



Celebrating Women's Stories with Angie Kim

Transcript:

00;00;08;05 - 00;01;17;10

Chris

[CHRIS] Welcome, Ocean County Library podcast listeners. Today we have a fabulous book talk scheduled with the wonderful, fabulous author Angie Kim. Angie Kim is the New York Times bestselling author of Happiness Falls, a Good Morning America and Barnes and Noble Book Club pick and winner of the Virginia Literary Award and Oprah Daily's number one novel of 2023. Her debut novel, Miracle Creek, won the Everett Award and was named one of the 100 best mysteries and thrillers of All Time by Time. A Korean immigrant who moved to Baltimore and middle school, Kim studied philosophy at Stanford University and attended Harvard Law School, where she was an editor of the Harvard Law Review. And without further ado, I will let my colleague Jessica, a librarian here at the Ocean County Library begin with our questions. We'll be interchanging with myself. My name is Chris Seminatore. I'm also a librarian here at the Ocean County Library system. And we are again, so honored to be having this book talk with author, Angie Kim. Get ready to learn what it takes to be a writer and the magical world of writing thrillers and mysteries.

00;01;17;12 - 00;01;59;00

Angie

[ANGIE] Thank you so much for having me. I'm so excited, not only for this talk, but to come visit some of your libraries in March. I'm so, so excited. It's going to be fabulous. Libraries have a special place in my heart because when I was an immigrant in middle school, which is such a hard time anyway, I didn't speak any English, and I came here and my public library outside Baltimore, Towson Public Library, was kind of my haven, away from the bullies and people who made fun of my accent and my inability to speak and understand the English and all of that sort of stuff. So thank you so much.

00;01;59;05 - 00;02;20;11

Jessica

[JESSICA] We're just so excited to have you here and get to interview and see you in March. So you kind of answered my first question. Ocean County Library is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year, and we were wondering what your fondest moments or experiences at the public libraries were? Can you add a little bit to what you just said a little bit about before? Public libraries and their impact on you.

00;02;20;13 - 00;03;05;02

Angie

[ANGIE] Absolutely! I love that that's your first. That was your first question, we didn't even compare notes beforehand. I love that. Yeah. I mean, like I said, so libraries are so important to me because of that experience that I had. I went to Interlochen Arts Academy, which is in Michigan, far, far from my original American home outside Baltimore. And the way that I found it, which I love, is I went to the librarians and I said, "I want to be an actress. I'm very interested in musical theater." And I was 14, and I don't know, you guys are probably too young to remember Fame, the TV show?

00;03;05;09 - 00;03;10;18

Jessica

[JESSICA] I love that show, yes.

00;03;10;20 - 00;04;33;28

Angie

[ANGIE] I wanted to basically go to, you know, the school in Fame. And I was like, "Can you help me find something like that?" And they looked for me and they found this reference book. They said, you know, there's nothing like that around the Baltimore area. There is now, I think. But there wasn't back then. And they said, unless your parents are willing to move to New York, which they didn't know anything about this, so they absolutely were not. They found this boarding school for me, and they helped me, like, get all the materials and help me to figure out what to send in for my audition tape, that I could try to get a scholarship and all of that. And the one thing that the librarians did not know was that I forged my parents signature on the application. So because I knew they would not approve and I wanted to kind of have it all done. And so I got in, got a scholarship, and presented it to my poor parents as a fait accompli when I told them about it, and it was because of the librarians that I was able to find that because we didn't have Google back then, we didn't even have computers back then. This was in the 80s and they helped me, and that kind of led me down this path. And I really don't think that I would have had any kind of a life that's in any way similar to, you know, what I ended up having if it weren't for them.

00;04;34;03 - 00;04;39;20

Jessica

[JESSICA] So crazy how we think of how we came to where we are today from those types of experiences.

00;04;39;23 - 00;04;58;01

Angie

[ANGIE] Exactly, exactly. Yeah. If it weren't for that one librarian who was like, "Here, let me help you." Another could have easily said, "Honey, that's just not something that you know, we can do. Or maybe have your parents come and we'll help them." But it all worked out. It was like a magical thing.

00;04;58;02 - 00;05;00;12

Jessica

[JESSICA] That's awesome. That's amazing. I love that.

