



Season 6, Episode 11: Bookish Fussiness + Diving Into The Covenant of Water

Mon, Oct 16, 2023 • 1:02:42

Meredith Monday Schwartz 00:10

Hey readers. Welcome to the Currently Reading podcast. We are bookish best friends who spend time every week talking about the books that we've read recently. And as you know, we won't shy away from strong opinions. So get ready.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 00:25

Were light on the chitchat heavy on the book talk, and our descriptions will always be spoiler free. Today, we'll discuss our current reads, a bookish deep dive, and then we'll visit the fountain.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 00:35

I'm Meredith Monday Schwartz is a mom of four and full time CEO living in Austin, Texas. And I may be fussy about my reading, but I'm okay with that.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 00:43

And I'm Roxana Kassam Kara, a mom, a marketer and a mood reader living in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. And this fall, I'm really leaning in to reflective reads. This is episode number 11 of season six and we're so glad you're here.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 00:57

All right, and we're so glad to be here together. Roxanna, it is always so fun for us to be able to be on the mic together and want to let everyone know that our deep dive today as we usually do when you and I do an episode together is we are going to talk a little bit more deeply still spoiler free about a book that we recently read together, The Covenant of Water a lot of people saw that that was what our current read was together and said, Hey, would love to know a little bit more of your thoughts. So we're going to do a mini deep dive again, spoiler free on The Covenant of Water later in the show. But first, let's talk about our bookish moments of the week. I'm interested Roxanna, what are you bringing?

Roxanna Kassam Kara 01:40

Okay, well, as I said, my intro Mer, I am really meaning into fall reading this year. But for me, fall reading looks different. I don't do spooky, I don't do scary. But I love books that are really, you know, sort of reflective and meditative as I'm going on my fall walks this time of year. So I like books that are quiet and easygoing on the surface, but packed with insight and reflection on inside. So on my instagram at Roxannathereader, I recently did a story about some of my favorite reflective fall reads. And I'm

bringing some more to the show today. But I did want to highlight one as my bookish moment, I've crammed so many books into this episode, I also have one in my fountain visit. So I'm putting in a lot.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 02:22

So we love it, we love it.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 02:24

I couldn't resist. This one is called No Two Persons by Erica Bauermeister. And I'm reading it right now. So I didn't want to bring it as a you know, full treatment. But I did want to make sure people were aware. So Erica Bauermeister, as you might know, is the author of The Scent Keeper and House Lessons, which I'm going to be talking about a little bit later. This book is her new one. And the premise is that no two readers encounter a book in the same way. So it's the story of a book as it makes its way through multiple people on its journey to being published and beyond. It's a story of how it affects those people. So really, it's a series of sort of interconnected narratives, as the book comes into different people's hands. So the first chapter starts with the author who's writing the book. And then the second chapter is about the bleary eyed postpartum mom, who's the first reader and selects it for publishing. And the third is the reclusive movie star who then becomes the audiobook narrator. So it's really interesting to see, you know how this book kind of goes on its journey as it comes to life. And then, you know, the book is out in the wild. So every chapter is about how different readers encounter it, and how it changes their lives. Although I would call this a reflective read, it's not slow at all. And I always want to keep coming back to witness really turning the pages. So I think this book about books might be perfect at this time of year for Currently Reading listeners.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 03:43

