



## Long May She Reign

*Ellen Emerson White*

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Meg Powers is the daughter of the President of the United States. She's about to enter her first year of college. She's living through the worst year of her life.

Last June Meg was kidnapped by terrorists - brutalized, starved, and left for dead. She was shackled in a deserted mine shaft and had to smash the bones in her own hand to escape.

Meg Powers survived the unthinkable, the stuff of nightmares. Her terrorist captor is still at large. But still she must live each day. Ahead of her is the grueling physical therapy to heal her broken body; the challenge of leaving the safety of the White House for her freshman year at college. But harder still than the physical and social challenges ahead are her shattered sense of herself and her family. Will she ever forgive her mother, the President, for her "can not, have not and will not negotiate with terrorists" stance - even when it came to her own daughter?

And more difficult still, can Meg forgive herself for having the strength, the intelligence and the wit to survive?

In a brilliant novel, Ellen Emerson White tells her most ambitious and intense story about a most unlikely but deeply affecting heroine.

## Long May She Reign Details

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## From Reader Review Long May She Reign for online ebook

### Bunny McFoo says

I've been in unpacking my books (finally, after living here for 13 months) and I ran across my stash of Ellen Emerson White novels. Naturally I had to reread them, and equally naturally (because I am contrary like this) I had to start with Long May She Reign.

Like so many others, I read the President's Daughter series when I was in elementary school/Jr. High. Unlike so many others, I only have a very sketchy and vague memory of them - there were things that were familiar when I got my hands on the re-issues three years ago, but enough time had passed that I didn't really *remember* anything about them - and even then, LMSR was brand spankin' new. Essentially, I don't have any deep emotional ties to this series.

It's probably fair to say that the main character of Meg Powers isn't a very *likable* character in some ways. She's abrasive, kind of bitchy, deeply proud, has a fast temper, is very aware of her own intelligence, and is deeply, deeply depressed. She's also suffering from severe PTSD and that's exacerbating her natural tendencies towards isolating and being overly critical of herself. But the thing is, despite Meg being a really complicated and prickly person who I *really* wanted to shake a few times, she's incredibly sympathetic and by the end of the novel I found myself respecting and admiring the hell out of her.

Some reviews have noticed that there's not a lot of action in this novel, and those reviews are fair. To be sure, there's none of the dramatic plot points of the first three novels of the series (Mother being elected President, Mother being shot, Meg being kidnapped by terrorists), but as someone who suffers from depression and whose father is (still, always) locked in a therapeutic battle of wills with his own PTSD, I found it to be plenty dramatic enough for me to want to keep reading just so I could find out if Meg and her family are going to get any better.

The character portraits are deftly drawn and beautifully fleshed out, at least in the case of most of the main characters. The minor characters are also written with a sure touch, none of them suffering from being overly stereotyped cliches. I'm really a fan of the casual way that White works characters of color and queer characters into the mix - with a great and stunning lack of fanfare. I also love that every character gets to be flawed and human, including Preston. Until this point, I've always kind of felt like Preston was too good to be true, but in this book he's allowed to be tired and overworked and snippy and deeply upset over the events in Long Live the Queen. I do love me some Preston.

While I did like Jack, Meg's new boyfriend (I have a soft spot for penis driven intelligent douches with a basic good sense of fair play), I thought that...hm. That was the one weak point of the novel for me, I guess. We kept being told that Meg and he had epic chemistry, but I didn't buy it - it was all very tell-and-not-show. It probably wouldn't have been so noticeable, but Meg *did* have chemistry with Preston - oodles and oodles of it.

In any case, this review is rambling because it's four in the morning and I've stayed up far too late to finish the book. I'm sincerely hoping that we're going to get another book in this series - maybe one regarding the President's run for a second term? - and I also sincerely hope that it won't take a decade or more to come along. I've been unable to find any information online indicating if there's going to be a fifth book, but maybe if we all close our eyes and wish really \*really\* hard....

