

# From The Front Porch - Episode 287

## Finding Freedom

**Annie B Jones:** [00:00:00] Welcome to From the Front Porch, a conversational podcast about books, small business, and life in the South.

Staff who had been with the couple from day one were mourning the end of what was supposed to be a happy story. Two people fall in love, get married, have a baby, serve the queen, the end. Instead they were leaving the country. As Megan gave me a final hug goodbye, she said it didn't have to be this way.

Finding Freedom - Omid Scobie and Carolyn Durand.

I'm Annie Jones, owner of the bookshelf and independent bookstore in beautiful downtown Thomasville, Georgia. And today I'm joined by my friend and fellow Royals aficionado, Courtney Kinsey. Courtney, and her sister, Betsy host the podcast I Do Declare and today we're talking about Finding Freedom, the story of Harry and Megan.

Hi Courtney.

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:01:07] Hello. How's it going?

**Annie B Jones:** [00:01:09] Oh, boy, I'm excited to talk about this. This feels like a very indulgent podcast episode. Yeah. But honestly, I feel like I've said this over the past couple months, but I am. When possible taking the fun route because there aren't a lot of fun options on the table right now.

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:01:28] No, that's so true. And I appreciate that. You've brought me along for the ride. I told my sister that I kind of feel like the official Royals correspondent for, From the Front Porch. Like I'm on the today show.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:01:43] Yeah. It's like. It's as if we were on the daily show or something, I feel like we're not as professional institutional, probably not as witty as the daily show.

It's fine. But I do consider you my Royals correspondent. You can put that on your resume.

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:01:54] I love that for me. Thank you.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:01:57] So today we are talking about this new memoir, I guess it's still new. I feel like the literary world, especially right now is moving real fast because book publications are getting delayed and moved up and all this kind of messy stuff.

So now. And also time just moves at a weird pace. So I feel like this is almost old news. We're going to keep the love alive. And we're going to talk about this memoir, not really memoir. Biography, I guess of Harry and Meghan. I want to know before we kind of launch in, we already know listeners pretty much know like your Royals background, but I'm curious if you

have read or do you normally read like Royal biographies or unauthorized tells of celebrities of any kind, just curious where you kind of land, ethically on this thing,

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:02:44] ethically is a good way. I actually have not read any prior to this. I prefer to consume my Royal content in short form. I like an article, a blog like, a long form article of sorts, but nothing to this level where I've like read an entire volume on a Royal subject.

I much prefer memoirs and autobiographies than these kinds of outsider perspective tell alls, I think.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:03:14] Yeah. Did you read the Jessica Simpson memoir?

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:03:17] Oh, did I!

**Annie B Jones:** [00:03:19] I heard that was really good.

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:03:21] I truly loved it. Okay. And I'm going to make a recommendation. I think that also you should listen to it as an audio book, through Libra, femme, shout out because she also, she narrates it, which is just great, but then there's also some new music at the end of it.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:03:40] Oh

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:03:40] which is so fun. Right. So highly recommend it as an audio, but that is a very dishy memoir, which I would say is the opposite of what we have here today.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:03:51] So I have never read a Royal tell all I do occasionally read like a celebrity memoir. And for some reason it is memoir that I'm more attracted to. I don't know.

I want to say it's like from my journalistic background where I just, yeah. Need it to be like a memoir where somebody has written about their actual perspectives or a light authorize or in depth biography, in which case often when the subject is already dead.

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:04:19] So there's no one to talk back at them.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:04:21] That's right. I feel like those are my two general genre preferences, but I don't know why. And I'm with you. My Royal content is normally Elizabeth Holmes on Instagram and. People magazine, like it's, it's not much beyond that. I don't listen to podcasts. They don't like I'm interested, but I'm not obsessed.

Is that the, I feel like that's yeah, I think that's fair.

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:04:45] I think the reason for that is also there's so much content just in those areas that it's not necessary to read a book, especially. I feel like myself, I'm more interested in the young Royals and there's so much information about them just like.

Online every day that it's not like, say if you were interested in a queen, Gloria, and you were going to go back and read a book that was written, you know, 50 years ago about her life, like a more traditional, like historical account.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:05:15] Yeah. So I, for whatever reason though, did pre order this book. All right.

I feel like that's all my disclaimer, but then I don't know if it was pandemic brain. This was like, I feel like I found out about this early on, like March through May at some point. And so I pre-ordered myself, a copy, but I don't even know that I had the intent of reading it. I think I just thought we need to carry this to the bookshelf.