I think so too. And one of the things well, a couple things, right before we came into record this morning, I opened up my mail that arrived yesterday, and this book came in the mail because you know that you convinced me from your messages earlier this week. I was like, Okay, I have to get this one. And one of the things I love about our reading Partnership, which we've talked about is that of course we share with each other in our voice memos about what we're reading, but sometimes books affects us even more deeply than just sharing about it. And sometimes we have to read large portions to each other. And I love it when you do this because I know that that means that a book has really gotten to you in one way or another. And so this was a book that you were reading portions of to me in a voice memo and I sent a picture to you because I just stopped everything that I have been getting out of the shower when I was listening. I stopped everything I was doing after I got dressed and everything and I was just kind of leaning over my bathroom counter with my chin in my hand just loving listening to this entire message. And so I immediately ordered it because it was just so excellent and so evocative. And really, I think perfect for the season as you say, but also I just love that part of what we do for each other This, although this might not have been a book I would pick up for myself I at least can experience it so often through you reading it, right where at how you speak about it, how the portions of it that you read. And then of course, with my scary reads, I can tell you all about a book without you having to read it. And then you can get the benefit of spooky season without actually having to get into spooky reading, which is not good for you. So it's good for both of us.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 05:25

Oh, my God, I totally agree. I remember when I was reading this book, I just as I was reading it, I was like, I have to read these passages out loud to Meredith. I have to because I just knew you would identify with them so much. And then I was like, Oh, my God, nine minutes have passed. I hope it's okay. So I was so happy to get your, your picture. But I agree we did that a lot in Covenant, too. And I'm sure we'll talk about that because of writing in that book. And you know, sometimes for plot driven books or books that I can't read, I love hearing about the plot of Kill Show, for example, that right, I will not touch with a 10 foot pole, but I really want to hear about so it's nice that we know each other well enough that, you know, we kind of make that rhythm go back and

Meredith Monday Schwartz 06:00

forth. Exactly, no, that's perfect. Well, speaking of books that we're reading together, you know, we almost always have a book that we're tackling together. And recently, when I was in London, I you and I were texting back and forth. And I all of a sudden, I can't even remember what brought it to my attention. Maybe you remember, I don't remember what brought it to my attention. But all of a sudden, I was overtaken with this notion that I really wanted to read Jane Eyre. And this time, time of year, reread, and I was like, but it will be so much better if this is the book that you and I read together. And I just knew I hadn't read it in I read it when Johnny and I were getting together. So gosh, that's 25 years ago. That's the last time I read it. I was a completely different person then, but I loved it. I loved it then and so I just got I was so excited. I texted you immediately saying, you know, we're we're ready to choose a new book, can we please do Jane Eyre, you immediately got back to me and said, That sounds perfect. Okay, but here's where my fussiness comes in. Okay, so when you and I do a read, everything in my life has to be routine. So I do it the same way every time, we usually pick a book that is going to take us a while to get through. That's just the kinds of books that we choose together. And so I like to have a physical copy. And then I do most of my actual reading of it on my Kindle. But the physical copy enables me to update Instagram with our progress, which is something that I like to do. And also I like to move my bookmark through these books. And it increases my experience of the book, I feel. I don't know, it's just like I feel more like I have my arms around it when I have a physical copy of it. So I went to my shelf, and I knew in the back of my mind that I had a copy of Jane Jane Eyre on my forever shelf. So I picked it up and snapped a picture of it, put it on Instagram, and then quickly realized once I took the picture of it that it was a very beautiful copy. But it was Jane Eyre and Wuthering Heights together. Now, my fussiness would not let this I just couldn't. It's wasn't right. I needed I needed it to be the perfect physical copy. So I reached out to Joyce Stallworth, one of our great bookish friends, someone who I absolutely adore and trust immensely. And she loves Jane Eyre. She loves it loves it loves it. She has so many copies of it. Like it's her favorite book of all time. So she owns like 20 copies of it. She owns copies in other languages. She owns these beautiful, beautiful copies, which I think everyone for whatever your favorite book is of all time. You should have multiple copies if you can. Well, she's the expert. And so I said to her, okay, of all of your copies, if you had to choose one for actually reading and annotating and working with but you want it to be pretty. What would you choose? And so she chose the Penguin Classics version. I'm gonna hold it up to the camera for you. Can you see

Roxanna Kassam Kara 08:58

it? Yes. Okay, you see this one? It was beautiful.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 09:01

