Dear Reader,

It was a crisp November afternoon when I heard Willie Nelson’s interview on NPR’s *Fresh Air*. I slowed my car as I crossed the entrance to my children’s school, hoping to capture the image that Willie’s song had conjured in my head, of a young girl in a lone farmhouse, who loved horses. It would take many months to realize that the picture in my mind’s eye would not only be the beginning of my next novel, but also the start of an incredible journey into the 18th century life of my heroine, Rosa Rendón, as she makes her way from the island of Trinidad into the Americas.

*Book of the Little Axe* has been selected as the Libraries Transform Book Pick and I couldn’t be more excited! In this story, you’ll meet real-life “mountain men,” Edward Rose and David Thompson, who open my characters to new possibilities. And when Rosa and her son Victor run from a terrible tragedy that takes place on Bighorn Mountain, you’ll come to understand why the telling of Rosa’s story is Victor’s best hope for survival in a dangerous and sometimes unwelcoming world.

*Book of the Little Axe* is ultimately a story about family and the communities we choose, and it is incredibly befitting that you’ll be able to experience it as part of a larger community of literary lovers. I hope you all enjoy it!

All the Best,

Lauren