**Transcript–– Gender Reveal Season 12, Episode 170: Jamie Lauren Keiles**

Tuck: Shopping for sex toys can sometimes feel overwhelming or dysphoric, but ShopEnby.com is a black- and trans-owned sex toy shop that aims to create a better experience for the queer, trans, and gender nonconforming community. One thing I like about their website is they have separate little tabs for “trans masc / FTM,” and “trans femme / MTF.” And if you've ever been on testosterone (for example) you might have a dick growth experience and be like “hey, I actually need completely new toys for this,” and that's where that website comes in and gives great examples of something you might like to try. Visit ShopEnby.com. That's S-H-O-P-E-N-B-Y dot com. And use the code “GenderReveal” at checkout to get 10 percent off, and bring more pleasure and affirmation into your life.

[Gender Reveal theme music by Breakmaster Cylinder plays]

Tuck: Welcome to Gender Reveal, a podcast where we hopefully get a little bit closer to understanding what the hell gender is. I'm your host and resident gender detective, Tuck Woodstock.

[Gender Reveal theme music ends]

Tuck: Hey everyone, hope you’ve all been hangin’ in there. This week on the show, I am very excited to share my conversation with Jamie Lauren Keiles. You might know Jamie from his archival Instagram account @sexchange.tbt, or from his work as a New York Times Magazine contributor, or from his resignation as a New York Times Magazine contributor – alongside Jazmine Hughes. In this episode, Jamie and I talk about truly so much, including the history of nonbinary identity...

Jamie: Genderqueers were coming out of queer co-ops, and anarchist scenes, and G8 protesters. Whereas nonbinary people come out of the Internet, right?

Tuck: The winners of his most transgender name contest...

Jamie: I would *never* do it again, because it created so much classic transgender drama. Which I think really did make it the most transgender contest.

Tuck: And having to clear his phalloplasty and blow job articles with the New York Times standards desk...

Jamie: That was just the year of minor arguments about dick.

Tuck: But before we get to that, just a reminder: Trans Day of Staying in and Having a Nice Snack is coming up this Sunday, so keep an eye out for a bonus episode about all of that later this week. In the meantime, you can shop this year’s Trans Day of Snack merch collection through the end of the month at bit.ly/gendermerch. Proceeds go to our mutual aid snack fund.

And now – it's time for This Week in Gender.

[This Week in Gender segment chime theme music plays]

Tuck: OK. So it sort of feels feels like I should use a segment to say something about Andrea Long Chu’s big new New York magazine cover story on child sex changes and whatnot, and then I could also talk about Beans Velocci's new article in *Cell* that asks whether sex is even a useful category. Maybe I could tie in Paisley Currah’s book *Sex Is as Sex Does* from a couple years ago, and then from there we could go to Paisley's piace in the *Yale Review* about the new Judith Butler book *Who's Afraid of Gender?* And then we could tie all of that back to what Andrea Long Chu says about the new Judith Butler book in her New York magazine cover story. But obviously you know I'm not gonna do that – are you joking? I have like 45 minutes to write this segment, I don't have a PhD, and honestly most of the time I can barely read. So instead I'm just gonna share three quotes about biological sex that I most consistently refer back to, and two of them are literally tweets.

[Ambient music plays]

The first is from friend of the show Dr. Sawyer Kemp – it’s an old tweet of theirs, and it says: "THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS BIOLOGICAL SEX there is an aggregate of 5 different biological data that we collect about infants that all present in various ranges and change over time. I'm sorry that science has improved since you went to high school 40 years ago". I use that quote a lot when I am teaching – I hacked off the last sentence so as to not be so rude, but generally I think the framing is very important. And by the way, what are the five different biological data? Say it with me: internal genitalia, external genitalia, chromosomes, hormones, and hormonal expression. Great job.

OK. The second little quote about sex that I sometimes use when teaching is actually from an old episode of this very podcast. It is a Cis Day of Visibility chat with Callen Lorde’s own Dr. Lola Pellegrino, and you'll hear her use the phrase “lab gender” here, because she's referencing my question from the episode, which was basically like: at what point in your transition do your doctors consider your sex officially changed for the purposes of blood test references and whatever – like basically, how do you know which sex box to check at the doctor?

Lola [clip]: I am happy to communicate that like top to bottom nobody has any fuckin’ idea what like your ‘laboratory gender’ is, there is no crossover point that is agreed upon at which somebody is now their target ‘lab gender.’ Like, is it somebody on T for one year? Five years? Ten years? Is it somebody who has had bottom surgery in which they don't have testicles or ovaries anymore afterwards? We kind of freestyle it for the person – but that question, I wish there was an easy answer. But you can get a bunch of people who do this kind of endocrinology drunk and we will all fight about it, and hearts will be broken, and nobody will come out the winner.

The last quote I keep coming back to is an old tweet from the author Foz Meadows. It's actually about gender, but I think it fits here as well. And it says: "human gender and sexuality are very much like animal taxonomy, in that both look structured and simple on the surface, but once you start investigating, it turns out there's actually no such thing as a fish despite the fact that we all know what a fish is, and that's okay".

And if you’re like “wait – what do you mean there's ‘no such thing as a fish’?” may I point you to the 2020 book *Why Fish Don’t Exist* by Lulu Miller. And if you really wanna spiral, and you've already thought too hard about all the classics like: “what is a fish?” “What is a woman?” “What is a chair?” All of that…did you know there's one mountain in southeast Oregon that’s 50 miles long, because there is nothing in the definition of mountain that says a mountain can't be 50 miles long? And if you’re like “hey Tuck, that actually seems like a non sequitur – what does Steens Mountain have to do with sex?” The answer is nothing; I literally just wanted to tell everybody about Steens Mountain, which is 50 miles long!

Anyway, I'll put all the articles I referenced at the top of this segment in the show notes, in case you want to do your own sort of DIY academic course on sex and gender. In the meantime, my philosophy will continue to be: “you know, let's just all have a good time.”

[Ambient music ends]

Tuck: This has been This Week in Gender.

[This Week in Gender segment chime theme music plays]

Tuck: We’ve got a Theymail message for you today. Theymails are little messages from listeners; there's a link in the show notes for you to submit your own. This week's message is from Riley, and it says: Is your boyfriend obsessed with an all-terrain vehicle he doesn't really need? Are truck nuts a gender? Do you love weird shirts? “This is my gender affirming truck” shirts are now available at southpaw.cafe. All shirts are hand-printed by volunteers, and all proceeds go towards mutual aid and community building in Appalachia.

