

RETRIBUTION & RESTITUTION

Two Crime Fiction Stories

by

Cindy Brown

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Re-Imagined Radio
Season 13, Episode 03

Final draft

RETRIBUTION & RESTITUTION

Two crime fiction stories by Cindy Brown

Our annual tribute to Women's History Month, and an episode of our Guest Writer series

Re-Imagined Radio

March 17, 2025

Synopsis

Re-Imagined Radio premieres two stories, "Retribution" and "Restitution, both written by Cindy Brown, an actor, director, producer, playwright, and disabilities advocate based in Portland, Oregon. Both of Brown's stories are crime fictions for radio.

Credits

Written by Cindy Brown

Sound Design, Original Music Composition, Post-Production by Marc Rose

Graphics by Holly Slocum with Evan Leyden

Social Media and Announcer by Rylan Eisenhauer

Produced and Hosted by John Barber

Characters

"Retribution" (aka "Strong Girlfriend")

Mary Thomas as Laurie

Jeff Pollard as the Crude Misogynist

Cindy Brown as the Older Woman

Mark Homayoun as the Australian Tourist

Nico Lane as the Young Woman/Strong Girlfriend.

"Restitution"

Mark Homayoun as Wiley

Jeff Pollard as Joe and the Faux Rancher

Marc Rose as Andy

Mary Thomas as Melanie/Older Woman/Sherry

Brian Lian as the Realtor

Cindy Brown as Irene

Color Code

Yellow highlighted text = sound effect(s), either pre-recorded or created for episode. Pre-recorded audio is used as content in this episode.

MUSIC = pre-recorded

MUSIC = bespoke, created for this episode

COLD OPEN

SFX: INTERIOR, SHUTTLE BUS. LAURIE PUTS THE SHUTTLE IN DRIVE. THERE'S A HAPPY HUM OF VACATIONERS. AND THE NOISE OF THE ENGINE AS THE BUS DRIVES AWAY.

MAN (LOUDLY) So, what do you think of my girlfriend?

LAURIE (V.O.) Seriously? The woman was right there. (BEAT) No one answered him. I glanced in the rear view mirror. Everyone was ignoring the guy. The young woman stared at her hands in her lap. I turned my eyes back to the road.

MAN (AGAIN, LOUDLY) Oh, I picked a good one. Pretty and strong. Right, sweetheart?

SFX: INTERIOR OF SHUTTLE BUS. A SOFT SLAP.

LAURIE (V.O.) I checked the mirror quick, but it was just the guy clapping a fellow passenger on the shoulder.

MAN (LOUDLY) So, ahh . . . She's got sisters, if you're interested.

LAURIE (V.O.) God. I was ashamed to be of the same species.

OLD LADY (AUTHORITATIVELY) Young woman . . . are you safe? If not, I can help. We can help.

MAN (LAUGHING, LOUDLY) Safe? She chose me. She thinks I'm the best thing since sliced bread. Don't you, sweetheart?

(SERIOUSLY). Look. I'm a lifesaver for her, you know. It's a tough life for women in the Philippines.

LAURIE (V.O.) Didn't look like it was much better here.

MAN Oh Yeah, I'm a Godsend.

SFX: SHUTTLE BUS DRIVES AWAY.

CROSSFADE TO

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION.

THEME AND ANNOUNCER

MUSIC: RIR THEME

ANNOUNCER Welcome to Re-Imagined Radio, a program about sound-based storytelling. With each episode we explore how dialogue, sound effects, and music can engage your listening imagination and promote storytelling. Here to tell you about THIS episode is John Barber, producer and host.

HOST OPEN

HOST Hello everyone. It's March and this episode is our annual tribute to Women's History Month, and part of our Guest Writer series. Re-Imagined Radio is pleased to introduce Cindy Brown, an actor, director, producer, playwright,

and disabilities advocate based in Portland, Oregon.

Cindy Brown is also a crime and mystery writer. Her award winning Ivy Meadows series is available at your favorite bookstore. But, this is her first time writing for radio and we're pleased to offer this premiere of her first two crime fictions for radio, "Retribution" and "Restitution."

"Retribution" is a story we want to believe ends righteously. "Restitution" is a story we want to believe is achievable.

For more information, and the episode script, visit the episode page at our website, reimaginedradio dot fm.

INTERVIEW WITH CINDY BROWN

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

HOST

Cindy Brown grew up in the Pacific Northwest towns of Bellevue and Spokane, Washington, where she fell asleep listening to E.G. Marshall hosting *CBS Radio Mystery Theater*.

Today, she blames Marshall for her love of mystery stories every time she talks about the award-winning Ivy Meadows Mystery series she has authored. Six traditionally published madcap mysteries set in the off, off, OFF Broadway theater world.

Each book in the series follows young actress Ivy Meadows helping her uncle, a Private Investigator. The first book in the series, *Macdeath*, was nominated for the 2015 Agatha Award for Best First Novel. Other awards include third place in the 2013 International Words with Jam First Page Competition, judged by Sue Grafton, the well-known female author with her own mystery series.

Cindy Brown started her career early, as a theatre musician, at age 14. Since then she's worked as an actor, director, producer, and playwright. That doesn't include her years as a disability advocate. We'll get into that soon.

Right now, we're fortunate to have Cindy Brown with us in the Re-Imagined Radio studios. Welcome Cindy, and thank you for taking the time to visit with us.

CINDY BROWN

Ahh . . . Thank you so much for having me and for airing my stories.

HOST

Well, it'll be fun. We heard a portion of "Retribution," also known as "Strong Girlfriend," at the beginning of this episode. "Retribution" is often defined as "payment or punishment for wrongdoing." You've said that this story was inspired by an actual event that made you [quote] "hoppin' mad" [unquote]. Would you be comfortable telling us about the circumstances of your inspiration?

CINDY BROWN

Sure. I was flying to Arizona to visit my family and was on a shuttle bus in between the airport and the rental car hub, and there was a couple with a mountain of luggage and when the shuttle driver went to go help them with the mountain of luggage the male in the couple, said, "No, no, no! I got a strong girlfriend!" And he jumps on the shuttle bus and leaves this young, slight woman to heave all of their luggage on board and would not let the shuttle driver help at all, and the look on the young woman's face was so cowed and resigned as she got on the bus and sat next to this man. I'm having a hard time being FCC compliant about this. Anyway, it was it was just that whole you could just see the relationship in that one instance and I felt for her a lot.

HOST

Well, thank you for that additional information, Cindy. It helps to contextualize your story. So, let's continue listening to "Retribution" then, the first of two crime fictions by Cindy Brown featured in this episode of Re-Imagined Radio.

STORY #1: "RETRIBUTION"

SFX: EXTERIOR. FADE UP AIRPORT
PARKING LOT. THE ENGINE OF AN
AIRPORT SHUTTLE. SHUTTLE BUS DOOR
OPENS.

