

## Interview with Mira Jacob

[00:00:09] **Kendra** Hello, I'm Kendra Winchester, here with Autumn Privett. And this is Reading Women, a podcast inviting you to reclaim half the bookshelf by discussing books written by or about women. And today we're talking to Mira Jacob about her memoir, GOOD TALK, which is out now from One World.

[00:00:24] **Autumn** You can find a complete transcript of this episode, as well as a list of all the books mentioned today by following the link in our show notes. And don't forget to subscribe so that you don't miss a single episode.

[00:00:35] **Kendra** From the moment that Lupita recommended this book to us, you knew it was going to be fabulous. When she says it's her favorite nonfiction book of the year, it's like a shoo-in.

[00:00:50] **Autumn** Yes. Yes. I know that, in true fashion, that I heard a lot about this book before I actually read it. It is just definitely is unlike anything I've read. And it's so good.

[00:01:04] **Kendra** Yeah. I didn't really know what it was about. I just knew that she had recommended it. And I actually started reading it in an airport after a very stressful time getting through security and getting pulled aside and like all this stuff. And then I sat down, and I started reading this book. And immediately, it pulls you into this world. I think that Mira Jacob does such a good job with the two timelines in the book and just how this book is—you know, the subtitle is "A Memoir in Conversations"—and it really is a series of conversations and about her thought process and different things. The style of the graphic novel is just so well done. And it's just so good.

[00:01:44] **Autumn** It really is. So in addition to writing GOOD TALK, Mira is also the author of THE SLEEPWALKER'S GUIDE TO DANCING, a fiction book which we featured in our October episodes. Her writing has appeared in The New York Times, Electric Lit, Tin House, Literary Hub, Guernica, Vogue, the Telegraph, BuzzFeed. I mean, she's just featured everywhere, and she's currently a teacher at The New School and does just a lot of really cool stuff and is a really cool person.

[00:02:19] **Kendra** In our professional, unbiased opinion.

[00:02:23] **Autumn** Exactly. Exactly.

[00:02:25] **Kendra** A little note from editing Kendra. There was a little bit of problems with the audio with this conversation. So I've tried to clean it up as much as possible. But just fyi, if you're wondering what was going on. . . . But we really enjoyed talking to Mira about GOOD TALK and the process that went into that. So without further ado, here's our conversation with Mira Jacob.

[00:02:51] **Kendra** All right. Well, welcome, Mira, to the podcast. We are so thrilled to have you on.

[00:02:56] **Autumn** It's always super fun to have authors on here who have written graphic novels, and I haven't read a graphic novel in a long time. And so this is an extra special treat to get to read GOOD TALK.

[00:03:10] **Mira** I'm so psyched about that. And I'm going to ask you about your last graphic novel that you read. But I'll wait.

[00:03:18] **Autumn** So for our listeners who haven't read GOOD TALK yet, could you describe the book for them?

[00:03:23] **Mira** Yes. The subtitle for the book is "A Memoir in Conversations." And so each chapter of the book kind of operates as a different conversation from my life. And when I had originally written it, I thought it was going to be the kinds of conversations that we all have, those conversations that don't ever quite finish, that leave you with a really kind of funny feeling about who you are or what was said. And it sort of rattles around in your brain for the next, you know, decade. And then as I was writing the book, the thing that was happening—just in our lives and in America at large—was my son was six. He was really obsessed with Michael Jackson. He had a lot of questions because he was obsessed with Michael Jackson about Michael Jackson's skin color. So I'm brown. My husband is white. My son's skin color lands somewhere between us. And he was having a lot of questions about what it meant to be brown. He was watching what was happening on television, which was Black Lives Matter protests. He was also seeing our current president come in to, kind of, start running in the race and get more and more traction with the American public. So I think the conversations turned into both the conversations he and I were having at that moment and then also the conversations that I had had growing up in America as an Indian American. So that's sort of what the arc of the book is, if you can say that. But the way it looks physically is that I drew us as paper dolls. And what that means is you see us as black-and-white characters on color backgrounds. I took pictures, photographs and put those behind us. And so what you're following in the course of the book is not really the action. It doesn't work the way that, you know, when you think of a graphic novel, you usually think action and you're going to see characters doing things. . . . It's not really the way this particular book works. This book you're reading for the conversations, you're reading for what people are saying to each other.