Yeah, so it's paperback. It has this great art that feels perfect for the the novel to me. Okay, so it has deckled edges, which I absolutely love. It has it's a paperback but it has the flap the inside flap. So it has some heft. So the Penguin Classics version with the artwork by Ruben Toledo is the version that she recommended. And that's the version that I got. So now, I can start reading this book. And this is me being fussy and silly, because I have it on my Kindle. I could have started. But no, everything has to be exactly right when we do our buddy reads Roxanna.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 09:42

Well, I will say that's a beautiful illustration. I haven't seen an illustration like that before and I can totally see that too. I'm listening on audio but also feeling like I can't get my arms around because I don't know how far I am like yes I do by the you know, whatever like audio counter, but that's not I'm a visual person. So I kind of I want to see the book and see how far I am. So I might get that same version. It's really beautiful. And it had, it does have have to, but not intimidating heft. I know, it looks really kind of easy to handle, which I think is important too.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 10:14

And also, it was only I think 11.99. So it's not going to really, it doesn't super add to the cost of the reading experience by that much. So, yes, I love it. I know we're all fussy in different ways about how we do things in our reading. But I lean into that now at this point. Okay, Roxanna, we're gonna get into our current reads. And usually the person who's driving the show tosses, the first current read to the person who's not driving the show. So that would mean you go first. But because of the way we're going to do Covenant of Water, where you're bringing it as a current read, but it's going to be our deep dive, I'm going to switch swip swap the order and I'm going to go first, so that your last one can take us right into the deep dive. Okay, so my first current read falls into the category of a read that you would not pick up yourself. This is sort of crime fiction, but also potentially a thriller, but it is one that is such a fun ride that I knew you would enjoy hearing about it. Alright, it's called before he finds her by Michael Kardos. Here's the setup. What happened in the quiet Jersey Shore town of Silver Bay became very famous on a Sunday evening in September 1991. Ramsay Miller threw a blowout Block Party, and then he murdered his beautiful wife and his three year old daughter. Catnip for me, a book Roxanna would never read. At least that's what everyone thought, but everyone We soon find out was wrong, because the daughter got away. Now she's nearly 18 And she is tired of living in secrecy under the name Melanie Dennison. She has spent the last 15 years in a very small town in West Virginia as a part of the witness protection program. She has never been allowed to travel. She can't go to a school dance, or even have the internet at home. Precautions must be taken at every turn because her dad Ramsey Miller was never caught. And the fear is that he might still be looking for his daughter. And then something happens that forces Melanie to defy her guardians and take matters into her own hands. She returns to the scene of the crime in Silver Bay and tries to find her father before her father can find her. All right, this book was recommended by Rene at booktalketc. on their podcast. And when she talked about it, I knew that it was the perfect book to get me out of the audiobook slump that I had been in. And I was right. This is my favorite kind of book to listen to on audio. It's propulsive, but with some substance, it's not so complicated that I have to pay attention to every word. But it's complex enough that I don't feel like I'm wasting my time. I've never read this author before Michael Kardos. But he does a great job of developing the characters, while also moving the story forward. And you guys know that getting that pacing right is super important to me. And this one was right all the way along. There's a lot

about the story that I cannot talk about, because there are some very satisfying twists and turns. But suffice it to say that I thought I had guessed right three different times. And I was wrong each time. By the end, I was just sitting at my desk staring at my phone listening, not multitasking at all. I was very into it. I really liked a couple of the characters in this book, and I found myself hoping beyond hope that they would have a nice, tidy, happy ending. If you like Lisa Jewell. And if you liked Laura Dave's book *The Last Thing He Told Me*, this will be a great book for you. If we're talking about genre distinction, then I would say this is securely in the crime fiction genre. I know several of you mentioned to me that you'd like it when I specify the kind of micro genre that a book fits into within the overall mystery category. I will say finally that somehow I managed to read yet another book narrated by Julia Whalen. This one is fantastic. And her narration absolutely nailed several different voices, which you know, is usually my problem with her. She did a great job. This is *Before He Finds Her* by Michael Kardos.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 14:22