LAURIE

(INTERIOR OF SHUTTLE BUS. DRIVER TALKING TO PASSENGERS OVER PA SYSTEM). Welcome

to Park and Fly, folks. Climb aboard and get settled. We'll be leaving for SeaTac airport in just a minute.

SFX: EXTERIOR. A SMALL GROUP OF PEOPLE BOARD. SNATCHES OF CONVERSATION, FOOTSTEPS, LUGGAGE BEING DRAGGED AND STOWED, PLANES IN BACKGROUND.

LAURIE (EXTERIOR OF BUS. TO ONE PERSON) Wow, that's a lot of . . . I mean, can I help you with those?

MAN Nah. I've got a strong girlfriend.

LAURIE (V.O.) The old guy in the track suit climbed on board, and the young woman behind him . . . slight, dark-eyed, with long black hair . . . heaved a huge-ass baby blue suitcase onto the shuttle, and then turned to the mountain of matching luggage behind her.

The man . . . pasty, bald, and pushing sixty . . . was already sittin' in the middle of a bank of seats, his arms stretched across the back of of 'em, like he owned 'em.

LAURIE (TO THE YOUNG WOMAN) Sure you wouldn't like some help, Miss?

LAURIE (V.O.) I didn't usually call women "Miss" but it seemed like she could do with some respect. Her eyes flicked toward the man in the shuttle and she shook her head.

OLD LADY I could do with some help here, driver.

LAURIE (TO THE OLD LADY) Of course.

LAURIE (V.O.) I left the young woman to her blue pile of luggage and began hauling suitcases and golf clubs and baby strollers onboard.

**SFX: INTERIOR OF SHUTTLE BUS.
ENGINE IDLES, THE DOORS SHUT.**

LAURIE (OVER SPEAKER SYSTEM) All right, folks. I'm Laurie, your Park and Fly driver for the shuttle to SeaTac International Airport. We will arrive at the airport in less than five minutes.

**SFX: INTERIOR, SHUTTLE BUS. LAURIE
PUTS THE SHUTTLE IN DRIVE. THERE'S
A HAPPY HUM OF VACATIONERS. AND THE
NOISE OF THE ENGINE AS THE BUS
DRIVES AWAY.**

MAN (LOUDLY TO LAURIE BUT ALSO EVERYONE ELSE ON THE SHUTTLE BUS) So, what do you think of my girlfriend?

LAURIE (V.O.) Seriously? The woman was right there. (BEAT) No one answered him. I glanced in the rear view mirror. Everyone was ignoring the guy. The young woman stared at her hands in her lap. I turned my eyes back to the road.

MAN (AGAIN, LOUDLY) oh, I picked a good one. Pretty and strong. Right, sweetheart?

SFX: INTERIOR OF SHUTTLE BUS. A

SOFT SLAP.

LAURIE (V.O.) I checked the mirror quick, but it was just the guy clappin' a fellow passenger on the shoulder.

MAN (LOUDLY) So, ahh . . . She's got sisters, if you're interested.

LAURIE (V.O.) God. I was ashamed to be of the same species.

OLD LADY (AUTHORITATIVELY) Young woman . . . are you safe? If not, I can help. We can help.

MAN (LAUGHING, LOUDLY) Safe? She chose me. She thinks I'm the best thing since sliced bread. Don't you, sweetheart?

(SERIOUSLY). Look. I'm a lifesaver for her, you know. It's a tough life for women in the Philippines.

LAURIE (V.O.) Didn't look like it was much better here.

MAN Oh Yeah, I'm a Godsend.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION, CROSS FADE TO

SFX: SHUTTLE BUS PULLS INTO PARKING AREA. THE ENGINE IDLES.

LAURIE (V.O.) We pulled into SeaTac in record time.

SFX: INTERIOR OF SHUTTLE BUS. THE SOUND OF BRAKES. TRANSMISSION INTO PARK. THE ENGINE IDLES.

LAURIE (V.O.) Thank God. I mighta strangled the guy if I'd had to listen to him much longer.

SFX: INTERIOR OF SHUTTLE BUS. THE SHUTTLE DOORS OPEN.

LAURIE (TO THE YOUNG WOMAN) I got those, Miss.

LAURIE (V.O.) I grabbed the heaviest piece of their luggage before either of them could say anything and carried them to the curb. Least I could do. And then I watched as the young woman . . . a girl, really, couldn't have been more than eighteen . . . struggled under the weight of all that blue baggage as she trailed the man, whose hands swung free. I felt somethin' sink inside of me.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION.

LAURIE (V.O.) About three months later, I saw them again. Same heap of blue suitcases, same balding jackass, same young woman shivering in too-thin clothes.

LAURIE (TO THE MAN) Let me help with your luggage, sir. Please.

SFX: INTERIOR OF SHUTTLE BUS. PEOPLE BEGIN TO BOARD. FOOTSTEPS, LUGGAGE BEING MOVED.

MAN Nah. I've got a strong girlfriend.

MAN (TO THE YOUNG WOMAN) Chop, chop, sweetheart.

MAN (BACK TO LAURIE) 'Sides, I know your type . . .

MAN (TO A FELLOW TRAVELER) Angling for a tip, am I right, buddy?

AUSTRALIAN TOURIST Wouldn't know, mate. Don't tip where I'm from.

MAN Oh Man, I'm moving there. That England?

MAN We're from here. Well, I am. We're goin' down to Florida for the fishing. Gonna catch me a marlin. Hey, what do you think of my girlfriend? I sure know how to pick 'em, right?

AUSTRALIAN TOURIST (UNCOMFORTABLE) Oh. Didn't realize you two were . . . together. How ya going, Miss? You looking forward to the fishing?

MAN She don't speak English. And she doesn't fish. She cooks.

(LECHEROUSLY) And she does, you know, other things.

LAURIE (OVER THE SPEAKER SYSTEM) Passengers will refrain from inappropriate conversation or they will be removed from the vehicle.

LAURIE (V.O.) It wasn't a rule but it should be, and it shut the guy up. That and the

fact that the Australian actually changed seats to get away from him.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION.

LAURIE (V.O) I drove the old man and his strong girlfriend several times over the next year. The guy must have been retired to travel so much, and always with that mountain of blue luggage. Never got a chance to help with it again. I did grab a suitcase once, but the girl shook her head.

When she looked up at me I caught a shadow under one eye that looked like a fading bruise. I wanted to call someone, do something, but who could I call? What could I do?

Then today . . .

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION.

LAURIE (Over the speaker system). Welcome to Park and Fly, folks. Climb aboard and get settled. We'll be leaving for SeaTac airport in just a minute.

LAURIE (TO THE YOUNG WOMAN) Oh, it's you. Still with all that luggage, huh? Can I help you . . .?

