

## Transcript

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You're listening to the My Simplified Life podcast and this is episode number 257. Welcome to the My Simplified Life podcast, a place where you will learn that your past and even your present don't define your future. Regardless of what stage of life you're in, I want you to feel inspired and encouraged to pursue your dreams, simplify your life, and start taking action. I'm your host, Michelle Glogovac, author of How to Get on Podcasts.

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the podcast matchmaker and CEO and founder of the MLG Collective. I'm excited to share my stories and life lessons with you while taking you on my own journey. This is my simplified life.

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Hey friends, welcome back to another episode. I'm your host, Michelle Glogovac. Today, let's go on an adventure to Switzerland. Sure, why not? My guest is Meg Tatey, author of Super Bloom and today, author of Bluebird Day. It is out now with Zibi Books and it is a novel that takes you to Switzerland, to Zermatt to be exact.

01:09

I fell in love with the book. It is such a great read, and I really felt like I was transported to Switzerland. So I was very excited to talk to Meg all about how she did her research, what that looked like. Did she go to Switzerland? I was hoping so. And you're gonna hear even more about the writing process and what that looks like, as well as the parts of Meg that are in this novel that comes out today.

01:38

Hello, Meg. Hi, Michelle. I'm so excited to get to talk to you again. Another amazing book. And I have to say, I think I like this one even more than the first one, which is amazing because I love the first one. That makes me so happy. Thank you for saying that. It's so fun to start to hear from

readers and people who are enjoying the book. It's really exciting. Before we go further, can you introduce yourself, please, and let everyone know what book we're talking about?

02:08

My name is Megan Tady. I am the author of *Bluebird Day*. My debut novel was *Super Bloom*. And *Bluebird Day* is about two alpine ski racing champs, mom and a daughter. They've been estranged for years and they find themselves in a Swiss village when an avalanche socks in their town and the only place to stay is a youth hostel with bunk beds and there are secrets and...

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old wounds and all the stuff sort of coming to the surface at the same time. I loved the aspect of it being in Switzerland. And I told you this as we were scheduling this, my mom is from Switzerland. My brother was there in July in Zermatt. And so I was like, Oh my goodness, this feels so real to me. Tell me you please tell me that you went to Switzerland at some point. I did. I did. And first of all, I wish I had known. I would have.

03:04

you know, been like interviewing your mom. I mean, I just I love interviewing people. And I went to Switzerland in my 20s. And I had studied abroad in London and toured all over Europe. And Switzerland stuck in my mind. It was the most beautiful place I had ever been. And of course, during this whole traveling time, I was staying in all these youth hostels.

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And I stayed in this youth hostel in Switzerland that had a disco in the basement, very similar to the hostel that is kind of the inspiration for *Bloober Day*. And I was still a skier at the time and I had this really crazy ski experience on a glacier in Switzerland. I'm afraid of heights, I got really scared. So like it just really influenced the book so much.

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And I was so happy. It's odd, like 20 or 25 years later, what trickles in to novels, how you were influenced way, way, way back. I felt like you should have just been there. Like next time you

need, hey, Zibi, I'm going to be doing this book on Switzerland, so you're gonna have to send me there for research purposes for like a year. Completely. Definitely, definitely swing that into the next one.

04:28

But it felt like you must have been there. And then when I read the acknowledgements on all of the research you did and all of the help that you had, what did you enlist to get this book done? So who did you enlist? Yeah, so in 2018, an actual avalanche stranded 15,000 or 13,000 tourists in Zermatt. And I remember reading that.

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statistic reading that headline and kind of filing that away and being like, oh, that would be a really fascinating place to situate a story. So when it came to be, you know, start to craft this book, I sort of harkened back to that and was like, that's this plot device that I'm going to use. And I love this setting so much. But I wanted to know, okay, what was it really like to be a tourist who was stranded? What was it like to be the head of tourism and have to

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go around until thousands of tourists, you know, all you're stranded and skiing is canceled. Like the reason you're here, you can't do it. What was it like to fly some of these helicopters that were evacuating 500 tourists a day? So I, you know, I just cold email a lot of people and everyone is always so happy to talk about their experience and

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You know, I ended up having these awesome Zoom calls with people in Switzerland who were like, yeah, that was crazy. And it ended up being kind of festive actually, like when we all realized we were okay and safe, we turned it into a party, you know, and I just got these little details to try to, you know, really make the story rich and was able to track down folks who were stranded there, people who had lived there, who could give me some real color, you know, like what are...

