

APPENDIX I

BIOGRAPHY

Meg Elison born May 10, 1982, is an American author and feminist essayist whose writing often incorporates themes of female empowerment, body positivity, and gender flexibility. The author lives in the San Francisco Bay Area and writes like she's running out of time. McSweeney's Internet Tendency, Fangoria, Fantasy and Science Fiction, Catapult, and many other publications have featured her work. She belongs to the Science Fiction Writers of America (SFWA) and the National Writers Union. As a high school dropout, Elison continued her education to colleges in California and eventually graduated from UC Berkeley (2014) with a bachelor's degree in English. Before becoming a professional writer, non-fiction editor, and essayist, she has an interest in opera and medicine as a life calling. She has written and spoken extensively about poverty and early queer identity, which informs much of her work. Her debut novel, "The Book of the Unnamed Midwife," received the Philip K. Dick Award in 2014. Her novelette "The Pill" earned the Locus Award in 2021. She has been nominated for the Hugo, Nebula, and Sturgeon Awards. She has received the Otherwise Award thrice. Skyscape will release her YA debut "Find Layla" in the fall of 2020. It is chosen one of the Best 15 Books of 2020 by Vanity Fair. Mira Books released her parasocial thriller "Number One Fan" in August 2022.

APPENDIX II

SYNOPSIS

At 14 years old, Layla Bailey is an aspiring scientist and caregiver to her younger brother, Andy. She acts as both subject and observer of her own life, living in an unsafe, run-down apartment that suffers from the same neglect that she and Andy have experiences. Their mother, goes out more often and leaves them alone. Layla, her mother, and her younger brother live in very dangerous conditions. Her mother has a poor mental state. A series of small accidents combine to cause terrible conditions inside their apartment from time to time. Things has been going wrong for a while, with defective plumbing producing leaks and mold, a broken refrigerator that is now home to a growing colony of maggots, doors that couldn't be opened, forcing Layla and her family to climb in and out of small windows, and so much more. Despite her difficulties, Layla is desperate to protect her younger brother and guarantee that no one discovers the truth. Layla's mother and brother appear to be white; mention of the texture of Layla's hair and her hair care needs may hint that she is biracial. Layla is bullied at school for her unkempt appearance and poor personal hygiene. Then there's a school competition that requires a biome. Layla creates her own environment, a hazardous ecosystem of indoor fungal and hidden shame. She records everything with a borrowed video camera. Her brother's dresser is overrun with mushrooms. The black mold that is growing up the apartment walls. The obscene things that live in the dead fridge. Layla's life is full of unavoidable exotic toxins. The video then goes viral. Layla loses her family and her home when Child Protective Services arrives. She is defiant and must face her bullies and friends on her own. Layla faces the humiliating truth of being seen for the first time. Layla tries to do what it takes to survive on her own terms and control as many of the experiments in her life as possible. To know Layla is to understand the challenges many young people face behind closed doors and the grit it takes to survive against the mounting odds.

APPENDIX III
TABLE OF DATA

This section is intended to help the writer present data from the novel Find Layla from the point of view of child abuse that occurs in the novel.

No.	Chapter	Quotation
1.	Chapter 1 (Monday 6:45 a.m.)	<p>a. She’s me. I did that. I’m not pretending she’s not me. It’s just that a lot has happened since then. That time I experimented on my own hair with a knife and dish soap in the bathtub isn’t the first time I knew there is something wrong with my mom. Or wrong with me. That we are doing it wrong. But it is the first time I realized that help is not on the way. It is the first time I went from being a subject to being an observer—to really doing science. (Elison, 2020:10)</p> <p>b. They finally get up and leave, not bothering to clear their trays. I don’t move until they’re through the cafeteria doors. <u>After they’re gone, I swipe their toast.</u> (Elison, 2020:13)</p> <p>c. But the real problem here is that she says Andy is stinky. He totally is, but I need to know what kind of stink she meant. Is it his little-boy-won’t-bathe stink, or something else? We live in the same house, in the same room, usually in the same bed, because he has nightmares and I can’t tell him no. Maybe the morning walk isn’t working. (Elison, 2020:13)</p> <p>d. “Once this once. Once this once.” His lisp makes this sentence even worse than it</p>