There might be somebody who's interested in my pre bookstore life. This is a book that I would have checked out from the library. One that I would necessarily have invested in the hardback version of, but I took it home over the weekend, thinking I'll skim it and see, you know, to talk about it on like a new release Tuesday podcast or, you know, just for my own information.

And my reading experience may be different from yours. I'll be very interested to hear, cause we have not talked about this off air. Like we, even on our walks, I feel like I have really maintained. Purity of thought in mind, I have not asked you questions. I read this and like absolutely devoured it and Vox my poor friends in between whenever I reached like a juicy tidbit, because I just, I don't know.

I really just dove headfirst, finished it in a day or two Jordan even commented on it. Cause he's told me like, reading it. I don't know, like reading it in between things, you know what I mean? Like it was clearly a book I was drawn to. Yeah. I'm very curious about your reading experience.

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:06:39] Okay. I'm going to say it took me longer than a day to read it because I didn't find.

I'm going to be really harsh. I didn't find the writing style to be super compelling where I wanted to keep reading it. I kind of took some breaks. Yeah. And I didn't find it very juicy. I didn't find like super as someone who kind of already feels like they know this story, at least parts of it, obviously I didn't feel like there was enough.

Like new information, like rumors. I hadn't heard previously to really make me feel like, Oh man, like now I'm really invested in this story. Or like, I've come away with something new, I guess.

Yeah. Do you think that's because like we talked about like, there's so much content out there already, like people magazine is Johnny on the spot.

You've got podcasts, you've got great Instagram accounts to follow. Like, do you think that's just because news is so instant right now and it's even similar to the fact I told Jordan, it feels like there's a Trump tell all every two weeks, like there's a new President, book about the presidency every two weeks.

And it's hard as a bookseller and a bookstore owner to keep up with that. And it's also hard to predict demand because to some extent, sometimes a book will be published and it will be old news by the time it's in people's hands.

So true. Yeah. And I think that's an interesting issue with this book in particular, because the one thing you did say to me was you felt that.

It had a really rushed editing job. Like towards the end of the book, there are a lot of like continuity errors or just issues that would be, you know, you would assume like they had some issues getting this, uh, edited in time to release it either because of the COVID timeline or they just wanted to get it out.

So it would be timely for their sort of retirement from Royal life,

**Annie B Jones:** [00:08:30] right? Yeah. Yeah. Because by the time you get to the end and the structure is pretty straightforward, I can understand why it might not be entirely compelling for everyone because it's pretty much just Harry and Meghan on a consecutive like timeline.

There's no back and forth element. There's nothing. It's really just their story from start to finish. And the last, I don't know, the last chapter, I guess, is the, in particular where I felt there were typos because it really felt like it had been written in March. Because it talks about Prince Charles having COVID.

Yeah.

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:09:01] I was so surprised that was in there.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:09:03] Yeah. That's, that's not brand new information, like by the time it, you know, now that it's out, but at the same time it felt very recent.

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:09:11] It did. Yeah. I also felt. A little bit sad at that point. Cause I was like a great, we're going to get all these books where people talk about their COVID experiences.

I was like, this is just the first of many, but yeah, I, yeah, it had to have been published very recently to accommodate all of that. And. I don't think it, it wasn't like throughout the book. It really was just that last section, like you said,

**Annie B Jones:** [00:09:36] I have no concept of reporting. There's not like a particular Royal reporter.

I follow more than another. Like I said, I like Elizabeth Holmes, but she's obviously American and writing mostly about Royals fashion, but also about other things. I was not familiar with these two authors, but apparently one of them hosts a podcast called the air pod, which I do like to do. It comes up for the pun.

But wondering how you felt about the author's expertise, this isn't, this is definitely an unauthorized biography, but what are your thoughts on authorized versus unauthorized? Like when it comes to this particular book, this particular story they're telling.

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:10:16] So I think that this is as authorized as an unauthorized can be.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:10:22] Yeah. I think exactly what I think

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:10:23] it is very one sided and it's heavily team Sussex. So understanding the backstory and I actually did read, I don't know if it's an introduction or a prologue, but the beginning of the story where they kind of like set up there. Like why they're writing this book or how they feel they're qualified.

