- **In *Riot Baby* Ella has superpowers yet she is not really able to save Kev from his destiny. What is the superpower for you? And if you had superpowers, what would it be?**

In *Riot Baby* Ella has superpowers yet she is not really able to save Kev from his destiny. What is the superpower for you? And if you had superpowers, what would it be?
Well, given my material reality, as a writer, I often think of financial security as a superpower. But in all seriousness, for me, a superpower is something that allows us to exceed the bounds of the normal societally accepted human experience. And sometimes that means being able to shoot laser beams out of your eyes. Sometimes that means being able to pass through walls. Sometimes that means being able to teleport, and I know that would be a wonderful way around air travel right now.

But what's interesting for me is thinking about all the ways in which superpowers, you know, can't sort of help us. That was something that I really wanted to explore with Ella, there's so much that she can do. She is essentially, at least, by the end of the book, a godling. But the one thing that she wants to do above all else, is protect her younger brother Kev. That's the one thing that she is unable to do. So you may be able to shoot laser beams out of your eyes, but you probably still have student loan debt. Same if you're able to pass through walls. Same if you're able to teleport debt will follow you.

But if I had a superpower, I would really enjoy flying, being able to fly. I… I often imagine what the view is like from up there. And being able to travel places… in a way that's completely, paradigmatically different from the way that I'm able to right now. I think that would be really cool. I think that would be really, really, really cool.

- **Your short story "How to Pay Reparations: A Documentary" explores the limits of techno-solutionism when it comes to redressing the historic and ongoing violence of slavery and racism. But the story also contain some interesting ambiguities. Do you think that algorithms and big data have potential applications in relation to reparations or other forms of social justice?**

- Now the second question: your short story "How to Pay Reparations: A Documentary" explores the limits of techno-solutionism when it comes to redressing the historic and ongoing violence of slavery and racism. But the story also contain some interesting ambiguities. Do you think that algorithms and big data have potential applications in relation to reparations or other forms of social justice? Yes, I do. I do, actually. And a lot of my thinking on the subject actually comes from some of the… the doom-mongering that has surrounded this very issue.

There's a lot of talk around how algorithms in this sort of hoovering of big data are used to perpetuate societal inequities. The use, for instance, of algorithms in bail

applications in the US criminal justice system to determine, quite literally, who gets to leave jail and who has to stay, you know, have often been found to be racist in their application. You know, if you apply algorithmic thinking to, you know, homeownership and whether or not a bank should lend out homeownership loans, you know, there's this idea that these things are race neutral, for instance, when they very clearly are not. They carry on prejudices of their creators, they carry the DNA of their creators in them. And so, if we are to engage, and that is something that we would have to grapple with, that is something that we would have to face, we would quite literally have to change the DNA of the people making the algorithm, which is actually a little bit easier than it than it sounds.

But I do believe that there's a solution. I don't think that, you know, there is… there are only Luddite ways in which to… to, you know, engage in reparations, or build a better society. I do think that, you know, it is incumbent upon us to use this technology in ways that we can. It's not all evil, or it doesn't have to be. And that is something that I wanted to get at with that story. Even though spoiler alert, the project ultimately fails, they are able to do some good, they are able to use algorithms to materially improve the lives of actual people. And that is something that I hope we don't lose sight of. Thank you