Tuck: OK. One more quick ad, then we’ll get to the interview. Here we go.

[Ambient music plays]

Believe it or not, I'm a pretty private person. I don't like to share intimate details with people I just met. I certainly don't want strangers to be able to look up my home address, or my family members’ names, or any other personal info, really. And that's why I continue to use DeleteMe. DeleteMe routinely scans hundreds of data broker websites to make sure that my personal information is not easily available online. DeleteMe can also scrub info tied to deadnames and other aliases. You can join today at joindeleteme.com/genderreveal, and use the code TUCK20 to get 20 percent off your entire order. That is TUCK20 for 20 percent off at joindeleteme.com/genderreveal.

[Ambient music ends]

[Gender Reveal theme music plays]

Tuck: Jamie Lauren Keiles is a writer and the admin of the trans archival history account @sexchange.tbt on Instagram. His book *The Third Person: A History of Nonbinary Identity* will be out from Farrar, Straus, & Giroux in 2025.

[Gender Reveal theme music plays out and ends]

Tuck: The way we always start the show is by asking: in terms of gender, how do you describe yourself?

Jamie: Oh god. I guess it depends who’s asking, right? Because I don’t know if I have a true answer to it, as much as, like, the answers that work in different settings and don’t humiliate me.

Tuck: Yeah.

Jamie: Yeah. I mean, I guess if I was checking a form, I would pick “trans,” but I have no problem with being a man. I have no problem with being nonbinary, I guess. I find the language is less important than the desires themselves to me, almost. I got into this whole thing I guess by being like: oh you put on a hoodie, and you think you look good. And then you cut your hair a little shorter, and you think you look good. And then you go to the gym a little, and you think you look good. And then you say: “oh, do I want top surgery?” And then like six or seven years later you're randomly a man, and that's kind of how it happens [laughs]. So yeah, I kind of backed myself way into man, and I guess I don't have a problem with it.

Tuck: Yeah, makes complete sense to me. So my producer Ozzy couldn't be here today, but I believe they did want to ask: “hey, so you have this beautiful full name and you never changed any of it, how does it feel to be god’s favorite?” [Jamie laughs] was I believe their wording. But yeah – was that an intentional thing that your parents did, or did you just luck out?

Jamie: I guess I just lucked out, and honestly I wasn't even perceiving it as that gender-neutral of a name. People keep telling me my middle name is gender-neutral, but mostly I was like “oh, my career is so tied up in it that because my first name is gender-neutral, I'll just keep the middle name.” But my mom is very self-satisfied, like “yeah, I'm so progressive, [Tuck laughs] I did this, and I think all people should give their kids gender-neutral names!” And I was like “you really weren't thinking about that.” [Tuck laughs] My mom’s very supportive, if confused sometimes.

Tuck: Mhmm.

Jamie: But I'm like “well, you know I could change my name if I wanted.” And she's like “no, it's gender-neutral, you wouldn't do that!”

Tuck: Wowww.

Jamie: So sometimes to spite her a little bit, I'm like “I guess I'll change it.”

Tuck: You could still change it, it's *very* doable.

Jamie: Yeah, but I don't have strong feelings about it. I mean, I have like two or three friends that call me Jim, and I've always liked that, but I've never been like “I like being trans now.” The whole process of reorganizing everything about yourself and your body and your life – like I never enjoyed any of it until it was done, and then I was able to be like “oh OK, this was the right choice.” But I was so ambivalent about my name, so ambivalent about every single stage of transition, and really just sort of begrudgingly went along with it ‘cause I know it needed to be done, if that makes sense.

Tuck: I mean, not to just immediately call you out on your whole life – but I did have to scream yesterday, ‘cause I was listening to a podcast you were on and you said that your transition took you by surprise. And I had just been reading your back catalog, man – and you wrote a piece for *Rookie* in 2011 called “No Girls Allowed” [Jamie laughs] in which you talk about wanting to be one of the guys. But don't worry: you don't wanna be a guy, just one of the guys, normally – like a girl does. And then in 2015, there's all this feminist blogosphere stuff like “how to optimize your flesh prison,” and I'm like, “honey I'm *so* sorry this was a surprise to you?” [laughs]

Jamie: Yeah, I think my point of entry was feminism, and for a while I was not perceiving the things I was feeling as a dissatisfaction with woman, as I was with like “oh the societal uptake of woman is incorrect”...

Tuck: Yeah.

Jamie: …which I still feel for the most part, because there was never underneath it all a strong desire to be a man. Or the things I think I desired about being a man are still things that I think are just maybe things everyone can feel about themselves that are like patriarchal rights. So it's like, to the extent that I thought woman was a limiting identity, I always thought of it as like a limiting identity in a *societal* way. And in some ways, I think that kept me out of the category “trans” for a long time, because I kept being like “no, there's a political fight to be fought here.” And I don't think I had a clear sense of what my personal stake in it was versus what the societal stake in it was. Was this a feminist concern? Am I gay? And like, I went through a phase of trying to be a lesbian and really just being like “I don't really get what two girls are doing here together.” [Tuck laughs] It’s not like I didn't get the mechanics of it [Tuck laughs] but I sort of for a bit was like “which one am I – am I the girl or the boy?” And it's like “no, you're both the girl, potentially – that's one of the ways that you could be a lesbian.” [Tuck laughs]

Tuck: Wait. I have a question about that, because I heard that you were heterosexually dating men, and then transitioned, and then mentioned something about a girlfriend somewhere. So I just wanted to ask if you were a straight-to-straight transsexual, ‘cause that’s such a rare thing – but we’re hearing something about trying to be a lesbian, so I just wanted to clarify.