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What are Swiss people like? You know, I have a sense of it. I've met Swiss people, but like give me some, some other ways of really knowing them. And that was such a blast. I loved it. I felt like I was eating the food and when they had fun, too, I was like, oh, yay. Yes. Yes. That's my wish I had known. I would have talked to your mom. She, I don't know how she, no, she's here. She came over to the States. Um, her.

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Now she has nephews and nieces that are still there because her siblings have passed and her mom's passed, but they were all still living there up until they passed away. So the last time I was there was my senior year of high school. But my brother went in college and then him and his wife, they celebrated their 10 year wedding anniversary in July there with their daughter. That's amazing. Yeah, it's so beautiful. It's just, it's gorgeous.

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I'm like, oh, now I want to go back. I don't want to be snowed in with an avalanche. The summertime is beautiful though. I've been there in the summer. Yes. Yes. I know. I know. So yeah, don't get stranded there. And the other thing is that there is a bit of a climate change aspect to this book and that winter is changing and these ski towns are having to reckon with that. So I was able to interview...

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a Swiss glaciologist, you know, like what's happening to these glaciers and what's going to happen to these ski towns? How are things changing? And how, how is skiing changing and ski racing and all these snow sports that we love? How can we better protect them? So that's another element. It's definitely, I think that's something I kind of always touch on in a lot of my books, like an environmental piece that's really close to my heart, but I also

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I want people to have a really enjoyable, fun experience reading the book and not be freaked out. And so it's sort of like very secondary, you know, like, oh, right, this is a love letter to winter and I really love winter. So what should I do to keep making sure we have winters? And it was fascinating too, the way you did bring it in of, you know, skiers are part of this and how you want the snow to be packed. And then we bring in the fake snow and all of this other stuff.

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I mean, it was something I didn't realize. I mean, I know that we've got global warming. I know that we've got climate change. I know that there are all of these things that go into it, but you don't really think, oh, well, skiing has something to do with that per se. And then you read the book and you're like, oh, I've been enlightened, not just entertained, but enlightened and educated along the way. Oh, good. That's my hope. Yes. Tell me, how did you come up with this premise of, so we'll give a little bit, but we won't.

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give anything away. The daughter does not know who her father is. Correct. Yeah. And I was like, oh, oh. And then there's a part where you go, oh, I get it now. I see what happened. And then there's two best friends who are not duking it out, but they haven't talked for years. The mother and the daughter aren't talking. You've got this agent guy who wants something else. And there's a lot of conflict. Yes.

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Yes. So where did you get this conflict from? Like, how did you create this? What part of it is you? No, what part of it is me? Yeah, you know, when I first conceived of this book, I don't know if you're a fan of it. Are you a fan of The Amazing Race, the show, the reality show? I don't really know. I don't watch it. Okay. So I used to watch it, you know, years ago, and I was, I really wanted to be a contestant on the show. Although I would be the...

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worst contestant. I mean, like I freak out in a tiny bit of traffic, you know, like plans go awry. I'm a stress ball. But I just always had this fantasy that I would do it. And I at first began to piece together this story as this estranged mom and daughter are contestants on the Amazing Race. And both my agent and editor love the mom and daughter piece, but they were like, reality shows don't sell as books.

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People love to watch them, they don't love to read them. So let's reconceive of this. And I started thinking a little more, and I love sports. I was an athlete growing up and female athletes,

there's just a huge spotlight on them right now. Like in every single sport, they've always been doing incredible things, but there's more attention on them. And I wanted to sort of think about, okay, well, what's the craziest sport?

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And that kind of drew me to ski racing. It's super dangerous, it's incredibly hard. And so what if it's this mom and daughter who were sort of bred for glory, and one, the mom wanted to do it, and the daughter doesn't, but she also happens to be really talented and it drives this wedge. So I just began to look into the sport a little bit more and to imagine what that would be like, and then build in.

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the layers of estrangement and the layers of secrets and who's wanting what from somebody else, you know, just, you can't only have one sort of layer to your book, it has to be multi-layered. So that's what I was really trying to do. You know, as far as my personal experience, this was, it was a hard book to write because I pitched it and sold it before my own mom.

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got sick and died of pancreatic cancer. And I was then on the hook to finish writing this book in the like grief stage. And this happened, you know, my mom, the anniversary of her passing's coming up two years. And so suddenly I was like, oh my gosh, like I've got to write this book, finish writing it. And I was sort of pulling up my own experience of having...