And then I also read the, both of the author notes in the back to kind of be like, okay, but like, what do you really think

**Annie B Jones:** [00:10:49] about this? Right.

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:10:50] And I think it says, I wrote this down. I think it really sums it up. They say that this is a quote, what we feel is the definitive story of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex.

So like they're all in on this version of events. And I feel that that was somewhat. Encouraged by the main parties involved here, because I mean, it is. That's probably the reason why I didn't really enjoy it, is it just, it felt so one-sided and it felt like a puff piece meant to kind of like repair, whatever favor was lost in Megan.

And Harry's like move to America and they're stepping down and it does kind of end abruptly, obviously, because like, by the end of the book, we're kind of caught up to the present day.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:11:36] Right. But

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:11:37] yeah, I definitely thought, like, they can say this is an authorized, but there's no way they didn't read it and like approve all the stories or have a very heavy hand in their quote, friends that were referenced in the book.

Like the people that they reached out to. Because obviously Megan and Harry couldn't put their names on this themselves.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:11:56] Yeah, I wondered. So I came at it and again, just felt I we're going to talk about the parts that I found to be particularly juicy, but I wound up thinking this was super entertaining because it felt like parts of it, even though.

You're right. Like it's not a ton of new information. I did feel like I was reading the Crazy Rich Asians trilogy says about the Royal family. Like I did. I almost felt like, man, if this were fiction, I'd be eating it up. Like yeah. Cause it felt, yeah, it felt very, very wealthy people doing wealthy things like, so I liked it for that, but as far as reporting goes, I feel like you're absolutely right.

Like for an unauthorized book, which this claims to be, I felt like it was really authorized the same way I felt like, do you remember? And I don't remember was this last year. It must've been, I have, I have memories of where I was when I watched it, but the Harry and Meghan I'm using air quotes that you can't see me document like yeah.

20 special. What was that? An ABC news. Exclusive. Unclear. Yeah.

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:13:04] Are you talking about the one where she, where she was like, thank you for asking how I'm doing. No one ever asks me that, like that piece. Oh, yes.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:13:12] Yeah. Yeah. So I watched that like laid on my couch, like, I mean, pop popcorn, like got ready for it and wound up.

I mean, I did find it deeply sad. Like I'd like to be clear. I do find their story. Sad particularly because I think she was super unprepared or what a weighted her. And also, because I think this book proves it. I think it was already something kind of in the ether that we all kind of suspected, but I think he really has been done with his Royal life for a long time and marrying an American person, I think just gave him.

The push he needed to get out of there. And so I feel like we've, we talk so often in the public about Megan in particular, I think because she's perhaps the more interesting of the two, but the reality is I think a lot of this has come down to, to Harry and to this being the push he needed to, to remove himself from the Royal spotlight, although that's debatable whether or not he's actually removed himself from the spotlight, but I did think.

Even if Harry and Meghan did not maybe have a hand in the storytelling of this book. I do think, I mean, they gave them access. That much was clear. And then most of the quotes, it felt like we're from people who were team Harry and Meghan. Although there were toward the end. I think some more, a few more perspectives from the Queens office.

I actually thought the Queens office might have been, who had the most difficulty with the Harry and Meghan dynamic. There wasn't enough will and Kate cause that's the relationship that is of most interest to me is the very dynamic. But I really did feel like as much as this was a tell all. It very much felt like to some extent a PR piece on their behalf.

So it didn't quite fully,

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:15:02] I

**Annie B Jones:** [00:15:02] F I firmly thanks to Elizabeth Holmes. Find myself in team, both. I think we're on the podcast earlier this year. Like, I think I like the will and Kate story, because I liked that they were friends for a long time. Like I. That's the love story I always am most interested in.

It's like a relationship. And so, I like Will and Kate, but I do find myself to be team both. And this book didn't change my mind. I will say I didn't like end it thinking, Oh, these poor guys, I really did think these poor rich people with rich people, rich people

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:15:38] problems.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:15:39] Yeah. That's kind of how I felt.

Did you? I think you also were kind of are typically maybe more the will and Kate fan. Did you find yourself switching sides after reading this or was, did it have the opposite effect? It

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:15:53] kind of had the opposite effect because I, my whole reason for being team William and Kate is like, I feel like whatever.