YOUNG WOMAN No. I am strong.

LAURIE (V.O.) I assist another customer while the young woman heaves her blue baggage into the van. The old guy isn't with

her. And he's still not there when we're all loaded up and ready to go.

LAURIE (TO THE YOUNG WOMAN) Miss? Should we wait for your . . .

YOUNG WOMAN No. (A HAPPY SIGH). I am going home.

LAURIE Oh, Good for you.

LAURIE (V.O.) I mean that with all my heart.

SFX: INTERIOR OF SHUTTLE BUS. THE DOORS CLOSE AND THE TRANSMISSION IS PUT IN GEAR. THE HUM OF HAPPY TRAVELERS. CROSS FADE TO

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION, CROSS FADE TO

SFX: THE SHUTTLE STOPS, THE ENGINE IDLES, AND THE DOORS OPEN.

LAURIE (V.O.) At the airport, I help a couple of old lady golfers with all their stuff. It takes a while but they're nice and the ladies are good tippers so I don't mind. I turn back to the shuttle. No one's on board, but the young woman's luggage is still there. Maybe she's looking for a red cap or something?

I pick up a suitcase and haul it onto the curb. God, she IS strong. This thing must weigh sixty pounds. It smells kind of funky, like metal and meat. I see the young woman in the near distance, dark hair shining behind her.

LAURIE (SHOUTING) Hey, Miss! Wait!

LAURIE (V.O.) Right as I say it, I also notice the wet red stain on the bottom of the baby blue suitcase, big and getting bigger.

Maybe it's because of the airport security guys all around, or maybe it's because she's been brainwashed into following orders, but the young woman actually stops. She looks at me over her shoulder.

LAURIE (SHOUTING) Miss! Wait!

LAURIE (V.O) I look back in the van. The other suitcases sit there in a slowly spreading puddle of blood.

I lift a hand in a wave.

LAURIE (NORMAL VOICE, TO THE YOUNG WOMAN). Have a good trip home. Stay strong, girlfriend!

SFX: VAN DOOR CLOSES. IT DRIVES AWAY, IT'S ENGINE REVERBERATING.

HOST CONCLUSION (ACT #1)

HOST We just listened to "Retribution" by Cindy Brown, a mystery writer based in Portland, Oregon.

The cast included

Mary Thomas as Laurie

Jeff Pollard as the Crude Misogynist

Cindy Brown as the Older Woman

Mark Homayoun as the Australian Tourist

Nico Lane as the Young Woman/Strong
Girlfriend.

This is Re-Imagined Radio. This episode,
is from our Guest Writer series It's our
tribute for Women's History Month.

We'll have another short radio story by
Cindy Brown, after I tell you about *The
Fusebox Show*.

THE FUSEBOX BREAK

SFX: FUSEBOX BREAK OPEN

HOST

Most experts agree. More than 2
bazillion podcasts, probably more, await
your attention. So, there's no time to
mess around. Go straight to the "ear
food" that is *The Fusebox Show*.

Produced by Marc Rose, Milt Kanes, Jeff
Pollard, and Regina Carol--all based,
and in one case, confined in Portland,
Oregon--each episode of *The Fusebox Show*
features conversation and commentary
about current events and news, filtered
through the unique "Keep Portland Weird"
vibe. Here's a sample.

SFX: THE FUSEBOX SHOW TEASER

HOST Learn more, and subscribe to the podcast at *The Fusebox Show* website, thefuseboxshow [dot] com.

**MUSIC: RIR THEME, FADE UNDER AND
OUT FOR THE FOLLOWING**

STORY #2, RESTITUTION

HOST INTRODUCTION

HOST This is Re-Imagined Radio. Our episode is "Retribution and Restitution," two crime fictions for radio by Cindy Brown. Brown has written for theater and print. She's published several volumes of a mystery series. But this is her first time writing stories for radio and we're pleased to offer this premiere of her work. Her next story is called "Restitution." "Restitution" is often defined as "paying back or restoring something to its rightful owner." Listening casually, not a lot seems to happen. But listen carefully to the combination of crime, mystery, and the supernatural. Allow your imagination to engage with this story and it quickly becomes deep and rich with imagery and detail.

Cindy Brown is with us in the studio. Cindy, thanks for joining us. What can you tell us about the genesis of your story "Restitution."

CINDY BROWN There's a couple of things that inspired it. I think I've told you that one of my mantras is "Write about what pisses you

off." And in this particular case, I don't think it was Bernie Madoff. I think it was someone else. There was somebody in the room the news who had committed a fraud and stolen a lot of people's retirement savings and all these people, and I started thinking about all the smaller ones, all the smaller scams, the smaller frauds, the people that have lost everything to these fraudsters, and because I have a strong sense of justice, I . . . I wanted to... something to happen. I wanted restitution for them, and when I want that and I can't see it in real life, I create it in fiction.

So there's that, and then the supernatural that came in is kind of interesting.

I, when I was in college, I was in College of Montana, and I worked at a program with a lot of Indigenous high school students, and then I also I also had a roommate and a best friend who were from the Crow and the Blackfoot tribe, respectively. I was introduced to a culture where the supernatural is just part of life. So there is one bit in "Restitution" where one of the characters talks about he would be sitting on his bunk talking to his grandfather who wasn't there, and that was kind of a, not a regular occurrence, but a not unusual occurrence with those . . . the folks I was working with and my friends. So it opened my eyes to a

different way of looking at who's with us.

HOST Huhm. Thank you, Cindy. Now, with that context, enjoy listening to "Restitution" by Portland writer Cindy Brown.

RESTITUTION, SCENE 1

SFX: EXTERIOR. FADE UP. A COUNTRY ROAD. INSECTS WHIR IN THE HEAT. THE ROAR OF A BUS PULLING AWAY.

WILEY (V.O.) The bus pulls away in a cloud of red dust, leaving me standing alone on the side of the road, dirt-covered and stinking of diesel. Son-of-a bitch driver left me about a quarter mile from town, but I can see it from here. I'd forgotten the world was so wide open.

SFX: FOOTSTEPS ON THE GRAVEL SHOULDER OF A ROAD (CONTINUE UNDER DIALOGUE).

WILEY (V.O.) I head toward town. The few low-slung buildings barely interrupt the horizon, except for the neon sign of the Crossroads Motel. It stutters on as I approach. Not sure if that's a welcome or a warning.

SFX: ANOTHER SET OF FOOTSTEPS JOIN THE FIRST. (CONTINUE UNDER DIALOGUE).

WILEY (V.O.) Then I hear footsteps. Behind me. The back of my neck shivers, like somebody blew on it.

SFX: ONE SET OF FOOTSTEPS STOPS.

THE SECOND DOES, TOO.

