

## [Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / The Book That Took 5 Days To Cancel

You're listening to a Mamma Mia podcast.  
Mamma Mia acknowledges the traditional owners of land and waters that this podcast is recorded on.  
Lies, I already have a ladder in my stockings.  
And it's 11.34.  
First time wearing them.  
It's disappointing.  
It's been a long time, but that's the thing with stockings, isn't it?  
I used to wear them all the time.  
The thing about sheer stockings.  
Ah, well.  
Mamma Mia out loud!  
Hello and welcome to Mamma Mia out loud.  
It's what women are actually talking about on Wednesday, the 14th of June.  
My name is Holly Wainwright.  
I'm Claire Stevens, filling in for Jesse Stevens.  
And I'm Elfie Scott, filling in for Mia.  
If you're worried about Jesse.  
It is her last week before she goes on that leave.  
And look, she's all right, but she's not really all right.  
She's okay.  
She's okay.  
Like, seeing a doctor, she's fine.  
She just called me this morning and was like, here's the deal.  
I was in the out loud meeting and I have lost my mind.  
And I'm like, it's fine.  
I will step in for you.  
These are the things sisters do.  
Yes.  
So that's where we're at.  
And Mia, of course, is still on holiday.  
Anyway, what's on the show today?  
On the show today, Elizabeth Gilbert spent three years writing a new novel.  
But it took five days for it to be pulled from publication.  
What happened and was it the right decision?  
And if there's one conversation that just keeps popping up,  
it's about the success myth and whether it's time to abandon the pursuit of having it all.  
But first Holly, the Hunter Valley bus crash.  
When you get on a bus, most of us don't think about which side we sit.  
But that simple split second decision could have been the difference between life and death.  
There's only really one news story that's dominating this week.  
And it's the truly terrible road accident that happened in the New South Wales Hunter Valley on Sunday night.  
When the bus, which was transporting guests home from a wedding, crashed at a roundabout and

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tipped onto its side.

10 people were killed, 25 were injured, making it the worst road accident in Australia in 30 years.

And it's actually being reported around the world because the story is just so horrific.

We can all imagine ourselves in the situation that those people having had a wonderful day at a wedding

and they're traveling back to where they're staying and they're feeling tired but heart full like you do after a day like that.

Perhaps it's because of that relatability.

Coverage of this incident is exhaustive.

And to be honest, we don't really want to add to the noise other than to say,

we're thinking about this community.

We're thinking about the families who've been devastated, wrestling with unimaginable loss.

And we also, of course, want to pay tribute to the bravery of the first responders to the people affected by this crash.

And there are a lot of them.

It's not a story to be speculated and theorized about.

It's real life shattered into a million pieces.

And we are thinking of you all.

I can't stop thinking about this story.

It was all I could talk about and read about on the weekend.

And I think it's because it is a situation so many of us have been in and to have such a joy filled day and then be caught up in that kind of tragedy.

I can't imagine.

And the victims are so young and thinking about the bride and groom having a day like that.

And I think it was the New South Wales Premier, Chris Minns, who said, you get a bus to get your guests home safely.

Like you make that decision as a safety precaution.

And then to have that go so wrong, I just can't stop thinking about it.

Elizabeth Gilbert is a big deal.

Her memoir, *Eat, Pray, Love*, I'm sure many of you have read it or at least seen the film, was written 17 years ago now.

And it sold more than 10 million copies.

Her most recent novel, *City of Girls*, was an instant global bestseller.

So an announcement of any new work from this author is a major event.

And so it was last week when she appeared on Good Morning America and then posted to Instagram and Twitter and all the places to tell the world she's written a new novel

and to show everyone the cover and encourage us to start pre-ordering for a February release.

Here's a bit of what she said about the snow forest.

Hey everybody, it's Liz.

I have written a new novel and it is called *The Snow Forest*.

This is a book that is going to take you into the deepest realms of the Siberian taiga and into the heart and mind of an extraordinary girl born into that world.

A girl of great spiritual and creative talent raised far, far, far from everything that we call normal.

It's coming out in February next year and I hope you will buy it and order it from wherever you buy

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books.