Jamie: I just don't think sexuality is a useful framing for how my sense of desire operates in the world. And I don't mean to be difficult and “I'm special,” but I just feel like a lot of people must feel this way, right? I definitely liked a lot of things about being straight, like I wasn't an unhappy straight person. I definitely like fucking men, and I don't know if I liked being fucked by a man as a woman, but I liked the script of heterosexual sex, and I definitely like it in reverse now as the man. I don't think I cared about whether I was the man fucking the woman or the woman getting fucked by the man; I just liked the dynamic of the two points of difference coming together in these ways, and that it is hot to me. But there are types of gay sex that have that dynamic of difference, so I don't feel necessarily excluded from “gay.” I've never felt any kind of a cultural connection to lesbianism, and I don't know what I actually think the content of lesbianism is that makes me feel that way, But kind of trying to negotiate myself in reference to that point was always very confusing to me. I wouldn’t say I'm straight-to-straight. I think I would say I was like bi in one direction to bi in the other direction, or something, or like maybe fake bi to real bi, or something. [Tuck laughs]

Tuck: Totally. And that’s a very real identity. [laughs] OK, well let me stop harassing you about your identity for a minute, and ask about all the work that you've done, because there's so much. So you’re working on this book now that's called *The Third Person*. Can you tell us how *The Third Person* is different from the other books that are all called like *He/She/They*, or *They/Them/Their*, or *Transgender 101*, or *Trans History*, or *Gender*, which I think are all real books that I just named. [laughs]

Jamie: Yeah. So basically I've been a writer for maybe 10 years now, and people start asking you like “oh, do you ever wanna do a book?” And because I got into things via feminism, people always wanted you to write a book about being a young woman. It was sort of in peak, like, Lena Dunham *Rookie* mag times. The personal essay by a woman was very valued, and for some reason that now is more evident, I was always like “I don't wanna do that,” and spent a long time defining my career in opposition to that. Being like “I wanna be a generalist, I wanna be able to write about everything, I don't wanna be siloed in this young woman writer category.” And then spent a bunch of years sort of carving that out, being like “I'm not gonna do identitarian writing; it doesn't interest me.” I like reading other people’s writing on that topic sometimes, but I was really – as sort of some type of ego thing – averse to it.

And then sort of my point into medical transition was via nonbinary as an identity, which I think opened up a lot of space for me, and I can talk about that separately. But from the perspective of the book, I kept getting really annoyed as nonbinary as a paradigm emerged into the bigger conversation, and I would see all these – not so much that the content was wrong – but that there was this certain precious tone that we always talked about nonbinariness with. And I found people really doubling down on this idea like “nonbinary has always been here.” And while I appreciated sort of the general sentiment of “people have always been getting up to shit gender-wise forever,” the category “nonbinary” actually has not always been here, and in my lifetime I watched it go from something that wasn't available to me to all of a sudden a very specific paradigm that emerged in a very specific place, with very certain cultural norms that has a very specific and sort of contentious relationship to the bigger category “trans” that it’s allegedly within. Nonbinary is new and historically produced in some sense, and that's OK – that still makes it legitimate.

And then it can even – maybe – open up a space to ask questions like “OK, now if it's legitimate, to what extent is it effective in helping us achieve our goals of bodily autonomy, or just respect for basic dignity of human life?” So if you could look at this set of questions with the normal journalistic eye that you look at any sort of changing set of paradigms with, it could actually be a really good story. It's not just this precious thing about the bravery of trans people – which is true, but it's the least-interesting story to me – I'm much more interested in the ways that the same type of person has been moved between categories over time.

Tuck: Hmm.

Jamie: The book is going to tell a material story of where this paradigm comes from, and some of the ways the people for whom it is meaningful use it. So I don't spend a lot of time arguing with people that hate nonbinary people. I do spend a lot of time talking about the struggles that nonbinary people face, especially within the broader trans community, and in relation to other ways that people wanna talk about “trans” that aren't wrong either. But there's multiple paradigms circulating at this moment, and they're clashing a lot, so I'm much more interested in that type of tension than I am with a right-wing nut job that is part of whatever the moral panic de jour is.

Tuck: For sure, for sure. I heard that you wrote a chapter about how genderqueer is either similar or different or both than nonbinary as a category, but obviously I can't read that chapter yet, because the book’s not out. Can you tell me where you landed on that?

Jamie: Yeah! I think genderqueer was definitely the first category I encountered that wasn't either like man or woman – and I include “trans man” and “trans woman” in that. It emerged in the context of all these bigger left political questions, or things about queer autonomy, or things about the ability of the medical establishment to have a say on your identity. It emerged in a pretty different way than nonbinary, which kind of comes fully-formed into the world in this way where it has no politic attached to it – like it can absorb a lot of politics, but there's no particular relation to medical transition, there's no concrete on-the-ground subculture it grows out of. Genderqueers were coming out of queer co-ops, and anarchist scenes, and G8 protesters.

Whereas nonbinary people – a lot of us (I think I would maybe include myself) – come out of the Internet, right? These sort-of disembodied spaces where people talk about identity before they ever come together on these other grounds. So I think that sets a really different set of terms for the way nonbinary can be used as a political category, an identity category, all these different things. I almost feel scared to talk about it out loud because I'm such…I feel like I write because I'm so neurotic, and there's a little bit of an impossibility about writing about trans stuff, and I think that’s some of the most fun and stressful parts of working on this book.

Tuck: For sure. So much of your work, it seems, has been digging through the archive to the point where you have this whole Instagram account: @sexchange.tbt. There are many limits to the archive – I'm sure that you're running into that all the time. I was wondering what are you feeling that you're particularly struggling with – resources that you wish you could manifest because there are just gaps in what's been archived.

Jamie: Yeah. I mean there's just a huge gap with the early Internet, right? So a lot of the stuff that I spend time just digging up for the Instagram account is things from the LiveJournal era, or basically ‘95 to like 2011 – is this pretty big hole. It's not like “oh, there's 20 books on trans topics that were lost to time,” it's like “there's one billion little Internet communities…”

Tuck: Right.

Jamie: “...that maybe contained 11 people.” I think about – for example – there's this one LiveJournal community called “Birls,” like, “boy girls.” And this is just an autonomous little space where maybe a couple thousand people would come and talk about themselves as birls, this other gender – a category which I guess was a little bit genderqueer, it was a little bit trans, but it was a little bit dyke. It kind of existed in this space where it just was birls. And then a Russian company bought LiveJournal, and it exists in some fractured way on a server far away, and you could never read all of it. And then even if you wanted to cite it, are you exposing some person who wrote it? So there's just all these questions that we don't have great historical methods for dealing with, using this trans archival stuff that exists in a really fractured way. There's a really good book that came out recently by Avery Dame-Griff called *The Transgender Internet* that gets into a lot of this. So the more recent stuff is really exciting, but it's really hard.