WILEY (V.O.) I turn around to see a Navajo with bloodshot eyes standing behind me, none too steady on his feet.

JOE Hey.

WILEY Joe? What the hell?!

JOE Thought you might need some help.

SFX: BOTH SETS OF FOOTSTEPS RESUME

(CONTINUE UNDER DIALOGUE).

WILEY (V.O.) Joe falls in beside me, his worn cowboy boots scuffing along the gravel shoulder of the road, walking toward the flickering red light of the motel sign.

WILEY But Joe. (BEAT) You're dead!

RESTITUTION, SCENE 2

SFX: INTERIOR. A MOTEL ROOM. A

SHOWER RUNS, THEN IS TURNED OFF.

WILEY HUMS AS HE TOWELS OFF. HE

OPENS THE BATHROOM DOOR. FAINT

CRICKET NOISE FROM OUTSIDE THE

WINDOW.

WILEY Jesus! You're still here?

JOE I like motels.

SFX: INTERIOR. CARDS BEING
SHUFFLED.

WILEY (V.O.) Joe sits at a particleboard table playing solitaire, the light of the red velvet swag lamp casting shadows on his face.

JOE You were in there a long time.

WILEY Who are you, my mom?

JOE Just sayin'.

WILEY Yeah, well . . . Just tryin' to feel clean again. You know.

JOE Yeah.

SFX: INTERIOR. THE SLAP OF CARDS ON
THE TABLE - A GAME BEING LAID OUT.

WILEY Let me get this right. You're my spirit guide?

JOE Guess so.

WILEY (V.O.) Joe shrugs the way he does, kinda lifting his left shoulder.

WILEY But I'm not Indian.

JOE Must not matter.

SFX: INTERIOR. A PLAYING CARD IS
PLACED ON THE TABLE.

JOE What you gonna do now?

WILEY Umm . . . Thought I'd hit my old watering hole down the road. It's been a while since . . . hell, since anything. It'll be good to feel normal again.

JOE Normal. Huh.

SFX: INTERIOR. ANOTHER CARD IS PLACED ON THE TABLE.

JOE What about restitution?

WILEY Restitution?

WILEY (V.O.) Joe's always been a man of few words and none of them more than three syllables. He shrugs again.

JOE Hey, I'm just the messenger.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

RESTITUTION, SCENE 3

SFX: INTERIOR. THE SAME MOTEL ROOM, THE NEXT MORNING. LOUD SNORING. FAINT BIRDSONG FROM OUTSIDE THE WINDOW.

WILEY (V.O.) I crack open my eyes and shut them again, real quick. Damn. I'd forgotten the personal hell of a hangover. I roll over--me and my thousand-pound head--and try again.

SFX: INTERIOR. A SNORT FROM THE SNORER, WHO CONTINUES TO SNORE THROUGHOUT THE REST OF THE SCENE.

WILEY (V.O.) A frizzy blonde head occupies the pillow next to mine. Damn again. I roll to the other side of the bed, sit up, and put my feet on the floor without completely opening my eyes.

JOE Mornin'.

WILEY Hey.

SFX: INTERIOR. A PLAYING CARD IS PLACED ON THE TABLE. OTHER CARDS ARE PLACED ON THE TABLE SOFTLY UNDERNEATH THE FOLLOWING VOICEOVER.

WILEY (V.O.) I open my eyes all the way. Joe's sitting in the same place, same card game laid out in front of him. Somehow it doesn't seem weird to be talking with a dead man.

MUSIC: FADES UP, CONTINUES UNDER

WILEY When we were inside, Joe was always talking about ghosts. Talked to them, too. There were times I'd come back from exercising in the yard and Joe would be sitting on the bunk, talking Navajo. "My grandfather's here," he'd say, waving to the empty air beside his cot.

Joe was one of the few friends I made in the pen. Hell, he was one of my few friends ever. I never was good with other men. My dad said they saw right through me and didn't like what was inside. Joe saw through, too. Don't know why he still liked me.

**SFX: INTERIOR. JOE SCOTS HIS CHAIR
BACK FROM THE TABLE AND RISES.**

JOE Time to go.

WILEY Go where?

JOE Restitution.

WILEY Not going to give this up, are you?

JOE Nope.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

RESTITUTION, SCENE 4

**SFX: EXTERIOR. A USED CAR LOT OFF
THE HIGHWAY, CARS AND SEMIS PASS BY
ON OCCASION. TWO SETS OF FOOTSTEPS
ON GRAVEL, BELONGING TO WILEY AND
HANDY ANDY, A USED CAR SALESMAN,**

ANDY I'm sure we can get you into a vehicle
within your budget, Mr. . . .?

WILEY Wiley.

ANDY That your first name or your last name?

WILEY Yeah.

ANDY (BEAT) Okay then. Five thousand, you
say?

WILEY Under five thousand.

ANDY Well, we've got this cherry two
thousand-four Dodge Neon, right here.

SFX: EXTERIOR. PATS THE HOOD OF A CAR.

ANDY A hundred and sixty-three thousand miles on, it, but plenty more where that came from, or my name's not Andy.

WILEY Handy.

ANDY What?

WILEY That's what the sign says. "Handy Andy's Garage and Used Car Dealership."

ANDY Huh . . . Ohh . . . Right. So, let's hop in and see how this baby . . .

WILEY Knock off five hundred for cash in hand and I'll take it.

ANDY I'm sure you'd appreciate a test drive. We can--

WILEY Okay, three hundred.

ANDY Sold.

WILEY (V.O.) We shake on the deal and I pay Handy Andy out of the forty-three thousand my dad left me when he died. Only nice thing he ever did for me.

SFX: INTERIOR. IN THE NEON, ON THE OPEN ROAD, WINDOWS ROLLED DOWN AND SOFT COUNTRY MUSIC FROM THE CAR RADIO.MUSIC DUCKS UNDER THE FOLLOWING.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

WILEY

(V.O.) Half an hour later, I'm on the road breathing in fake new car smell from the cardboard air freshener Handy Andy threw in "as a bonus." Hadn't seen Joe since morning. He didn't like cars.

It was vehicular manslaughter put Joe in prison. Drunk as a skunk on a winding reservation road, he slid over the line on a curve right into an oncoming car full of kids. Killed a couple of cousins of his. "We're all related out there," he'd said.

Joe's eyes were permanently bloodshot. I thought it was all the booze. Joe said it was sorrow.

Me, I have mixed feelings about my crime. They called it "fraud" and "theft," but hell, the women I supposedly bilked got something, too. Maybe the exchange wasn't exactly equal, and maybe they hadn't exactly agreed to it all, but still.

Joe had told me to get going today. I drive over to Sherry's house. Still the same lion statues flanking the drive, the same fountain in the courtyard, same huge carved wooden doors.

