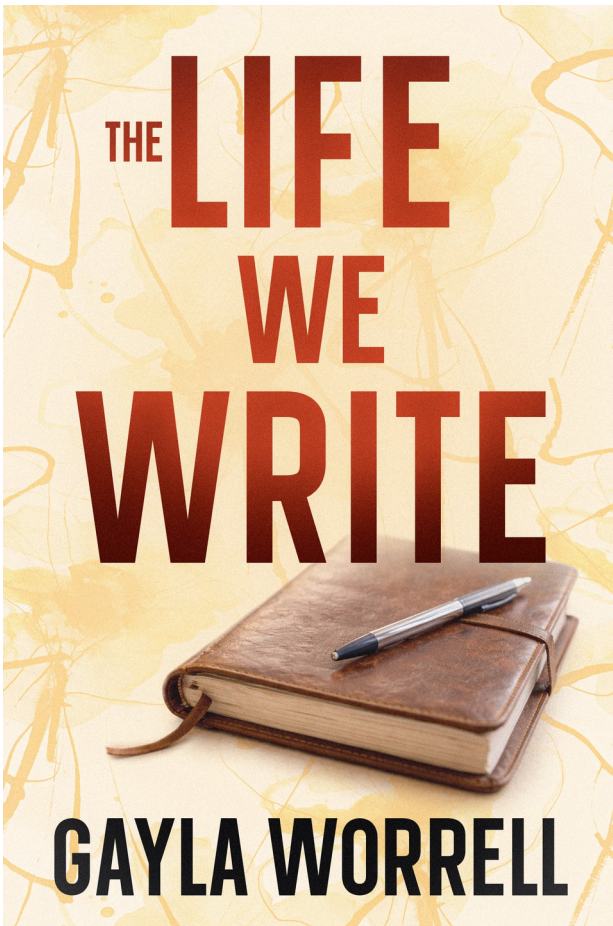




MEDIA KIT

The Life We Write

A novel by Gayla Worrell

Edition

First Kindle edition, 2026

Contemporary fiction

gaylaworrell.com

THE BOOK

Book description

Title	The Life We Write
Author	Gayla Worrell
Edition	First Kindle edition, 2026
Genre	Contemporary fiction

Approved Amazon blurb

Claire Thompson has always been the one people call when their lives are falling apart. For years, she has built a reputation in Washington, D.C. as the attorney who could manage any crisis, make any scandal disappear, and fix anything. When her carefully constructed career, and the marriage tied to it implodes, she calls her sister and escapes to small town California to catch her breath and figure out who she is when she's not billing clients in six-minute increments.

In Alderidge, Claire rediscovers the things she once loved, relishes in friendships that don't revolve around power or politics, and finds herself journaling increasingly creative ways to fictionalize the demise of her ex-husband, which may or may not be what her therapist would recommend. Then there is Ryan, a quiet, slightly mysterious vacationer who spends an awful lot of time in the local diner and seems to understand her dark humor better than anyone should. Their conversations start as a distraction but turn into something more as Claire begins to imagine a future defined not by what she lost, but by what she might choose next.

The Life We Write is a warm, witty story about second chances, creative courage, and the risk of opening your life to new things after it has been professionally and personally dismantled. It is about the stories we tell ourselves to survive and the ones we dare to write when we are finally ready to begin again.

Editorial overview

The *Life We Write* is a warm, witty novel about a woman rebuilding after the twin ruptures of divorce and career loss. Claire Thompson arrives in Alderidge, California with a carefully managed professional identity in tatters and no real plan except to stay with her sister, Maggie, until she can breathe again. A former Washington, D.C. attorney who built a life around competence, Claire is suddenly forced to meet a version of herself outside the office, outside her marriage, and outside the expectations she has always trusted.

Alderidge offers goats, yoga, diner booths, farmers markets, a small but attentive circle of new friends, and a notebook that becomes far more than a place to complain. As Claire begins writing, long-shelved parts of her creative life return. Her journal entries move from darkly comic fantasies about her ex-husband toward song lyrics, observations, and new possibilities. A connection with Ryan, another visitor with a notebook of his own, creates space for Claire to consider intimacy, risk, and a future she has not yet outlined.