And then in terms of the older stuff, there's this question that always exists in trans stuff, which is: how do you categorize – or do you even categorize at all? – these people that lived before that have traits that resemble the traits of identities now, but are not that. A crossdresser isn’t nonbinary, they’re a crossdresser. But obviously changes in the world of crossdressers has something to do with like nonbinary today, right? If a category is not operating with a younger demographic, then people are coming up with other things to sort of use that. Does that mean that nonbinary people are *really* crossdressers? No. I mean, maybe some of them are in addition to being nonbinary. [Tuck laughs] But just figuring out the ways that you contend with these resemblance in categories, but they don't totally line up. Trans intellectual work is not like…there's trans studies, and that's increasingly sort of schematized – but there's not…very few people my age graduated high school and were like “now it's time to go to college and study transgender,” you know what I mean?

Tuck: Right! Because it didn’t… the programs didn’t exist, absolutely.

Jamie: Right. And it existed in this weird gap between “it's women’s studies,” “it’s gender studies,” “it's history of science and medicine.” Right? All these things. So just learning to piece that together – it's made me so grateful for grad students. I never quite understood – like, I’ve got friends who are grad students – but I never quite understood, like “what’s the deal there?” And I’m like “oh right, you guys produce huge amounts of really in-depth research that no other funding mechanism could ever make happen.” So my book is dedicated to grad students sort of spiritually, ‘cause I could never have done this without a million random dissertations on topics that will never make it into a mainstream book otherwise, you know?

Tuck: Yeah, that rules. Honestly one of the best arguments for grad programs that I've ever heard. So, great work. I wanna go back to something you were saying in the genderqueer first nonbinary thing that I think threads through your work a bit – which is this idea that in the genderqueer era, people were meeting other people, and that was helping them realize that they were genderqueer or trans. I just feel like there is some benefit to being somewhat forced into community, because it gives you a sort of community solidarity that doesn't necessarily exist when identity is so atomized and individualized. I am wondering what you think are sort of the pros and cons of the ability to fully trans yourself on the Internet, ‘cause I think we hear a lot of “it's amazing, and it's safe to tell lies,” which is true – it is true. But there’s gotta be other thoughts in addition to that.

Jamie: I don’t know, ‘cause then…so much of dealing with community is extremely annoying, and so much of being alone makes you really brittle and fragile and scared. I think why I’m having trouble answering the question is ‘cause I just don’t think of it as different than anything else in life that has to do with not-trans stuff, right? I think contact with other people that makes you uncomfortable is very, very productive for growth. But then also there’s downsides to that – other people are annoying, and it causes people to clique up and form these brittle ideologies that are as brittle as if you developed them by yourself. When I’m walking down the street in New York, I do feel this solidarity of when I see other trans people in public, I wanna be like “I’m trans too.” But then at the same time, I don’t like when I meet another trans person at a party and they come up to me, and they assume that we have some set of things in common because we’re both trans. Which I guess in some sense is true, and I do think we have (or *should* have) a political solidarity in some sense. But then at the same time, I don’t like when people are overly familiar because they assume that just because two people are trans, they have something in common. So maybe just be normal, be chill, be curious…

Tuck: “Be normal” is what it always comes down to. It always comes back to “be normal.”

Jamie: And do I know how to be normal? Depends on the day, I guess. [Tuck laughs] It’s an interesting question.

Tuck: Yeah. So when you’re posting all this archival trans-related content on @sexchange.tbt, I’m curious about what you’ve learned about current trans culture and trans moods, from just the way that people react to different posts that you’ve made of archival stuff.

Jamie: People always like stuff where they say “oh, it’s me it’s me, I’m the same as I was in the past,” right? Sometimes it’s boring stuff where it’s like “oh, a trans guy was hot in the past and I’m hot in the present, so I’m gonna share this.” [Tuck laughs] That’s not the most exciting thing. But then there’s surprising ones. Just when you read the archive, trans women have just…there’s a lot of different trans women’s culture, but I think across the board they’re just always funny and have a weird sense of humor, and weird trans girl humor has existed since the earliest trans girl newsletters. When you put those up, people are always like “ahh, she was a shitposter just like me,” and that kind of stuff always makes me laugh, ‘cause how do you account for a sensibility over time, right? And I think this just…there’s differences…stuff I like that I always want to post, I notice, doesn’t hit. I love early 2000s trans people in corny settings, right? I love Chaz Bono shopping in Miami, and people don’t love that.

Tuck: Huh.

Jamie: People don’t want a picture of Alexis Arquette using a Razr phone.

Tuck: Hmm.

Jamie: Whereas I think that’s the cutest, most charming shit ever. I don’t know why…I think there is sort of…people want strong, powerful, sexy images of trans people. They don’t like images of trans people that are sort of mundane, or…

Tuck: Huh.

Jamie: …sort of commercial. And people don’t like things that are on the edge of porn a lot. Like I notice I always want to post things that are kind of like “oh, this came from a sissy magazine in the ‘50s.” And I think people are averse to hypersexualized images of trans people, maybe ‘cause they…

Tuck: Hmm.

Jamie: …exist in such quantity in the world already. But that surprises me, ‘cause the stuff that I just have a taste for is…I have my couple followers that are hardcore, and they’re always sending me, like “I found this porno thing from a long time ago,” but it’s not a broad taste that people are clamoring for.

Tuck: Yeah. So, we have to talk about this: you wrote this *New York Times Magazine* feature in 2022 about phalloplasty, called “How Ben Got His Penis.” Bunch of questions about that. But at the top, I’m just wondering who you are imagining as the ideal audience for that, and what you wanted them to take away from it.

Jamie: It’s interesting, ‘cause I think through that, I learned a lot about where trans writing should and could live. I think at the time I was thinking of it from the perspective of it’s not very often that you get to see trans topics given a classic magazine story treatment from a perspective that’s not exoticizing.

Tuck: Mhm.

Jamie: And I just thought in terms of having all the parts of a story that are just like: a person, caught up in a historical moment in which certain things are available to them, and making choices that are hard, but also resolving certain ambivalences. I thought there was a lot of interesting things that are just the stuff I’m drawn to in stories in general. And questions of: is now the right time to get phallo? Who gets it? How do they make that choice? So it kind of started from that place of “I’d really like to just write this as a regular magazine story, and not a public health article.” But then I think I had a naive idea about when something goes and lives in the world, the ways it gets used, or who takes an interest in it, right? ‘Cause there’s the upside, which is now when you search “phalloplasty,” there’s a deeply-reported article that a major place spent thousands of dollars paying someone to write – I had lots and lots of fact-checkers, a legal team – I was given a huge amount of resources to make readily searchable a positive story that was also factual about phalloplasty. So I feel good about that.

