podcast since its inception. And it has been that we have one theme. We have a bunch of books in the first episode, a discussion episode in the second one. And we wanted to do that because we noticed that most book podcasts that we were listening to were surveys, right? There were overviews to entice you to read the book, but we wanted an in-depth discussion to kind of replicate what we had experienced in grad school when we'd had this, you know, in these big classes where we had to write these like giant papers about certain things. And, you know, that was something I always really enjoyed about the podcast was being able to take that deep dive into books. So for you, Mom, as someone who enjoys reading, is that something that you really enjoyed? Did you find yourself wanting to pick up the books for the discussion episodes? Or what was your process for that?

[00:18:39] **Mom** I really did like the discussion episodes because it was sort of like listening to a couple of friends talk about, you know, talk about books. But it was almost like—I've never been to a formal book club—but it was kind of like being at a book club, hearing different perspectives on a book, and seeing what each of you got out of it that the other may not have picked up on or, you know, whatever. But yes, I did like those. And that is why I've read some of the books that I have is because you guys would talk about them. And I'd go, "Oo, I really want to do that." And I'd never heard of a TBR before. But I'm looking in my journal. And I have a "to be read" that overflowed my bookshelf. I mean, I drew it in my journal as a bookshelf. And yeah, that bookshelf is overflowing too. So there we go. Real life imitates . . . no, life imitates art? Art imitates life? Whatever that is—my bullet journal and our bookshelves are both in the same condition.

[00:19:47] **Kendra** You know, it's true. People may not know this. But my dad also has an overflowing library that mom is staring at right now. They're running out of shelves. It reminds me of The Sword in the Stone in the Disney version, where his house is just cluttered. And I'm like, that's my dad. Is my dad Merlin? That makes Darius the owl, right? The cat?

[00:20:15] **Mom** Yes. Yes, yes. But most of his bookshelves are double stacked, really. You know, and some of them that are not deep enough to be double stacked, the top shelf has two layers. You like. . . . They're on top of each other. Our granddaughter comes up here. And she just kind of like stands and looks, like, all of Papaw's books. You know. We tell her, Don't bother those. We give her some of her own.

[00:20:43] **Kendra** Yeah, I don't think that's exactly her speed.

[00:20:47] **Mom** No, when our grandson was younger, a stack of your dad's—a series—was on the floor, but it was not in order. And so he said, "Mimi, can I please put these in order?" He was about seven. And it just. . . . It bothered him they were out of order.

[00:21:06] **Kendra** I appreciate that. And when I send him books, I worry that he won't keep them together, like the series together. But I try not to think about it. Like I know, like, he's a boy that is kind of stereotypical in a certain way, we'll just say. But yeah, you know, one of the best moments of my life is when he was like telling his friends that his aunt is cool and can get him like whatever book he wants or something. And I'm like, that's a . . . that's a nerdy flex right there, isn't it?

[00:21:41] **Mom** Oh, he thinks Aunt K knows everything there is about books. He'll say, "Hmm, I wonder if this book is out. I think I need to talk Aunt K."

[00:21:51] **Kendra** All right. So we . . . we started the podcast. We got to the new season. We started doing author interviews. And we talked about author interviews in our last like reminiscence episode. But what did you think, like, when that started because I feel like that was kind of unexpected? We did not expect to do author interviews. It was kind of a . . . a startling—I was about to say "occurrence," but that's not right—startling . . . what's the word I'm looking for?

[00:22:17] **Mom** Development.

[00:22:17] **Kendra** Yes. Thank you.

[00:22:19] **Mom** You're welcome. I think it was really cool. The one that I probably resonated with the most is when you did Maggie O'Farrell.

[00:22:28] **Kendra** Oh my goodness.

[00:22:30] **Mom** Her book I AM, I AM, I AM. I just. . . . I think because I identify with that book so much, not that I have—I mean, I've had illnesses off and on—but I don't consider myself chronically ill. But when she talked about her child being chronically ill, that's when I was like, okay, yes, this, you know? And so that one was. . . . That's probably my favorite one of all time, of all the ones you've done. Yeah, that was probably my favorite. Just because, yeah, just because.