[00:05:24] **Autumn** Yeah, I really think that that's a great point about how the way it's drawn makes you pay attention to the conversations. And I don't even necessarily know that I could have articulated that. But now that you've said it, I'm like, oh, yeah. That's exactly what I was doing. So it's very effective obviously.

[00:05:47] **Mira** Well, yeah! I mean, you know, I made a lot of choices just to sort of keep it that way. But one thing that you've probably noticed is the characters' expressions never change. Actually, it's funny when I tell that to some people. They're like, "They don't?" But the characters really sort of stay frozen in a moment, which is . . . Part of the reason that I did that was specifically so that it would have that effect, so that you would have to pay attention to what was being said and sort of hold it instead of waiting for a character to cry or yell or break something. You just sort of have to hold what the conversation is.

[00:06:18] **Kendra** Yeah. And I really love your description of paper dolls because that's really what I thought when I saw it, especially the different versions of you at different ages. And it's almost like you just paste them in. And I remember taking apart my mom's magazines and cutting out the women models and pasting them different places. And that kind of reminds me of the way that you do the art in this because it's, like you said, it's black and white on color photos. So the characters stand out from the page. And I've never seen a graphic novel like this. And I really love graphic novels and comics. It was really a delight to read. Lupita, from @lupitareads on Instagram, gave me a copy, a signed copy.

[00:07:03] **Mira** Oh, Lupita! She has been really wonderful. And I have to say, getting to know people through the course of this book has been really wild. People that have resonated, you know, that it's resonated with them who have reached out to me. It's really great to hear. I'm glad she gave you a copy.

[00:07:18] **Kendra** Yeah. And our contributor Sumaiyya chose *THE SLEEPWALKER'S GUIDE TO DANCING*, which is your novel, which I believe came out in 2014, as one of our discussion picks for October. But *THE SLEEPWALKER'S GUIDE TO DANCING* is this gorgeous family drama, kind of. There's so much going on. Who even can explain it. But it's this beautiful novel. But then you go from that to *GOOD TALK*, which is this graphic novel memoir kind of thing. What made you want to move from something like *THE SLEEPWALKER'S GUIDE TO DANCING* to *GOOD TALK*, which is, you know, very different in its medium.

[00:07:56] **Mira** Yeah. Oh, so that's such a great question. And I have to say I have a couple different answers to that. But the first way that it always occurs to me is really just as an artist and as a creator, there's always a part of me that sort of waits for the form of something to occur to me—meaning what's going to be the best container for this story? So with *Sleepwalkers*, it's a novel. I love a metaphor, as you probably figured out. It's a long novel. I think 512 pages; hopefully, I hear from people it goes by very quickly. For me, it was really a joy to write that and to really explore what's happening in a specific family. I'm a sucker for a crazy family story.

[00:08:44] **Kendra** Us too. Yeah.

[00:08:45] Yeah! Right! Please tell a crazy family story. And getting to spend time with those characters was really. . . . It was for me, it became a real escape from my life, getting to go into their lives instead. So that was one thing that was, you know, doing that with that novel—and it was a specific time and place—that novel was helping me deal with an enormous amount of grief I was feeling in my life about losing my dad. And I needed all the words I could. I kind of needed every word I could find just to articulate that feeling. The impulse to write *GOOD TALK* was a really different thing because when I tried to write it, you know, I actually tried to write it first as an essay because that's what I know how to do. And I sort of was like, I can do this. I can write what this feeling is. My son had all these questions. Some of them were super funny. You know, "What happened to his other glove?" About Michael Jackson. "What happened to his other glove?" And you know, "What color is his skin? Like my skin?" And then some of them were really hard when he started asking, "Are white people afraid of brown people?" I think actually the transition question was really wild because he asked me at one point, "What does Michael Jackson. . . . What did he like being better?" Because he noticed, obviously, that his skin color changes over his lifetime. And he said, "Did he like better. . . . Did he like being brown or white better?" At the time I was sort of like, "Aah, no!" because I knew the things that it was stepping on in me when he asked that. I know all the fears that I have for him. You know, I know he's going to be a brown young man at some point. And being a brown man in America is a very specific and harrowing thing, especially right now. So I know all things his questions were unleashing in me. And I also knew that if I were to write those down and explain that. . . . There is a whole subsection of the internet right now that is devoted to really not caring about people's feelings. And specifically, [if you write something, they will go after you,] finding a way to lampoon it, finding a way to make fun of it, to call you snowflake. . . . And I'm used to that as a, you know, a woman of color who writes. I'm used to those people coming for me, to come for me often. I'm not used to them