And then I feel like the downside is maybe some amount of reading about anything is always a little bit prurient, right? You want to find out about a world you don’t live in, and there’s kind of a mode of reading that even if you don’t want it to be, it can be extremely exoticizing. So I think I expected trans people to be mad at the story, but you can never predict why — and there were just a lot of trans people that were like “you should never write about something involving trans people and surgery for a mainstream audience.” I had…a lot of these people were really cruel to me; I got a lot of death threats from other trans people, a lot of people saying “kill yourself.” But then the flip side of that is I had a lot of interesting conversations with people making a case for “well, I’m a stealth trans guy living in the world, and people knowing what a phallo scar looks like makes life harder for me.” So I’m sympathetic to that, I just don’t know…I think it’s better for the information to be out there than not. Would I have done it or approached it differently if I was writing it now? Yeah, there’s a lot of different choices I would make. But you hope that your work does more good than harm. I do just think information wants to be free, but I can respect that there’s a lot of other trans people that would draw the line in the sand a little bit differently than me on that.

Tuck: Yeah. What are some of the changes that you would make?

Jamie: I think I made some miscalculations in terms of what types of information the reader needs to be able to immediately have available to them. So there’s online communities that maybe I pointed to by name that in another story I just don’t know if the reader needs to be involved in knowing that, right? I think my idea was initially that a trans person could read this story and want to be put into contact with this information, but then prior to that I had never been on the receiving end of a lot of trans-specific harassment, and I think I underestimated the scale of when you send *The New York Times* audience in the direction of something, that there’s a lot of risks that come with that. I think I would have done a little bit more work of just protecting the structures of the community writ large. Do I regret that? I don’t know. ‘Cause you don’t know the things you don’t know, but I think I would definitely do it differently next time. I think honestly people had criticism of quoting Ben describing his body, of saying that he had fears that he would have a “Frankenpenis” after surgery. People said “you should never put the word…

Tuck: That was funny. [laughs]

Jamie: Right, and having trans people talk about themselves in ways that are scandalous or ambivalent is good and fine. If that makes us seem unrespectable in some way, I just really don’t give a shit.I don't know – there's lines…I think the main one is thinking a little bit about more community resources and how I would protect them from the *Times* audience. But at the end of the day, I might not have written for the *Times*, right? So if I was writing it now, I think I would try to write it somewhere a lot smaller that catered more towards – maybe not just a trans audience, but a left audience. A bigger platform is not always inherently better, and I think that feels obvious now, but it did not feel obvious to me in 2020 or 2021, when that story came out.

Tuck: Yeah. I think it came out in 2022, right? But you'd worked on it for several years.

Jamie: Yeah, it took about two years to write, so I guess probably by the time it came out it was like…

Tuck: I remember it coming out really close to Emily Bazelon's *New York Times Magazine* piece.

Jamie: Yeah.

Tuck: And I was wondering what that was like, and if you knew that that was coming down the pipeline so close to yours. Because something that we point to when we talk about the *New York Times’* contribution to anti-trans sentiment is just the fact that they published so many enormous articles about transmedical transition, to the point where if you're just a casual cisgender reader and you see *The New York Times* knock out, you know, two huge profiles in two months in their magazine about medical transition, it would make sense to be like “oh, this must be a huge issue that affects millions of people, because *The New York Times* is thinking about this so much!” So obviously that's not on you, but I was just wondering what your experience was on your end.

Jamie: I mean, I had no sense of that coming down the pipe at all. And honestly didn't even really engage with it when it came out, because when I was still at the *Times,* every trans thing would just be a huge headache for me. And a lot of it, I think I was just like “I don't wanna be involved in this,” which is…I probably should've been more.

Tuck: What are you gonna do? [laughs]

Jamie: I think on some level, writing the story interested me, because I had heard there's all these institutional barriers to doing good writing about trans stuff, and that's why the *Times* does such a shit job. And on some level I think I proved to myself that it's not a paper-wide conspiracy where every person there hates trans people…

Tuck: Right.

Jamie: ...and there's stopgaps in place to prevent anything that's trans-affirming from coming out. There's specific parts of the institution, or there are specific blind spots, or there are specific people that are transphobic, and there's certain attitudes towards what type of inquiry is seen as virtuous, right? Like the “gotta hear both sides, just asking questions” is something the *Times* really fetishizes. But I was very happy to be like “oh, actually good reporting can come through this process.” But then I do see that part of why I was able to get it through is because it complied with this certain prurient interest in the medicalization of trans people's bodies.

Tuck: Mhm.

Jamie: So this is all stuff that I have a lot of hindsight about years later, but in the moment it was just really opaque to me. And when people ask me now “what's going on really behind the scenes?” And I still feel like I don't know. Obviously there's a problem, and obviously it's systemic, but then parts of my time there were so…I felt like I had so much freedom to write about anything that interested me. So I think a lot of it – when I think about what's the call to action – there needs to just be other ways of funding journalism.

Tuck: Mhm.

Jamie: Because the idea that there's one paper of record, and it controls so many resources, and so many writers, and such a sense of what belongs in the common American conversation and what's outside of it. I don't get why one privately-owned company has so much say, and it seems like it's happening right now in part because media as an industry is being gutted, right? And these types of moral panics just took hold in different ways when there were a lot healthier and more robust alt-weeklies, and resources for in-depth reporting in major papers in every city, right? And we just don't have that anymore, so it wouldn't bother me so much if the*Times* was transphobic if there's also 25 other similarly-resourced papers.

Tuck: Absolutely, absolutely. You famously signed the Writers Against the War on Gaza solidarity statement. We can talk about that – that led to your resignation as a *New York Times Magazine* contributor. You also signed the *New York Times* open letter (nytletter.com), which talks about the ways that the paper contributes to anti-trans sentiment, as we talked about. So what overlaps do you see in the way that *The New York Times* – and of course other publications as well – fail Palestinians and trans people? I think a lot of ways that they are failing overlap; I'm curious what you think.

Jamie: I think so much of it is there's this idea of who is the target reader of the *Times*, right? And it's not a defined profile – a person – but you clearly come up against it when you're writing about anything there. ‘Cause there's an assumed body of knowledge of what seems reasonable, what seems like a question that needed to be asked, versus what's implicit. So on some level, I think it's just that trans people and Palestinians are regarded as outside of the group of people that not only is the *Times* reader, but also the group of people that's assumed to be able to speak for themself, right? So I encountered a very weird thing being at the *Times,* because in the coverage in the paper, a trans person is not someone that's considered an authority to speak on trans issues.