[00:23:03] **Kendra** That one stands out in my mind as well. I, at the end of the podcast, I just started sobbing and so . . . like. . . . Thankfully, there was someone else to carry it through because, like, I would . . . definitely was not coherent enough. And so that . . . that, yeah, I just remember that one. Like there are certain ones that . . . certain interviews that stand out in my mind. But of course, we talked about that last time. But I don't think I realized even interviewing Maggie O'Farrell that I was disabled because that was not a word that I would have ever applied to myself because you don't think about. . . . Like we have in our minds what disabled people are. But when you realize that that is a form of gatekeeping and that there's just a lot more going on with the term "disabled" and what that means for you as a person and who can be disabled and who's not disabled. I think that was really the beginning of me looking into that term because I realized that there was something different between Maggie O'Farrell and I that was not the same. In that, like, you know, she eventually recovered from her chronic illness as a child. And she did not consider herself chronically ill as an adult. But I did, and I was like, oh, there's a difference. And so, you know, that's just Maggie O'Farrell's experience. But that for me, personally, engaging with that book was really important. And it's a gorgeously written book. And I really appreciate what she says about, you know, caregiving for a child who has . . . who has a chronic illness or who is disabled, and. . . .

[00:24:33] **Mom** That needs to go on my reread TBR.

[00:24:36] **Kendra** Yeah.

[00:24:36] **Mom** Now, would that be TBRR . . . to be re-read? Whatever. I need to be read it again,

[00:24:43] **Kendra** New acronym. You heard it here first. So we have a lot of themes that we've done over the course. And of course, we had. . . . I don't know. It was a couple of seasons before the new co-hosts came on. But then when they did, there was like a whole new world of ideas. So what. . . ? What was your thoughts moving into that? Because by then you were like proofreading every week and doing all these different things for the podcast. And I know Beth, our transcript editor, has said that she considers like different eras of Reading Women. And she said that was like a beginning of a new era. We had so many different people, ideas, and all sorts of things.

[00:25:23] **Mom** Yes. I enjoyed that. And I enjoyed the different interests that they brought in. And like THE WIDOWS OF MALABAR HILL—I never would have discovered that. I mean, that was a fantastic—or is—a fantastic book. And then I read the one after that. If she has a third one, I haven't read that. And then when you did like the, um. . . .

[00:25:51] **Kendra** Afrofuturism.

[00:25:53] **Mom** That one! Yes. Thank you very much. With BINTI. I really liked that book. I mean, that one was one I never would have been exposed to, or it wouldn't have come on my radar, you know? So I really appreciated the difference. You know, everybody has their, like, comfort area of reading. And it was good to, you know, expand on to other things. And I really enjoyed those.

[00:26:20] **Kendra** Yeah, I really appreciate that. I know Sachi was very excited about the episode we do with Bezi and Afrofuturism and Africanfuturism. And yeah. And I remember when, you know, a lot of patrons—I asked this to the patrons a while ago—and I remember that partition narratives that we did with Sumaiyya was a big favorite. And then you have like authors like Veera Hiranandani, who was a guest on the show to recommend some books. She talked about. . . . She talked about how that, you know, it affected her family. And Sumaiyya talked about how it affected her family. And I know that was really just a great, a great moment that I will always remember in the podcast history. And also, like we, you know, with Jaclyn, we had a lot of great Australian literature. And she raised a lot of awareness for how few books come from Australia to America and how it's really difficult to get Australian, you know, written titles. And they're actually very good. It's just there's this huge problem with getting international literature into America and all this stuff. And so her episodes have always been really informative on that. And she's such a champion for Australian literature.

[00:27:33] **Kendra** So, yeah, it's . . . it's been . . . it's been a great. . . . It's been a great six seasons. And I'm very proud of what we've put out and the wide variety of perspectives. And, you know, the patrons. You know, I just want to give a huge shout out to the patrons because they have stuck with us for so long in so many different, like, versions and developments and how we've grown over the years. And, you know, they've always been so appreciative of how hard the team has worked. And I'm so grateful for that. And you know, Mom, one of their favorite episodes was when we talked about what it was like being home schooled for the Patreon.

[00:28:12] **Mom** Really?

[00:28:12] **Kendra** Yeah.

[00:28:12] **Mom** Oh, that's cool.

[00:28:15] **Kendra** Yeah. And we were going to do a second episode. But it didn't work out for logistical reasons. I think I was sick, um, which is usually the reason why things don't get done on time.

[00:28:26] **Mom** You were. You were home—well, you were here. And, um, I know where you are is home, but you know what I mean. You were here, and we were going to do it. And then you got sick, and it just didn't work.

[00:28:40] **Kendra** Well, now you're here, on the main feed.

[00:28:43] **Mom** Up in the big leagues, right? I got moved to the big leagues, out of the . . . out of the minors.

[00:28:53] **Kendra** So what is one thing that happened that you were. . . . Like, I have a lot of moments that I can't believe that this is happening, that this is my life. Did you have one of those moments for Reading Women?