And I mean, there's a lot in this book that paints them in a poor light. Whether it's true or not, but I think regardless of how you feel about them as a couple or people, I feel like they really do come across as people that have respect for their family. I mean, this is their family's responsibility, like, and that's my problem with the Harry and Meghan thing is I feel like, well, a lot of people probably wish they could put their personal desires above like their duty to other people, but it can't always be that way. And I feel like Meghan and Harry kind of in some ways, I mean, don't get me wrong, faced a lot of backlash, but I feel like, it seems like they took the easy way out of, like, we just don't really feel like doing this anymore, so we're going to leave.

And if only everyone could do that, right. Like. Even non Royal people. I'm sure there are lots of us that are like, Oh, I don't really feel like doing this today. So I'm just going to move and that's not the case. And so I feel like I have more respect for William and Kate because they toe the line and they have a lot of respect for that institution.

And I want to support Harry and Meghan as if they need my support. But this book made it really difficult because even though it was. Like very much supporting them and kind of, kind of like they're doing what they feel is right. And they're following their hearts. Like that's all fine and good, but it doesn't really neglect the fact that.

That whole quote about her saying it didn't have to be this way. I feel like it goes both

**Annie B Jones:** [00:17:29] ways. Well, and that's what I was going to say, even though I feel like in my opinion, the first half to three quarters of this book feels like a kind of a, like I said, PR piece about Megan and Harry, I will say last quarter or so I did feel like I got more insight into the Royals dynamic.

Yeah. And maybe the offices, different parties kind of butting heads. Felt kind of torn because I really like Kate, but it did feel like maybe Kate did not go out of her way to welcome Megan into the family. And yet I feel like you and I both have siblings who are married and like that's complicated when royalty is not involved.

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:18:09] Like,

**Annie B Jones:** [00:18:10] no matter how much you love your in-laws or who your sibling marries, like there's always this weird sibling dynamic shift. And I did wonder, well, you know, they were Harry, Meghan and William, or Harry, Kate, and William for a long time. They were, they were kind of this trio and to add a fourth person and into that dynamic would make it hard no matter how awesome Megan was like

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:18:32] incredibly.

So,

**Annie B Jones:** [00:18:33] yeah, it would change the dynamic of this. Like, I don't know these three Musketeers, and then you also get some insight into the, not enough in my opinion,

but I thought you did get some insight into the William and Harry relationship. And even from the beginning, I don't think I fully realized where it had never occurred to me that when they were children like pre Diana's deaths, William would go get.

You know, go get trained at the castle, I guess, or like at the palace, by Charles or by a team of people who were prepping him for what his role would one day be. And nobody did that with Harry because Harry's role was inconsequential. And so like, I imagine that really does mess with your head a little bit.

Like I, yeah. And do you hope Harry has a good therapist? Like, well, I feel like there's a lot to discuss there.

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:19:23] Yeah. If you've watched the, that whole part made me think about in the show, the crown in the episodes that focus on princess Margaret, like you see that dynamic play out with them where like she doesn't, well, really the queen barely gets to go to school because she's a girl, I guess.

But you see that also where she was doing different things than Margaret, and then we saw how that turned out. So, I mean, it is very telling of their relationship, but. Yeah. I feel like a lot of that in the book, the authors are conveying that like William was kind of not too keen on Megan from the start and would kind of refer to her as like this girl or like this woman, like, you need to do whatever before you get to know this girl.

And they were like, he was biased from the start. But I think that it's like what you said, there's just a really weird dynamic of bringing someone like a significant other into your. Like family or just your like sibling group that everyone like, who wouldn't want their sibling to get to know this person that they're trying to bring into their family.

I mean, that's like, that's point number one, you should know them. So I feel like that was weird.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:20:34] I don't know. And I, so I obviously like watch Harry and Meghan's wedding, which I thought was beautiful. Well done. And I feel there, I would like to be clear, like there are things about Meghan, like a PA particularly I found the details about her relationship with her dad to be particularly heartbreaking because as a consumer of the occasional, you know, Royals news or information, I don't think I fully realized that they were in so close.

Such close contact really up until her wedding day. And so there are parts of Meghan's story that I really did. My heart really did go out to her because I think she has really had to overcome and sidestep a lot to be in this really public relationship. But I wanted to talk about some of the kind of. I don't even, I won't even call them groundbreaking because that's not what they are, but I'm going to talk about some things that I immediately was like, wait, what?

Like, and one of the things was despite falling along the Harry and Meghan love story. I don't think I realized how fast all of this happened to me. It goes back to maybe William really



does it. Dislike Megan. I don't know. I really don't. And I really don't even get that complete sense from this book.

