

## Ooligan Press Editorial Department

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December 17, 2019

Erin Moynihan | *Laurel Everywhere* | Copyediting Editorial Note, Round 1

Dear Erin:

Thank you for your patience as we worked to complete the first round of copyediting on *Laurel Everywhere*. You've been incredible while wading through this publishing process and trusting your manuscript to us for several rounds of intense editing.

In terms of the editing process, we are closing in on the homestretch. What I'm passing back to you is a draft that needs to have setting and location better established, as well as some moments padded with additional description to get it one-step closer to final draft form. This draft is brimming with edits focused on spelling, punctuation, grammar, syntax, and active voice. We haven't suggested any major revisions or structural edits here, but we have identified some opportunities for expansion within scenes. So hopefully that provides some relief on your end!

In order to view our edits using Microsoft Word, select the "Review" tab, and under "Tracking," select "All Markup." Probably the easiest way to navigate the document is to use the "Next Change" and "Previous Change" buttons (located to the right of the Tracking menu). This button will "select" each change individually, after which you can accept or reject it using the neighboring "Accept" and "Reject" buttons. (Accepting or rejecting a change will also automatically bump you to the next change, making it easy—hopefully—for you to breeze through the document.)

### **The biggest areas we focused on:**

- ❑ **Setting and location.** We've noted several areas within the manuscript that need to have setting and location better established to give the reader a sense of where the action is taking place.
- ❑ **Stronger word choices.** These are emphasized throughout in place of simpler terms like "get, got." We are suggesting stronger verbs, adverbs or additional rephrasing which would add more punch or provide poetic value.

- ❑ We've highlighted a few areas to include more description, especially around the expression on different character faces and or their actions. At times the prose can lapse into generalities and vagueness, so we want to catch those moments and give Laurel the chance to paint a clearer picture.
- ❑ Removed phrases such as "I can feel" or "I can see" that are not needed when a narrator has taken up the first person perspective mantle. The same with "I think" or "I feel like." Those phrases can be eliminated and we can jump directly into the action from there.
- ❑ Eliminated excess uses of the terms "that" which is another filler word which only needs to be used minimally.
- ❑ The use of the "deflated balloon" imagery is repeated throughout. Unsure if this intentional, but each instance is marked and further suggestions for imagery are included.
- ❑ **Sentence structures:** there were several run-on sentences that were either chopped up into smaller sentences, or were slightly altered to preserve the "racing thoughts" of Laurel in times of high distress. Overall several commas were eliminated that forced too much pausing within longer sentences.
- ❑ **Dialogue.** Replacing several instances of "tell" with "says" so the dialogue feels less demanding and more relaxed between the different speakers. Additionally, some dialogue was altered to reflect a different speaker, as minor characters seemed to adopt Laurel's narrative voice as their speaking voice. Also pared down the number of times characters use names and start out sentences with "Well." In natural dialogue, we rarely use names unless we're trying to get someone's direct attention, and book dialogue reads better without additional filler words like "well, uhm," etc.
- ❑ **Queries for factual information or fact-checking,** especially around the state penitentiary scene.
- ❑ **Opportunities for expansion.** Aside from adding additional details about setting/location and calls for more heightened description, there are still some areas for expansion which would increase the word count and bring it closer to our goals. Specifically, in the final chapter with the visit to Shannon. There is an opportunity for Laurel to bring about some kind of closure with The List. She used it to sort of deflect and shield herself from directly dealing with the

emotional fallout of losing her family, and so bringing that element back and giving her closure would also help underscore her emotional growth throughout the book.

We were so pleased to see that you took much of the advice from the developmental edit note and felt comfortable making changes to the manuscript in order to better intensify existing elements. The opening is still dramatic but keeps some of the exposition hidden to be revealed at key points. Well done!

In so many ways, Laurel is much more present and centered in her own story. The reader gets a better sense of who she is while not losing any of her depictions of her deceased mother and siblings. Specifically, the additional scenes with Lyssa and the hot yoga add more emotional weight and impact to the adoption scene later on. The expansion of the lake scene allows the reader to really revel in her brief, shining moments of happiness. Laurel is a much more well-rounded character.

The biggest thing to highlight at this point, is we are nearing the final edit of the book. The next round of editing will be the last, so this is really the time to make larger-scale additions or changes. The next round is mostly for fine-tuning the existing content before we head into the interior design and proofreading portions of the publishing process.

Once you are finished reviewing our edits and making any changes of your own, please send the manuscript back to us by January 13, 2020. If you encounter any roadblocks or have any questions, please reach out! Tia and I are always happy to help.

Thank you so very much for sharing this story with us. It's such an intense emotional journey, and it's been incredible to watch it evolve and take shape over the last few months. Laurel's story of loss, grief, and healing is such an important message for young people to hear and we are that much closer to making it happen!

Take Care,

Melinda Crouchley | Managing Editor | Ooligan Press