P.S. I saw a lot of criticism of Meg's language in the less complimentary reviews of this book. Good lord - most of the "cursing" in this book is "Jesus Christ" and "God Damn" - there's a few "Fucks" scattered throughout, but we're talking about a mostly 18-20 year old cast of characters and our main character is a PTSD suffering 18 year old with severe chronic pain, incredible amounts of daily stress, and significant levels of depression, isolation, and fear. I'd think it was deeply *unrealistic* if she *didn't* ever cuss.

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### **Hallie says**

I'm truly going to need a lot of time and space to say anything coherent - or semi-coherent, even - about this, so for now, I'm going to limit myself to two, not intentionally provocative, sentences. At the moment, I'm leaning towards feeling that this book shows pretty clearly all of White's \*considerable\* strengths, and also her weaknesses. Having read *The Road Home* first (it was my first of Emerson/Emerson White's books, i fact), I feel it has fewer flaws than *Long May She Reign*, and as well as that, *might* actually argue that there's something more than just the happenstance of reading order to that feeling. (I might not argue it well, or wisely, but it could be fun!)

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### **Sara says**

This sequel, published 18 years after *Long Live the Queen*, was a long time coming, and I was thrilled when it came out. The previous three books, which also include *The President's Daughter* and *White House Autumn*, are some of my all-time favorites. The main character is Meg, the oldest daughter of the first female president of the United States. She and her family must deal with unique situations in their position, such as assassination attempts and even a kidnapping. The most recent book follows Meg through her physical and emotional recovery which takes place during her freshman year of college.

I've heard critiques that the writer is too introspective and slow with plot points, but I find myself so drawn to the richness of the characters as to not notice. This book, 700 pages plus, adds a lot of backstory and fleshes out Meg's character even more than the previous books. It also fairly accurately captures freshman year of college: meeting new people, finding a way to fit in, dorm life - however, from the point of view of a person completely, constantly, in the media spotlight.

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### **Angie says**

I have to preface this review by saying I've been an Ellen Emerson White addict for years. Ever since I found a used copy of *Life Without Friends* and took it home with me because I liked the girl on the cover so much. I've never read a "new" EEW book in my life. They've all been out of print or used when I've come across them. So sitting down with a brand spanking new copy of a brand spanking new book of hers...well, let's just say it was a religious experience and leave it at that. *Long May She Reign* is a sequel to the *President's Daughter* trilogy written in the 80s. The series follows Meg Powers, daughter of the first female president of the United States, and her experience moving to the White House and adjusting to life in the public eye. In the last book, *Long Live the Queen*, Meg is abducted by terrorists, forced to endure days of starvation, beatings, and emotional torture, only to be dumped in a mine shaft, shackled to the wall, and left to die. In an act of breathtaking determination, she breaks the bones in her hand in order to escape and is later reunited with her family.

*Long May She Reign* picks up where *Long Live the Queen* left off. Meg is in bad shape, to put it unbelievably mildly. She's a wreck, physically and emotionally, and her family isn't far behind. At best, they're able to skirt the issue of what happened to her. And none of them can answer the omnipresent question: what happens next? So Meg closes her eyes and makes the decision to go ahead and go to college hoping her absence will make it possible for her family to move on. At Williams, Meg finds it even harder than she imagined to function as a college freshman, surrounded by paranoid secret service agents and a slew of students who regard her with, at best, timid curiosity and, at worst, outright hostility. Fortunately Meg meets a couple of people who are determined to insinuate themselves into her life whether she wants them or not: her JA Susan (the main character in *Friends for Life*) and an Ultimate Frisbee-playing, love 'em and leave 'em California boy named Jack. Having been through her own personal hell when her best friend was murdered during their junior year of high school, Susan is familiar with the seemingly insurmountable challenge Meg faces in attempting to reclaim her life. Slowly, these two survivors strike up a tenuous friendship. Meanwhile, Meg negotiates an equally fragile relationship with Jack. Both relationships are unusually compelling. I love that Meg and Jack are equals--two extremely flawed, extremely interesting, extremely complicated people attracted to each other precisely because they are flawed and interesting and complicated. I love that he calls her on things. That it makes her mad when he scores higher than she does on a psych test. That they get angry at each other and talk it out and laugh together and move on. As I've mentioned before, I get tired of the Tireless Good Guy and his counterpart the Reformed Bad Boy. It was so refreshing to find that Jack was neither of these. And, as ever, White's sarcastic, thought-provoking dialogue kept me absolutely glued to the page. There's something so satisfying when a writer treats her reader as though she is smart. The whole time I was reading it I felt in the company of old friends, that I had been here before, and that I was comfortable here. *Long May She Reign* was hands down the book I was most excited about this year and it exceeded all my expectations. I cannot recommend it highly enough.