MUSIC: OUT

SFX: EXTERIOR. FOOTSTEPS ON THE CONCRETE WALK UNDER NEXT FEW LINES.

WILEY

(V.O.) I walk up to those doors, then stop in front of them. What the hell am

I doing? I haven't seen Sherry in what, six, seven years? She's probably forgotten all about me. It wasn't like she lost a ton of money. I turn to go.

WILEY (startled) Aah! What the hell?

(V.O.) Joe's right behind me on the walkway, shaking his head.

WILEY (to Joe) You nearly gave me a heart attack.

JOE You gotta go.

WILEY (V.O.) If a ghost comes to you, it seems smart to do what he says. Besides, I'd be needing a place to stay, and this might be a good option.

SFX: INTERIOR. A DOORBELL RINGS, REVERBERATING IN THE LARGE ENTRYWAY INSIDE. HEELS CLICK ACROSS TILE AND THE DOOR OPENS.

WILEY (V.O.) Sherry squints into the light. She looks good; tan and fit in a skirt that shows off muscular calves. Probably still working out. This could definitely work.

WILEY (to Sherry, trying for charming) Sherry? Hey. Long time no see. I just wanted to say--

SHERRY Go to hell!

**SFX: INTERIOR. SHE SLAPS WILEY. A
SLAP ACROSS THE FACE.**

MUSIC: FOR MOOD

WILEY (V.O.) I didn't even see the slap coming. Hurt like a son of a bitch, too. She was definitely working out.

WILEY (to Joe) You happy now, Joe?

JOE I'm always happy. Now.

WILEY How come you never smile?

JOE I AM smiling.

WILEY (V.O.) He wasn't.

JOE (a staccato laugh) (BEAT) Next one.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

RESTITUTION, SCENE 5

**SFX: INTERIOR. IN THE CAR AGAIN.
SIMILAR ROAD NOISE, SIMILAR MUSIC,
DUCK UNDER THE FOLLOWING.**

WILEY (V.O.) I used to play it like this: I'd find a woman, older but not too old, forties, maybe early fifties, when she wasn't really in the running anymore and knew it. Sometimes I used Internet meet-up sites, sometimes bars. Both worked. I made sure she had money. Not a lot: that was too obvious, besides, I wasn't greedy. I'd court her the old-fashioned way, with dinner dates and flowers, crap

like that. Make her feel attractive. I never had sex with any of them until the third or fourth date, so they knew I was serious. They couldn't help falling in love with me.

My "new" car bounces down the road on the way to Melanie's ranch. I keep the windows open in spite of the dust. I haven't smelled pine trees in a long time.

I round the final curve and see the house in front of me . . . big ass place made of logs.

MUSIC: OUT

SFX: INTERIOR. CAR ENGINE IS TURNED OFF.

WILEY (V.O.) I stop a ways away,

SFX: EXTERIOR. CAR DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS.

WILEY (V.O.) Get out.

SFX: EXTERIOR. FOOTSTEPS ON DIRT.

WILEY (V.O.) Walk slowly to the door. (BEAT).
Something's different.

WILEY (V.O.) Melanie's family built the place. Her granddaddy added onto his dad's log cabin. Her daddy built a big porch and the second story. Melanie's first husband--the one that died--he built

another wing. The house looks the same, but . . . there's a lawn. That's it. A lawn, for God sakes, in the middle of the woods. It looks as out of place as those concrete dinosaurs you see along the highway.

What was there before? (BEAT)
Wildflowers. And grass, that tall weedy kind that waves in the wind.

RICH FAUX (LOUDLY) May I help you?
RANCHER

WILEY (V.O.) A big guy stands inside the open front door, arms crossed, chin thrust out. His designer ranch wear doing a bad job of disguising his beer gut.

WILEY (to the faux rancher, in a friendly voice) I'm looking for Melanie Evens.

WILEY (V.O.) If I had a hat, I'd probably have have it in my hands. I hate the guy on sight for having that effect on me.

RICH FAUX For the love . . . Melanie Evans?
RANCHER Listen. How many times do I have to tell you people? She's down at the Riverbend Trailer Park. (BEAT) You know what son . . . Wait, wait just a minute. Come over here. Stand right there.

WILEY (V.O.) He goes inside, shutting the door halfway to make sure I know it's not an invitation, then comes back out, a bunch of mail in his hand.

RICH FAUX
RANCHER Here, take these. I want you to tell
Melanie Evans to change her got damn
address.

WILEY (V.O.) I take the mail and turn away
before the slam I know is coming.

SFX: EXTERIOR. DOOR SLAMS.
FOOTSTEPS ON DIRT UNDER NEXT FEW
LINES.

MUSIC: FOR MOOD, DUCK UNDER THE
FOLLOWING.

WILEY (V.O.) I head back to the car, thumbing
through the mail. Creditors, overdue
notices, liens. I'm about to throw the
whole mess on the wannabe cowboy's
pretty lawn, when...

SFX: EXTERIOR. A CROW CAWS.

WILEY (V.O.) This crow flies right over my
head, close. It lands on the path in
front of me and looks at me with beady
black eyes.

SFX: ANOTHER CROW NOISE, MORE
STACCATO.

WILEY (V.O.) The noise it makes sounds
familiar, kinda like a laugh, kinda like
. . .

WILEY (to the crow) Joe?

JOE Yep.

WILEY (V.O.) The crow hops closer, tilts its head at the mail in my hand.

JOE Riverbend Trailer Park . . . No river. No bend. Plenty of trailers though.

WILEY I gotta go there?

JOE Yep.

WILEY (V.O.) Crap. I kick a rock onto the son-of-a bitch's green lawn, hoping it'll screw up his lawn mower, and head toward my car. Joe the crow trots along beside me.

WILEY (to Joe) Hey, Joe . . . what's it like being a bird?

JOE It's good. Watch this.

SFX: BIRD WINGS FLUTTER

WILEY (V.O.) He flies away. I watch him until he's just a black dot in the sky.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

RESTITUTION, SCENE 6

SFX: INTERIOR. IN THE CAR AGAIN.

SIMILAR ROAD NOISE.

WILEY (SPEAKING OUT THE CAR WINDOW) You know where Melanie Evans lives?

WILEY (V.O.) The old woman looks me up and down from her vantage point, a lawn

chair in the dirt yard of a turquoise trailer.

OLD WOMAN Down the road apiece. Number one ninety.

WILEY (V.O.) She watches me as I head down the road. Probably taking down my license plate number.

(V.O.) Joe's right about this place. No river, no bend, just a few pine trees and some scrub juniper. Then I see it. Number one ninety.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

SFX: EXTERIOR. CAR DOOR OPENS, THEN CLOSES.

WILEY (V.O.) I woulda known it was Melanie's place even if the old lady hadn't told me.

