

APPENDIX I

SYNOPSIS OF *SHARP OBJECTS*

Camille Preaker works as a journalist at a small newspaper in Chicago. She is not satisfied with her job, which includes writing stories about human neglect and crimes such as murder. Camille gets along somewhat well with her boss Curry, who supported her during a recent hospitalization due to self-harm. Camille has carved many words onto her body—having previously hallucinated them on her skin. Curry gives her a reporting assignment to her hometown of Wind Gap, Missouri, where one girl has been murdered and a second is missing.

Once in Wind Gap, Camille manages to gain some information about the crimes from the townspeople, including the family of Ann Nash, the murdered girl. The local police are not particularly forthcoming about the murder, but the town sheriff divulges to Camille off the record that he believes that the murderer is a Wind Gap native, not a stranger. Soon the body of the missing girl, Natalie Keene, is discovered in an alley in town. Both she and Ann were strangled, and had all of their teeth removed. Camille publishes a story, only for Curry to ask her to remain in Wind Gap for further coverage of the murders.

While there, Camille reconnects with her estranged mother Adora and half-sister Amma. Camille never had a good relationship with her mother, as Adora always preferred Camille's younger sister Marian, who died due to an unspecified illness when Camille was young. Amma, who was born after Marian's death, has grown into a spoiled preteen who behaves like a young child in front of her mother to hide her drinking, drug use and promiscuity. Camille connects with a Kansas City detective, Richard Willis, sent to investigate the potential of a serial killer.

As Camille continues to investigate, she begins a sexual relationship with Richard. During each encounter with him, Camille refuses to remove her clothes out of fear that he will reject her after he sees all of her scars. Camille and Amma begin to grow closer. After attending a party with her sister where the two of them

get drunk and take drugs, Camille wakes to find Adora caring for her, giving her pills that make her sick. Camille is horrified to discover that Adora does this to Amma frequently, and realizes that Marian's illness was not hers, but Adora's—Münchausen syndrome by proxy. After some investigation, Camille finds a letter written by a nurse caring for Marian that shows that the nurse had these same suspicions. Camille also discovers that Richard believed Adora to be responsible for the murders of Ann and Natalie. She returns to her mother's home, where Adora poisons Camille and tries to care for Camille's wounds while bathing her.

Camille passes out, but awakens to find Richard and the police arresting her mother. Richard is horrified to see the extent of her scars. This ends their relationship, despite his earlier claims of genuinely falling for her. Adora is charged with the murders of Marian and the two girls, and Amma is sent to Chicago to live with Camille. Amma initially seems to be healing from the abuse she suffered at Adora's hands, but soon after she begins attending a girls' school in Chicago, a classmate is discovered murdered, having had six of her teeth pulled. It is then revealed that while Adora did kill Marian, Amma murdered Ann Nash and Natalie Keene, in part because she was jealous of the attention Adora was giving the girls. Amma is later arrested for her crimes. Distraught, Camille cuts herself again, but is stopped by Curry and his wife, who take her in as their own daughter. The story ends with Camille learning to be cared for as a child and a daughter for the first time.

APPENDIX II

BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR

Gillian Flynn was born at February 24th, 1971 in Kansas City, Missouri and raised in midtown Kansas City's Coleman Highlands neighborhood. Both of her parents were professors at Metropolitan Community College–Penn Valley: her mother, Judith Ann (née Schieber), was a reading-comprehension professor, and her father, Edwin Matthew Flynn, was a film professor. She has an older brother, Travis, who is a railroad machinist. Her uncle is Jackson County Circuit Court Judge Robert Schieber. Flynn was "painfully shy" and found escape in reading and writing. When she was growing up, Flynn's father would take her to watch horror movies. Flynn attended Bishop Miege High School and graduated in 1989. She attended the University of Kansas, where she received her undergraduate degrees in English and journalism. She spent two years in California, writing for a trade magazine for human resources professionals, before moving to Chicago and attending Northwestern University for a master's degree at its Medill School of Journalism in 1997. Flynn initially wanted to work as a police reporter, but she chose to focus on her own writing, as she discovered she had "no aptitude" for police reporting.

After graduating from Northwestern, Flynn worked freelance briefly at *U.S. News & World Report* before being hired as a feature writer in 1998 at *Entertainment Weekly*. She was promoted to television critic and wrote about films but was laid off in December 2008.

She attributes her craft to her 15-some years in journalism. She said, "I could not have written a novel if I hadn't been a journalist first, because it taught me that there's no muse that's going to come down and bestow upon you the mood to write. You just have to do it. I'm definitely not precious.

Some critics have accused Flynn of misogyny due to the often unflattering depiction of female characters in her books. Flynn identifies as a feminist. She feels that feminism allows for women to be bad characters in literature. She states,

"The one thing that really frustrates me is this idea that women are innately good, innately nurturing." Flynn also said people will dismiss "trampy, vampy, bitchy types – but there's still a big pushback against the idea that women can be just pragmatically evil, bad, and selfish." In 2015, Flynn explained her decision to write cruel female characters, saying, "I've grown quite weary of the spunky heroines, brave rape victims, soul-searching fashionistas that stock so many books. I particularly mourn the lack of female villains – good, potent female villains."

She married lawyer Brett Nolan in 2007 and they have two children. Their son Flynn was born in 2010 and their daughter Veronica was born August 6, 2014. They met through a grad school classmate at Northwestern, which she attended when she moved to Chicago from New York City in her mid-30s. As of at least 2013, they reside in Chicago.