The Snow Forest.

Then what happened was pushback. Lots and lots of pushback.

Here's a sample of one of the comments that was entirely typical of a wave of feedback that came and kept coming for days from Ukrainian readers.

Very much disappointed that you decided to write about Russians when they're killing, torturing, terrorizing and raping my homeland at this very moment.

And to issue a book in February on the anniversary of a full-scale invasion of Ukraine is beyond atrocious.

Five days of this kind of criticism, including lots of people jumping onto Goodreads where you rate and review books more than a thousand probably by now.

One star reviews placed on this book that doesn't exist yet.

Liz reappeared on social media to say that the book had been pulled. Here's a bit of what she said.

Hi everybody, it's Liz and I have an announcement to make.

So last week I announced the upcoming publication of my most recent novel, a book called The Snow Forest.

But over the course of this weekend, I have received an enormous massive outpouring of reactions and responses from my Ukrainian readers expressing anger, sorrow, disappointment and pain about the fact that I would choose to release a book into the world right now.

Any book, no matter what the subject of it is, that is set in Russia.

And I want to say that I have heard these messages and read these messages and I respect them.

And as a result, I'm making a course correction and I'm removing the book from its publication schedule.

It is not the time for this book to be published. I do not want to add any harm to a group of people who have already experienced and who are all continuing to experience grievous and extreme harm. The publishing world and Liz fans and many, many others are debating whether that needed to happen.

Does it set a dangerous precedent or was it an act of integrity or one of cowardice? Claire Stevens, where do you sit?

Oh, I have so many feelings about this. So I want to preface this by saying, I haven't read the book. None of us have read the book.

And Elizabeth Gilbert wrote it. So presumably she's read it.

And she is perhaps best placed to say whether it is actually insensitive given the current political climate. That's kind of a hard call for anyone else to make.

However, I feel really, really uncomfortable about this.

So the Snow Forest is based on a true story.

It was inspired by the story of Karp Kaikov and his family who survived the decades completely cut off from human contact in Siberia.

And they fled to the wilderness to escape religious persecution at the hands of the Soviet Union in 1936. And then they were found in 1978.

To me, the idea that a story about a family fleeing religious persecution from communists is pro-Russia is completely absurd.

And she has written a story that is set in another century and has no clear connection to the current conflict and people have been furious.

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But what they're saying is because she's not written that story. She's taken that as inspiration. And the way she describes it and the cover of the book and all those things is it's like a romantic adventure deep into the deep forest of the Siberian tiger and you go inside this girl's mind. And what people are upset about is like, we don't want to romanticize Russia in this moment. Do you understand the backlash against that romanticization? Like, do you empathize with that? I do. I mean, I'm not Ukrainian, so not in my business. When I've read all of the comments as I have, because I've written a story about it, we'll put a link in the show notes. I'm not in any position to dismiss that criticism. If that's making a lot of people who are living through unimaginable horror right now go like, is this the moment when we want to read about Russia? Anyway, I think there's a difference between Russia, the country, Russia, the landscape, Russia, victims of the USSR, which by the way, like Russia now is a fundamentally different country to what it was in the era where she was writing about it to think that just because a story is set in Russia, that it is therefore sympathetic to Russia and somehow endorses the current war crimes that Russia is committing. That seems absurd to me. And the reason I find it upsetting and distressing is because I think it sets a really dangerous precedent, because Elizabeth Gilbert is in the very rare position where she is so wealthy, so successful, that she can say, I spent three years writing a book and you know what? Don't worry about it. Not everybody has that luxury. And at the same time, I think what's worrying is that this isn't how art should be. Ironically, she wrote Big Magic, which is one of my favourite books of all time about creativity and making art. And that book is all about how you should not make art for critical acclaim, for money, for success. You need to make it because the music sits on your shoulder and tells you that there's a story that needs to be told and you're the one who has to tell it. So for her to write this entire book, get that backlash from people who have not read it and then for her to say, actually, yeah, yeah, we'll rest it. I find it really disappointing and not very brave. Oh my gosh. Elfie, how do you feel about it? That's a very spicy clip. Look, I am inclined to agree with you. I don't want to detract from the anger that Ukrainians are experiencing right now. I think it would be very hard for any of us to really truly put ourselves in their shoes and understand the extent of how horrifying this has been for them. None of us have read it yet. Also, I don't think that like the anger is very well targeted. If you're targeting an author who is writing about a completely different historical context and also anti-USSR context, which is important to note because it's not pro-Putin at all. And then I just think that it's so unfair to target an artist in this particular scenario as well.