[00:29:03] **Mom** When you started getting mentioned by various big-name media outlets or when. . . . I know for a while, your dad would keep me up to date on how many followers like you had on Instagram or whatever. And, you know, it's just like, wow, how far it's come from the beginning when it was just for your friends and, you know, whatever. And . . . and it was like your influence was literally worldwide between the contributors you had and the media outlets that were interviewing you. And then you were on other podcasts. And it's like, this is so cool, you know, so. And then when you were asked to go, you know, be on a panel or to be a judge here or whatever. And you know, it was like. . . . And it was because of Reading Women. And that's how they know about you. And you know, it's just . . . it's been really cool to see how Reading Women has influenced, I think, the way people read and what they read. And, you know, just because the podcast is not going to be continuing does not mean that influence has ended or that people can't still remember what Reading Women has stood for and continue. I mean, you know, you've opened doors that . . . those doors will be forever opened for your listeners, you know, and for those who followed you on Instagram or wherever. So I mean, just because the podcast itself is not continuing doesn't mean it's still not having an impact.

[00:30:50] **Kendra** I appreciate that. I appreciate that. One thing I learned is, you know, I've worked 60 hours on this podcast the last two years, and. . . .

[00:31:01] **Mom** A week, right?

[00:31:01] **Kendra** Yeah. Yeah, a week.

[00:31:03] **Mom** Not total.

[00:31:04] **Kendra** Not total. Oh my word. And, you know, sometimes you're just so in it, it's hard. . . . It's hard. . . . Sometimes it can be hard to remember, like, you know, you're so in it. And you're just trying to get . . . meet the deadlines. It's sometimes difficult to just be like, oh, right, we're doing this because we love books and because we want to make a difference in everyday readers' lives. And we want to support these authors who may not be getting as much attention as they deserve because of one reason or another. And so that's something that I really have always loved about the podcast was that that is ultimately why I did this. And I am so grateful when listeners reach out and say, you know, I've been reading these books. I didn't realize, like, how many dudes I was reading or how many, like, white people I was reading. Or I'm, you know, belong to this community, and I realized I wasn't reading any books from my own community. And I really wanted to read those. And it was just something I didn't realize. Those are the. . . . Those are the moments of why Reading Women exists is really for listeners and for those authors. And that's something that . . . definitely a big takeaway.

[00:32:16] **Mom** Yeah. And I was looking. . . . I was looking back in my . . . in my bullet journal, my, you know, my books that I'd read, especially like 2018/2019, and how many of the books are on there because of Reading Women, because I heard about them on Reading Women, or heard about—or they were featured on Reading Women or whatever. Of course, then once I discovered the . . . the—and it's called the Hannah Swenson series, if anybody wants to look it up—but once I discovered those, I mean, there are twenty-eight in the books in the series. So you know, that became the main focus of what I was

listening to because I had a lot of catching up to do. But, you know, so many of them. . . . And even then, I discovered that because of Reading Women. So you know, it just . . . it's really had a big influence on what I've read the last few years, at least pre-COVID.

[00:33:15] **Kendra** So normally in our Patreon episodes, this is where I asked people, "Do you have any questions for me?" So I'm going to do that here since we're kind of breaking the mold on the the main feed. Are you having any questions that you wanted to ask me because it's been a while since we did an episode on Patreon? It's been, what, a couple . . . few years.

[00:33:36] **Mom** Yeah. Yeah. What. . . . So now—with the podcast winding down or ending—so now what's next for you? What are you going to do? Because I know you. You're not going to just sit at home and twiddle your thumbs. That's not like you. You have too much of your father in you.

[00:33:55] **Kendra** That's very true. An anxious workhorse.

[00:33:59] **Mom** Yes, constantly. I mean, you know, even if we're watching a movie, we have to be doing something else too. This is a man who reads at red lights. So anyway.

[00:34:10] **Kendra** Don't try that at home, children, please.

[00:34:12] **Mom** Well, he's sitting still at a red light. But you know. But anyway. Yes, don't try this. It's not something I recommend. Anyway. What's next?

[00:34:22] **Kendra** Well, I actually am not. . . . I'm not doing anything big next. Some people have emailed me some really wonderful, kind emails and asked me what's next? And they're like, "Oh, I'm sure you have something like a big new project planned." And I'm like, well, not really. I'm actually was planning on medical leave, as it were, just to take some time off to do some testing I've been putting off, that I couldn't do while podcasting. And I'm going to be doing that. And actually, my doctor wants to start earlier than planned. So actually, I start my first round of testing in a week from this recording. So that's thrilling, right? Like, oh, we're going to do this in December, right before the holidays? That's great. So we're going to do that.

[00:35:11] **Mom** Lovely.