Instead. The sense I get is that he's an overprotective older brother who really is committed to the firm, committed to his role and. Really Harry and Megan's whole relationship unfurled very quickly. And I don't think I knew that until reading this book. Were you aware, like they went on a blind date and then like three weeks later went to Africa together?

Like

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:22:07] yeah. Just like typical dating stuff. Yeah. Going to a different continent. Yeah. I did know that because you know, I, as a high minded journalist myself, I watched the Harry and Meghan hallmark or lifetime movie, rather, even, even more accurate that it was on lifetime. So, of course I knew all that, Annie, but yeah.

I mean, that's also a big part of it is just like, and I'm not in it in no way, like takes away from the, the genuine love that these people have for each other. The fact that they just like, all this happened so quickly. And so privately that like people sure. Always going to guess, like, Well, did they really like, are they really in love?

Because like, they didn't see any of this stuff happening. Like they didn't see them going off and having these like secret dates and like, you know, all that, even their own friends. Talk about it in the book. Like mostly Harry's friends, I guess I'm kind of like, you know, questioning whether or not it's all real or if it's happening too fast.

So that's definitely part of it, I think is like, that's the skepticism is just like how quickly it all

**Annie B Jones:** [00:23:08] unfolded.

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:23:09] And I think that probably only heightened the whole breakdown of like him William or like their family and the other members of the firm, because it did kind of just come out of nowhere and then it was just like, well, this is how it's going to be.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:23:22] Right. And like, you know, Harry's what Harry's older than I am. I think so maybe 35 or 36. And so at the time I think they started dating, I guess I just didn't realize, gosh, that was just 2016 and maybe it's, COVID-19 affecting my brain, but I was like, these people met like right before the 2016 election and now they're like married with children or married with a child and no longer.

A member of the firm, like bonkers to me, like, that's, that's a fast timeline. That was just groundbreaking. And that's a lot where I get the comparison to crazy rich Asians, because some of them went on, like the fact, you know, I was reading. I was like, Oh wow. They traveled together really quickly. Oh, where'd they go?

Oh, Africa. And they stayed, Oh, they stayed in tents. Oh, no glamping tents. I think, I wish just like every page I was getting some new. Again, perhaps this wasn't groundbreaking information, but to me it was very, I truly felt like I was reading a Kevin Kwan novel with their relationship in particular and their dating relationship details into, I think, I didn't realize that in 2016, this was a woman who still had a blog and an Instagram.

Oh,

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:24:30] they talked about that blog. Like it was, I don't even know, like the most

**Annie B Jones:** [00:24:35] groundbreaking piece

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:24:37] of internet. Information ever, like, if I have to hear about the TIG one more time, I'm kind of loose.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:24:45] I was so intrigued because I tried to watch after hearing Megan's wedding, I did try to watch suits because I thought this would be, and I couldn't get into it.

Maybe a different time. Maybe now might be a good time to try something again, but I couldn't do it. But the thought that this very public figure who like now is best friends with Oprah, like had a. A blog called the TIG to try to basically. Boost her like almost be another source of income from her actress,

She's an OG influencer.

And I knew that, but getting some of these details, I did like the details for me, that was the best, most interesting fun part of the book was their dating relationship and him staying at her house in Canada. I also felt like we got a little bit more I'm you know, who I really am intrigued by is her mom.

Yes. I got some good information about her mom, but I'll tell you, I'm going to tell you the most interesting detail where I did say boy, rich people can get away with anything. And it is just going to be real honest, so excited. My issue is really not often with Megan. Honestly, I, and I like Harry a lot.

Like I think he's cute. Like of the two brothers. I did always have a crush on will more than Harry, but here and are close in age. Like, so like. I, and I feel for him, I think he made some mistakes as a younger person. He's really worked hard to rehabilitate his image, blah, blah, blah. That being said, yeah, we get some details about his texting personality that I will never be able to unlearned unless the idea that like she thought it was cute, that he often used the ghost emoji just as a detail that will be seared into my brain.

Like I, this is a grown adult man. And I would like to be clear that I have never had to date as an adult person. Like I only, you know, dated as a college student, but if an adult male in his early to mid thirties was texting the ghost emoji to me, I just, and like his, they there even, am I not mistaken?