		<p>should be. Yes, repeating it helps a lot. Great. Kids are so stupid that I don't know why anyone has them. "I think you mean 'Just this once.' And the answer is still no. <u>Because I take you all the time, so it isn't once. Could you not bother me to death, please?"</u> (Elison, 2020:15)</p>
		<p>e. We don't talk about our dark house where the lights don't work and the gas is definitely off again. We don't talk about how long it's been since the front door stopped opening, or how scared we are of the window climb every day. He doesn't ask me when Mom will be home, which is great because I have no idea. (Elison, 2020:17)</p>
		<p>f. It isn't as much of a fight to get him out this time. I climb up the pool ladder and hug myself in the cold and tell him it's time. He comes up after a minute or two, hugging himself the same way. We can't see our breath, but our fingers are prunes, and his hair hangs pointy in his face like icicles. We don't have towels. We walk home like penguins, arms and legs tight together and straight, our backs to the wind. (Elison, 2020:17)</p>
		<p>g. I boost him through the window and then come up slowly, extra careful because I'm soaking wet and I have imagined myself falling like a thousand times. I don't fall, but the corner of the AC unit leaves a long, angry scratch down my bare thigh. (Elison, 2020:17)</p>
2.	Chapter 2 (Tuesday 11:36 a.m.)	<p>a. Oh god please stop looking at me. Please don't notice that <u>I've taped my</u></p>

		<p><u>shoes together or that my jeans haven't been ished in a month. Please tell me this flannel makes me look grunge on purpose rather than gross on accident.</u> Please just don't even look at my hair. (Elison, 2020:20)</p>
		<p>b. She signed that paperwork the same way she's signed everything for Andy and me since she registered him for kindergarten: in my handwriting. Am I supposed to be emailing my teachers as her? Do the other parents do that? What do they ask? (Elison, 2020:20)</p>
		<p>c. <u>She leans down and picks up my T-shirt and my shredded two-year-old training bra,</u> too. "Layla . . . there are some things your mom might not have told you. About hygiene." (Elison, 2020:25)</p>
		<p>d. When I say "somebody," I mean me. Andy can't remember to do it. And <u>Mom can't handle anything.</u> (Elison, 2020:26)</p>
		<p>e. Andy leaves for school after I've started the first load. The laundry room isn't technically open, but Mom gave me keys to all of the laundry rooms in the complex a long time ago. (Elison, 2020:27)</p>
3.	Chapter 3 and 4 (Wednesday 6:30 a.m. and Thursday 7:30 a.m.)	<p>a. He's sitting on something dry, but surrounded by waterlogged junk. It's never bothered him; Andy doesn't know any better. He shoots the balled-up wrappers into the shopping bag from the mall. It sits up like a bright, gold-edged bucket. The bottom of it is already wet; I can see the inky gray water crawling up the sides. (Elison, 2020:33)</p>

		<p>b. “Layla, can I ask you something?” Her eyebrows are plucked so thin they’re like a single hair each. Her perfect hair, her shark smile. I could kill her a thousand times. “Can’t stop you.” “How do you get your hair to do that? I try to rat mine up to look like a scene kid or whatever, and no matter what I use it won’t stay.” (Elison, 2020:34)</p>
		<p>c. She’s got a big black trash bag in one hand, and she’s smoking with the other. Her clothes look like they’re hanging off of her. Her eyes are too deep in her face. It looks like she dyed her hair earlier today—it’s crazy red, like a clown or a cartoon character. Oh shit. All the signs. I hope Andy hangs out at the donut shop for a long time. (Elison, 2020:38)</p>
		<p>d. “How the hell could that take you so long?” She’s sitting on the couch, pulling up soda cans and magazines and takeout boxes from the moat she makes around herself when she won’t get off it. <u>“This couch smells like pee. Has your little brother been peeing here? Is he that lazy?”</u> <i>The couch smells like pee because you lay on it not moving for almost nine days last month. Those are bad days. You didn’t eat. If you has stopped drinking the minimum amount of water to keep a human body alive, I would have has to get help, and I didn’t know who I would call. But you kept drinking water, and you did eventually get up. You started talking again. I don’t say anything.</i> (Elison, 2020:39)</p>