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If you think about Russia as a concept and the country and, as you say, like the landscape and all of the things that make a country.

I feel very, very sad for the people who aren't pro-Putin and who aren't for the war as well, like they're part of Russia.

So I think that this is all very misdirected.

But I would say part of the campaign of the Ukrainians has been to go on Elizabeth Gilbert's Goodreads and give her one star reviews.

And Holly, I don't know if you can relate to this at all, but I'm obsessed with my Goodreads reviews. And if anybody started targeting them, I would do literally anything.

This is where I sit on this, right?

You can argue for weeks and months and years about whether or not people should have a right to be upset about whether or not they want to read about Russia in this moment.

You've got to remember we've got major sanctions against Russia.

We're not, you know, Russian teams aren't playing in sporting competitions.

Russia wasn't competing in the Eurovision Song Contest.

There's like, we're kind of broadly cancelling Russia at the moment in a good way, I would argue.

Whether it's right or wrong is almost irrelevant now because my question is what the hell are you supposed to do when a controversy of this size comes for your book announcement?

Because if Liz Gilbert had decided to ignore it, it would have completely swallowed this book.

Every interview she gave, every review that was published, every time it was mentioned she would have to address this and she probably doesn't want to do that.

She's been writing this book for three years.

She just wanted to write a nice little story about, you know, a girl hiding in a forest for 50 years in the snow.

Like, so I feel like once the criticism is there and it's reached a point of no return, it's almost impossible to ignore it.

And I also think if Liz Gilbert was a different kind of author, with a different kind of following and a different kind of brand, it would be different, right?

If she was Jonathan Franzen, right, she would just be like two fingers up at the world, who cares, this is my art.

But her whole brand is thoughtful, sensitive.

If you build a community and you commune with them one-on-one, then you can't just tell them to shut up when they start saying things to you you don't like.

And the other thing is, what boggles me more than anything is when these things happen and I said the same thing about the Cia movie last week.

It's like we think Liz Gilbert is sitting in her little studio, like knocking up the cover on Canva and, you know, just writing in it like...

So her publishing house, which I think is Bloomsbury Press, this is one of their major releases for the decade, probably.

So the marketing plan would be huge.

It wasn't coming out till February.

This is massive.

And it's like nobody thought, oh, Russia problem.

Like that boggles my mind because the scale of this feedback did not come from nowhere.

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Do you know what I mean?

We get it so wrong.

And then we blame the author rather than all the people around her who you would hope might go like, hmm, we should have a line in place for what's going to happen when people say why you're telling a story about Russia in the middle of a war.

We should consider how we're going to deal with that feedback.

We should work out how to support you.

Like she is being smashed for a decision that was actually probably made at a million different levels.

And I think that's the other thing.

So I feel like she had no choice.

Is that she's come out and said this and it very well may not be her decision.

It may be the publisher.

Yeah, I think it is her decision.

I think she's at the level.

If she'd have said to her publisher, I will find this.

She could have done it, but she clearly doesn't want to.

If you go and read all of those comments from the Ukrainians who are commenting, it is heartbreaking.

And who's going to turn around to them and say, me, me.

The thing I worry about is that more often than not, in this political climate, it is men who double down and say,

no, I wrote a story and I'll defend it and you haven't read it yet and you read it, then you make up your mind.

And it is women who bend over and say, don't worry.

It's more complicated than that because very often those men are not relying on a community who believes and engages with them in the same way that it is Gilbert is.

Matt Hague, who's a really successful British author who lives and breathes on social media and in fact comes off it all the time because it affects his mental health so badly.

But like, if a very large part of your success is a community, you can't pick and choose when to listen to them.