[00:35:11] **Kendra** I tease and say that I'm retiring to be a stay-at-home corgi mahm because Gwen, our second corgi, is just about five months. And she loves to chew everything, especially baskets are her favorite. She has found every basket in this house that we have tried to, like, put in other places. She found them all. The Pottery Barn one. The Walmart one. TJ Max one. It doesn't matter. Equal opportunity basket chewer. And I will be working on Read Appalachia. It's more of a heritage project, but it's been doing. . . . I didn't. . . . It was just something there to have an outlet because I moved out of the region a year ago and—you know, the outer edges of the region—and I wanted to do something more. So I have that. And I actually had to give up my BookTube channel this year because I just was so sick I couldn't do Reading Women and at the same time. So I wanted to do more with that and kind of go back to doing some of that.

[00:36:13] **Mom** Oh good.

[00:36:15] **Kendra** I miss it, you know? But you know, the big thing, I think, for me is resting. You know, we—in our society—praise overwork. We say . . . we have a lot of bluster about self-care and whatever, but we praise overwork. And when you're. . . . And I'm a disabled, chronically ill person. A lot of people don't understand that, like, when I say I can't do something, there's a physical reason for it. And so it's been really difficult to try to communicate that in a very busy working world that is publishing. And so I'm going to take some time. I want to read some dudes, you know. Like I haven't read books by men except for like Garth Nicks, you know, like the SABRIEL books or whatever. I haven't read dudes in a long time. So I have like Ocean Vuong. I have Bryan Washington, who Jaclyn is a huge fan of. So that's been on my list for ages. I have so many that I have a stack of dudes that I want to read. Of course, more women, more women in translation in particular. I really am excited just to read what interests me. I'm judging something right now. So when that's over, I can read—listen, I guess for me—whatever I want to. And the last thing, I guess, is I freelance for Book Riot. I know, like I'm saying, I'm not doing a lot. And there are like things here. But the thing is, is like, except for my freelance work, I don't have deadlines with all this other stuff. So if I'm sick, I can take the week off if I want to. Right? With Reading Women, no one else edits the podcast. So I have. I have. I'm the one who has to do it. I haven't had a vacation where I haven't worked on Reading Women ever since it started, so I'm like, I'm ready.

[00:38:09] **Mom** Yes. Yeah. Because even when you've come to see us, you said, "Well, you know, I'll have to work while I'm there." And we're like, yeah, okay. You know. And you have. Yeah, you know.

[00:38:20] **Kendra** Yeah.

[00:38:21] **Mom** So it would be good for you to have some time off. Everybody needs time off sometimes.

[00:38:26] **Kendra** Yeah. And you know, one of the things that one of our patrons—she's also chronically ill, and she and I talk a lot. Shoutout to Shelby. And there was this thing that, like, she posted—it was a while ago—but it was like something about chronically ill people feeling guilty when you take off time when you feel well because most of the time you take off is when you're sick. And you save your vacation for your sick days, but you're allowed to take vacation when you feel well. And that is like . . . it's like a mind, like, my mind-blown emoji is like in my brain. Yeah, play World of Warcraft and Sims and Animal Crossing, listening to audio books. I mean, I haven't changed since I was a teenager, I suppose. Still playing the same games.

[00:39:26] **Mom** Yeah. I can see you on the couch.

[00:39:27] **Kendra** Yes.

[00:39:27] **Mom** Surrounded by a couple laptops and a drink and a comfy blanket. Yeah.

[00:39:36] **Kendra** The nesting. Nesting ever since. I passed it on to my corgi children. My genetics are that strong, it jumped species that I adopted.

[00:39:46] **Mom** Oh, that's so funny.

[00:39:48] **Kendra** Well, I'm also planning on visiting you. So I'll finally be able to visit you at random times.

[00:39:54] **Mom** Yay! It's my favorite.

[00:39:54] **Kendra** I just charted up where to fly in and different things.

[00:40:00] **Mom** Oh good.

[00:40:00] **Kendra** I'll be able to do that throughout the year. And I'm very excited because Samuel doesn't get off, but if I can fly. . . . So as long as weather holds, so that's exciting. Yeah, yeah. I think, you know, I'm very proud of what we've done with Reading Women. And I think, you know, just like TV shows end, you know, podcasts end. And you know, everyone on the team, you can still follow on social media. You can go check out their pages. I'll link some things down in the show notes where you can find a list of the team members and all this stuff so you can go follow them and see what they're doing. They have a lot of their own projects going on. I know three of them have their own podcasts that either are currently going on or will be starting in the New Year. So you can go follow those, which is really exciting. Mom, what are you going to be doing the New Year?