coming from my kids. And whenever I tried to write those essays, I just stopped. I just froze. And it was really actually weird, you guys, because I think part of it was freezing me was just exhaustion of trying to explain something that's so fraught to an audience that I knew either didn't believe it or was going to greet it with skepticism or at best was going to kind of read it with a level of just nonchalance, you know, like, oh, that's interesting. And put it away. So when I was filled with that feeling one day, I just drew us on paper, printer paper, and I cut us out. And I ran to his room, and I got all these Michael Jackson albums, and I put us on those. I cut us out like paper dolls, and I put them on top of them. And then I drew our conversation into bubbles and put those on top of the albums. And I stood on the dining room table and took pictures of them so that they just were sort of. . . . It was almost like storyboarding our conversation with visuals. And the minute I did that, I just felt so relieved because I felt like I had gotten to the part of the story that I wanted to tell the most without exhausting myself and without having to bleed on the page for somebody who just doesn't care about that blood anyway. It felt like I was getting to the point that I needed to say. The other that it was doing was I was saying the conversation without having to convince anybody, if that makes sense. Like it's just there. You can read it or not read it. You can decide that you care about it or not decide. Or decide that you don't care about it. What you can't do is say, "Well, the sentence leading up to this made me really just not believe her. If she would've said it this way, maybe I would have believed her." Well, you can't do that anymore because it's just paper dolls talking. So what do you do with that knowledge? What do you do when your disbelief is no longer the center of the story?

[00:13:02] **Autumn** That's so interesting to hear your process for creating the story because I feel like people can talk politics all day long. But something about, I don't know, having it vocalized to the perspective of your son was just really meaningful in like a, this is how it's affecting people on a day to day kind of basis. Yeah, which is just like, I think, to your point of what you're saying about people who comment on your writing and things like that. You know, they like to just talk about all kinds of other things. But I mean, as far as then like how it's been received, how have people responded to this book compared to perhaps the first book that you wrote.

[00:13:50] **Mira** It's funny because the first book, I feel like, had a cult following of devotees that would kind of reach out to me and say, like, "I really felt this. Thank you for writing this novel, and I saw parts of my family." But a lot of it was also people saying, "This is the way I learned about India." I mean, if you look at the reviews, it's people saying this was a great way to learn about Indian culture, which is such a funny thing when you're writing a story about grief. Like, was that what you . . . ? Okay! Is that what you learned? Interesting. You know, by and large, people were really positive about the novel.

[00:14:21] **Mira** But also, I hear from people every day about this book [GOOD TALK]. They write me really long letters about their life, about what it was like to grow up. And it's you know, it's the wildest part about this is it's not Indians that write me this letter. And it's that Indians married to Jewish people. It's like every single person in America that doesn't see themselves on the very rigid, kind of outgrown and out-dated, black-and-white model we have about talking about race. It's everyone else. Often those people are black and white, who also just don't see themselves on that spectrum. They don't see the complications of what their family really looks like on that spectrum. They don't see the nuances. They don't see the ways in which their community actually talks about this stuff. So I hear from people all the time saying, "This is me. This is my story. Or this is what that conversation was like in my family." It's really wild. I should say definitely get the weirdos still. I get the people who write to me and tell me that I should stop writing. And they hope

that I have a horrible death on a street corner. You know, I get those people because those people exist. But by and large, what I've heard from is people that feel seen for the first time, which is an incredible. . . . It's just an incredible feeling to hear from them. It's like you write a book because you just so desperately want to explain a situation that you're in. And then when that situation writes you back saying, "Yeah, we're here, we're all here." It's just overwhelming.