00;05;00;14 - 00;05;17;19

Chris

[CHRIS] So, yeah, still on the subject of libraries. That being your first world and entry point to learning and assimilating into American culture and kind of getting your first taste of what is the English language. What was the first book that you read that made an indelible impact on you?

00;05;17;23 - 00;08;45;22

Angie

[ANGIE] Okay, this is not going to be some seminal work. It's not going to be something that's very... okay, I'm just going to come out and say it. It's a little bit embarrassing. And I've actually written the humor essay about it. And this was one of the first things that I had as a writer when I became a writer. And being a writer is actually my fifth career, so I didn't even start writing until I was in my 40s. But one of the first things that I did when I started writing was sort of delve into my very painful period when I was an immigrant and I didn't speak the language. And those middle school years and, and it won a contest, an essay contest that was being sponsored by Glamor magazine. So that was a milestone for me as a writer, too. And it was judged by Jane Smiley and Erin Morgenstern, and yeah, it was a very, very cool thing. Anyway, so the essay was about and you'll understand why I'm telling the story. The essay was about how I learned English, especially English phrases, by memorizing them from Sidney Sheldon's *Rage of Angels*. For those of you who may not know, it was a very popular mass market, like millions of copies sold kind of - I don't know what his books would be labeled, like, what genre you would say they are, except very popular. This particular book, *Rage of Angels*, was ridiculous. It was about a woman named Jennifer Parker who becomes a very, very powerful and brilliant courtroom trial lawyer, which is actually being a trial lawyer is my first career. So there's a little bit of a connect there, too. But she has this torrid affair with somebody who becomes the U.S. president as well as at the same time that she's having another torrid affair with, like, the head of the most powerful mafia in the U.S. There's a lot of drama, whatever. But my aunt with whom I lived when I first came to the U.S. and she was our sponsor. She was an avid Sidney Sheldon fan. And when I talked about how difficult I was finding English, like, you know, just because I didn't know how to speak and conversational English was really hard for me. And it's not something that you can just, like, read out of books or whatever. And she said, you know, you should do what I do, which is when I first came to this country, I read books, and it doesn't matter what books and whenever I encountered a phrase or a word that I didn't know, I would look it up. And then I would write down and memorize the things that I felt would come in useful. And I thought this was great. And she was an avid Sidney Sheldon fan. So I just picked up two books that looked the most interesting, and I thought *Rage of Angels*. I was very into biblical story. So like, not knowing what it's about and which it was not But, you know, I was 11. So I was fascinated by this whole intriguing world. And I memorized so many ridiculous phrases that really got me into a lot of trouble in school. And so that's what my humor essay was all about. But so as you can imagine, this is why I picked that book in answer to your question.

00;08;45;24 - 00;09;13;09

Chris

[CHRIS] And it shows you there's a book for everyone out there. Well, Angie, we wanted to lean into why we are inviting you here at the Ocean County Library just to celebrate Women's History Month and historically women's stories and their experiences have often been pushed aside or simply forgotten. Why do you feel women's stories are important and should be told to society?

00;09;13;11 - 00;11;44;19

Angie

[ANGIE] Yeah, absolutely. I mean, of course I feel like my stories, both short stories and my two novels, have really focused on the perspectives of outsiders. And even though women make up the slight majority of every society, of course I think our voices and our roles have been kind of buried in many, many ways. And I think we're starting to recognize that. And I think our sort of search for equality first came by way of saying, "we can do what men can do" is don't leave us out of schools, don't leave us out of important positions of power and career tracks and things like that. And certainly in literature, it was true that men's stories and male authors were taken much more seriously than women's stories and women's voices for a long, long time. And I'm hoping that that's really changing. But even more than that, I still think that the stories of women with respect to being a mother, that whole quote-unquote "domestic sphere" has been something that, has been looked upon in the literary world and also just by the society at large as just not as important. And I think by exploring what it is that women go through in what is often considered a more private sphere, that we can learn so much about ourselves and about what our, you know, roles are and also how it's actually such a confining and limiting thing for both women and men to sort of label that sphere as quote-unquote "women's world." For example, in Happiness Falls, my novel that just came out last year, there is a father who goes missing, and he is actually the stay at home dad. So he is the one who was kind of the full time caregiver to his children, especially to the son who was last seen with him, who is a non-speaker and who has a severe disability. Even looking at men and their lives, but in sort of a role that's traditionally been something that is, you know, relegated to quote-unquote "just women's work" I think is important as well.