		<p>e. I go right away and suck the hose to drain the bucket into the bathtub. I'm still in there when I hear Andy come through the window. Damn it. Out in the living room, he's already crying, sitting on the floor with a garbage bag. He doesn't know about not answering yet. "I'm sorry, Mommy." "I brought you all those tacos. I got you that cereal you like and I put a roof over your head, and you can't even help me keep the house from falling apart." She's standing right over him, waving her arms. "I'm sorry, Mommy, I'm sorry." (Elison, 2020:39)</p>
4.	Chapter 5 and 6 (Friday 6.00 a.m. and Saturday 8:30 a.m.)	<p>a. I woke up to her screaming, and like an idiot I came down the ladder to find out what is wrong. I has barely come around the doorway when the box hit me in the face. The two heart-shaped halves came apart in the air, and the last few candies flew out and pelted me, falling down my chest. <u>The top of the box left a tiny cut in my forehead,</u> and I just stood there, blinking . . . She went on like that for a while, but my ears are ringing and I couldn't hear her anymore. I climbed out the window while she is still screaming, in my pj's and with no shoes on. I don't know what my plan is, but I found this place that night. (Elison, 2020:43)</p> <p>b. "You knew the nurse would call me. She woke me up. Ranting at me about some bullshit. Why did you send him to school? He could have just slept in, we both could have." "I didn't know if today is going to be a bad day for you." I turn off</p>

		<p>the fire. She's quiet for a minute. "It's a bad day for me now." I wish she sounded sad. I wish she is sorry. I wish I could tell that she felt anything other than inconvenienced. Also, that isn't what I meant, and she knows it. (Elison, 2020:47)</p>
		<p>c. Little by little, things fell apart. The door broke, and Mom says we couldn't let maintenance in until the kitchen is cleaned up. But then the fridge went bad and the kitchen went with it. Then the bathroom sink, which meant the carpet got flooded, which meant the newspapers and the mold and the stink. Little things caused big things, and picking up the living room just didn't matter to anyone. (Elison, 2020:50)</p>
		<p>d. The flashlight beam crawls up the mushrooms in Andy's dresser, making their shadows long like giants behind them . . . I pan the camera over the big blooms of black mold . . . I hold my breath a few minutes and throw open the fridge, focusing in tight on a writhing mass of maggots and the cloud of gnats. (Elison, 2020:50)</p>
		<p>e. "I told her that is the right thing to do, and that those girls should feel terrible, making fun of you for being homeless." . . . "She told me that she's never been to your house, and how you sometimes look like you haven't slept at all. She says you have to take care of your baby brother all the time." (Elison, 2020:53)</p>
		<p>f. "Well, I mean, look at the way she comes to school. Her hair is an awful rat's nest, and her clothes are filthy. Did you</p>

		<p>know she bathes at my house? I thought . . . I thought maybe she is living on the street.” (Elison, 2020:54)</p> <p>g. “She’s not living on the street. She’s just a lazy, dirty little teenage brat. I can’t give her a bath like she’s a baby.” (Elison, 2020:54)</p> <p>h. “Mona Monroe is a friend of mine. She’s the on-call nurse over at Maxfield Elementary? She told me that your little boy, Andrew, has all the same problems. He’s little enough that you can give him a bath, so why don’t you? Why does he show up to school dirty and exhausted? Why is he so hungry that they catch him eating out of the garbage cans once a week?” (Elison, 2020:55)</p> <p>i. I hear her click back down the steps. I slide into my hiding spot and find my camera fully charged. I stay in there until my eyes are dry and I can breathe like a normal human. (Elison, 2020:57)</p>
5.	Chapter 7 and 8 (Sunday 9:30 a.m. and Monday 1:15 p.m.)	<p>a. I find a can of soup that’s only a little past its expiration date. No dents. I set it aside to make for Andy’s dinner. (Elison, 2020:58)</p> <p>b. @angelface787: I sit right behind her in second period, I have sooo many pics of her hair @angelface787: it’s so fuckin gross I should get paid for smelling it @angelface787: so not fair to me</p>