[00:16:03] **Kendra** I find the different responses to the the different books fascinating because before talking to authors, I hadn't realized that different books can create totally different responses from readers to such an extreme. And, you know, THE SLEEPWALKER'S GUIDE TO DANCING is, you know, a beautiful family story. And this book is also a beautiful family story. But the fact that they both have such different responses, I find that very interesting. Especially since I heard both of them in the same month.

[00:16:34] **Mira** Did you notice that there might have been a few similarities?

[00:16:37] **Kendra** Yes. The themes are very, very similar in a lot of it. And I read GOOD TALK first, and I read the portion of GOOD TALK where you talk about writing the novel. And I was like, Oh, Okay. This is kind of some context about how the book came to be. And anyway, it was a really great reading experience. I would highly recommend it to our listeners to go read both of them together because they do pair very well together. You just talked about your process for creating GOOD TALK and how you took photos and you would cut out different characters after you drew them. But in the storytelling-wise, as far as plotting and you know, your memoir is a story. Was it a different process as you were thinking through it than writing THE SLEEPWALKER'S GUIDE TO DANCING? And how did you decide what memories to include in GOOD TALK? And where there some that you had to be left on the editing room floor, as it were?

[00:17:34] **Mira** So many. So many. So one really great thing about my first editor for Sleepwalkers. . . . I had two; one left in the middle as happens in business. But he said this really wonderful thing to me, which was, "I want you to go wide. I want you to put down every single conversation that you think could have a place in here." And the middle of the book, like in the course of me writing the book, is what happened was Trump was ascending, and then he won the election. That happened right in the middle of me writing this book. I thought until that point that it was going to be a kind of . . . a book that talked about identity but maybe just . . . not obscured, but maybe coming at it a little more from the side. And once he won, and once I knew what that meant for my family, it sort of really . . . . It put a different lens onto all of the conversations, like even the ones that had felt innocence before. I was seeing them differently. They were cutting in my mind like they were shaping themselves. The things that, you know, kind of stood out to me changed a little bit. And I mean, that's what a conversation does anyway, right? We remember different beats and conversations all the time, and different parts of them come back to us at different moments. But what happened in the course of doing this was I had written—I don't know, probably close to eighty conversations, I think; forty-something make it in—and I went back. So the editor that ended up working on really the editing of the book with me in a very hard core and intensive way was Chris Jackson of One World. He and Victory Matsui coedited the book together. And so it became a sort of beautiful collaborative process among the three of us about which conversations to include and why and which felt like they were missing. You know, they would ask me questions like, "You know, this is interesting. Why this conversation? What happened?" And then in the process of telling about one, I would remembering other, and they're like, "Well, that one has to be in here."

So we shaped it in this way where we put those, you know, we had to put those key conversations together. But again, to really structure the book, what you're following is my son going from a six year old who has some questions about what's happening to an eight year old who is very aware that he's brown and very aware that the person who's just been elected doesn't like boys like him. And so heartbreak, you know, it was a heartbreak writing this book. It was a heartbreak knowing that I was sort of encapsulating a time that I'm not even out of yet, that I haven't even fully emotionally weeded through. So much of what I've been told about writing over the past twenty-five years is you either have to have perspective on something to write about it—I was like, well, okay—or you're writing it from the middle of the battlefield, and the war's not over. So that's another way to do it, I guess. And that was the process for this.

[00:20:43] **Autumn** I was reading, as kind of in preparation for this interview, a little bit about this book and how it came about, and I came across a mention about a BuzzFeed article that you had written that kind of contributed to the creation of this book. Can you talk about that article and its relationship to the finished book?