Whereas I think that Jonathan Franzen, for example, like he's not on Instagram going, friends, sisters, let's talk today about my feelings.

The idea of a homogenous community is not true.

And the fact is that these voices were very, very, very loud and it looked like really big scale.

But I think probably the majority of people were quiet and thinking, oh, I actually would have loved to read that book.

We all know about red flags.

We've also spoken about green flags.

But this week we are talking a lot about beige flags.

You've probably seen tiktoks or tweets about the beige flag popping up.

I definitely have.

They have been dominating my Twitter feed.

According to a New York Times definition, a beige flag is an odd trait in a romantic prospect that is

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not quite a deal breaker but not exactly a plus either.

So a good example from a tiktok that I found was my partner's beige flag is that he doesn't put his phone on silent mode throughout the night because he's scared it means his morning alarm won't go off.

I too am worried about that.

You too.

Yeah.

I get anxious about that.

It does.

I mean, I'm not willing to throw the dice on that still.

Let's be clear.

A beige flag is not an ick.

It's not about something that puts you off someone.

It's just something that tells you quite a bit about them.

So it could be a weird quirk, a bad but ultimately unhelpful habit.

You might have your own beige flags too or you might have some about your partner.

I was thinking about it before and I think that my beige flag is that because I'm a bit claustrophobic and worried about getting stuck in places.

I always have like a snack and a bottle of water on me.

I don't know what this means.

Like a toddler.

Exactly.

And I would say that my partner's beige flag is that he has a whole bunch of words that he flat out pronounces incorrectly like he says elderly instead of elderly and engine instead of engine.

So we asked around the office for some of the Mamma Mia team's beige flags.

When you go into somebody's Instagram profile and you see that all their photos are selfies, like what does your life look like?

Where are your friends?

Why are they all selfies?

That's just crazy to me.

My beige flag is that I somehow think that cooking is equal to all the other domestic chores in a household.

I don't clean it.

I don't do washing and I basically just cook.

My beige flag is that no matter what drink I have, I will always leave a sip or two left in the cup.

When you go to Yumcha and someone asks for a fork, just learn how to use chopsticks.

You've had enough time.

My ex used to every time I said, I'm going to go to the bathroom.

He would say, don't fall in.

I have many, many beige flags.

I am picky about weird things.

So for example, I hate butter.

Can't eat butter.

On toast or just anywhere?

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What do you have on toast?

For example, had toast this morning, I say, hi, could I please have jam toast?

No butter.

That's a red flag to me.

I just, I can't have it and it means I get into situations and I'm also a people pleaser.

So my partner's mum, for example, would make me this sandwich and people who are very into butter

and it's chunks of butter and I was like, I just, I can't do butter.

Butter's yummy.

The other thing is I can't and apparently Jesse has this as well according to my partner.

I can't distinguish between his and his.

Okay, wait, give me an example of this.

So like if I'm saying like his car, I say his car.

Oh, that's cute.

And my partner gets really annoyed.

I love that.

I just, it's, I have a few language quirks which are not very clever.

My partner's beige flags.

He says mall instead of shopping centre, despite the fact he's only ever lived in Australia.

Do you know anyone else who's called the shopping centre a mall?

Yeah, I do.

But yeah, I don't really know how you say that.

We're going to the mall.

Yeah, going to the mall.

And I'm like, no, we're not.

We're going to the shopping centre.

He also listens to the same few songs on repeat for years.

So like the same album for years and years and years and years.

And then you get in the car, even my dog responds to music because he has heard.

He knows like this song means that we're going up the coast.

Like he associates it.

But the thing about the beige flags, I went really deep on it because I didn't fully understand.

Yeah, I don't think I understand.

And that, that makes me feel old because I go Jen's there to having a conversation that I feel like I'm not a part of.

So it's something that gives you pause, but doesn't fully make you turn off that person.

It's not the ick.

But is it just people thinking that they're quirky?

I mean, that's it.

It's all of us striving for our main character energy.

Totally.

It's such a thinly veiled meme just to spread a little bit of information about your personal life.