I feel like there were even. Um, excerpts from his texts weren't there. Or like,

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:26:55] I feel like we got some, Oh, they did. Yeah, they did. They did reference a few things, a few like expressions or several emojis that he uses apparently. So somebody

**Annie B Jones:** [00:27:08] that,

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:27:08] yeah, somebody had to,

**Annie B Jones:** [00:27:10] somebody leaks that he's a heavy emoji user, and that is the detail that I can not forget because I just feel like this is a grown adult, male and boy.

W, and I did, I put the book down and I boxed a front and I was like, well, people there, there are no boundaries there. They can just do whatever they want.

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:27:29] They're using emojis. The rest of us don't even know exist.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:27:33] I just thought that was such a wild detail and just some of their dating life. I just, it was so again, because I think they've really done a good job, to their PR team's credit and to their credit.

They've really done a good job of. Spinning their lives as of the people, like we're the normals, where the normally pretty well adjusted. I don't know. Like we tap into Diana being the people's princess. Like I feel like they've really spun themselves that way. Yeah. But it's very clear. They are coming from an extreme place of privilege as well.

Like, and I think that was not new information to me, but interesting, because I feel like we've really been fed. I don't know, like he married an American and it's like, okay. But he didn't marry like. I don't know somebody from Birmingham, Alabama. Yeah.

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:28:23] Well, he didn't marry me. Like he married an actress who already had a level of fame.

Yes. Regardless of her background, up to that point, like she was still herself, a fairly privileged person.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:28:36] Um, her story, her trajectory is fascinating. Really. Yeah. Again, I often prefer Megan's story. Like I find her to be relatable, but part of the reason I find her to be interesting is I think she is so smart.

Like she knew not necessarily that she wanted to marry a Prince. I'm not gonna say that, but yeah, I do think she. Totally found herself with the right kinds of friends in the right kinds of circles of influence. And I think that's where she wanted to be and kudos to her for making it happen. I said, I was blown away by that.

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:29:09] This is a woman who addressed Robin Thicke and Paula Patton's wedding invitations that was on her resume guys

**Annie B Jones:** [00:29:18] at previous source.

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:29:19] Yeah. My friend works at Paper Source. That could have been my friend. Yeah. The other thing I wrote down was. That Meghan Markle was in the movie a lot like love, which is one of my favorites.

Early aughts, rom coms. I was like, wait, what

**Annie B Jones:** [00:29:35] was that? I've never,

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:29:36] Oh my gosh. It's Ashton Kutcher and Amanda Peet. It is so great. And apparently shoot, like they referenced

**Annie B Jones:** [00:29:43] in the book,

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:29:44] like at one point, I wonder if it was in reference to her first marriage, it was like, there was some kind of timeline in her life.

And they were like, around that time, she went to film this movie and I was like, wow, I love that movie. I didn't even know she was in it. But my real crown jewel of fun facts while we're on this subject, the subject is, there is a very shady, I think this might be the shadiest queen in the entire book.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:30:08] And I'm

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:30:08] interested to see if you caught this too. Okay. There is a part in the book where they're talking about how. The Royals Kate did this like new Royals, I guess, do this fake kidnapping exercise where they get trained on how to behave in a kidnapping scenario. So they get fake at which this is like crazy.

They do, they get fake kidnapped and. Like blindfolded thrown in the back of a car and they are taught strategies and things to help. So this is the line. And I literally asked, this was my put the book down moment. This quote says Megan was even taught to develop a relationship with the enemy. If that is not the shadiest line in this entire work, I don't know what it is.

I was like, wow, could you have. Veiled that any, any more thinly, like that's incredible.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:31:07] Oh, I somehow missed that line. I think I was too obsessed with Harry's texting personnel.

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:31:13] Oh no, you missed a good one there. I was like, wow, you guys, it was really tough

**Annie B Jones:** [00:31:21] there. Their story, their timeline moves so quickly.

They're her. And I, you know, as we just stated, this was somebody who had worked for Paper Source. So in that sense, Harry did Mary to some extent and air quotes normal, but again, she really had worked her way up. I think I still think she might be the hardest working. I just feel like she really Rose from the ashes kind of situation because like in America we all know that a USA network show is like good and fine, but it's not like a Hollywood blockbuster situation.

Right. So she really did work her way. Up and out. And I think what will be interesting and what this book obviously couldn't address because it doesn't know, is what will come next for them and what I think Megan might want next for them, because I think of the two of them, she is the more ambitious of the two.