		<p>@macktheknife: yeah but it's not like she'll see it. She doesn't even have a smart phone @angelface787: no but I can hook up my laptop to the projector in honors English and show it to everyone. (Elison, 2020:64)</p>
6.	Chapter 9 and 10 (Tuesday 6.30 a.m. and Wednesday 11:30 a.m.)	<p>a. “Layla!” I stand up and turn around slow, like in a nightmare. It’s Mom. She’s wearing the leggings that are see-through over her ass, and her shirt could not possibly be more wrinkled. Her eyes are wide and wild and she’s coming right at me. What can I kill myself with? Even the forks are plastic. “Layla, are you wearing my jeans?” “What?” Her hands are on me, and the shock is so complete that I can’t even move. I stand there like a mannequin while she beats at my pockets. (Elison, 2020:67)</p> <p>b. She opens up her mouth, and I can see she’s folding toilet paper over her bottom teeth again. She started doing that about a year ago. I can’t figure out if it’s because her teeth hurt or because she can’t deal with how black and holey they are, or if even she got tired of the smell. (Elison, 2020:68)</p> <p>c. Andy cut himself trying to use the can opener, and he cried and cried. I wrapped his fingers up and put a sock over his hand. Mom never even looked at it. She stopped looking at us, or at anything. (Elison, 2020:70)</p>

		<p>d. I don't remember Dad leaving, because at first there isn't any difference. He is in the Army, and he is never home. And then he is never coming home. I guess that matters, but I didn't see how at first. The important thing is that we used to get money from him and we aren't going to anymore. I heard Mom yelling about it on the phone, over and over. When the phone stopped working, I is glad. Then the lights went out and I is less glad. (Elison, 2020:70)</p>
		<p>e. Mom stopped leaving the house. The dark windows has frost at the edges, and Andy has to wear his coat inside, all the time. Nobody stopped by to visit. Christmas came and went; I didn't even bother asking. Mom has stopped talking. I think they're not allowed to shut off your gas when you live somewhere that it snows. There's no way we paid the bill, but the gas stayed on. That meant the water heater and the stove worked. We ate out of cans for a long time. I remember corn and soup at first, and then cans of pumpkin or beets, or jars of spaghetti sauce we'd just eat with spoons. (Elison, 2020:70)</p>
		<p>f. One night we are so cold I thought we would die. I didn't know anything back then; I don't know if it is actually cold enough to kill. The window rattled and whistled in Andy's room, and cold air came through. (Elison, 2020:71)</p>
7.	Chapter 11 and 12 (Friday 8.00 a.m. and Saturday	<p>a. "This is my mother, Darlene Thompson. She is born in captivity and released into</p>

	<p>Morning)</p>	<p>the wild without any skills to care for herself. She is missing. If you see her, do not attempt to approach her, but please contact animal control.” The second is of Andy. “This is Andrew Fisher Bailey, my little brother. He is taken into captivity two days ago by people he has never seen before. I don’t know his whereabouts, but I hope he’s safe. If you see him, remember he is friendly but skittish. He is better off in captivity than in the wild.” (Elison, 2020:78)</p>
		<p>b. On Twitter, there are links to Jane Chase’s Instagram, and pictures of my face photoshopped onto “wanted” posters and milk cartons. My hands shake so bad that Google has to guess that I meant YouTube and not “youoyutubrube.” (Elison, 2020:84)</p>
		<p>c. I can’t breathe right, and I decide I’m going to stay down here for a while. Nobody can see me, and the electronic lock is still on. I should be safe. (Elison, 2020:85)</p>
		<p>d. But who’s going to sit with him on Sunday nights and make him read? How is he going to sleep alone when he has nightmares? He’s always has me, since he is a baby and I started changing his diapers when Mom would forget. (Elison, 2020:87)</p>