[00:40:54] **Mom** In the New Year. Probably still listening to my audiobooks, going back and forth to work. I haven't been crafting this year. I'm hoping if, you know, life will settle down, maybe I can get back in my making cards again because I do miss it. I just, you know, there's only so much bandwidth.

[00:41:16] **Kendra** Yeah. And you do scrapbooking, custom-made cards?

[00:41:20] **Mom** Yes, I do. Are there more cards than scrapbooks anymore. I did your cousin's wedding album, and that was pretty much the last. No, I didn't. I did an album about her husband growing up, and that was probably about the last scrapbooking I've really done. I haven't even done my grandchildren. What kind of a grandma am I? But right now, I'm just busy, you know, playing Animals and whatever.

[00:41:47] **Kendra** Animal Crossing. We love. . . . We love the new update.

[00:41:52] **Mom** Yes, we do. We do. And talking villagers and you know, what have you. I just got Fang. I got two to come the same day. So today when I get on, I'll have two new villagers at the same time.

[00:42:06] **Kendra** That's impressive.

[00:42:06] **Mom** Never happened to me.

[00:42:07] **Kendra** That's very impressive.

[00:42:09] **Mom** I brought one in by amiibo, and one asked to leave that I was willing to let leave. And it turned out that they were synchronized. So I have Fang and Savannah coming today.

[00:42:22] **Kendra** Well, I. . . . This is. . . . So this is the end here of Reading Women. And I want to say thank you all so much for listening over the last almost six years now. I greatly appreciate it. I. . . . I don't know how, you know. . . . I've had Reading Women in my life since I was 25. Like, so I was just out of school. So I have either been in school or had Reading Women in my life. And so now it's like a whole new chapter for me. I usually have

chapters of my life for six and seven years apiece, it seems like. So I don't know what the next part is going to look like. But you all can find, as I said, all of our team members on the team page. You can find me in my social media on there. And you can follow along if you . . . if you would like. But I want to say thanks to everyone for listening.

[00:43:16] **Kendra** And all of our backlisted episodes are still going to be hosted with LitHub, so you can go listen to those whenever you like. You can even try past challenges that you didn't do. So a lot of people have contacted us and say, "Well, we just found the challenge in 2021. What do we do now?" Well, we can send them back to old challenges, or you can check out Book Riot's Read Harder challenge. And then also, StoryGraph has a challenge coming out this year, I believe as well. So you have a lot of different options. A lot of people are discussing on our post on Instagram where to go. So definitely check out those as well. And we also have some recommendations on Patreon. So we have people coming on on Patreon who we think would be cool for you to follow, so you can head over there if you like and listen to those episodes for the starting is a dollar. And that's going to be just in December. And then that's it. So you want to sneak in there while you can. Is there anything else, Mom, you wanted to cover?

[00:44:19] **Mom** No, I don't think so. Just, you know. . . . We're very proud of you and all that Reading Women has done. And we're anxious to see what the next chapter looks like.

[00:44:30] **Kendra** Thank you.

[00:44:31] **Mom** And it's . . . I think it's—you're welcome—and I think it's really cool how Reading Women has been able to showcase and support so many women. And you have, you know, promoted other women and their projects. And it's not like, you know, oh, well, you know, they're working for this part. So, you know, you can't promote that. But you've been very willing to promote their special projects and, you know, their pages and whatever. And I think that's really cool. I think that's the way it should be. You know, we should. . . . You know, what is that saying? That we should straighten each other's crown without letting the world know that it slipped or something? I don't know. There's a quote out there, something like that. But you know. Anyway, but, you know, just helping each other out, that's the way it should be. So, good job. You've done a great job.

[00:45:24] **Kendra** Well, I appreciate it. And I appreciate your support. And as you have, you know, you've been Reading Women's number one fan, and I appreciate that. You know, whether we had like five listens or, you know, fifty thousand—it doesn't matter. And so I really appreciate that, Mom. Whenever I felt really bad about something that didn't go right or I was upset about something not turning out the way I wanted or whatever, you've always been really encouraging. So I appreciate it. And I think for a podcast called Reading Women, that's really important because it's women supporting other women and—not always, but oftentimes—that's your mom that teaches you that. And so I really appreciate that.

[00:46:09] **Mom** You're very welcome. Very welcome.

[00:46:10] **Kendra** So, all right. Well, listeners, that's it. That's our last show. Many thanks to our patrons, whose support has made this podcast possible these last almost six years. This episode was produced by me, Kendra Winchester. Our music is by Miki Saito with Isaac Greene. You can find all of our backlisted episodes wherever you get your podcasts. And you can find Reading Women on Instagram and Twitter (@thereadingwomen). And thank you so, so much for listening.