Tuck: Right.

Jamie: But then I as a journalist am in authority to write the paper, and I'm also trans, so it's this weird double-bind where just certain types of subjectivity are considered so beyond the pale that they don't generally assign coverage of Palestine to what at one point was a huge number of Palestinian reporters available to do good reporting on the ground, right? It's this idea that there's some purportedly objective third-party that is going to be able to somehow speak truth to power in a more reasonable or a more uninvested way. Where like “I'm just surveying the scene and kind of making comments.” And there's no uninvested viewpoint – everything is coming from a perspective. Even if you're being like “well I'm just a cis white man that's writing the newspaper,” you're obviously bringing a perspective, because you're a person writing it; it doesn't come out of an algorithm…which also has a perspective, I guess. So that's a bad example. [laughs]

Tuck: My favorite example of this is, I think, a Luke O'Neill quote that I will paraphrase, which is that truly objective air quotes “journalism” would be if *The New York Times* wrote up every single thing that happened one day, and then shuffled it at random, and then put it on your doorstep and it was 100,000 pages. [Jamie laughs] You know, otherwise everything is editorializing, right?

Jamie: Right. Even just when you're making seemingly neutral choices about what gets cut from the story, and what goes in – because I only have, say, 5000 words in a long magazine story. Even the mundane things you leave out are a prospective choice, and I think in some ways my problem with the *Times* is my problem with my own line of work. Which is that I don't believe in journalism as a project. I have somehow ended up becoming the type of writer that is a journalist, but I have a lot of misgivings about it, and a lot of how I ended up here is because that was the funding for writing that I came into contact with when I was first setting out to write. So I'm no great defender of journalism. And I don't think the answer is to bring more minorities, trans people, people of color into the *Times*. Certainly that's fine, you can do that – but I don't…I think we have since the 80s a lot of evidence that shows you put gay people in the *Times,* you put black people in the *Times,* it’s still *The New York Times.* And now it's just *The New York Times* with a bunch of really stressed-out gay and Black people working there.

Tuck: [laughs] Totally. So one more sort of in-the-weeds *New York Times* question, and then you can talk about something else. But I was a reporter for the 2020 protests in Portland – back when I lived in Portland – and I was very aware that because of the ways that I tweeted through some of the protests in Portland, Oregon in 2020, I was becoming completely unhirable for a number of mainstream media outlets, because I did not remain perfectly objective in my personal tweets. And as you know incredibly well, if you want to be a writer for *The New York Times,* or *The Washington Post,* or anything like that, technically-speaking you have to be following their code of conduct for employees 100 percent of the time, just in case sometimes you write [laughs] for *The New York* *Times,* or *The Washington Post,* or whatever. And as someone who was held to this standard and then ultimately left over this standard – I just was curious: how much guidance do they give you, and how much do they actually care what you do as a contributor in terms of how you sort of live and speak in your daily life online?

Jamie: I mean it's just so mysterious, right? I would be told things by my editor, who I had a great relationship with and really liked. Like, “you can be out in the streets protesting, but keep it quiet, don't put it on social media.” There was this idea that your public life and your private life could somehow be separate. But it's weird, ‘cause if you're hiring someone because you want them to report on the situation, you're in some ways hiring them because you think seeing the situation through their eyes is valuable. And why is that valuable? It’s because they have whatever set of viewpoints they have. I mean, I've never not been an open communist doing journalism. I've never – I mean, I was not trans at one point – but I never made a secret of it once I started to be trans at my job. Now on some level I think it's just there's not writing that's good that's a lie. If the cost of working at *The New York Times* is that you have to make certain carve-outs in your sense of reality, of what things can't be said – why would you ever want to devote your life to that? I would much just rather have any other job. So my leaving the *Times,* it’s tied up in all these questions about what can journalism do and not do. I don't want to do journalism if it has to be shitty, you know what I mean?

Tuck: Absolutely. I've thought about this so much, because I’ve tried to figure out why people stay in journalism if they're gonna lie, or support institutions of power. And I think it's just that there are people who get into journalism because it affords them access to power, and proximity to power. And those are the ones that are like “oh, what do I need to do to maintain that power? I need to lie, I need to omit things? Sure, whatever, I don't care.” And to me that's just kind of like you're saying if you want to be close to power, there are more lucrative and low-effort ways [laughs] to be close to power than becoming a journalist, I don’t know..

Jamie: Yeah. Why people become journalists is interesting to me. I'm not gonna say that I'm not doing some amount of small..I don't know if lying’s a choice, but you profile a celebrity, right? You're making certain choices about what you're trading in terms of access, so those types of decisions are always part of journalism. I just think it can't be human life is one of the negotiables.

Tuck: Right. [laughs] Totally.

Jamie: I think there's some small things like: will I act a little nicer to someone then I ordinarily would in my social life to get access? Sure. But am I gonna be like “you should do a genocide”? [Tuck laughs] No, that's ridiculous. I'm sure there's more gray area sort of in-between those two points, but this is just one to me that's just…why be on this earth if you're not gonna have sort of basic hardline things about the value of human life.

Tuck: An incredible question – would love to ask so many people.

So in the course of researching the phallo article, in the course of researching the book on nonbinary history that you're writing, there's gotta be ways that what you have learned has informed the way that you think about your own gender, your own body, your own transition. I get asked this a lot, and I'm always like “yeah it's every single episode, don't try to make me pinpoint something.” But just in case there is something, is there anything you can pinpoint in like a way that your research has affected your own relationship to gender?

Jamie: I mean, I started writing the book and I was not someone who passed or aspired to pass. I was on hormones, but in a very sort of low-dose, inconsistent kind of way. And I thought I would have this longer period of people being like “is that a boy or a girl?” But I pretty much just in a matter of two weeks tipped some point where then all of a sudden I was a man forevermore. And I do think the experience of passing changes the blind spots or the things that I’m attuned to in the course of writing. I was perceived as a woman but I didn't want to be, and I didn't necessarily care about being perceived as a man. I wanted to be perceived as this other thing that didn't quite exist. Feeling the acute stress of that desire when I would be writing the book in the beginning was really informative, and now to go into being like “well, now I'm a totally passing white man in the world” all of a sudden, I take certain types of safety for granted. Or certain types of emotional dimensions to certain parts of the experience, I think I've lost direct access to in a way that has opened up access to different types of experiences that are interesting to me, right? So my own subjectivity about what it means to occupy the category nonbinary has really changed. Because in the beginning of the book, a lot of people would've said “well that's a person that's definitely nonbinary.”