00;11;44;21 - 00;12;05;16

Chris

[CHRIS] And I just want to touch on that, which is the polar opposite of Miracle Creek, where you have, you know, your main protagonist, Young. And she was the one that was like kind of in the domestic sphere and trying to handle anything. And then once her husband and her child come into America, how that dynamic kind of plays out and kind of gets reverberated.

00;12;05;18 - 00;13;38;16

Angie

[ANGIE] Yes, absolutely. So my first novel, Miracle Creek, I really consider that a novel about the sacrifices that parents, especially mothers, make. And so there are, seven point of view characters, but most of them are full time moms, and they are caregivers and they're all kind of trying to hold their families together. And one thing that I've heard from a lot of women, both full time stay at home moms and those who are not at home, who, you know, work full time or part time or whatever, is just that they kind of saw themselves in the mother characters, just because there's a lot of [indistinguishable] that we get. We are privy to what these characters are feeling and thinking that they actually saw these characters struggle with thoughts and actions, that they were very ashamed to have anybody else find

out about them. And these women who are very intimate and close with each other, confiding some of these things with each other and to each other that I've heard from so many people, so many women saying like, thank you for telling that story, because it made me realize that some of my own shameful thoughts and actions don't make me into a monster, because I realized that other people have the same types of thoughts. We just don't speak them out in polite society. Right? So...

00;13;38;18 - 00;13;39;26

Jessica

[JESSICA] Absolutely right.

00;13;39;29 - 00;14;12;29

Chris

[CHRIS] Yes. Oh, I can attest I'm a full time worker here at OCL. I have two kids at home, and when I read Miracle Creek, my heart strings went out to the female characters, especially the ones that were trying to juggle it all. And there's like a poignant scene for me where Young is in the hospital with her daughter Mary. And her friend comes in and she tells her like, "Oh, Mary's awake. Mary's awake. I'm so happy." But then, like her friend - I know it's not Elizabeth. I forget the other character's name at this moment.

00;14;13;01 - 00;14;14;14

Angie

[ANGIE] Oh, Teresa, Teresa.

00;14;14;14 - 00;14;32;17

Chris

[CHRIS] Yes, Teresa, and Teresa is like, "I'm so happy for you." But then when you read it all, you totally realize that she's not really happy, she's jealous, she's envious. And has soem thoughts that a normal person would have come out to the person that is going through a very traumatic experience, such as Young, as with her daughter being in a coma.

00;14;32;19 - 00;15;01;04

Angie

[ANGIE] Yeah, I mean, she and she is happy for her friend. It's just she's happy for her, but then she's like, I wish I had - yeah, she's envious - and I think we all have moments like that. And she feels so much that way that you see in the next scene, you see her going into a bathroom and flushing the toilet so people can't hear her and sobbing. You know, that's just the kinds of stuff, the complex relationships that we have with our friends, with our children.

00;15;01;06 - 00;15;03;03

Chris

[CHRIS] Even with other women.

00;15;03;06 - 00;15;03;24

Angie

[ANGIE] With ourselves. Yes.

00;15;04;00 - 00;15;22;28

Chris

[CHRIS] It's also that competition between, in Miracle Creek, between Elizabeth and Kim in terms of who has, like, all the best methods to treat their autistic children or children on autistic spectrum disorder, and at one point they have a big blow out and say, "When is it enough? When are we going to stop upping each other?" in a sense.

00;15;22;28 - 00;16;17;04

Angie

[ANGIE] Yeah, yeah. And also like criticizing each other's parenting methods and, you know, all of that sort of stuff. And then at the same time, like having that, those feelings of insecurity of like, well, I'm saying that I'm the better parent, but am I? Maybe my child would be better off with, you know, somebody like the other person, you know? And so these are all, I think things that we think and they're important just because, you know, we have sort of said, oh, you know, it's just moms thinking these things. I think there has been kind of a relegating women to this sphere that is considered private and more emotional. And because of that possibly, quote-unquote, "less important." And I want to sort of cut through all of that and assert that, no, these are important things for us to think through and explore.

00;16;17;05 - 00;16;57;21

Chris

[CHRIS] And I think this leads into my next question, that it just shows how vital women's stories, when told by a female author, that these kind of perspectives are brought to light, such as things of being a parent of children that have disabilities and on the spectrum, and what the challenges are, because it is a challenge to go through that as being a mother to a child that has a disability, but then also having the other additional layer of the competition of being judged by your own gender, and then a third layer of society, because you have a child that's on the spectrum and you're kind of like you said earlier, considered other on the outside. Can you like, elaborate on that?