SFX: EXTERIOR. THE CAR DOOR OPENS. SOFT BIRDSONG.

SFX: EXTERIOR. THE DOOR SHUTS. FOOTSTEPS ON A DIRT PATH UNDER THE NEXT LINES.

WILEY (V.O.) Wildflowers in the yard, a blue bird feeder on a pole, some sort of plant in a clay pot on the front stoop that gives off a sharp, herb-like smell when I brush against it.

SFX. EXTERIOR. A KNOCK ON A FLIMSY DOOR.

WILEY (V.O.) I stand in the front door, and that "hat in hand" feeling comes over me again. It's different this time. This time it doesn't piss me off.

SFX: EXTERIOR. THE DOOR OPENS.

MELANIE Come on in. I've got a pot of . . . Oh!.
Um . . .

MUSIC: FOR MOOD, DUCK UNDER THE FOLLOWING

SFX: THE DOOR CREAKS.

WILEY (V.O.) Melanie shuts the door but I wait on the stoop. She's only shut it halfway. And there was something in her eyes.

SFX: THE DOOR OPENS.

MELANIE Wiley?!

WILEY (V.O.) She'd put on lipstick and combed her hair. It's not blonde anymore. More brown, like the little sparrows that used to pick up crumbs in the yard. Only birds I ever saw the whole time I was in prison, except the crows.

MELANIE Come in.

SFX: THE DOOR CREAKS WIDER.

WILEY Thanks.

SFX: THE DOOR SHUTS.

WILEY So, I, uh...

**SFX: HE KICKS A TOY, STUMBLES A
LITTLE.**

WILEY Oh, man. Did I break it?

MELANIE Probably not. Anyway, it's my fault. I should have . . .

SFX: SHE SCOOPS UP THE TOY.

WILEY No, sorry, I can't see a thing, it's so bright outside, and then coming in. You know . . .

**SFX: A SILENCE BETWEEN THEM. THEN
SPEAKING ON TOP OF EACH OTHER.**

WILEY I thought I'd . . .

MELANIE So you're out?

WILEY . . . stop by. See how you're doing.

MELANIE (BEAT) Okay.

WILEY (V.O.) Does she mean it's okay that I stopped by or she's doing okay? I can't tell 'cause her face is tipped down, looking at the thing she picked up . . . the thing I probably broke. My eyes have adjusted to the dim light inside the trailer, and now I can tell what it is. A toy dump truck.

MELANIE (WITH PARENTAL PRIDE) It belongs to my son, Christian.

WILEY (V.O.) I look around. No sign of a man. My line of work being what it was before prison, I'm pretty good at sniffing out the signs. Melanie sees me looking. She nods out a screen door.

MELANIE That's him in the back yard. He's six.

WILEY (V.O.) She stays looking out the door, her back to me. She tucks her hair behind one ear, the way she always did when she was nervous. I count backward in my head. No. No way. No way. I look around the place again. No man lives here.

WILEY (TO MELANIE) Wait, is he . . .? No, that's crazy. You adopted him, right?

WILEY (V.O.) Her back gets a little straighter.

WILEY (To Melanie) Uh . . . Yeah. Wow. I mean, I thought you were . . .

MELANIE (LAUGHS) Too old? Yeah, me, too.

SFX: INTERIOR. A SCREEN DOOR OPENS.

MUSIC: FOR MOOD, DUCK UNDER THE FOLLOWING.

MELANIE (IN A LOUD VOICE) Christian, come meet someone.

WILEY (V.O.) I shut my mouth, which has been hanging open like an idiot, just as a skinny little kid with straight brown hair runs inside. As soon as he sees me,

he swerves and hides behind Melanie,
like she's his own personal shield.

MELANIE Don't be shy, hon. Come meet your . . .
Wiley.

WILEY (V.O.) The kid peeks around Melanie. He
looks at me with my mother's green eyes.
(BEAT) My son.

WILEY (V.O.) Next thing I know, I'm sitting at
a wobbly-ass table drinking weak coffee
with Melanie. It's like I'm in some
sorta fog. I keep catching myself
shaking my head with my mouth open.
Melanie must think I developed a tic in
prison.

MELANIE Dad died a few years back. The money
that was left, after you . . . left . .
.

WILEY (V.O.) "After I stole it" is what she
doesn't say.

MELANIE . . . It all went to medical bills. His
and Christian's.

WILEY (V.O.) Melanie gets a little worry
crease on her forehead. I look at the
kid, who's sitting on a rug trying to
get the wheel back on his broken truck.
He's little for six.

MELANIE He's got heart problems.

**SFX: EXTERIOR. A BIRD TAPS ON THE
WINDOW WITH ITS BEAK.**

MELANIE Would you look at that? A crow's tapping on the window!

SFX: FOOTSTEPS TO WINDOW

WILEY (V.O.) Christian runs to the window on the other side of the single wide. Joe the Crow clings to the outside rim of the aluminum window, looking at me with those black eyes. Christian presses his hands against the glass. Joe doesn't move.

SFX: EXTERIOR. THE BIRD TAPS AGAIN.

MELANIE Have you ever . . .?!

SFX: INTERIOR. THE SCRAPE OF A CHAIR AS SHE GETS UP. SOFT FOOTSTEPS. TO THE WINDOW.

WILEY (V.O.) Melanie goes to the window to stand beside Christian

SFX: EXTERIOR. THE BIRD TAPS AGAIN.

WILEY (under his breath) Yeah, yeah. All right. I get the message.

WILEY (V.O.) I take my checkbook out of my jacket pocket. What the hell. I'm gonna have to get a job soon anyway.

SFX: INTERIOR. A PEN ON PAPER.

WILEY (V.O.) Melanie and Christian watch the crow, which watches me while I write. When I sign the check, Joe nods once and flies away.

SFX: CROW WINGS FLUTTER

SFX: INTERIOR. A CHILD'S LAUGH.

MUSIC: OUT

WILEY (V.O.) Christian laughs and Melanie turns to me, her face bright, like the bastard in front of her never stole her money and left her to raise a kid by herself.

SFX: INTERIOR. SOFT FOOTSTEPS.

MELANIE (HAPPY) Wow. That felt like...like a miracle or something.

WILEY (UNDER HIS BREATH) Or something.

SFX: INTERIOR. A CHECK RIPS OUT OF A CHECKBOOK.

WILEY Here. For Christian...for what I broke.

MELANIE (BEAT) Thirty-seven thousand dollars?

MUSIC: FADE UP, DUCK UNDER THE FOLLOWING

WILEY Yeah. (CLEARS THROAT) I'm really sorry.

WILEY (V.O.) My throat's tight. Probably catching something.

WILEY (To Melanie) I'll be off now.

SFX: INTERIOR. THE SCRAPE OF A CHAIR AS HE GETS UP.