[00:21:07] **Mira** So that piece was literally the first piece I was telling you guys about when I drew us on printer paper. I cut us out. And I put us on top of the album. I cropped those pictures. I sent them to a friend of mine who was at BuzzFeed. And I said, "Does this feel like a visual essay to you? It feels like a something to me." And he said, "Yep, we're running it." You know, I had worked on the web for years by then. I had a pretty good idea of what viral content looks like. I knew when I put it together, I was like, I think we're not the only ones with these questions. I think I don't have the only little boy that's asking these questions about color and race and how things work in America. I know I don't have the only little boy who's obsessed with Michael Jackson, which of course meant a kind of different thing then. I did that. And they put it out. And then the amount of people I heard back from was just crazy. Again, it was just this. . . . It was like the unseen us. The us that nobody at that point really felt like they were speaking to. But who saw themselves in those questions and in the impossibility of those questions. So once I had done that, once I had put that out, I realized in the course of doing that that I just had hundreds more conversations in me that I could kind of use that format for.

[00:22:27] **Kendra** And talking to your son about this, it becomes apparent very quickly that, you know, the fear that came over you when you started asking these questions. . . . Like, oh my goodness, he's asking these questions already. And just how to explain this to, you know, a six-year-old boy. Did you find it difficult to kind of take the content of those conversations and translate them to a graphic novel kind of medium?

[00:22:54] **Mira** That was maybe the easiest part. His questions were—I mean, they really were—bewildering. It was like having a benevolent alien come down to earth and say, "How do these colors work?" And then you have to say something insane like, "Well, the black ones aren't treated very well. The brown ones, it kind of depends. The white ones pretend it's not happening." Like, you know, just the way that you have to say these things that you always have known, but you also don't want any of it to be true. So in a way, those conversations really wrote themselves because he asked the questions, and I was just so haunted by them that I would lie in bed at night, sort of like holding my brain, thinking, "What was the right answer? I definitely don't think I gave him the right answer. What would the right answer have been? What is the right answer to 'Are white people afraid of brown people?'" And, do you guys know?

[00:23:52] **Kendra** I don't even know how you would start that conversation.

[00:23:57] **Mira** Right? I mean, let's say a six year old starts it for you, right? So you don't even have a choice. It's not that you even started the conversation. Somebody else started it for. You're just in the middle of it. Right. What's the right answer? As a parent. Because I remember when he asked me that question, the first thing that went through my mind was like really just wanting to go, "Nope!" And then understanding very quickly, like in the millisecond after that, that's why. And then thinking, I don't want to lie to my kid. I don't want my kid to think his mom's a liar. I don't want him to have to figure this out alone. Part of what's so hard about all of this, especially for me growing up, was figuring it alone. Because my parents, I don't think they registered what was happening around them by and large as racism. I think they just sort of soldiered forward. And they didn't want to see it. I've talked to my mom a lot about it since about what it was like to come here in the '60s with so few other Indians, and so little real sense of community. And to just have to walk into that world day after day. You didn't have a lot of time to say, "This hurts. And this is why that is, and this is what's being said to me. And this is what sucks about it." They just didn't have time. Or safety. And I wouldn't say that I had the safety to say it, but I did know, I did kind of understand. Like, if I don't push through this, if I don't think through this with him, then he's just alone in an even scarier time. So anyway, the thing that I ended up saying to him was, "Sometimes." Are white people afraid of brown people? Sometimes. And that also, to live with the weight of having said that to a six year old, it's just a lot. What do you do with that? What do you do with that? Now that you've just said the truth. What do you do with what it feels like hold the actual truth in that moment. You and a little kid.

[00:25:54] **Kendra** I think that really goes to say that much of GOOD TALK is about motherhood and your specific context in raising a brown son and trying to have that discussion with him. And I think there's been a lot of discussions about parenting. When you're parenting, you know, a black or brown son and having that talk with him and seeing more of those talks on the page and in novels is . . . not only do people see themselves, but those of us who are white and didn't grow up with that, we see that on the page, and there's an empathy for some and then a new understanding for others. And so I really appreciated seeing those conversations on the page because it hasn't been seen in literature as much as it should have been.

[00:26:40] **Mira** Yeah. And to be clear, I'm coming from a position of privilege here because I have a son who ran somewhere on the spectrum between white and brown. And we live in Brooklyn. And there are like, Yes, I did have to have this conversation with him, and I had to have with him in a way that was real. But also my Black friends had that conversation with their sons. What was that like? What was it like to say that to a four-year-old? Also Indian, this comes with some of the privileges of whiteness. So what does it look like to inhabit this particular space? And what's easier for me than it is for a lot of my friends? And what is difficult? And what's complicated? And how do you stand and just hold it all without denying it or overplaying it or making it into something that either consumes or horrifies people. Like how do you just hold the actual thing that it is?