Like here in mind, Holly, what are yours?

I am obsessive about not seeing a menu before I go to a restaurant.



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In fact, if you showed it to me, I would not want to go to the restaurant anymore.

Are you serious?

Is it because you want the excitement of making a decision on the spot?

And we went for dinner on Friday for Brent's birthday and he looked up the menu and he wanted to tell me about it.

And I was like, I will cancel the reservation if you tell me about it.

Stop talking about it.

I like to cut my food into little pieces.

I'll eat it all, but I like it to be in little pieces.

So bacon egg roll cut into four always.

Sandwich cut into four always.

Are you worried about choking hazards?

It feels like more, you know?

Okay, no, I love that.

If I have a burger, I'll cut a burger up.

Because it feels like many burgers.

I'd rather eat lots of little things than one big plate of food.

Oh, wow, the slider industry.

I'm like what old ladies let me call nibbles.

I like nibbles.

Oh, Brent's got so many that I wouldn't know where to start.

He licks his fingers before he turns a page.

Oh my God, I hate that.

Did he start doing that?

Has he always done that?

He has always done that.

He's born 80.

Exactly.

And every time he does it, I'm like, babe.

You don't need to.

You can turn the page.

I believe you.

Always leaves a bag in a cup of tea.

Shits me, but I don't want to whinge about the fact

he's bringing me a cup of tea so I don't say anything about it.

You know how you say how there was one of those beige flags there,  
was that her partner always said,

don't fall in when it, Brent has a million of those.

He can't have like, what time is it, 2.30?

Oh, it's the time to go to the dentist.

The dad jokes are relentless.

When I was younger, they would have been red flags.

I would have gone like, this is too irritating.

But now I'm like, older and wiser,

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and I can see the real person behind the irritating pics.  
That's very sweet.  
And look, I think that it is really, really nice  
to be able to share beige flags.  
And I love reading interesting details about people's lives.  
But my only thing about this, again,  
I do think that it is just one of those things  
where you just get to share content about your life.  
Think about another format. You can do it.  
I promise TikTok.  
But then also stop crowding the flag field.  
Red flags are useful for a reason.  
True. And green flags.  
Green flags are also useful for a reason.  
Yeah, it makes it more ambiguous.  
The red flags are getting broader and broader and broader.  
Do you notice that?  
I mean, all these Facebook groups  
are people asking for relationship advice.  
It's getting absurd, the red flags.  
I'm like, we have so many red flags.  
We're not going to meet a human being  
with these red flags.  
Tell us what you think out loud is,  
do you have interesting beige flags?  
Do you think that beige flags are really red or green?  
Jump into the Facebook group and let us know.  
If you want to make out loud part of your routine five days a week,  
we release segments on Tuesdays and Thursdays  
just for Mamma Mia subscribers.  
To get full access, follow the link in the show notes.  
And a big thank you to all our current subscribers.  
Last week on No Filter,  
Mia sat down with the former chief content officer of Goop,  
Elise Lunan.  
And she was on No Filter to talk about her new book  
on our best behavior, *The Price Women Pay to Be Good*.  
And how and why she walked away  
from a very successful job in Hollywood  
for a smaller and what she argues is a much better life.  
So Elise had it all by external standards,  
but she wasn't happy.  
She says in the book that it felt as though something was sitting  
on her chest and no matter what she did, she couldn't get it off.