00;16;57;23 - 00;21;01;25

Angie

[ANGIE] Yeah, I mean, I do think that all of those things, the feeling of being an other, despite the fact that so many women are going through this experience alongside us, not realizing that and feeling that isolation and the loneliness, I think that's actually what the power of stories is, and just cutting through all of that and just sort of saying, you know, let's share our stories with each other. Certainly in real life too. And you see a depiction of that, I think, in Miracle Creek, because the women start actually confiding some of these shameful thoughts to each other, and in that sharing, they find connection and they find community, and they find kind of the strength to hold each other up and to stand up to their husbands when they need. I think in my case, it's especially poignant because of the kind of society that I come from, so the Korean society is especially patriarchal. And I would go so far as to say it's misogynistic. Certainly at the time that I came over, it really was. So just a quick story as to my childhood, that one of the things that really prompted, I think, the way that I feel about women's roles in society is when I was in Korea, in Seoul, and I was in, I believe it was third grade, my teacher asked,

who wants to run for class president? I raised my hand along with a bunch of other kids. My teacher asked me to come to the front of the classroom and hold out my hand, and then he took out his ruler and hit my hand with it. You know, for punishment for thinking that a girl can be president of anything. This is a story that I told in an op ed that I wrote for The New York Times, and it was published right before Hillary Clinton lost. So, you can sort of see the political context of why I told that story. But when my mom heard about that story, she was furious. She stomped all the way to, you know, my school and demanded to talk to the principal, came back, and that was around when my parents decided, okay, we have to leave Korea and go to America. And I'm an only child, and they just didn't want that kind of society and future for their only child who happened to be a girl. So it's relevant because in Miracle Creek, the protagonist is really Young Yoo who is a Korean immigrant mother. And in the beginning of the story, she is so deferential to her husband that it's actually it was actually painful for me to write. In fact, I kind of came to the maybe like a third of the way into the book. I didn't know exactly how it was going to turn out, because I'm not one of these writers that outlines or anything like that, or I tried, but I just I'm very bad at it. And so I didn't know how it was going to turn out. And I remember thinking like, maybe I shouldn't have her be my protagonist because she's annoying me so much because she is just - she thinks all these things and I and she's so smart and she had all these really intelligent perspectives, but she and she was telling us, the readers, so we knew that she was smart and she had all these opinions that were very different from her husband, and yet she wasn't speaking any of them out loud. And it was driving me crazy because I am so not like that. And so that's another way that I think that I want to illustrate the power of these outsiders, people who are really considered outsiders as people are in certain societies and probably our own to a many extent also, you know, is just giving them these transformative stories so that they do find the power and the strength to speak out loud.

00;21;01;29 - 00;21;16;11

Chris

[CHRIS] Speaking of speaking out loud, in both novels, Happiness Falls and Miracle Creek, you feature characters that have a disability. In Happiness Falls, you feature the character Eugene, who suffers from Engelmann syndrome and autism.

00;21;16;12 - 00;21;17;17

Angie

[ANGIE] Angelman syndrome.

00;21;17;18 - 00;21;26;29

Chris

[CHRIS] Thank you. Angelman syndrome. How did you handle the challenge of writing these characters, showcasing their disabilities, while making them relatable to readers?

00;21;27;02 - 00;26;10;03

Angie

[ANGIE] Yeah, absolutely. And again, you know, the difference between the two sets of characters in Miracle Creek and Happiness Falls is, in Miracle Creek, I really do focus more on the parenting angle. You know what it's like to have children with, you know, cerebral palsy in the case of Teresa or, you know, one of the autism spectrum disorders in some of the other characters. And on Happiness Falls, I more