I could be wrong about that. But it feels like it feels like she definitely seems to have a more ambitious personality than Harry who I really do think when push comes to shove, he just, it

really sounds like it wasn't something he ever wanted. He didn't ask for it, but he got born into it. And instead of just dealing with it, I think he really wanted somehow to get out.

And it'd be interesting to see how that works for him, because I don't know if it will or not.

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:32:41] Yeah, no, I agree. I think that, I think that kind of

**Annie B Jones:** [00:32:44] sums it up. Yeah. Okay. On a scale of like one to five, what's your ranking of Finding Freedom

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:32:52] to

**Annie B Jones:** [00:32:53] call man?

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:32:55] I really didn't. I liked the idea that, and I wanted to like it so bad, but I just couldn't.

I can't get past the fluffiness of it and like the team, the team, again of it all. I just, I'm not really here for it.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:33:09] So it's definitely,

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:33:11] I could, maybe after this conversation, maybe give it a three, but like in my heart, it's going to be a two.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:33:18] So I, and look, I would like to be clear, I state this with.

Really a lot of reticence. Like I, this is not a confession I'm really happy to make. I freaking love this book, like four out of five buyers. Okay. Not for the writing quality, but truly for the wild ride. It took me on. And maybe it's because I like the Royals. Obviously we talk about them on the podcast.

We've got a Harry and Meghan standee, like standing in the door of the bookshelf. Like obviously I am rooting for them, but I. Don't think I just, I don't think I really knew very much. And so for me, a lot of this information was new and kind of bonkers will do the parts about their dating relationship. I also really liked hearing maybe because this was my first Royal tell all of any kind.

I felt like I did learn some, to me. It was like watching the crown. Like I felt, I learned some about the behind the scenes of how. The business of the Royal family works. You know what I really want. I really wanted pictures of Frogmore cottage,

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:34:18] and really

**Annie B Jones:** [00:34:20] this one, because the TIG does not exist. And because I was not aware of the TIG.

Before it got shut down. I want to know Meghan's design style. Yeah. I'd like to know what her house looks like. I just am very, I, I remain intrigued. So I finished the book. Look I'm still

feeling a lot of empathy. I think for Kate and William, I still would've liked more of that side of the story, but I didn't finish.

The book and seeing, Oh, Harry and Meghan Goodwill, like I still felt okay. I still do care. What happens to them? I. Because I find the whole thing. And again, I keep him away back to like that four year timeline. I just feel like so much happened to that relationship in four years to go so sour so quickly that I'll be curious to see what their next steps are.

And I did finish the book, I guess, equally intrigued. Like I didn't finish the book and think, okay, I'm done caring about them. I finished the book and thought. Yeah, they're still interesting to me. So for me, it was a, I don't know it was a four star rating. We can also blame COVID-19. My reading tastes have been all over the place, but I'm going to, I made a stand by my appreciation for this in the same vein, perhaps think of it less as a work of like journey journalism, because I'm not sure this really qualifies.

I think it's the same level of journalism as the documentary. They did. We'll put it that way.

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:35:43] Yeah.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:35:45] Yeah, but if we're talking like crazy rich Asians, sending ghost text emojis and staying in glamping tents, like I'm here for that, like all day long, all day. Well, Courtney, thank you for this deep dive, this really important content.

I just feel like this was very important to cover it together. Absolutely. Thanks for providing your expertise and hopefully we'll have something else to talk about here in a few months. Any

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:36:10] time I'm hoping William and Kate. Serve up a story of their own very soon. Yeah.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:36:15] All right.

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Special thanks to Dylan and his team at Studio D Production for sound and editing and for our theme music, which sets the perfect, warm and friendly tone for our Thursday conversations.

This week, I'm reading Recommended For You. That's literally the name of the book it's called Recommended For You. It is by Laura Silverman.

It's a young adult novel that is utterly delightful thus far. What are you reading?

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:37:09] I'm reading The Guest List by Lucy Foley.

**Annie B Jones:** [00:37:12] Oh, do you like it so far?

**Courtney Kinsey:** [00:37:13] Yes, it's so, so good. Yeah. I was trying to finish it. Very

**Annie B Jones:** [00:37:17] Agatha Christie. Yes.

If you liked what you heard on today's episode, you can tell us by leaving a review on iTunes, or if you're so inclined to support us on Patreon, where you can hear our steps weekly, new released Tuesday conversations, read full book reviews and our monthly shelf life newsletter follow along as Hunter and I conquer a classic and receive free media mail shipping on all your online orders.

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