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### **Nicole says**

So this book sounds like it should be dumb. Fourth book in a series following the daughter of the President, Meg Powers. (The first three books were written in the 1980s). But this book, coming in at around 700 pages, was written in 2008. Though the premise may sound silly, it is actually AMAZING and touching and moving and made me cry multiple times.

Meg Powers was abducted and tortured by terrorists prior to this book. So this novel centers around her recovery – physically (her knee was completely destroyed and she broke the bones in her hand to get free and save herself) and mentally (she battles depression, PTSD, and disordered eating patterns). Trigger warning for assault, mental illness, eating disorders, rape, PTSD, among other things. This book is heavy, for sure, but it is really really well-written. Meg starts out the book in a bad place, but decides getting out of the White House is what she needs, so she begins attending college, and it basically just goes from there.

I really enjoyed Meg's family – her parents are having a rough time with their marriage, her brother Steven is having issues with puberty escalated due to circumstances, and her little brother Neal is basically adorable. Her friends at school are fleshed out and interesting – even her Secret Service agents and some of the reporters that follow her around get character development.

By far the most interesting relationship in this series, however, is with Meg and Preston Fielding. He is her best friend, a thirty something African American man who is the most dapper person ever. He's handsome and intelligent and shares her snarky, witty sense of humor. I can't help but ship it, and if you look on AO3, all six fics from this series are Meg/Preston, so I know I'm not alone.

It's odd, because I have read the three other books in this series, and none of them gripped me as much as this one did. However, in this book, comparatively little actually happened. In the first book, Meg adjusts to living in the White House. In the second book, Meg's mother gets shot, and in the third book, Meg gets kidnapped. However, this book is mos captivating of all of them, because the emotional and character development is just that strong. The mentions of how everyone around Meg felt when she was missing for thirteen days rip your heart apart.

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### **Chelsea says**

Wow. I sat down and read this book in one day - all 700 pages of it. And, oh god, I cried. And I laughed. And it was REALLY GOOD.

I was originally very impressed that White choose to pick up after this horrendous, traumatic experience (Meg Powers, the daughter of the President, was kidnapped and beaten, and finally left for dead; she saved herself by smashing her own hand to escape from handcuffs and wandering through the woods for a week until she found a house), and deal with the aftermath rather than writing about the actual events. Well, it turns out that there were three or so books in the series before this one, and I just didn't know about them. (I hate it when that happens! I always used to mention that to people when they bought books in series I read, to make sure they weren't starting with book three or something.)

But I was still blown away. Meg was angry, she was in pain, and she was VERY ANGRY. She was suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, recovering from her injuries (which were severe), and starting college - while dealing with the pressures of being the President's daughter. And I bought it! I was amazed. The summary, and even my description above, would lend themselves so easily to melodrama and unrealistic characters and situations, but White pulled it off. I connected with Meg, I loved Preston, I probably would have voted for her mother, and Steven reminded me of my own brother.

I'm now on a desperate hunt to find the previous books in the series, though I'm almost sad this isn't a stand alone - it was such an interesting and unique way to handle the situation, by focusing on the aftermath, giving little bits of insight into what happened to put Meg in the state she's in. And, naturally, my library doesn't have any.

(I also have to add - my library has this shelved as a "kids" (that is, middle reader) book, when, wow, is it ever a young adult book. The sex and *overwhelming psychological trauma* are the real reason, but isn't it usually a safe bet that books about college students aren't aimed at middle readers?)

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### **Chachic says**

Originally posted here.