Tuck: Mhm.

Jamie: Whereas now it almost feels like I'm making some type of political statement by continuing to say that I'm nonbinary, and sort of questioning my own relationship to it. And some days I'm like “fuck this category, it’s so dysfunctional.” And other days I'm like “no, I would never be just a man, like I need this nonbinariness.” Then I think a big takeaway is just – I don't know, maybe there's not any big takeaways. [Tuck laughs] I'm still very much working through it. But on a day-to-day basis, I will really…who I think my community is really changes, right? ‘Cause I interviewed a lot of trans women for a chapter in the book that’s talking a lot about the ways that nonbinary identity gets mobilized in this transmisogynist way, where nonbinary becomes a synonym for AFAB masc people. Talking to a lot of the trans women and they’ll say lots of stuff like “nonbinary people, they're not materialist, and it's just in their head.” Not all trans women talk like this. But lots of sort of angry meme account girlies who I talked to very charitably were willing to tell me their most cynical opinions about nonbinariness, right? And when I’m listening to them talk, I'm thinking “how dare you talk that way about my people, the nonbinary people!”

Tuck: [laughs] Right.

Jamie: And then when I talk to the most UwU tenderqueer nonbinary person, that's like “gender is just what you make it up to be that morning, and it's all rainbows, and there's no stakes here, and I can't believe that anyone would ever assume my gender.” [Tuck laughs] On some level I’m like “well, I agree with a lot of what you're saying,” and then on other levels I’m like “you have not lived one day in this world, you don't know how hard it could be.” So I switch back-and-forth who I am in the book, and I don't know – maybe that's good, hopefully. We’ll see when it comes out if this is useful. It does sort of challenge this idea that if you’re a writer, you're coming from a stable subjectivity. And probably no one ever is, but I've had longer periods of time in my life where I feel like my subjectivity feels more consistent than it has been in the past few years.

Tuck: Well, that's why I feel like I am so terrified of the concept of writing a book that is published by not-me, because of that huge lag between when you write the book and when it goes into the world. I'm not gonna agree with this anymore. By the time you hit publish on this book, I will have new opinions, you know? [laughs] And the world will have new opinions, and we’ll be talking about gender differently, and we’ll be thinking about gender differently. So I think it's smart that you seem to be framing your book as a history book, because that's one of the easiest ways to avoid something completely falling out of date immediately – is being like “well, we’re talking about the past here…past is still the past.”

Jamie: Yeah, I think about this a lot. Because by the time the book comes out, I'll be different and also nonbinary will be different. A lot of these books that come out now talk about nonbinary – it's like defending it as an ontologically real thing, right? There’s a real thing called nonbinary, and it speaks to an actually-existing type of person.

Tuck: And here’s how you be nice to them. [laughs]

Jamie: Right, and that’s not something I believe. And I think if the book has any utility, it's that it is documenting a period in time where this very strange category did exist, and it proves that other strange categories will continue to exist as part of this endless churn. And I think if we could come to a way of talking about queer history that isn't so contingent on being like “this was the moment in time in which queerness was most natural and authentic and real, and anything else is an aberration or a bastardization of that.” I would like my book to be more about this idea that…there's ways of doing gender that exist in some moments of time that won't exist in other moments of time, and that just has always been true. That is more the thesis of the book, versus like “nonbinary is real and good, and if you don't use someone's pronouns correctly every time you're a bad person.” There's enough books that do that already.

Tuck: Yeah. OK – I'm gonna do something that I don't do that often, which is I'm gonna lightning round some really fast questions at you. I mean, they don't have to be lightning – but they can be. If they're short, that's fine and good.

Jamie: OK.

Tuck: The first one is: you have a second Instagram spin-off account full of novelty trans license plates. This actually came in handy the other day, because a friend of mine voice memoed me from Portland, and said “I just saw a license plate that said ‘T4TDND’,” and then immediately I realized it was already on your account. If you were going to get a trans license plate, what would you get?

Jamie: I don’t think I have a good answer. I *had* a good…so I had “MAZELTOV” on my old motorcycle, and it got stolen, so I've really just been in the grief of not having that, ‘cause once something gets stolen, you can't have the plate anymore. So…

Tuck: I mean, that's a perfect answer – that actually you've already done it, and it was “MAZELTOV.” So…

Jamie: Yeah, OK – so “LGBT” is still available as a motorcycle plate [Tuck laughs] and I think that would be really funny, but I don't think I can bring myself to do it.

Tuck: No, that is very funny.

Jamie: Yeah.

Tuck: Someone out there is hearing this and is signing up, and that's what's really important.

Jamie: Yeah, go get it.

Tuck: OK. I was looking at your Letterboxd, and under your *All of Us Strangers* review, it just says: “a moderator has removed this review.” So what was your review of *All of Us Strangers*? [laughs]

Jamie: I'm so mad, and I've been trying to argue with Letterboxd over this. So it said something like “society accepted gay people too much, that now they need to invent imaginary parents to reject them and subsequently accept them.” [Tuck laughs]

Tuck: OK – that's so disrespectful that they took that off. They're not real people, you can't be mean to them. [laughs]

Jamie: I think they thought it was homophobic…

Tuck: It’s Paul Mescal. [laughs]

Jamie: …like I was saying that society accepted gay guys too much. [Tuck laughs] Which maybe is my opinion, but it's my right to express it.

Tuck: It absolutely is. OK – when you were working on the “Ben’s Penis” piece, did you get into any fun standards desk fights over either something trans or just having to say the word “penis” and “dick” a lot?

Jamie: I think there was some skirmish over “pocket pussy,” or…[Tuck laughs]...I think there was a little bit of back-and-forth of like “can I mention this in the first place, and what am I allowed to call it?” I don't remember how it was resolved, but that was my year of dick stories, because before that I did a profile of Jacqueline Novak…

Tuck: Right!

Jamie: …whose show was about blowjobs – *Get On Your Knees*. So after I wrote that whole piece – which they assigned to me, I did not pitch that – then the standards desk came back and said “you're not allowed to say ‘blowjob’ at all in the story.” [Tuck gasps] And I said, “well, you assigned me a story…”

Tuck: How?!