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And that line, I just really, really resonated.  
That's exactly how I felt for about a year in a job that I had,  
which I'll talk about in a minute,  
that there was like an elephant's foot on my chest  
and I just couldn't take a deep breath.  
So she decided to make some changes  
and let's have a listen to what she said.  
You know, at the beginning of COVID,  
when I no longer had a full-time job and was figuring out my new life,  
I was like, I don't have enough.  
I'm in a, you know, oh, just panic.  
And feelings that were familiar to me that I've always had.  
And this woman who I work with, Chris,  
I was like, well, what do you need?  
And it occurred to me, I had never actually written it down.  
And so she was told me to make an Excel document with my needs  
and an Excel document with my wants.  
And what I also found, which was so amazing,  
is that my wants weren't actually runaway either.  
I want to take my kids to Montana  
where I grew up every summer to go horseback riding.  
I want to be able to like order dinners in  
or go out for dinner.  
Like I wanted sort of a slush fund of ease.  
You know, I want to buy books, et cetera.  
Like when I wrote them down, I was like, wow, this is not actually,  
I don't want multiple homes.  
There are a lot of things I don't want.  
And to actually think about it was so liberating  
because you arrive at a concrete list where you're like, this,  
this I can do.  
I can meet these needs.  
I can get some of these wants met as well.  
Like this is doable.  
This is definable.  
Just that alone was incredibly relieving.  
There was so much that you were doing  
that so many other people would probably want,  
like hosting a Netflix show.  
You know, working a group, having this degree of fame,  
getting invited to all these fancy places  
and meeting celebrities.  
So even that objectively, a lot of people would want that.  
You didn't.

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And that's weird too.

Like that's very freeing to go,

I know I should want all of these things

because society tells me I should, but I don't.

It seems at the moment that everyone is busting the success myth.

So Emma Gannon, who coincidentally is on No Filter next week,

has written a new book about it called The Success Myth,

Letting Go of Having it All.

And the description for that book says,

everything we've been led to believe about traditional success is a lie.

It's time to stop climbing the endless ladder to nowhere

and uncover the path to a more fulfilling life.

And it's something I experienced and have written about a little bit

when I chose to step back from my job as editor-in-chief

at Mum Mia.

So I climbed the ladder here and got to what was the top for me

and wasn't happy.

And one thing that helped me work that out

was the concept of anti-goals.

And it's similar to what Elise talks about

in that interview with Mia,

where it's basically working out what don't you want.

Instead of always focusing on, I want money, I want success,

I want people to think that I'm doing really well,

what don't you want.

And there are a bunch of things I didn't want that I was currently doing.

And so that didn't make any sense.

So it seems that walking away from having it all is having a big moment.

Holly, in the age of quiet quitting, are we done with success?

Everywhere you look, people are having a version of this conversation.

On different levels, at different stradders, you know, obviously,

Elise Lunan is talking about a very specific world,

but you're seeing this all around you in friends who are talking about

whether or not to quit their job, change their job, pull back their days.

They're not getting the flexibility they want.

Will they go somewhere else to get it?

It is a seismic shift.

And it's so interesting because there are lots of things informing it.

And obviously one of them, of course, is COVID.

No question.

It shifted everybody's perspectives in so many ways.

It's also that a low unemployment rate.

So people aren't actually scared of not having a job.

Even in America, which is suffering a big economic downturn

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and where a lot of these cultural conversations start,  
the unemployment rate is low.  
And I listened to this amazing podcast that Elise Lunan hosts the other day.  
She hosts this podcast called Pulling the Thread.  
And she was interviewing this work expert guy called Bruce Fila.  
And he wrote a book called The Search,  
Finding Meaningful Work in a Post-Career World, right?  
And his whole point is that careers are just dead.  
Like the idea that you start somewhere and you climb,  
climb, climb to get somewhere is just gone.  
And that actually it has been for much longer than we recognize  
because we used to only judge success by very narrow criteria  
that were set down by old white men over decades.  
But if you ask real people of all kinds of different diversities,  
and that's what he did in making this book,  
because he literally interviewed hundreds and hundreds and hundreds  
of people at all levels of work, all different backgrounds,  
ethnic diversity, women, shock horror.  
That actually the idea of the linear career has been dead a long time.  
That at different times in your life,  
what you want and what will make you happy at work will change.  
And he argues that every few years you have a kind of career quake  
and it might not mean that you change job,  
but you might change your job within your job,  
or you might jump departments or take on new roles or fewer roles or whatever.  
And it really resonated because I just think particularly post COVID,  
and we're talking kind of white collar world broadly,  
although obviously not only a lot of people's scales have been lifted  
from their eyes about what slaving away for a company is giving them really.  
It's so interesting because it feels like everywhere you look,  
people are redefining this stuff.  
And I think it's amazing.  
And I think that a lot of it also has to do obviously with the fact  
that the promises that we were sold in the idea of actually  
attaining career success aren't tangible anymore.  
So the idea that you can have a house and you can have a secure income  
and this stability will happen once you reach a certain level of success.  
That doesn't happen in a housing crisis,  
economic crisis, pre-climate apocalypse world.  
So I think that that's a very obvious part of it.  
And then also the idea that capitalism only functions on the central tenant  
that you actually gain capital.  
And for a lot of us, that's not happening anymore.  
So it doesn't really apply.