I'm glad I found out about this series (through Angie and Michelle) when all four books are already out. I can't imagine having to wait for *Long May She Reign* for several years. At first, I had a hard time getting into Ellen Emerson White's writing since I have no clue about American politics and that's a huge aspect of her President's Daughter novels. Meg eventually won me over as I read the rest of the books in the series. Meg is such an intelligent character with a unique sense of humor and I have a feeling that I would be intimidated by

her if I happen to meet her in person. One thing I can say about Ellen Emerson White is that she isn't afraid for her characters to get hurt. Her writing reminds of Megan Whalen Turner and Elizabeth E. Wein in that sense (if you haven't read their books, you should go pick them up!) I admit that their books aren't easy to read because of all the suffering their characters go through but you know that they're tough and they can eventually overcome any challenges thrown their way. I'm talking about the kind of writing that stays with you days after you finish the book and makes you want to read the rest of the author's work.

*Long May She Reign* starts from where the last book left off - Meg is trying to cope with the effects of the physical and emotional trauma that she experienced. She's not doing a good job because she mostly just sulks in her room. Although after what happened, she deserves to be as grouchy as she wants. However, she can't take how her attitude is affecting her family so she heads off to Williams, hoping that things will get better while she's at college. As if being the US President's daughter doesn't make it hard enough for Meg to fit in, she's constantly in pain because of her injuries. Things look up as Meg reluctantly starts to make friends with her Junior Advisor, Susan, and some of the other people in her dorm. She also starts dating Jack, a California playboy who's surprisingly vulnerable when it comes to Meg. I didn't like Jack at first because I had my heart set on Preston, the First Gentleman's press secretary and the family's close friend, but I ended up liking Jack and Meg's relationship. Both of them are far from perfect and they make mistakes when it comes to dealing with the other person but I like that Jack is Meg's equal. Plus, Preston had some wonderful scenes in this book so it's all good. There's something about Ellen Emerson White's writing that makes me want to read more of her stuff. Seriously, I'd like to see a President's Daughter book that will jump forward in time, maybe if/when Meg and Beth decide to go to law school together. For now, I have to patiently wait for my copies of *Romance is a Wonderful Thing* and *Life Without Friends* to get here. Oh and I need to find a copy of *Friends for Life* somewhere because I'm really curious about Susan.

Here's an article about EEW's writing over at The Savvy Gal. Check out this interview, where EEW says "*It's too early to say, but I suspect there will be more than one sequel and they will not be all from Meg's point of view*" about more books about the Powers family. Yay! I hope there's more of Preston in those sequels!

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### **Rebecca says**

On the one hand, I was super excited to have a new Meg Powers book to read, and I couldn't put it down.

On the other hand, the reason I couldn't put it down was because I kept expecting something to happen, and well...nothing really does. Meg doesn't feel hungry. She's so tired she can't possibly stay awake but then she stays awake for like 10 more hours. Her knee hurts and her hand hurts. She has awful nightmares. She has difficult conversations with her family. She feels awkward. Repeat chapter after chapter after chapter. As a representative look at what someone's life would be like after a horrible, traumatic event, I find it believable. As a novel, it's not very exciting.

It was so painful to read about a character you've come to know and love going through all this, and seemed totally unrealistic that she would not be getting psychiatric help. I understand that part of the point of the book was that she kept suffering because she was not willing to open up to people, and she refused help. I found it so hard to believe her parents would not insist, and did not insist.

I'll read more books in this series if they come out, but I really hope they get a little more plot-ful, and I really hope Meg gets some help.

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### **Wendy says**

I still can't really believe this book exists, as opposed to being a figment of my imagination.

I was so happy to read about some of the things I really wanted to know that were left out of *Long Live the Queen* (like, what was going on at home during the thirteen days she was gone).

The Beany Malone-style updating to the present day was both necessary and seamless, though I imagine it might be weirder for people who read through all four for the first time now. Thank goodness for TV Land, which makes it less weird for Meg to know about Mary Tyler Moore...

The college stuff is pretty spot-on, but what keeps this from being a five-star for me is that I find her boyfriend totally boring.