explore the perspective from a sibling's perspective. A young girl who's 20 years old, Mia, who is the older sister to Eugene, who is a non speaker by virtue of having autism and Angelman syndrome, as well as just that more direct challenge focusing more on that. So I am a mom, and that was my fourth of the five careers that I've had, was being a full time stay at home mom to three boys, all of whom are fine now. I'm knocking on wood. But all of whom had medical issues as babies and toddlers, and so they're all grown now. They're much older, so that's kind of long behind me. But I was in that group of moms around the DC area that struggled with medical issues, with lots of therapies, fighting with insurance companies, going to the children's hospital. I knew many, many departments in those things, and just that struggle of being a full time caregiver to kids with medical issues and all of just the emotional toll of that, as well as the physical and the logistical challenges, especially if you have, you know, more than one child. And all of those things are things that I think I went through myself. I watched some of my friends who have kids who are non speakers, who have autism and other various issues. So we became very close, I think, because we had that common core. A lot of times, you know, novelists talk about the research that they've done in writing their novels. For me, the research really was like ten plus years of not only going through that myself within my own family, seeing sort of the way that my kids reacted from their perspectives as siblings as well as the people going through some of these issues to also as a very, very close friend of people who are going through similar things. And so we would have these heartfelt conversations and sometimes we would have fights, and sometimes we would have those envy-filled confessions and, you know, angst filled, you know, moments of comparing our lives, who has the harder life? You know, all of those types of things that you see in some of the scenes in my books I've gone through in my own life. So I think that's how I was able to feel confident in telling these stories and feeling like I told them with the proper amounts of background and empathy and, you know, understanding and all of those things, the other thing that I should mention is for Happiness Falls, especially for writing about somebody like Eugene and his family, Eugene being a non speaker in the course of doing some of the research and things like that for Happiness Falls, I did come across an organization near my house in Northern Virginia that brings together communities of non speakers, most of whom are autistic, but some, you know, in Angelman syndrome, some with cerebral palsy, things like that. And I started volunteering as a teacher to work with some of these kids. I call them kids, but they're like anywhere from ages of 11 to 25, something like that. Working on creative writing to express what they've been through and the frustration that they felt in sort of not being understood, having people not realize that just because you can't speak doesn't mean that you can't understand, and that just because you can't speak doesn't mean that you don't have these brilliant thoughts that are trapped inside you and learning to communicate them through writing and typing and seeing that kind of amazing transformation through some of my students has been so amazing. And so that was a huge part of why I felt like I wanted to tell these stories, and why I felt okay telling these stories, even though I'm not a non speaker myself.

00;26;10;06 - 00;26;17;22

Jessica

[JESSICA] So with these stories, you said before, you don't really outline them when you just start writing. Do you have a process when it comes to writing a story?

00;26;17;27 - 00;26;32;10

Angie

[ANGIE] Yeah. So I mean I do start a lot, so I do a lot of just free writing or images or things. But I do have a lot of story ideas though. I mean, I probably have 40 that are on my phone.

00;26;32;11 - 00;26;34;23

Chris

[CHRIS] Do you just keep them all in your head? Or, do you have notes?

00;26;34;24 - 00;31;13;29

Angie

[ANGIE] No, I write them down on my phone and there are certain ideas, though, that just kind of stay with you. That's what I will say is, you know, there are some story ideas. I just go, oh, that would make a great short story. The ones that I just can't let go of are the ones that I think, okay, that's novel idea or and maybe it won't end up being a novel, you know, if I start writing and it doesn't really work out. But that's definitely kind of how I get the brainstorming impulse. And something that I like to do is if there are two or more intriguing ideas, bringing them together in surprising ways. Miracle Creek, for example, I had an idea one of my many ideas of either a short story or a book or something for my first novel was having a story set in a hyperbaric oxygen therapy center is something where it's almost like a little mini submarine tank that you crawl into. And I did this with one of my kids when he was four years old for his ulcerative colitis, and it's very claustrophobic. You're sealed in this, like, tank with other people, other people's families. And so I had done this with my own son. And then you breathe in pure oxygen. The patient, the children breathe in pure oxygen. So I had an idea of story where you would do that. And then one day, what if there's a fire and people are caught inside? What would happen? And so that was the initial idea, and that was an idea that I had for my own life, where I was in there and I was like, oh, we have pure oxygen kind of having a nightmare about what would happen if something like that happened and also just this sealed environment kind of serving as a crucible, like a physical crucible but also, like, an emotional one, because there are all these parents in there with their kids with varying medical conditions, comparing their lives with each other. Because you don't do this just one time, you do it 40 days in a row. So you become very close with the other people that you're kind of stuck in there with. And so I had that idea. And then another idea that I had was a silent grocer, basically, my dad, an austere Korean man who doesn't speak much or is not very expressive, immigrant, but, you know, runs a grocery store in downtown Baltimore with a headstrong daughter, me, who became the Yoo's in Miracle Creek. And then I was describing them to a bunch of friends during a brainstorming session, and one of them said, "Why don't you combine those two things?" And I was like, "What?" And so, yeah, just have this silent grocer be the person who's the owner or supervisor or whatever for this hyperbaric oxygen therapy thing. That sounds perfect. And then something can go wrong on his watch. And then he's like, maybe negligent or, you know, whatever. Or maybe he's like, there's some nefarious insurance plot. Who knows? I was like, that's interesting. And so that's what I did. But to go back to your question about the writing process. So once I have an idea with my first novel especially, I try my best to write some kind of an outline. I know a story structure is supposed to be in the first plot point and midpoint and all these things, but I'm just very bad at writing those kinds of things. And to me, I think my writing to me comes alive at the sentence level. So I have to love the sentences. I have to love the scenes. There's so much specificity that brings up specific emotions for me. And so if I don't have that specificity, if I just have a general conceptual outline, nothing much is going to happen for me and it's not going to feel alive. And because of my background in acting, I did a lot of method acting. And so I call my method of