		<p>e. Andy and me in my loft bed, Mom either on the couch or out somewhere. If she woke us up in the middle of the night, I knew we are in for something terrible. That night, she woke us up yelling. I don't remember the words, just the volume and sitting bolt upright in bed, Andy waking up slower. I remember blinking in the darkness of our room and seeing the light on in the hallway. I sat there for a second, trying to figure out what I has heard. "Get up. Get the wet vac." (Elison, 2020:89)</p>
		<p>f. Living with her has always been like living with a stranger. It's always been the same stranger, one who's lived with me for as long as I can remember. She hardly ever looks directly at me and never says my name. Sometimes she calls Andy "kiddo," like a yard narc would, in a way that means all kids are the same. (Elison, 2020:90)</p>
		<p>g. "I think I have some cousins in Missouri? I don't know. I know my grandparents died a long time ago. We've never really has much contact with any relatives." I hardly ever think about that. I can't imagine my mom having a mom. (Elison, 2020:103)</p>
8.	Chapter 13 until the end.	<p>a. Jane Chase who pinched my nipple one day and pointed out to everyone that I didn't have anything on under my sweater. We are nine. Jane who would comment loudly on how fast I ate my lunch, or announce that she has seen my shoes on the shelf at the dollar store. Jane who lied to teachers, telling them I stole her</p>

		<p>Valentine's Day cards so that I has to give her all of mine. (Elison, 2020:108)</p>
		<p>b. Mom would buy a cup of coffee and read a newspaper for hours. I would slip away to other tables, as sneaky and quick as a little rat. Sometimes it works where adults have been, but I've tested it fewer times. I look like I belong at a messy table where kids have sat. And the best bet is always other kids. They leave behind big messes of pancake syrup and scrambled eggs with cheese and ketchup. Even the best eaters miss whole slices of toast. Mom would pick up tips, quick as a magician, and make them disappear. We are a pair of thieves back then. (Elison, 2020:113)</p>
		<p>c. The waitress is gone back to the kitchen, and my eyes slide over her tip money: six dollars folded neatly under a coffee cup. "I could give you some money." I leave it and walk quickly out the door. I'm only stealing food that would have gone into the trash. If I take that money, if I say yes to some guy who offers me money, I become somebody else. Somebody like Mom. (Elison, 2020:113)</p>
		<p>d. "Let me explain. Andy is your half brother. You two have the same mother, but two different fathers." From the leather case that holds her tablet, she pulls out some papers. "Here is your birth certificate. Have you ever seen this before?" I look it over. Female. Born December 21, 2005. In a state I didn't</p>

		<p>think I has ever been to. Mother: Darlene Grace Thompson. Father: Matthew Sean Bailey. Tiny footprints at the bottom. Alright, so I is born. “Here’s Andy’s, which I assume you’ve never seen.” Another sheet, from another state. It looks really different from mine. Male. Born May 18, 2014. Mother: Darlene Grace Thompson. Father: Daniel Brian Wendel. No footprints. (Elison, 2020:113)</p> <p>e. I laugh a little, just because he’s so happy. “Yeah, you love the gilly boats. Are you doing your word lists? Do they help you with reading?” “Mm-hmm. Look!” He’s pulling off his blue backpack to show me his reading book from school. It’s not the one I remember. “Look look look. ‘This is my hat. It is a red hat. It will not fit on the cat. My cat is a white cat.’” He smiles up at me, the happiest little vampire in the world. “Really good!” I can’t help but smile back. (Elison, 2020:135)</p>
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