The Preston stuff: so. satisfying. I continue to secretly believe that Ellen Emerson White writes for an audience of one (me).

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### **steph says**

Review November 2016:

STILL AMAZING. Meg Powers will never not be my hero.

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Review September 2012:

5+ stars

Honestly, one of the best decisions I made last year was buying this series. This is my second time re-reading this book and I have to say, I am still blown away by the depths to all the characters -notably Meg, her parents, Preston, Beth, Susan, Steven and even the Secret Service, that is shows in this final installment.

This book is long (I think if you put the first three books all together they would equal this one) and there is a lot of talking and internal debate and struggling in this book so I can see why some people complain it's too long and *real* but honestly, that is my favorite part of this novel. There are times when I will pull out my copy just to read certain sections, it is that good. The writing and dialogue and relationships (I WILL NEVER NOT SHIP MEG AND PRESTON) between everyone is just A+++ and while I love this series as a whole, I will have to say this particular book is my favorite. You get to watch Meg grow into herself and her situation in life (I i.e. being *both* the President's daughter and that girl who was kidnapped and almost died last June) and it is just so well done. Just so well done. I can't recommend this series enough.

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### **Kirsten says**

The tragedy of this book is that you don't get the Meg of the first three in the series. Her sense of humor and joie de vivre are gone, and she is really really struggling. (Still a fabulous character, just not as \*fun\*.) This author is one of the few who can take me from laughing out loud to many tears streaming down my cheeks in a matter of pages (or paragraphs).

That said, White \*nailed\* the Williams experience rather well, I thought. Good job there. I don't know how a non-Eph would see it, but I loved all the college stuff. As usual, I want more - of these characters and their complicated relationships and their witty banter and everything. (Oct 2008)

I still like this a lot. I wish there was more wrap-up at the end, or another book in the works. Either one would work for me. (Oct 2014)

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### **Shelley says**

Oh, where to start? At, perhaps, staying up until 5am reading this thing? And still only getting to about page 500, and so then reading nearly immediately after waking? Previously, I'd only done that for Harry Potter. \*g\*

It really is everything I hoped it would be. It went so in depth to the aftermath of Long Live the Queen. At the start, I kind of felt that it was rehashing things that had been covered in that book, but it wasn't, really. Comparatively, not much had been resolved in that book. How could it? It was so new. And Meg and her family really aren't the type to get over things quickly at all.

It was a little odd at first to see the Powers' with internet, blogs, World Champion Red Sox, etc. (And not even ONE Hill Street Blues mention! She got in Joan Jett and the Doors, but not HSB, Tab, or I Love Rock and Roll. Sadness!) And it was so very cool to see Susan McAllister - I never was able to track down Friends for Life but Life Without Friends is nearly as beloved as this series, and I had to contain my glee when Susan was on the phone with Beverly and asked about Derek. YAY! I love that Beverly and Derek are still together. And I love the intersection of the books.

Honestly, reading this felt like visiting old friends. I found myself watching for Russell to call the President Katie, as a sign that things would be okay. I wanted to hug Meg. (And smack her, when she was being stupid and more jerk-like than usual.) I was thrilled to see Beth, and seeing more of their friendship. (Hopefully we'll get to see them in law school together one day. I can only imagine. \*g\*) And honestly, I loved Jack and their relationship. Meg is not an easy person, but neither is he, and I can totally see shades of her parents relationship in them. They are equals, and that's awesome to see. Not many people are in her league.

Just, you know, love. All around love. I want the first three books to be released very soon - I don't know how well this one stands alone, being so immersed in the world already, and the first three are out of print. The world needs to be better acquainted with Meg Powers.

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## Tiffany says

This book sure is hefty. 700 flipping pages is enough to fend off a sizable assailant, in my opinion.