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you know, periods of estrangement and challenges with my own mom and the ways we navigated that and began to heal our relationship. So, you know, it was, it's, I was telling someone else this the other day, it's a lighthearted book in a lot of ways, but it was really written and bred in a lot of dark times for myself. Yeah.

12:56

That's a long answer. No, and I want to say I love it and yet I'm like, that's not the right thing to say. I love the explanation and the reasoning behind it because it is the part of you that is in this that people won't expect. It's beautiful and sad and tragic at the same time that you went through all of this and not just grieving your mother, but then...

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looking back, and I think this is so true for so many of us, of estrangements and what goes wrong and what's sad and regrets and all of that, and then how do we come to grips with it when it is time and we have to face it head on. So we just took a total serious turn, I know. We went from lighthearted in Switzerland and eating and we're like, oh, yes, mothers and daughters. Yes, for sure. And now I'm a mom. You know, I'm...

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My daughter just turned nine, my son is six, and that also just really influenced the book. And I felt like the chapters alternate POVs between the mom and the daughter. And I sort of felt like I was splitting myself in half as I was writing and sort of standing in one chapter in my sort of daughter experience and then standing in another chapter as a mom. And knowing that

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both characters are complex and human and flawed and fail and are unique just as I am in my role as mom and daughter. And I wanted to sort of imbue that and to really get to the heart of this sort of idea of forgiveness that it isn't.

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always a linear process, whether you're forgiving someone else or forgiving yourself. You know, it doesn't just like, okay, you know, like we're done. It happens and, you know, stops and starts. And sometimes you go through a period and then you kind of have to like, oh, that like still hurts. Like you have to revisit it or new wounds arise. I fully expect my daughter is going to be like, uh, mom, you know, remember when you did this? Like I'm preparing, you know, because

15:22

We are humans and we make mistakes. And so I wanted to get to the heart of that a little bit. It took me a while, I think as a young woman to really be like, oh, my mom's a person. She's not just a mom. Like, what does that mean then? You know, like what sort of grace can I give her? How does my relationship shift when I see her as a fully formed?

15:51

Yeah. That's so hard. It's so true and yet so hard. Something I grapple with myself. Then as you become a mom and a fully formed person, there's still times where I'm like, no, I'm a person too. So I mean, Michelle, just the other day I said to my son, I was like, do you want to know anything about me?

16:18

I was like, I've lived a huge, like a really long life so far. Like, are you curious? What did I do? You know, and he was like.

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I was like, okay, I'll go make your dinner. Okay, all right. Oh, the honesty. But that'll all change. I think that we're uninteresting up until a certain point and then they'll want to know. But I know that they're on this journey. I think we talked about this last time when you were on about how they're viewing you and this book coming out and what is round two like for them and for you?

16:58

That's a great question. They're so proud of me. It's so cool to see, you know, my son doesn't totally read yet. He doesn't read yet. And so first of all, any book on my shelf he thinks is my book. He thinks, which like, you know, hundreds of books. He's like, is this yours? Is this yours? I'm like, I've written two. Thank you. Which feels huge. And my daughter, you know, she just talks me up. I picked her up from camp.

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this summer and the counselor was like, your daughter is an incredible salesperson. She just told me all about your book and I just pre ordered and I'm like, Oh my god. Thank you. So they're super proud of me. And you know, they're also like, I get you know, I get my books, my



copies in the mail, like, who wants to see them? And they're like, Can we go watch their shows? You know, I'm like, Okay.

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It's amazing. And yet it is because they're secretly behind our backs talking about us in the best possible way. Because mind you, the same thing, they even check my book out at the school library. And I'm like, you guys have copies at home. Can you not check this book out? That is so funny. Oh my gosh. You're like, save that for someone else, please.

18:18

Yes, yes, but they will tell everyone. My daughter came home, she's like, so the girl who's the intern for our PE class, I told her what you did. And then she Googled you and you came right up. I love it. I love it. They are so proud. It's really cool. And my daughter loves to write and she loves to read. I think that's one thing I'm really proud of with her. I mean, I have books. I'm usually reading five books at any given time. They're strewn about the house.

18:46

And now my daughter is sort of the same. She's just constantly reading. She'll be in the center of all the hubbub and she's just reading her book. And I'm like, yes, that's my girl. Yes, we will pass that on. I love it. Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. How long did it take you to write this one? I was thinking about that the other day. When I sold the book, I had about 50 pages. So I sold it on a partial.

19:14

if anyone who's interested in the behind the scenes of publishing, and then I had to finish it. And that was new for me. I hadn't, you know, super blue. My first novel took me eight years. And that I sort of include like finding an agent and getting my publisher. It was a long slog. And this one was probably 16 months all told. And...

