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Runde signs her book for a reader at Thunder Road Books in Spring Lake.

Seaside in the aftermath and starting fresh in a place where she cannot smell or feel the ocean's breeze, which will only remind her of the life she should have had with Brian. Through clandestine forum posts, Evy and Liz ultimately dissuade Margot from her plans.

One of the more interesting choices made by the author is having the girls locate a CD-ROM filled with archived emails exchanged between Brian and Margot during their college years. Readers are presented with a slice of life during the late 1990s when email was new and a much faster way to communicate versus mailing hand-written letters. Cell phones were yet to be mainstreamed, and email was considerably less expensive than long distance telephone calls. "The cadence of that communication is hard to explain," Runde stated. "There was a space in between email messages versus the instant communication of today. The magic of fiction is that most people didn't save those emails and they disappeared, but Liz and Evy have a snapshot of their parents' relationship." The emails allow the girls to

see the budding love story between their parents and how that relationship almost became derailed. Runde remarked that readers, along with Liz and Evy, can fill in the time between Brian and Margot's emails to create their own narrative within that space.



A 2000 graduate of Central Regional High School in Bayville, Runde first fell in love with writing in middle school when practicing for standardized tests. She met her husband, Dan, while studying at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana. She previously taught high school English and Spanish, volunteered at a nonprofit in Puerto Rico for a year, and lived in New York City and Long Beach, California.

After settling in Iowa where her husband attended medical school, she earned her MFA from the Warren Wilson MFA Program for Writers. *The Shore* originally began as her thesis and took her twelve years to write.

"I didn't focus on publication but on developing the story during that time," she said, and after drafting two previous versions of her man-

uscript, she knew she had to revise and include the perspectives of three narrators: Margot, Liz, and Evy. "I had to figure that out myself, and it was risky because you don't get a million chances to get it right," Runde explained, "but it's how this story works best." While she doesn't have a favorite character, she smiled when admitting she loved creating Evy's concurrent teenage and faux on-line middle-aged voices.

Following a multi-city book tour and several visits to Seaside Park to visit her mother and family this summer, Runde returned to Iowa City with her husband and two daughters, where she is currently working on a new project. The Jersey Shore, however, will always be the place where her story began.

Runde's distinctive perspective and exceptional resilience shine through Margot, Liz, and Evy Dunne, and in the end, *The Shore* emphasizes the strength of family, the influence of living by the beach, and the power of unconditional love. ♦

For more information about Katie Runde and her debut novel, *The Shore*, visit www.katierundewriter.com.