

Foreword by Mariel Hemingway,
Oscar-nominated actress and granddaughter of Ernest Hemingway

There are certain stories that find you at exactly the right moment. *The Gershwin Cutter* was one of those stories for me. From the very first pages, something about its beginning in Idaho immediately captured my attention.

Perhaps it's because Idaho has always felt like home to me. It's where I return to remember who I am. It's where the noise quiets enough for me to hear my own thoughts, where the mountains, rivers, and open spaces remind me that nature never rushes, yet somehow healing happens anyway.

As I read these pages, I was struck by how much the landscape itself becomes a character. The vastness, the isolation, the beauty, and the danger all exist side by side. That feels true not only of Idaho, but of life itself. The places that offer our greatest peace often sit right beside those where we've experienced our deepest challenges.

Perhaps that's why Blake's journey resonated so deeply with me. Like many of us, she is trying to find her way back to herself. And like the wild landscapes of Idaho, she carries both scars and strength, vulnerability and resilience.

At first glance, this appears to be a thriller. There are mysteries to solve, dangers to confront, and dark histories that refuse to stay buried. But beneath all of that, I found something much deeper. I found a story about healing.

Throughout my life, I've been fascinated by the relationship between suffering and transformation. Not because suffering is noble, but because I've witnessed how human beings can survive things they never should have had to endure and somehow emerge carrying wisdom, compassion, and strength they never knew they possessed.

In my own work, I often talk about embodiment. To me, embodiment isn't about becoming someone new. It's about remembering who you were before fear, trauma, shame, or survival convinced you otherwise.

That is why Blake spoke to me. And perhaps that is why her relationship with her horse touched me so deeply.

Horses have always held a special place in my life. What I've learned from them is that they don't care about your titles, accomplishments, mistakes, or the masks you wear. They respond to something much more honest. They respond to presence. To authenticity. To whether you are truly inhabiting yourself.

Again and again, horses have taught me lessons about trust, connection, intuition, and the quiet power of being fully present. They have an extraordinary ability to meet us exactly where we are while gently inviting us toward who we can become.

Blake's horse reminds me of an acceptance and resilience I've seen sometimes in animals more than people. When a horse is injured, it doesn't spend its life wishing it were another horse. It learns how to move with what remains. It adapts. It discovers new ways of navigating the world. There is an honesty in that process that human beings sometimes struggle to embrace.

Blake sees something in the one-eyed horse that others cannot. Most people focus on what is missing. She focuses on what is still possible. That simple shift changes everything.

Nature has always been one of my greatest teachers. Walking through the mountains, sitting quietly beside a river, or watching animals interact with one another, I am constantly reminded that life does not demand perfection. It asks for participation. The tree that has been struck by lightning

still grows. The river doesn't stop because a boulder blocks its path. It simply finds another way forward. The same is true for us.

As this story unfolds, you'll discover characters who carry wounds, both visible and invisible. You'll witness courage, heartbreak, violence, tenderness, and redemption. But what stayed with me most was the reminder that healing rarely happens all at once. It happens through relationship, through trust, and through the small moments of choosing life again and again.

Like a cutting horse separating one animal from the herd, we all spend part of our lives learning to separate truth from conditioning, freedom from fear, and who we are from what happened to us. That journey is rarely easy. But it is always worth taking.

I hope this story moves you the way it moved me. I hope it reminds you that resilience is not hardening. It is remaining open. And I hope that when you reach the final page, you carry with you the same truth I did: Being wounded does not mean you are broken.

The Gershwin Cutter illustrates that sometimes the very places where we've been challenged become the places where our deepest strength can be revealed.