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You know, I was under contract, which had a lot of pluses. I could work with my editor. I could be like, I wrote myself into a corner. You know, what do I do here? I could have the feedback from

my agent. We could, you know, walk through things together. And, you know, I had to write it fast. And I think what you forget when you're writing,

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when you set out to write is that it's not just time at your computer, it's time to think. And it's time, it's like passive time away from your computer. And often that happens for me in the woods when I'm hiking, and I take my headphones off, and I turn off my audio book or my podcast, and I really force myself to think through like, what's a plot hole that's happening or a piece of dialogue that's not working.

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or just to let my mind just kind of wander. And I didn't have as much time to do that. So there were just moments where I had to just buckle down. And I remember getting a note from my editor, my character Wiley in the book begins to have this sort of budding romance with this singer named Calvin. And they have a scene in the club and my editor was like, can you make this sexier?

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And so here I am in my upstairs office. I'm in my grubby pajamas. My kids are downstairs watching a show. I feel not sexy. And I'm writing the word grind. And I have like 20 minutes to sexify this point.

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This is awesome. I love this. Yeah. You did. And he's like, don't look at me that way. Oh, I read it. Yes. But this is even great now for those who are going to read it to now picture you in your pajamas.

22:02

Like, how am I going to sexify this part? That's awesome. Yeah. I love it. Now I have a new appreciation for just that scene in general. I know. It's so funny. I was just dying. I texted my agent, my editor. I was like, I couldn't feel less sexy right now, but I'm going to give this a go. I

forget what author it was. There was some author was, oh, it's the Fifty Shades of Grey author who would make her husband play out.

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all of the scenes with her. No way. I read that in an interview, yes. That's amazing. So they like laid it out. He must be a very happy man. No kidding. My husband's gonna be like, wait a second. Why wasn't this happening? He's like, wait, which one am I? Am I Calvin or am I the one who got left out? Yeah, exactly. Oh my goodness, I love this.

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Are you working on your next one already? I am. I know that this one comes out, so today, we're recording early, but today is pub day. Woohoo! Congratulations. Thank you. So as the baby is born, are we thinking of the next one? Yes, I am working on the next one. I have like two thirds of the way through on this very fun holiday rom-com that's just like a palette cleanser of a book.

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and I'm having a total blast with it. I'm not going to say too much more, but set in New York, you know, just a total super fun. And yeah, like I, you know, I, I love, I just love writing and I crave that time and I crave, you know, every chance I get to work on it. I feel really lucky that I think every author has their own challenges when it comes to this journey.

23:52

And mine is not bum and chair, you know, like getting here, getting to the page. I'm not intimidated by the blank page. I love it. Bring it on. I feel more challenged by the author side, by the being out in public and. You know, having someone tag me in a two-star review, like that stuff. Ooh, like that's rough. I know. Stop doing that. Um.

24:21

But the blank page, I'm like, bring it on. I love that. As I woke up this morning at 5.30 because I wanted to read, not write. I'm like, oh, let me go read this book that I'm reading. I'm gonna get up really early. And then I went, oh, I haven't written in like a week. No wonder why this book

isn't done. But the content is all around me because I just visit the school playground and the parents show up and that is my content, literally.

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Are you working on fiction or nonfiction? Fiction. I'm working on fiction right now. Yeah. That's exciting. Oh my gosh. Okay. Can you say more? Yeah. It's a mix between the real Housewives meets the desperate Housewives. And my community gives me so much content. And I shouldn't say that. Are you going to be able to live there anymore after you publish? I've told the family, be prepared to move once this is published, although all names have been changed. And it's just total irony.

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represent someone else. Right. Oh, I can't wait to read that. That is super exciting. Yeah. I just need, I need to put bum in chair and just get it done. Yes. I mean, even 20 minutes just to like keep the tether of the book, keep a hold of the book, keep, because there is that passiveness of your brain working on it, even when you're not at your laptop, at your computer.

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Um, so if you can kind of feed it every day, like a few little goldfish, feed it a little bit every day, even if you don't have a ton of time, um, you do progress, you know, even if it's like 200 words, 500 words, like you, it's only going to build if you build it. And if you don't, it won't, you know, you, it won't get written. I'm just saying that.