So can I ask something about that Julia Whalen narration sure, because I sadly it Meredith I have issues sometimes with it. And I I have issues when there's a lot of characters and a lot of accents, particularly when the accents aren't actually written into the book, but she's just decided to put on accents because you know, she loves to do that. She likes to show her range she loves to show you know what she said theater kid loves to show that range and she's got a fabulous range. You know, no doubt about it. But I can't stand it. I think in the you know, *Thank You for Listening* through like 20 different accents in there for no good reason and it drove me crazy. So are there a lot of different accents?

Meredith Monday Schwartz 15:02

No. And I think this for me, and like I said, I've I've actually not on purpose read several books where she narrated recently. And what I've come to is the fact that I actually do really mean she's obviously very good at what she does in this book and a couple of the others that I've listened to, it's fairly straightforward. They're American accents. It's not a ton of characters. And really what happens when I like it best with any audiobook narrator is when I kind of just forget about the narrator. And that's what happened here. She just disappears into the story, and does a really good job of doing that. And so I was able to just completely focus on what was happening. This is a very plot heavy book, no question. This is not, you know, this is not great literature, but it was well done crime fiction, and she can read me that all day long. Got it.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 15:55

Okay. And I feel the same. I think I read *flying solo*. She did the narration of last year, which was an excellent sort of set in main summer book, and she did an excellent job at that. And it was also pretty straightforward. So I get that, okay.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 16:07

Yeah, she's very good at what she does, for sure. So I'm, I'm kind of walking back my antipathy toward Julia Whalen. She's really good. All right, what's your first read?

Roxanna Kassam Kara 16:18

Okay, well, Meredith, listeners will be surprised because I am bringing a thriller as my first one. It's called *The Almost Widow* by Gail Anderson-Dargatz. So this is the perfect under the radar wintry thriller to put on your TBR as cold season approaches. And it's CanLit. So it's Canadian literature. And these are the kinds of books I love to bring to the show. And I'll just say off the top, this is, you know, friendly for HSPs like me, which was another reason I wanted to bring it. So here's the setup. Piper is an environmental writer who has moved to the isolated forest town of Moston, British Columbia to marry the love of her life. Ben, she loves her life. They're hiking among the 100 year old trees, scaling the big cliffs and living close to nature in a beautiful home overlooking the water, but Moston is not as idyllic as it seems. The northern town's economy subsists mostly on logging. And now that most of the trees have been cut down, the loggers are idle, bitter and angry when Piper finds some ancient old growth trees in the protected area of the park cut down. She suspects that one of the loggers has been poaching the trees under the cover of night. So she asks her husband Ben to inspect, and he goes into the wilderness to track them down. But he never comes out. And the snow begins to fall harder and harder. So as the snow piles up Piper's furiously searching for Ben, but it turns out that somebody may be on the hunt for her to,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 17:43

oh, no, this sounds totally like a book I would read.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 17:46