The main thing to get about Ellen Emerson White, though, is that even she's completely obscure (for reasons I have yet to figure out), her books are unquestionably witty. *Clever witty. Funny witty. Actually, I think I'm up for more than 700 pages witty.*

But we must march on, wit or no wit! To the characters! Generally, the people are what make or break a story, given that the stuff the characters do create everything in the plot. We live in humancentric book world, my friends, and it just gets strange when books are published from the point of view of an animal (It's even stranger when it's a plant). Fake-people-that-are-completely-real-in-my-mind are my favorite kind of character, boy oh boy oh boy oh boy Meg and everyone else makes me happy. I know it's really whiny sometimes (Dude, are people not allowed to whine anymore? Then I'm in a heap of trouble.), but hey, Meg acknowledges her flawed humanity. Whining is also offset (very nicely) by wit. And wit. And more wit. *Garden variety wit. I'm giggling under the covers and it's waaaaay past midnight wit.* Exhibit A:

*"Why are you in college, Miss Powers?"*

...

*"Because I can't sing or dance." she said.*

I must divulge on a brief opinion on Jack - oh my goodness it's a real boy! With crude comments and feelings and mess ups and *everything!* And it's all really really awkward and I can't even. Also, their inappropriateness is kind of funny. They manage to be awkward about that, too, and it's all very very cute.

Well, that's all for today, folks, but rest assured, this book is at least the greatest gift to novel-writing and at best plain *wicked excellent.*

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## Willa says

I was so excited to learn a few months ago that a new book had been published about Meg, the daughter of the first female U.S. President. I loved the first two books of this series a great deal during my youth and also greatly enjoyed the third when I read it a few years ago. And while I still love Meg and was glad to hear more of her story of survival, I have to admit that this book just isn't as good as the others.

First of all, it's too long. I understand that recovering from an experience like Meg's is a very long and drawn-out ordeal and in reality would be a life-long process, but re-hashing the same things over and over in great and repetitive detail doesn't make for the most enjoyable reading experience. Some editing could definitely have helped.

Also, one of the things I really enjoyed and respected about the earlier books was that it was never totally clear which political party President Powers belonged to. Yeah, the more politically aware readers could easily figure it out, but it wasn't brought up directly. The stories were about Meg, the challenges she had to deal with, and her relationships with her family and friends, and therein was their strength. This time we are left with no illusions about Meg's, the President's or Ms. White's political views. Which wouldn't necessarily be bad. Meg is growing up and of course she's going to be confronted with people who disagree with her

mother's policies and be forced to defend them or at least deal with them in a diplomatic manner. However, when the topic comes up in this book, it doesn't feel like an integral part of the storyline, but more like a political statement thrown in just to influence readers.

And the guy Meg chooses to date is such an irritating character that it's a huge disappointment. Yes, he's obviously smart and very witty, but all his wit is centered around sex and there doesn't seem to be anything to their relationship other than sexual attraction. Which, yes, can be very powerful and enjoyable, but Meg has always been such a strong, smart character that I really feel this relationship is unrealistic.

But, I do still love all the characters, even when they're acting like jerks, which Ms. White is smart enough to allow them to do, as always. And I did enjoy it overall, I was just a bit disappointed by its weaknesses.

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### **Danielle says**

708 pages. SEVEN HUNDRED and eight pages.

The story takes place over six months. That means we get lots of detail. I understand EEW's being drawn to tell stories of strong, intelligent women working through trauma. And this portrayal of Meg working through PTSD and constant terrible pain is probably quite accurate.

But it's simply not interesting to read what Meg ate or didn't eat, drank or didn't drink, what medication she took or didn't take, over and over again. Her knee--Christ, it hurt. A lot. We get it. It hurt. A lot. (Seriously, how did she do so much making out when in that much pain? You so much as bump a knee or hand like hers...)

I like Meg. I wanted to like seeing Meg in college. But what there was of story wasn't actually that interesting for me. Her physical therapist determines she's going to ski again someday, I want to see her ski. (Without further ripping her knee apart, dammit). Maybe I just can't do 700 pages of psychological circles, most of which were addressed at the end of the third book. Her mother did not negotiate with terrorists. Meg understands this and knows that's how it had to be done. But we still need to go over it and over it.

In 700 pages, I want to see Meg graduate from college. I want to see the next election. I want to see her recover more. I want to see her grow up a bit and make a career move. The story just needed to move forward.

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