The novel treats recovery as a lived process rather than a makeover. Claire's path takes shape through community work, creative practice, honest conversations, and ordinary pleasures that slowly become meaningful again. Worrell balances romantic possibility and sharp humor with a grounded portrait of grief, identity, and the courage required to choose a life after the life one expected to have.

Central themes

Identity beyond achievement Claire has built her self-worth around being composed, capable, and indispensable. The novel asks what remains when the roles that once defined her no longer hold.

Creative courage Journaling, songwriting, and storytelling give Claire a language for anger, grief, and desire, while making room for the artistic self she set aside.

Second chances after betrayal Without minimizing loss, the story explores how recovery can include humor, tenderness, and a renewed willingness to participate in life.

The practical power of friendship Maggie, Harper, and the wider Alderidge circle offer support through invitations, laughter, shared work, and the confidence that connection can be built gradually.

A place that changes the pace Alderidge is not an escape from reality so much as a setting that helps Claire see what she has been missing in her old one.



CONVERSATION STARTERS

Media angles

Rebuilding after professional burnout and betrayal Claire's career collapse opens a conversation about how much identity can be tied to work, achievement, and the ability to solve everyone else's problems.

The creative life returning in adulthood A notebook becomes a way back to songwriting, humor, and a voice Claire thought she had outgrown.

Small town community without sentimentality Alderidge offers friendship, shared meals, local causes, and a network that asks Claire to participate rather than remain a spectator.

Romance after disappointment Claire and Ryan's growing connection lets the novel examine what it means to let someone in after a life-altering loss, with warmth and restraint.

A fresh lens on crisis management Claire is skilled at handling public problems for other people. The story reverses that expertise when she has to make choices for herself.

Women, ambition, and a life that belongs to you The book invites discussion about professional success, creative ambition, and the freedom to revise a life that once looked settled.

Humor as emotional honesty Claire's dark jokes and comic journal entries give the novel an accessible way to explore pain without simplifying it.

Suggested coverage formats

Author interview A conversation about second chances, humor, creativity, and writing a woman who has to stop being the fixer.

Book and culture feature A story about professional identity, creative renewal, or the pull of small town community.

Reader event A discussion with book clubs, libraries, or bookstores about life transitions, friendship, and beginning again.

Craft conversation An interview about balancing emotional recovery with romantic possibility and comic storytelling.

Suggested interview questions

- 1 Claire has built her life around being the person who can fix anything. What interested you about putting that character in a situation she cannot solve through competence alone?
- 2 How did Claire's move from Washington, D.C. to Alderidge change the way she sees herself?
- 3 Journaling begins as a reluctant practice for Claire and becomes creative work. What does writing make possible for her?
- 4 Claire uses dark humor as she works through betrayal and loss. How did you find the balance between comedy and emotional truth?
- 5 Why was it important that Maggie and the Alderidge community support Claire through everyday invitations and practical kindness?
- 6 The novel makes room for goats, diner booths, yoga, softball, and farmers markets. What do these ordinary experiences reveal about Claire's recovery?
- 7 Ryan is also drawn to writing. What does their shared creative curiosity bring to their connection?
- 8 How does Claire's legal background shape the way she approaches the community work she takes on in Alderidge?
- 9 What did you want to explore about professional identity when a career ends or changes unexpectedly?
- 10 Claire once set aside music and songwriting. Why do abandoned creative ambitions have such power in the novel?
- 11 What role does place play in *The Life We Write*?
- 12 What do you hope readers take with them about beginning again?

AUTHOR AND PUBLICATION DETAILS

About Gayla Worrell



Gayla Worrell

Gayla Worrell writes fiction that centers strong, authentic women facing life's messy, beautiful, and sometimes deadly moments. From contemporary stories exploring relationships and personal growth to cozy-ish mysteries with sharp plotting and memorable characters, her work celebrates women who navigate challenges with resilience and wit.

A lifelong reader and longtime book reviewer, Gayla lives in San Francisco with her wife where she's perpetually juggling multiple story ideas and trying to keep track of the cast of characters that live in her head.

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More information

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For book news, event information, and author updates, visit the author website.