

Dear Reader,

Writing multi-faceted, multi-themed novels with large ensemble casts is what I do— – the more layers to the story and the more interconnections between the characters, the happier I am.

Still, there's usually one character, one plotline, and one aha moment that finally brings the story together.

This time, that moment was a long time coming.

Maybe it was because pandemics sap the creative juices. Or maybe I jinxed myself by writing a book with the words "fails spectacularly" in the title. Whatever the reason, the road I traversed while writing this book was rockier and much longer than any other I have traveled. I've lost count of the numbers of times I started over and revised my revisions.

Esme – her foibles, faults, blind spots, heart, humor, and history – was clear in my mind from the first. I felt the same way about the people whose paths she crossed during her years in New York, including Yolanda, Carl, Alex, and, of course, Oscar.

Even so, in draft after draft, it felt like something (or someone) was missing.

Then one day, when I was on the computer procrastinating doing research, I stumbled upon an article about the early history of the National Gallery, and how the newly -opened museum had secretly transported the most important works in its collection to Biltmore Estate in 1942, where they remained hidden for most of the war.

That was my aha moment.

The story of the hidden artwork is true. Adele is a product of my imagination. Yet, from the moment I learned of the connection between Biltmore and the National Gallery, Adele's personality and role in the story, and how the frustrations, setbacks, and self-doubt she endured as an artist and a woman would put a spotlight on Esme's experiences, was were clear in my mind.

I still don't understand why arriving at that moment of clarity took so long. However, as Esme learns during the course of her adventures, and as I have learned over and over again in my life, the places worth going usually involve detours. And while the middle of the journey can be pure misery, when you arrive at your destination (which usually doesn't appear on the maps you've been following), you're glad you made the trip.

Yes. Now that I'm done writing the story of Esme and her fascinating family, I'm glad I made the trip. And now that you've spent time in her world, I hope you feel the same way. If so, could you please help Esme Cahill Fails Spectacularly find an audience by spreading

the word about Esme's story? Doing so can be as simple as recommending the book to your family and friends. Or writing an online review.

Word of mouth from passionate readers is the very best possible advertising for any book, and the greatest compliment a writer receives. Thanks in advance for doing any or all of the above. Your support means so, so much.

If you belong to a book club, I'd love it if you would propose Esme's story to your membership. You'll find discussion questions in another section of these "Esme Extras". Schedule permitting, I might even be available to participate in a virtual discussion with your book club.

Your club can schedule a virtual half-hour virtual discussion with me through NovelNetwork.com. Joining Novel Network is free for book clubs and so are my virtual visits.

And if you're interested in inviting me to speak at your library, community organization, book festival, or quilt guild, make a booking inquiry by emailing [christie@authorsunbound.com](mailto:christie@authorsunbound.com). You can find my speaker's profile at <https://authorsunbound.com/marie-bostwick/>

I absolutely love hearing from readers. I read every note personally and do my very best to make sure each one receives a response. The quickest and easiest way to get in touch with me is by sending an email to [marie@mariebostwick.com](mailto:marie@mariebostwick.com). It usually takes me much longer to respond. But if you prefer to send your note by post, the mailing address is...:

Marie Bostwick  
9450 SW Gemini Dr  
PMB 90457  
Beaverton, OR 97008-7105

You can also find out more about my world by following me on Instagram (search for [@mariebostwick](https://www.instagram.com/mariebostwick)), and Facebook ([www.facebook.com/mariebostwick](http://www.facebook.com/mariebostwick)). However, the true hub of my online world is here at my website.

Be sure to check out the other "Esme Extra" features, including the discussion questions, recipes of Shrimp and Grits and Easier Than Adele's Caramel Cake (perfect to serve when your book club gather to talk about ESME!), and even a travel guide to Esme's world in beautiful Asheville, North Carolina. It includes a listing of some of my favorite spots I visited while conducting my research.

When you're done with that, spend a little time reading my lifestyle blog, Fiercely Marie, with recipes, crafting tutorials, travel tips, and other posts to help you "live every minute and love every moment". Then visit the "Goodies" section for free, downloadable companion patterns and recipes inspired by many of my books.

These little goodies are my personal gifts to you. Why? Because readers like you are the reason I can do this work I love.

Thank you for making it possible.

Blessings,  
Marie