So it does sound like a book, you'd read Meredith. And I love mysteries and thrillers written by literary fiction authors. So that's why it was right up my alley too. Gail Anderson-Dargatz has been a finalist for the Giller Prize twice for her literary fiction that's kind of like the National Book Prize in the US. So she really knows what she's doing. But I will say, as you talked about, sort of micro genres, this is not a literary thriller. It's not written like literary fiction. It has those terse sentences and short hanging chapters of a thriller. And I think that's a good thing. It keeps you going. You see the quality of the writing more in the setup and how she pulls it through. Then kind of a lot of flowery writing, which I think is good here because it keeps that thriller moving. So what I love most about this book is that it wasn't a wilderness thriller that was just set in the wild. And I've read a lot of those to hear the wild is actually the main plot. Anderson-Dargatz tells us the story of a town that's really in despair, but it seems beautiful and picturesque from the outside. But in inside, it's just another small town that's losing people because of the lack of jobs and opportunity. And the residents are turning on each other. The old loggers of Moston feel like it's their right to keep logging in. That's the only way to keep the economy of life. But Piper and some of the other residents want to protect the old growth trees and turn it into a provincial park to attract tourists and millennials who want to live among nature and work virtually. So this is a very real conflict for many forest towns in Canada and the US. And Anderson-Dargatz does a great job of wrapping this into a thriller, but it doesn't take away from the main story, it just sort of adds surround sound. Now because she is telling the story. This thriller is more of a slow burn. So the action starts right away like on page two, but it doesn't really get moving until about 50 pages in and that's when the action starts to pull you along. As the search for Ben ramps up and the snow starts to Bill and Piper discovers there might be more dangerous characters lurking in this old growth forest. The author herself lives in northern BC and her husband is the geography Information Systems expert who worked in forestry so she knows what she's talking about. And at the end she has talked about the different plot points that she pulled from the headlines in you know her town and in surrounding town. And it's

actually really interesting because I know nothing about these kind of ancient forest towns and how they're surviving. So to hear some of this and also to hear some of the mythology around Bushman and all this stuff was really interesting to see how she pulled that from the headlines. So I'd say it's the perfect winter read, kind of that slow, but creeping, ominous thriller to cuddle up to insert on November, December. That's *The Almost Widow* by Gail Anderson-Dargatz.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 20:27

I'm so glad that you brought that one. And it occurs to me and I thought about this earlier this week, too. And I was talking to my friend Lexy about a book and asking her Okay, how many pages in will I know if it's the book for me? And that's not too far from the question of how many pages in do I need to read to know that kind of the action is getting started, it's really helpful to have that, like, it's gonna be about 50 pages before things start to really rock and roll. So just know that it's that slow burn start. That's really helpful information when you start a book, right?

Roxanna Kassam Kara 20:59

Well, and that's what I was thinking too, because I will say, I picked up this book earlier. And I think I was the mood for something just faster paced. And so I put it down after a chapter and I thought I would come back to it, but I just was like, Okay, this is great about this town. But when did somebody get killed? Like what's happening, you know, and so to know, okay, page 53. If you're not in it by then either it picks up and you get in it, or you say, Well, I'm not sure this is moving at the pace I want, you know, to put it down. I do find that helpful information if you have it.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 21:27

Yeah, definitely. Yeah, sometimes I'm in them. I just need bodies to start dropping on page two. I mean, let's just get it going. All right, my second book again, thank you all for putting up with me, continuing to talk about me moving through Agatha Christie, and all the Hercule Poirot books because I'm bringing another one today. The most recent when I read again, which I always do on audio, is *The Dumb Witness* by Agatha Christie. Here's the setup. This is not a groundbreaking setup. This is going to sound really familiar. Rich, elderly lady Emily Arundel was not happy when she had an accident in her home, and she had to deal with several injuries afterwards. It didn't fit into her nicely planned life. The accident itself was strange, because she wasn't one to trip on the stairs. But everyone blamed it on a rubber ball left on the stairs by her dog. But the more she thought about her fall, the more convinced she became that someone in her home was trying to kill her. On April 17. She wrote her suspicions in a letter to Hercule Poirot. Mysteriously, he didn't receive the letter until June 28. By which time you'll never guess Roxanna, poor Emily, Arundel was already dead. And now Hercule is on the case. All right, again. My quest is to read all Agatha Christie Hercule Poirot novels. Why not Miss Marple? Because heretofore Miss Marple has bugged me. We shall see if that changes. I will. I am going to give a try to Miss Marple on audio later, I didn't read this one for a long time, because I absolutely hate the title, the *Dumb Witness*, I just hate the title. Clearly, the word dumb is being used here in the old fashioned sense of mute. And that comes into the plot in a really interesting way in the story. And I think that's what strikes me every time I read one of these novels, which I tried to do three or four times a year, every single one of them bring something new to the table. Yes, we have a lot of the same tropes every time, the Manor House, the elderly victim with a lot of money, the room full of distasteful climbing relatives, but this one offers a few elements that I haven't seen before. I can't tell you what those are,