## [Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / The Book That Took 5 Days To Cancel

I love the idea that there is just a certain amount of things that will make you feel fulfilled.  
And a lot of the time that stuff is a lot smaller and a lot more contained and a lot gentler than we really realize.  
And it kind of reminds me of those happiness studies that they did like ages ago. I don't know if you remember this, but that idea that, you know, you reach \$75,000 in income and beyond that, it doesn't actually seem to boost your happiness levels in life. Obviously, that number would have changed markedly now because shit is a lot more expensive.  
But it does imply that there is just like a threshold. And it's still more than the average wage, you know, like that still is significantly more.  
But the idea that you're earning enough to cover the basics and live comfortably and you don't actually need any more than that.  
Totally.  
And we're so ingrained that more correlates with more happiness. And that's just not necessarily true.  
And I am very, very much of the belief that work is...  
I mean, I've said this on the podcast before, work is bad. I don't like working.  
As soon as I stop working, I forget about it and I don't care. I'm not like that.  
I'm not like that at all.  
Like I would like to be more like that.  
For me personally, like I've always worked really hard and I really like it and I've probably got way too much of my identity, way too much of it tied up in it.  
But what has shifted for me over the years, what success looks like for me now and lots of people I know what they're chasing is fulfilling work that they love but that doesn't kill them.  
That's what everybody wants.  
So it's not that you necessarily want, oh, I just want a really crazy job that I don't care about.  
Or again, back to what Bruce Fieler says, maybe at some points in your life you do.  
But I want work that is meaningful and fulfilling to me, but that does not consume every minute of my day.  
Whereas I didn't use to care about that.  
And the other thing this guy said on Elise's podcast that I loved as he said, successful people don't climb, they dig.  
And I think that's really good.  
This point is about depth and meaning rather than climbing.  
And I think that's what a lot of people want now.

## [Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / The Book That Took 5 Days To Cancel

It doesn't have to be an endless slog upwards.

The only thing that worries me, Claire, and I'd love your thoughts on this, right?

Is this a very female thing?

Well, I think that it's not just women having this crisis.

I think men are.

And we've seen it in a few resignations recently.

The men are not okay.

We talked about that on the show.

I think men are having this kind of crisis of meaning as well.

And I think the more that the family unit is changing,  
the more men are also having to readjust their priorities.

I will say I did the thing that Elise is telling us to do.

Living a life where you're also pursuing meaning in like a less structured way  
is also incredibly difficult.

I'm glad you said that.

Because I remember things I said to Mia when we were talking about it.

Because I've sort of also done it in a way.

It's not a stress-free existence.

No, it's stressful in different ways.

It's stressful in different ways.

And whatever change you make.

So, you know, I've made the change to the tree change and all that stuff.

It comes with its own stresses and its own problems and its own demands that are different.

But I think that people would often rather have problems that they've made  
than other people's problems.

Then impose problems.

The other thing I thought when I was listening to Elise was that so recently I did season one of  
But Are You Happy?

And basically the overwhelming realization and it's supported by a bunch of research  
is that money, fame and success don't make people happy.

They're the things especially millennials think will make you happy.

The thing that genuinely makes you happy is the quality of your relationships.

It does seem bizarre that we're on this treadmill for fulfillment and satisfaction  
when we know it's not actually leading to either of those things.

And I listened to an episode of Honestly called How to Live Longer and Healthier  
with Dr. Peter Atia.

Right at the end he talked about the fact that as a doctor he was obsessed with how not to die  
and how his mentality has changed to how to live.

And I loved that.

