



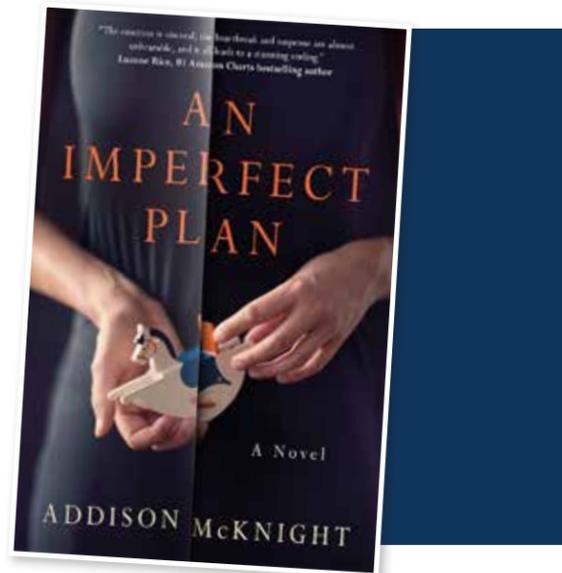
Sounds like a plan:

Chance meeting leads to thrilling collaboration

Colette De Luca and Greta O'Brien each have to wrestle their own demons. Colette's childhood is full of trauma that she'd like to forget, and she thinks the time is right to start her own family with the man she believes is the love of her life. Fortunately, despite her troubled past, Colette thought ahead when she was younger and froze her eggs with the firm belief her life would improve. Greta, a wealthy hedge-fund manager, has to grapple with the origins of her family after a tragedy involving her teenage sons. And there's a betrayal on her conscience that she wonders if her husband should know about.

Welcome to *An Imperfect Plan*, a book whose plot develops into the story of two very different women desperate to become mothers who find themselves linked by a secret as they seek their own definitions of perfection.

The 400-page fictional domestic thriller authored by two West Hartford women, Krista Wells and Nicole Moleti, would never have been written if not for a chance meeting at a hair salon.



"I am a life coach who specializes in working with military spouses," says Krista, who grew up in Schenectady, NY, and attended Elmira College and then Alliant International University in San Diego. She has a Master of Human Behavior and a Ph.D. in Industrial-Organizational Psychology.

While working on her graduate degree in San Diego, Krista met her Marine Corps husband, Richard, who was stationed at Camp Pendleton. She learned about the challenges of military spouses by being one after Richard transitioned to the reserves and the two moved to the east coast so he could attend graduate school. There were deployments and reserve training and traveling as their family grew to eventually include four children. "I found it hard as a military wife to balance motherhood, career, and being a military spouse so I started writing and speaking about military spouses," Krista says.

Krista and Richard, who teaches at Webster Hill Elementary School, have lived in their Glenwood Road home since 2015 and have four children: Alexa, 19; Elijah, 15; Lucas, 14; and Sierra, 12. When not writing fiction, Krista delivers keynote addresses at military events, writes articles for multiple military publications, and has a podcast called *My Military Spouse Show*.

Nicole was born and raised in the Hartford area. She grew up in Rocky Hill, went to high school in West Hartford, and then attended Fordham University in New York City where she majored in communications. Nicole and her husband, Daniel, are the parents of Daniel Jr., 16, and Sean, 14.