writing method writing, where I really try to become the point of view character and try to sort of think like them, try to feel like them, try to sort of set up the situation in my mind and almost act it out and see the scenes in my mind, and then I'm just basically transcribing what the character is seeing and feeling and going through. And so doing it that way kind of helped me make my way through. And then as I'm writing, once I've finished a scene or a chapter, then adding it to kind of a retroactive outline, like a one page outline that I am making as I'm writing.

00;31;13;29 - 00;31;27;19

Jessica

[JESSICA] You kind of actually also hit another question we were going to ask was how, as a writer, how do you infuse your own personal life experiences and situations into your stories? And how do you balance all of that when writing?

00;31;27;22 - 00;32;32;26

Angie

[ANGIE] Very hard. I mean, I try not to base any of my characters on like one person or anything like that, but it's really hard when you hear something that's really intriguing or, you know, of a character who has kind of a fascinating characteristic. It's hard not to sort of pull that into one of your characters. I think even if it's like subconscious or it can be, you know, more intentional than that. But in whatever way it is, I think it is very, very difficult not to just give that to a particular scene or a character that you're working on and kind of incorporate it. But for me, that's always the starting point. Even when I'm writing essays, I have a hard time writing essays, and I have to do a lot of editing afterwards because my imagination kind of takes off and I almost end up writing what I wish had happened instead of what did happen. So sometimes, like something starts off as an essay and then it becomes like totally unrecognizable and definitely fictional by the time I'm done.

00;32;33;02 - 00;32;42;12

Jessica

[JESSICA] So you've mentioned that you've had five careers in the past. What was it like to transition from working in the field of law to becoming globally known author?

00;32;42;15 - 00;33;49;03

Angie

[ANGIE] Oh thank you. Well, I actually stopped being a lawyer pretty early as an adult. So that was my first career being a trial lawyer. And I did love that. I loved being in the courtroom, but I hated everything else about being a lawyer. So I actually became a management consultant. And then I was a .com entrepreneur. And then, of course, as I mentioned, that I was a stay at home mom, my longest and most challenging and most impactful career all in one. And then I started writing first to deal with just a lot of the complex feelings that I had as a stay at home mom, and some of the issues that I was dealing with with respect to my kids and some of the medical challenges and all that, and then that really paving the way for me to go into fiction writing and really going into deeper into my background and, you know, sort of bring all of those strands together. It was so fun for me, though, the trial law aspects, because I was able to use that for Miracle Creek. Miracle Creek is a courtroom drama.

00:33;49;08 - 00:33;52;19

Chris

[CHRIS] In those scenes, I feel like I was right in there.

00:33;52;22 - 00:34;12;18

Angie

[ANGIE] Oh, good. Thank you so much. I've heard from so many trial lawyers, like, saying that they are like, you know, one of the few. Yeah, because a lot of fiction that involves courtroom stuff, I think a lot of us who are experienced trial lawyers kind of cringe at, like, no, that doesn't really happen in life.

00:34;12;23 - 00:34;17;18

Chris

[CHRIS] Yeah. The way, like you describe, each of the lawyers, it's just amazing.