WILEY (V.O.) Melanie runs the couple of steps between us and hugs me hard, her head against my chest. She still fits there, like she used to.

MELANIE Wiley?

WILEY (BEAT) Yeah?

MELANIE (WHISPERING) Did you ever really love me?

WILEY (V.O.) My throat really aches. Sure as hell I'm getting sick.

WILEY Yeah. (BEAT) So much.

MUSIC: UP FOR TRANSITION

RESTITUTION, SCENE 7

SFX: AUTOMATIC CAR WINDOW GOING DOWN. RADIO MUSIC IN BACKGROUND.

WILEY (V.O.) I roll down the Dodge's windows, let the breeze cool my face. I feel like I took a haymaker to the head. No, not like that. There's pain, sure, but there's something else there, too. Something . . . good.

I'm a father. I'm Christian's dad. Dad. (BEAT) First time the word doesn't make me want to spit. Instead, I feel light. Like the sky.

I look around for Joe as I drive, but no crows in sight. There is a stop sign ahead, one I remember well.

SFX: INTERIOR. THE CAR ROLLS TO A STOP.

WILEY (V.O.) I sit there for a minute, then take a right. What the hell. Might as well do this thing. Restitution.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

SFX: INTERIOR. A CAR (AND ITS RADIO) TURNS OFF. A CAR DOOR OPENS AND SHUT. THE SOUND OF SOMEONE POUNDING A SIGN INTO HARD GROUND.

REALTOR Well, hi there! Pardon me a sec. Need to give this sign one more whack . . .

SFX: EXTERIOR. A WHACK ON THE SIGN FROM A WOODEN MALLET.

REALTOR There we go.

SFX: EXTERIOR. THE REALTOR CLAPS HIS HANDS TOGETHER TO GET THE DUST OFF THEM.

REALTOR Bob Turner, Rancho Deluxe Realty. Aren't you the early bird. Just listed this beauty. (IN A LOWER VOICE). Good deal, too. Foreclosure.

WILEY (V.O.) I almost turn around then. But I don't.

WILEY (TO REALTOR) Thanks.

SFX: EXTERIOR. FOOTSTEPS ON A PAVED PATH. WILEY RINGS A DOORBELL. THE DOOR OPENS. DOG BARKS INSIDE.

IRENE Sorry, open house isn't 'til . . .

WILEY (V.O.) Irene stares out at me, a big G&T in her hand, a little dog at her feet. The look on her face changes from light to dark and then back to light again, like clouds going across her face.

IRENE Well, what do you know? Perfect timing. I was just going to have a drink. Come on in.

SFX: INTERIOR. A SMALL DOG'S NAILS ON A TILE FLOOR, PLUS FOOTSTEPS, A WOMAN'S (IN SANDALS) AND A MAN'S.

WILEY (V.O.) The dog skitters ahead of us down the entryway, which is lined with packed-up boxes. I follow Irene into the kitchen. She looks way older than when I saw her last, gray hair, sagging jowls.

IRENE Gin and tonic?

WILEY Yeah, thanks.

IRENE What brings you to town?

WILEY I wanted to see you.

WILEY (V.O.) She's had her back to me, but turns then, and I get a glimpse of the woman she'd been. Maybe it's the hope in her eyes.

IRENE Just me?

WILEY (V.O.) It's not like me to tell the truth when a lie will do, but I don't want that sky feeling to go away.

WILEY (TO IRENE)...No. In fact, I just came from Melanie's house. Did you know I have a son? Christian.

IRENE Yeah. Hell, the whole county knows. With any luck, the apple will fall far from the tree.

WILEY (V.O.) Irene's face turns old again, but with a new meanness in her eyes. Doesn't matter. No way she's going to make me feel heavy again.

WILEY (TO IRENE) Nah, he's doing great. Christian's gonna be great. I can be a good dad. I already started. Gave them all my money.

IRENE (BEAT) You had money?

WILEY From my dad.

IRENE And you gave it all to Melanie.

WILEY And my son.

IRENE (BEAT) Where are my manners? I was getting us a drink. Here.

SFX: INTERIOR. ICE CLINKS AS SHE HANDS HIM THE GLASS.

IRENE I hadn't started yet. I'll make myself another.

SFX: INTERIOR. ICE BEING PLACED IN
A GLASS. GIN BEING POURED, THE FIZZ
OF A BOTTLE OF TONIC BEING OPENED,
THEN POURED.

IRENE No lime. Sorry. Down the hatch.

SFX: INTERIOR. GLASSES CLINK AS IN
A TOAST. THEY DRINK, IN BIG GULPS.

WILEY (V.O.) Irene smiles at me. It's not a nice smile, but hell, I deserve it.

IRENE Yeah, perfect timing. A couple minutes later and you would have missed me.

WILEY (V.O.) Her little dog stands in front of her, licking her toes.

WILEY (TO IRENE) Nice dog. What kind is it?

IRENE A Yorkie. Only type of male companion I trust anymore.

WILEY (V.O.) I take another drink for the Dutch courage. Damn, Irene's gin is cheap, but I drink it anyway, seeing as how it's some sort of peace offering. Like a peace pipe. I wonder where Joe is.

WILEY (TO IRENE) So you're moving?

IRENE Have to. You should have kept some of that money for me. You cleaned me out, buster.

WILEY Yeah. About that . . . I'm sorry.

IRENE Me, too.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION, AND MOOD.

WILEY (V.O.) I feel it then. A sort of burning in my gut, followed by a spasm. And another.

IRENE I am sorry, Wiley. That drink was really for me. But then you showed up. (A HARD LAUGH). Perfect timing.

SFX: INTERIOR. WILEY FALLS TO THE FLOOR.

MUSIC: IN BACKGROUND, DUCK UNDER THE FOLLOWING

WILEY (V.O.) My legs give out and I end up on the kitchen floor, the tile cool against my face. My gut clenches and burns and. I grit my teeth against the pain, but even that tiny movement makes it worse.

IRENE Not sure how I'm going to explain this. But damn, it feels good. (BEAT) You should have loved ME. Goodbye, Wiley.

SFX: INTERIOR. FOOTSTEPS, A WOMAN'S SANDALS ON A TILE FLOOR - RECEDE. THE FRONT DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS. MUFFLED SOUND OF A CAR STARTING UP AND LEAVING.

WILEY (V.O.) My gut twists, hard. Damn. I shut my eyes, and . . . a door opens up in me. Lets the sky in. I see stars, like there's a whole universe inside me. It

gets bigger and bigger and draws me outward or maybe inward . . .

SFX: INTERIOR. THE SOUND OF A DOG LICKING SKIN, DUCK UNDER THE FOLLOWING.

WILEY (V.O.) . . . warmth on my face. I force my eyes open. It's the Yorkie, licking my face. I shut my eyes again. The licking actually feels good, the way it felt when my mom would rub my head when I was little. Comforting-like.