Jamie: “...that's a one-person show about blowjobs.” So we had to go back-and-forth on like “OK, we can quote ‘blowjob’ if she says it, but I’m not allowed to say blowjob,” all this stuff. So that was just the year of minor arguments about dick.

Tuck: What will your *New York Times* reader do if they find out about blowjobs?

Jamie: I know.

Tuck: You did a Most Transgender Name Competition on @sexchange.tbt, which is something that all of us have joked about, and so few of us have followed up on in this fashion. So congratulations. But a lot of it is paywalled, so can you tell us all what the winning Most Transgender Name was?

Jamie: The Most Tansgender Name winner was Lilith.

Tuck: Yeah.

Jamie: Which I think works; I'm glad that a girl won…[Tuck laughs]...I just didn't want the hordes of Elis and Elijahs and Aidens…that felt just in some way. I think it’s very transgender, ‘cause Lily is obviously one of the top white trans girl names, but you gotta get a little more trans with it – so Lilith makes it funky.

But that was so much fun, and people were so mad at me, ‘cause I got about 10,000 name submissions, and half of them were like “I just picked the ones that were most common,” and half of them were like “I'm gonna pick ones that I feel have some special unique element of one-of-one transness.” And no matter what selection of names you pick, everyone said “well, you didn't pick my name – you picked these names – these are white people names – these are rich people names – these are coastal names.” Everyone had some kind of opinion, so the contest itself…I would *never* do it again, because it created so much classic transgender drama. Which I think really did make it the Most Transgender contest in a way. Oh my god, that ate up weeks of my life.

Tuck: I mean, the second I saw you post it, I was like “there's gonna be racism involved in this, there’s gonna be…the concept of racism is going to be called out in this conversation about names; there's no way you're going to avoid it.”

Jamie: Right, and to name something “The Most anything” automatically makes certain assumptions. And in some ways I'm like “well, the winner is making fun of a stupid kind of trans thing.” But then people are saying “no, you're saying this is the best way to be trans.”

Tuck: Right. [laughs]

Jamie: Much like every time I’ve ever engaged with anything trans, I've learned so many things that I would do so differently next time.

Tuck: Do you have a favorite? And I also will bleep it if it's one person's name.

Jamie: Oh, you don't have to bleep it, because I’ve told this guy that it's my favorite name. But there was a Gustopher…[Tuck laughs]...I love a name that combines two really normal names to make one name that almost seems normal at first, but then you're like “oh, that's not really a name.”

Tuck: [laughs] Totally.

Jamie: I don't know how many Gustophers there are, so I was rooting for Gustopher.

Tuck: That's beautiful.

Jamie: There was someone in the contest named Roadkill.

Tuck: [mirthfully] Mhm.

Jamie: There's someone named Image Object.

Tuck: Oh, I saw that, yeah.

Jamie: Yeah, trans people…our minds, you know?

Tuck: Totally. OK – last sort of chaos question. We talked a lot about one or two stories that you've done. But are there any stories you’re most proud of, or that you still think about, that you think maybe are being overlooked or forgotten, but you still think about them?

Jamie: My favorite thing I've ever written is honestly the story I did on The Points Guy – the credit card rewards blog. I just wanna write about dry bureaucratic systems all day. [Tuck laughs] That story…I was going down to Wall Street to talk to people that were doing the books for airline companies in their rewards programs. And the most exciting thing to me is when you make something that's really boring and unflashy into something really interesting, right? Like gender – it's the sexy, flashy object that causes people to clutch their pearls. Whereas I love to just do a story on something really fucking boring. So I wanna do more like that. And then when this book is done, my next book is gonna be something that involves no conceptual ideas, and is only about heavy nouns that exist in space, because I'm *so* tired of abstractions, and I just wanna write a book about rocks and minerals, or something.

Tuck: Dude, I get it. [laughs] Could not get it more. I wrote a book about *The Fast & Furious* [laughs] because it was just like “well, I can't keep doing this – I'm in hell talking about gender all the time.” OK. Well, the way we always end the show is by asking: in your ideal world, what would the future of gender look like? Sorry to do it to you – wish it was about rocks and minerals. [laughs]

Jamie: I think we made some kind of mistake by making trans an identity category and not a series of decisions. So I guess this would raise a lot of questions about…you’d still be wondering like “well, who’s actually a man? Who's actually a woman?” But I just am very interested in the alternate future in which we made matters of gender a free expression argument and not one about a protected class of people, right? Because right now, we're in this timeline where we’re asking “well, who's really trans? Who’s really nonbinary? How do we decide who's a woman?” And I'm much more interested in like “are you allowed to cut off your own leg?” [Tuck laughs] Just these questions about who owns your body, and how should society protect your right to self-ownership, you know what I mean? So in the future I think – would I wanna live in a world where you never have to talk about it? Maybe. I think I’d still be talking about it. [Tuck laughs] I've spent my whole life trying to not be interested in gender, because I think it's so tacky, and so much of my career has ended up being so invested in it. So, I don't know. I don't think we're ever going to get it right. [Tuck laughs] I think that you put the floor in for…you give people healthcare, you give people money, you give people jobs, all these different things. Maybe in the perfect version of communism it changes what gender is, right? Because it's not this scramble for basic survival. But I don't even think I could get to the point of imagining it until we put all those things in place.

[Gender Reveal Theme music plays]

Tuck: That's gonna do it for this week's show. If you had a good time or learned something, please share this episode with folks in your community. You can find Jamie on Instagram @sexchange.tbt, on Twitter @jamiekeiles, and at jamielaurenkeiles.com. You can find us on Patreon at patreon.com/gender, that’s where you can also get access to our weekly newsletter and our bonus podcast. We are also on Instagram and at genderpodcast.com, where we’ve got transcripts of every episode. Our merch shop is also full of limited edition Trans Day of Having a Nice Snack designs – through the end of this week only – at bit.ly/gendermerch. This episode was produced and edited by Ozzy Llinas Goodman, and by me, Tuck Woodstock. Our logo is by Ira M. Leigh. Our theme song is by Breakmaster Cylinder. Additional music by our friends at Blue Dot Sessions. We’ll be back later this week with more feelings about gender. Free Palestine.

[Gender Reveal Theme music plays out and ends]

Jamie: I mean…oh god, where do I start? The short answer is you have to read the book, but…

Tuck: I would love to; pass it on over. You know? [Both laugh]

Jamie: I gotta finish it, it’s driving me nuts.