00:34;17;21 - 00:35;31;26

Angie

[ANGIE] Oh thank you. Yeah. But it was really, really fun to write. It was like I was back in the courtroom, except that I could actually have the witnesses do and say what I wanted them to, like, control it, which is like a power you definitely do not have in real life, but definitely wish that you can. So that was really, really fun. And it's just been really fun for me not only to write, which is, you know, very solitary, kind of thing, but something that doesn't weirdly isolate me and make me feel alone because I feel like the characters are so alive and I feel like I'm with them. But it's also been really, really fun to do the publicity events like this, going on a book tour and doing interviews and podcasts and all of that sort of stuff and giving keynotes. It's been such an amazing experience, and it does remind me of preparing for trials and preparing for arguments and things like that, that sort of speaking and thinking on your feet and all of that sort of stuff. So it's been really fun, and I feel like a really good way to, you know, not completely waste the very expensive legal education that my parents gave me, you know?

00:35;31;29 - 00:35;43;05

Jessica

[JESSICA] Is there anything exciting coming up in your career in the near future? Are you allowed to even tell us anything that you may be planning or thinking of doing?

00:35;43;05 - 00:35;55;04

Angie

[ANGIE] Yeah. So couple things that are going on are that my books are being developed into TV shows, films, you know, things like that. So that's really fun.

00:35;55;10 - 00:35;57;11

Jessica

[JESSICA] That is exciting.

00:35;57;13 - 00:35;58;24

Chris

[CHRIS] I will be watching them.

00;35;59;01 - 00;36;00;21

Jessica

[JESSICA] Me too.

00;36;00;23 - 00;36;23;05

Angie

[ANGIE] Yes. So fun. And so yeah, I think top among my like social media posts, which I don't actually post that much at all. Like I think the last time I did was actually about this news, which is Ethan Hawke will be helping to produce Happiness Falls and then playing the role of the missing father. So that will be really...

00;36;23;05 - 00;36;24;14

Jessica

[JESSICA] Congratulations.

00;36;24;16 - 00;37;15;06

Angie

[ANGIE] Thank you. Yeah, that's really fun. And there's some fun stuff happening on the Miracle Creek front that we haven't announced yet, but very excited about. And so yeah, so that kind of stuff is going on. And then I am working on my third novel. I'm still at that sort of, you know, free writing, doing a lot of research and stuff like that right now. So it's a little bit messy and it's very high concept. So I'm not actually sharing what the concept is quite yet, because I'm a little bit superstitious about sharing the concept before I've done the bulk of the writing, because I feel like there's this superstition that says, like, if you talk about it too much, then it'll just like go out of you and then you won't have that excitement when you're actually writing, you know, that kind of thing. I'm not sure if I believe it or not, but I'm superstitious enough in my writing to, like, just...

00;37;15;06 - 00;37;17;24

Jessica

[JESSICA] I actually get that. So don't tell us anything.

00;37;17;27 - 00;38;02;00

Angie

[ANGIE] But I will say I will share a couple of things about it, which is that it is about sort of connection, connection and to your home land, connection to extended families, connection to your past memories and things like that. And also that I think the format might completely change. It's true. But I think the best way to tell this story will be through interconnected stories. So I'm doing a lot of reading of those types of linked stories. Candy House and Goon Squad by Jennifer Egan and Olive Kitteridge, and, you know, all of those types of beautiful stories. So I'm really excited.

00;38;02;07 - 00;38;51;19

Chris

[CHRIS] No, I think we ran through the gamut of, you know, touched on everything that's wonderful that's going on with Angie Kim and especially the exciting upcoming new things. And we're very - again, the Ocean County Library's so honored to be hosting you in March. To our OCL podcast viewers, Angie Kim will be coming on March 13th and 14th for an author's mini talk tour, and it's titled Celebrating Women's Stories with Angie Kim. On March 13th, she'll be stopping at the Plumsted Branch and Tuckerton Branch, and then on March 14th, she'll be stopping at the Barnegat Branch and the Toms River Branch Bishop Building, and at each event she'll be answering questions from the audience. There will be a brief Q&A, as well as a book signing, as well as a lovely speaking and talk engagement with author Angie Kim.

00;38;51;21 - 00;38;56;24

Jessica

[JESSICA] We're really looking forward to seeing you and meeting you in person and getting to do this tour.

00;38;56;28 - 00;38;57;28

Angie

[ANGIE] Thank you so much.