Hey! I crack open my eyes and look into the dog's black eyes.

WILEY (TO THE DOG) Joe?

JOE Yep.

WILEY You been in here the whole time?

WILEY (V.O.) The dog lifts its left shoulder. I feel myself smile in spite of everything.

WILEY (To Joe) I thought you were my spirit guide.

JOE I am.

WILEY Then, Joe, what the hell?

JOE You did it, right? Restitution?

WILEY Yeah. (BEAT) Oh.

JOE Good. That's good, my friend.

WILEY (V.O.) I close my eyes. The stars are closer. Or I'm closer. It doesn't matter. I feel the dog's small warm tongue lick my face, and I let myself slip away into the starry night.

MUSIC: UP FOR ENDING

MUSIC: RE-IMAGINED RADIO THEME

THE RIR BREAK

MUSIC: RIR THEME. ESTABLISH, THEN
FADE OUT UNDER THE FOLLOWING.

HOST This is Re-Imagined Radio, a program about sound-based storytelling. You're hearing that in this episode. The dialogue written by Cindy Brown, the original music composition and other sounds by Marc Rose combine to engage your listening imagination and promote storytelling. And so it is with other episodes. Here are some examples.

SFX: RE-IMAGINED RADIO AUDIO

TRAILER

HOST More information is available at our website . . . reimagedradio DOT FM.

MUSIC: RIR THEME, ESTABLISH, THEN
FADE OUT

HOST CLOSE

HOST

This episode features two crime fictions for radio written by Cindy Brown, an actor, director, producer, playwright, and disabilities advocate based in Portland, Oregon.

Like many creatives, Brown wears other hats. She's a member of the disability community with 20+ years professional experience in accessibility and disability and currently works part-time as the Coordinator for the Access/VSA International Network, a program of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Office of VSA and Accessibility, that strives for the full inclusion of people with disabilities in arts and cultures.

The term "VSA" formerly stood for "Very Special Arts."

She also keeps busy writing. A graduate of the Community of Writers Workshop (formerly known as Squaw Valley), with a Screenwriting Certificate from Scottsdale School of Theatre and Film, Arizona, a BA in Music Therapy from Montana State University, Billings, and awards for her playwriting and scriptwriting, Cindy Brown freelances as a copy, script, and content writer and also presents writing workshops focusing on humor, dialogue, structure, and how to include characters with disabilities.

She's still writing novels. Her latest, *What the River Knew* (working title) will

be released by Ooligan Press in May 2026.

Bitten by the radio bug, she's currently hard at work on another radio play, "The Demon at Mt. Angel," which she describes as [quote] Sam Spade Meets Scooby Doo [unquote]. We hope to premiere her new radio story here on Re-Imagined Radio.

Cindy is here in studio and there's opportunity to ask some final questions.

First, Cindy, you're an accomplished writer whose work has been published in several books. How is writing for radio different than writing for print and how did you handle that change?

CINDY BROWN

Well, thanks for asking. I am still working some of those things out.

It's been, I love this idea of writing for radio. One of the things is I am, I come from a playwriting background, and so telling stories through dialogue is somewhat natural to me.

That said, I went to novel writing and one of the great things about novel writing is that you have the opportunity for exposition and then also in a play you have the opportunity to describe the set, you know, and what's going on in the costumes. etc. a little bit, and obviously in radio you need to figure out how to set the stage with sound and also provide exposition that's not going

to bore the listener, and it was interesting trying to figure out how to do that through sound.

I really loved the opportunity to imagine where I was in time and in place and imagine what the sounds would be in those particular areas. What is the sound of a desert bus stop? What is the sound of an old motel? And how do I describe those both in in the technical directions, to give Mark some some direction on what I'm thinking about in terms of sound effects, but also to put it in the dialogue.

So that was quite a shift and it's interesting. I'm working on another radio play because I just love this format and this time the both of these were stories or ideas, ideas I had that I then reworked.

The one I'm looking at right now, I am writing it thinking about it being a radio piece, and it's quite different because I'm thinking in terms of also what sounds would be interesting and what sounds can really create an atmosphere, and that's coming as I'm creating as opposed to adding it.

HOST

That's very interesting, and I appreciate your insight and sharing with us. One final question, if I may: So what? What do you hope listeners will take away from the experience of

listening to your two stories,
"Retribution" and "Restitution"?

CINDY BROWN

That is a good question.

I think I'm an empathetic person. I hear a person's story, I see where somebody is, and it resonates with me. I feel for them, and because of that, I have a great interest in justice as an overarching-concept's not a good word-longing for. I have a great longing for justice. longing for justice for people, and I write about that a lot, and I think I've written about that in these two stories.

I don't really advise people, you know, murdering them for justice, although I'm probably sure that it feels good listening to a fiction piece about that.

I think one of the cornerstones of justice is empathy and then and recognizing our actions both that contribute to justice and that could possibly take away from it from for a particular person or particular group of people. I hope in some ways these stories allow people to to feel that.

HOST

Thank you, once again, for joining us, Cindy. And for sharing your stories with us.

CINDY BROWN

Thank you so much. I really appreciate the opportunity and I'm glad to have listeners.

HOST CREDITS

MUSIC: RIR THEME, ESTABLISH, DUCK
UNDER THE FOLLOWING

HOST

This episode of Re-Imagined Radio is our tribute to Women's History Month and to a woman radio writer, Cindy Brown. We listened to her two first-ever radio stories, "Retribution" and "Restitution."

Sound Design, original music composition, and post-production by Marc Rose.

Graphic design by Holly Slocum with Evan Leyden.

Social Media and announcing by Rylan Eisenhauer.

Support comes from KXRW-FM (Vancouver, Washington), KXRY-FM (Portland, Oregon), KMWV-FM (Salem, Oregon), and the Electronic Literature Lab at Washington State University Vancouver.

If you have a community radio station in your area you think would benefit from broadcasting episodes of Re-Imagined Radio, please let us know.

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Re-Imagined Radio honors the diversity of listeners and does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity of your ears. For accessibility we provide scripts with each episode so that listeners with different hearing abilities and/or listening needs can follow along. We acknowledge the debt we owe to previous and contemporary radio artists and hope our curations and stewardship of their artifacts and efforts demonstrates our sincerity.

This is John Barber, producer and host. Thank you for listening.

MUSIC: RIR THEME UP, THEN DUCK
UNDER THE FOLLOWING

ANNOUNCER CLOSE

ANNOUNCER

This is a production of Re-Imagined Radio. To learn more, visit our website, reimagedradio (all one word, no punctuation) DOT FM.

Please join us for another episode of Re-Imagined Radio as we continue our exploration of sound-based storytelling.

MUSIC: RIR THEME UP, AND TO END.