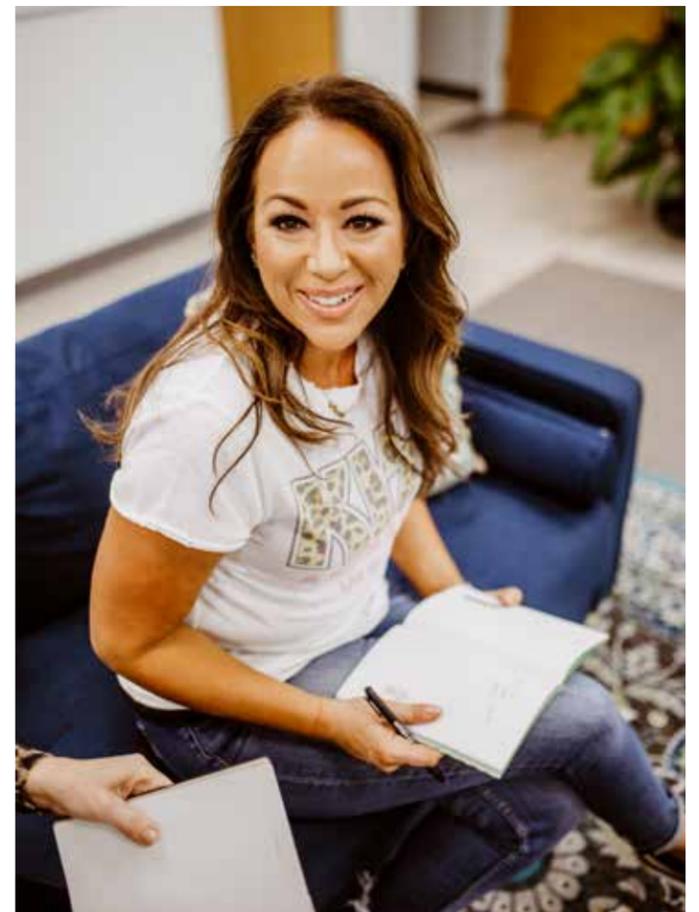
In the early 2000s, Nicole became a makeup artist and in recent years also earned her license as a real estate agent. Along the way, she has authored a parenting blog and has written for myriad publications, including *POPSUGAR Beauty*, *Martha Stewart Weddings*, *Scary Mommy*, *Today Show Parenting*, and *Hartford Courant*.

What became the spark of collaboration for Nicole and Krista began with coincidental appointments at the same hair salon about 10 years ago. Initially, they chatted about motherhood and then discovered they both were involved in writing. After coordinating their next hair salon appointments together, they kept crossing paths around town and developed a solid friendship between each other and their families.

The idea for *An Imperfect Plan* would take shape years later when Krista was speaking with Nicole about research she was doing in the area of human fertility for an upcoming writing project. "I was shocked by some of the information



Krista Wells



Nicole Moleti





she was finding in her research and thought to myself, ‘Oh, my gosh, this would be a real scary book!’” Nicole says.

Little by little, in between their existing jobs, obligations, children, and school and family activities, the book took shape. And it turned out to be a dynamic partnership. Krista is all about the details of science and research while Nicole prefers the creative aspects of storytelling. “We had this perfect union because we both take a part in the process,” Nicole says.

Ultimately, *An Imperfect Plan* was written under a pen name the two women selected: Addison McKnight. “It’s a strategic name,” Nicole says. “We wanted something hip and modern that also has an element of darkness about it.”

End of story? No way. Writing a book and then getting it published are different animals. Fifty-five rejections. That’s what Krista and Nicole received after sending out query letters and the book’s first three chapters to various agents. “It doesn’t feel good getting rejected, but I never felt like giving up,” Krista says.

The co-authors changed their strategy about how to pitch a book and discovered that pitching it in person is the best route to success. Their golden opportunity was an annual New York City event called ThrillerFest, which brings writers, publishers, agents, editors, and readers together to help promote and support

thriller writers. It features a PitchFest that gives authors a few minutes to outline their books to multiple agents.

Nicole: “It’s like speed dating for thriller agents.” Krista: “We practiced on each other and then even made a practice pitch to a perfect stranger on the train heading for the event.”

What does success feel like? Pitching to 13 agents and having all of them request a copy of the book.

An Imperfect Plan was picked up by Lake Union Publishing and will be available on May 10 in all of today’s various formats.

Nicole and Krista have continued their multiple roles as moms, spouses, and business people who stay busier than most and hope to inspire others — whatever their aspirations. They have a second book in the pipeline and are working on a third.

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