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as advice to everyone, not you. No, you're inspiring me. I'm like, all right, I have to, I need to just block time and say no emails, no nothing else, just block it, sit, write, and write wherever. Yes. Because it's very different than writing the nonfiction book because I had, oh, chapters are outlined. Oh, that's done. This is easy. And there was a total kind of flow because it was, this is going to be what this is, this section and the next one is this. And it just, you just plugged in the words.

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this one, I'm like, oh, how is the story going to flow and where are we going and what secrets will be revealed? And yeah. And then changing everybody. I've created little AI characters so I can look at them and visualize them. Oh my gosh. That's exciting. I haven't ever thought about that.

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Yeah, I put in, you can use Canva, it's magic something. Okay. And I will put in a description of what I want the character to look like. And then they give me a bunch of choices, oh, that one. Then I've printed it out and I put their name and what place in the PTA they hold and who they're married to and their profession. And the kids are like, who's that? I'm like, the character. It's nobody we know. It's not our neighbor. Nope. It's no one we know.

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Yeah, it's fun. It's different. But I think I don't know if that was my excuse for not writing one day, but I felt like I needed to see who these people are. See, sometimes I think that I would benefit from some of that background work and some of that outlining work, but I'm so eager to be writing, to do the writing that, and my time feels so scrunched that I'm like, oh.

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No, I just, you know, I'll play it out on the page. Yeah. But that could be helpful. I'll look into that. It's pretty cool. It's fun. I want, like I envision a big bulletin board with Post-its and that's not happening, but I figured this might be, I'm just going to put a bunch of faces on the wall. It's going to happen here shortly and just go from there. That's cool. That's great.

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How did you, before we wrap up, I wanna know, how did you go from one point of view to the next and switching back and forth? Did you write like all in one point of view and then come in and fill in with the other or did you literally swap as you wrote? That's a great question. I write in a linear fashion. So I definitely switched as I went. And even though this book was, you know,

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only took about 16 months or so, there were a lot of variations. There was a lot on the cutting room floor and different things that I was trying to do. And I was very aware that sometimes when I read alternating POVs, that sometimes I like one character better than the other and that I'm sort of drawn to that story more. And I was like, okay, I wanna hold the drama and hold the emotion and...

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just like really string it through each character so that the reader doesn't fatigue of one POV and like you kind of flip through, you're like, I'll skip it, I'll just get to the next, get to the character I like best. So I was very aware of that and aware of how the mom would speak, the dialogue would be different, the way her internal thoughts would be different, Wiley's thoughts would be sort of different and younger, she's younger. So...

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That was sort of tricky. The...

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The thing that was also sort of interesting is that at first, I, the, the Matterhorn mountain plays a big role in the book. And for a while, when I first gave this draft to my editor, I had the Matterhorn almost having a POV. And it only came in like toward the end of halfway through the book. And I was trying to do something really like kind of brave and

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I was really daring and my editor was like, this isn't working. We're not going to buy this, that this Matterhorn has a consciousness. It also happens halfway through. How can we make, I still wanted it to be an important part of it and Claudine the mom's relationship to mountains.

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really visible throughout and the Matterhorn kind of holding that for her. So I had to, I had to think a lot about that and begin to sprinkle that in and give it, give this, this mountain a bit of a personality without giving it consciousness, you know, so that was a tricky, a tricky part. And I, at

first was, you know, sort of like, oh, I hate to lose this. And she was right. She was right, as she always is.

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I can see it though. I can see where you did that and how you did that, and you did it beautifully. Thank you. You pulled it off. Thank you. You did. Yeah. I know exactly the part you're talking about. Everybody, you have to go read it now so you can figure that part out. We do. You do. Where can everybody buy the book and find you to follow you? You can buy the book wherever books are sold. I love if you support your local bookstores and they love it too.

31:51

and you can find me at [megantady.com](http://megantady.com) and at Instagram at MegTady. Thank you so much, Meg. Congratulations again. I loved Bluebird Day. So good, so good. Thank you, Michelle. I love getting to talk to Meg. She is so much fun. We've gotten to meet in person, which is even better.

32:14

And Bluebird Day was an incredible read. I'm so grateful that Meg shared with us the parts of her personal journey that are in this fun read, and that you do get to escape to Switzerland with this book. Go pick it up. I promise you, you're gonna wanna read it, especially as the winter is upon us and you can feel like you're nice and cozy without being stuck in a small town after an avalanche. So that's always a good thing.

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Go grab a copy and remember that everybody's journey is different and that when you're an author, a lot of your personal journey is going to go into your book. Whether the reader knows it or not, it is a great way for us to get to know the author. I appreciate Meg for sharing her journey with all of us.