[00:27:39] **Autumn** Yeah. I mean, it makes me think back to what you were saying at the very beginning of this conversation about how this book reflects those conversations that we have in our minds that keep us up at night? Yeah. This book is just so much to think about. And it's just so great. You've talked to, in other places on the internet, about those specific challenges that writers of color face when trying to get their work published and share it. And we wanted to ask you, could you describe a little bit perhaps like what some

of these challenges are, but some of the discussions that you've had and then how us and our listeners can help support writers of color, their work out into the world?

[00:28:26] **Mira** I think one of the things that I think about and I reflect on right now a lot is that as a writer and as a person who was told often, as I was coming up and trying to get things published, that my work was both too Indian and not Indian enough. I didn't get published for a really long time. I didn't get published until. . . . My first book came out when I turned forty. And so I think about that a lot. I think about my trajectory coming up. I think of how many "No's" I heard and how many people specifically read my work with this gaze that told them that my work wasn't Indian enough, that it was also too Indian, with that gaze of whiteness that looked at my work and said, "I am here to judge whether or not your Indian is the right kind of Indian for my consumption." And I know, because I went through that, that there were a lot of other people that went through that specific moment. So when you ask me, "What can our readers do? And how can they, how can we help support readers of color?" One of the things that I always want to say is to go back and read the work of women of color, you know, throughout these decades. In the '80s and in the '90s, and in the '00s. We didn't just all of a sudden burden into existence in this moment that whiteness is suddenly allowing for us. We've been here the whole time. We've been doing this work. We have been writing and sort of trying to illuminate our achievements. And what is the best thing that readers can do right now is to understand that we were there the whole time and to go back and look at who was writing to you when you were not yet able to receive them. Who was trying to tell you who they were when you didn't have the bandwidth for it? Because I feel like that would give you so much context to who we are now and where this country is now.

[00:30:28] **Autumn** I think that's such a great point. And I know that we have found so many amazing books just by going back, as you say, and into our backlists and trying to rediscover some of these people who have been writing for so long. And I think that is such a good thing because it is easy, I think, with especially with social media and stuff just to get caught up in what's new, what's newest published, and things like that. There are so many wonderful, wonderful writers who've been writing, as you said, for such a long time. So I think that's so great to hear.

[00:31:01] **Mira** And something really interesting, frankly, to go back and read the writing of someone that's in a time that you were living through, but you weren't experiencing any part of their reality. I always find that really illuminating.

[00:31:14] **Autumn** Yeah.

[00:31:16] **Mira** Like, who was I in that moment that didn't know about the story or didn't tune into it or somehow missed it? So that kind of gives you. . . . I think the reason that we read, right, so much of why we read is because it's a specific window into empathy. You're literally building with someone else's words in your imagination. You're building a place for them to exist in your mind and in your heart and in your consciousness. So when you can go and do that work retroactively, when you can grapple with who you were in that moment, and that to see that person and all the things that person was trying to carry forward into the world, I think that sort of gives you the tools to unpack the moment that we're in.

[00:32:04] **Kendra** I really appreciate you saying that because, you know, we'll read authors, and then we go and discover their backlist. But then there's also authors that have been writing for ages. I believe Sumaiyya was talking about is met Ismat Chughtai, I



think. She moved back to India, and she rediscovered all these amazing Indian women writers. And she sent me a slew of fabulous books. She's like, "Kendra, just read all of these" because she's kind of rediscovering that there have been so many amazing Indian women writers. And I think about that and all of the writers that I missed because we were taught mainly straight white dead dudes. And how going back, we could realize that women have been writing for ages. And going back and appreciating them for what they've done. And it's almost like a reeducation of history and of literature.

[00:33:01] **Mira** Totally! And doesn't it kind of put. . . . It's like it returns a puzzle piece to you in a way of how you built your own identity. Right. Like when you get that stuff from the past, when you look back, you're like, "Oh, oh, this is how. This is why I'm positioned this way. This is why I acted this manner. This is what I took for granted. These are my assumptions." Like they're built up this thing. It's not just the ether. It's not just something unformed. It's very well formed. And it positioned to me in this specific way. I always feel like it's so helpful to know that.