But he talked about how he went to rehab not for drugs or alcohol but for depression  
because he was essentially addicted to success and achievement.

And he was addicted to finding things he was good at.

And then I got pretty far in life.

I got to 45 because the perfectionism and workaholism had produced good results.

## [Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / The Book That Took 5 Days To Cancel

And most people didn't see the simmering rage that came along with it and the detachment and the selfishness and the lack of connectivity and all of the interpersonal pain that I was basically giving to everyone in my wake. And at that point my selfishness and my behavior was escalating to a point where I couldn't take it anymore.

And my closest friend who I write about in the book again named Paul Conti who's a psychiatrist basically said, look, I don't think you have a choice anymore.

I think you have to go and confront your past.

And the thing I loved was that he realized his self-talk was constantly yelling at himself and saying, you're not good enough, you're failing.

Because he's like, even in a successful life you fail multiple times a day because you're ambitious and you're striving.

And so his psychologist gave him this tool.

Basically every time he was yelling at himself he had to pick up his phone and do a voice note where he spoke to himself the way you'd speak to someone that you love.

He did that for six months and by the end he said it replaced the voice in his head.

And the self-talk.

I did this yesterday.

Did you?

What did you say?

I woke up and I was yelling at myself and feeling guilty

and you haven't done enough and it's been a long weekend and you should have got so much done.

And I was just yelling at myself and I just picked up my phone and did a voice note and basically spoke to myself the way I would speak to Jesse and said, it's okay.

You're doing your absolute best.

You're allowed to rest.

You're allowed to rest and it's a new day and you only ever have the present.

Can't worry about the past.

And it was this really calm, gentle process and I'm committed to this.

I'm going to do it.

I also found that absolutely fascinating.

I was driving when I listened to that and it's one of those moments when you go, what?

Yeah.

I just want Claire to leave me voice notes.

Yeah, exactly that.

We should all do it for each other.

It's okay.

Claire, you've got a quick record before we go.

I do.

Okay.

Oh my God.

She's just so Jesse.

She's discovered a show from five years ago.

I'm sorry, but they're the best shows.



## [Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / The Book That Took 5 Days To Cancel

The best things already exist.  
So I love shows like Line of Duty, Happy Valley.  
They're my favorite.  
Even British shows, Claire.  
Yes, British crime shows.  
So I Googled shows like Broadchurch.  
And what came up was The Missing on Stan.  
And I was like, oh, this is good.  
This is good.  
My God.  
Okay.  
So it's a classic British crime show.  
It has faces in season two.  
The ex-husband from Happy Valley is in it.  
James Nersby is the main dude.  
He is from like lots of iconic British shows.  
There's a woman who's in line of duty.  
You just spot everyone from all your favorite crime shows.  
And basically there's this detective, Julian Baptiste, who's like French and amazing.  
And he leads the search in season one for Missing Child.  
And it is this gripping series that explores the fallout of a child's abduction on the family and the wider community.  
The ending is just, you know, those shows, you're always waiting to see if they'll pull off the ending.  
Now, my partner and I are onto season two.  
There's a missing girl who's turned up again, but there's a big twist to her turning up again.  
It's great writing.  
It's great dialogue.  
It's a set in like Germany in the winter, but then a beautiful French town.  
And you just, I'm here just for the set.  
It's just, it's so good.  
You must watch it.  
If you're looking for something else to listen to, on yesterday's subscriber app, we spoke about the unspoken truths about female breadwinners.  
So what it really feels like and what everybody else imposes on you when you're the person in a relationship who earns more.  
Things like they'll cheat on you.  
They'll resent you.  
Your relationship will never feel equal.  
They're just some of the critiques.  
And I share some of my own.  
If that resonates with you, there's a link in the show notes to go and listen to the secrets of a female breadwinner.

## **[Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / The Book That Took 5 Days To Cancel**

Thank you for listening to Australia's number one news and pop culture show.

This episode was produced by Emeline Gazillas and Susanna Makin with audio production by Leah Porges and the executive producer is Eliza Ratliff.

Bye.

Bye.

Shout out to any Mamma Mia subscribers listening.

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There's a link in the episode description.