[00:33:36] **Kendra** So speaking of women writers, we always like to ask the women we have on the podcast, who are some of your favorite women writers or maybe your favorite women graphic novelists?

[00:33:48] **Mira** Oh, wow. That's such a good question. Okay. So I also love Thi Bui's books. I thought it was extraordinary. I love Emil Farris's MY FAVORITE THING IS MONSTERS. I don't know if you've read that, but it's really extraordinary. The other thing that I have been spending a lot of time with lately is Lynda Barry's two books, WHAT IT IS and SYLLABUS. Nothing makes me want to create more than basically Lynda Barry opening up all the avenues and neural passages that she can. She's an incredible, incredibly giving artist. And I think I loved SABRINA AND CORINA, which is just nominated for the National Book Award. It's a book of short stories about Latinx and indigenous women in the southwest. Let's see. What else. There's a great book that's going to be coming out by Cathy Park Hong called MINOR FEELINGS. It's nonfiction. It will be out next year. I recently read it to blurb it, and I felt like it was just beautifully done.

[00:34:49] **Autumn** I think we just got an e-mail about that last one today, actually.

[00:34:53] **Mira** So good. Oh, my god, you guys. It's so good. You have to get it. It's so good. I'm sorry. I'm being a weirdo. You know, it is really. The entire time I was reading it, I was like, "Oh my gosh. What? What?!"

[00:35:06] **Kendra** Great.

[00:35:08] **Autumn** Well, then we will absolutely 110% get it.

[00:35:14] **Mira** Yeah, send that copy to Sumaiyya. You need to jet her copy as well. Or maybe I can get one sent to her. Anyway. Go on.

[00:35:24] **Autumn** So then we also wanted to ask you if there is anything that you're working on right now that you would like to share with our listeners or for people to have on their radar that's coming out.

[00:35:37] **Mira** I'm working on a new book. It's not coming out yet. I'm working on a new novel that I think is going to be partially told visually. We'll see if I can pull it off. I'll be up for a little while. And other than that, I've been doing increasingly weird experiments on my

Instagram stories of telling kind of meditations about all sorts of things, and that's mainly where I'm putting my "make something every day" vibe. I just basically throw it over there. So that's what I'm doing right now.

[00:36:09] **Kendra** I love those.

[00:36:12] **Mira** I decided to just let myself be like, my fully weirdo, weirdest self over there. Why don't you do a twenty stories on grief and planets? Let's do that one. Sure. Great.

[00:36:26] **Kendra** That's actually the one I was thinking of. I was like, Oh, that's so good. It's almost like I'm not sure if you're. . . . With videogames, there's always the DLC, the downloadable content after the big release comes out. I kind of consider that DLC for GOOD TALK. It's like more.

[00:36:43] **Mira** Oo! I like that. That's great. Okay. Good to know. Good to know. Yeah. It's just been like a. . . . It's like an easy place for me to put all my emotions. You're just a small screen. Let me tap something out.

[00:36:56] **Autumn** So thank you so much, Mira, for coming and talking to us about GOOD TALK. We loved talking to you about it. We loved reading it. And. Yeah. Thank you so much.

[00:37:05] **Mira** Thanks, guys. I really enjoyed it.

[00:37:09] **Kendra** We'd like to thank Mira Jacob for talking to us about her memoir, GOOD TALK, which is out now from One World. You can find Mira on her website, [mirajacob.com](http://mirajacob.com) and on Instagram (@goodtalkthanks) and on Twitter (@mirajacob). And of course, all of Mira's information will be linked in our show notes.

[00:37:27] **Autumn** We would also like to say a special thank you to our patrons whose support makes this podcast possible. You could find Reading Women at [readingwomenpodcast.com](http://readingwomenpodcast.com) and on Instagram and Twitter (@thereadingwomen). You can find Kendra (@kdwinchester) and me (@autumnprivett). Thank you all so much for listening. And we'll talk to you soon.