because they would ruin the story for you. And I, of course never want to do that. But suffice it to say Agatha Christie always keeps me guessing. Also, I want to point out that this is one of the great novels that includes both Hercule Poirot and his sidekick Captain Hastings. When he has scenes in the novel, I know that Hercule is going to be at his dashing, arrogant, hilarious best, their camaraderie and their repartee always makes me giggle. This book is only about three and a half hours listen to at my chosen speed of 1.5 speed. So it's a very quick win and a very enjoyable mystery that punctuated and acted as a palate cleanser in my late summer reading. This is the Dumb Witness by Agatha Christie.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 24:27

You know, I actually love when you bring these Meredith and I love how you read them because I think sometimes for me, I get stopped up in my audiobook listening in my reading too, but specifically my audiobook listening and I don't know what to read next. And I think having a series that you can return to even as you think about what you want, what you're in the mood for three and a half hours is a nice, easy tidy kind of in between palate cleanser while you choose your next read and it doesn't slow you down or stop you up because you always have something bright you know in the queue. So I think it's a smart way to use them in a good good And for us all to think about,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 25:01

well, that's a really good point. As soon as I finish one, I immediately make sure I've cued up the next one so that when I do have that moment of uncertainty, which does happen to me all the time in my audiobook listening way more than in my regular reading, I don't know why I get stopped up with it, but I choose the next one so that I can immediately go, Okay, I'm slumping in my audiobook, let's just immediately go to this next Hercule novel. So I always love them. I also love to do puzzles, while I listen to them. And of course, now I'm doing an Agatha Christie puzzle. While I'm listening to an Agatha Christie, it's just perfect. It's perfect

Roxanna Kassam Kara 25:37

for fall. All right, what's

Meredith Monday Schwartz 25:38

your next one?

Roxanna Kassam Kara 25:39

Okay, for my second book, today, I'm talking about House Lessons: renovating a life by Erica Bauermeister. So here's the setup. Erica Bauermeister and her husband have just moved back from Italy to Seattle with their two young children, when they spot a crumbling down house in eccentric Port Townsend, Washington. They decide to buy it and renovate it from top to bottom. But the house has a lot more in store for them than they bargained for. This is a memoir, in essays that is about much more than home renovation. It's a broader meditation on architecture, marriage and family roles. And ultimately, it's about the role a home plays in lives over time. So what I didn't realize until I started reading this book, and I think it's important for listeners to know is that it spans a few decades, since it's a long time from when Bauermeister and her husband buy the house to when they finally move into it. So in the beginning, you know, she's talking about renovating this house. And then she talks about 9/11. And she talks about her young kids. And I was so confused, until I kind of googled and figured out,

okay, this book is going to take, you know, a long time. It's not just it doesn't end with the renovation of the house. And it really is kind of a longer journey. And I think that's important to know, because if you're looking for a house renovation book, then you know, a Downton Shabby, or The Home Wreckers, which we've talked around before, I think those are good ones. This really is more of a memoir, I'd say. And so she talks about the home renovation, but along the way Bauermeister really takes us on a journey of architecture, community, marriage, life and death. And in her she talks about these topics in a really fascinating way. When she's talking about architecture, she talks about how architecture can evolve to meet the changing needs of a population. She talks about how she thought about it, it meet her own personal needs. So she talks about this concept called prospect and refuge, which is humans love to do you know you it's about looking out prospecting, but doing it from a safe place, a refuge. So she talks about the classic like window seat or bay window where you're looking out, and you can see the world but you're doing it from a cozy place, like our house is on top of a hill. So like that's a perfect example. You're looking out onto the world. But you're doing it from sort of the safety of your house. And that was really interesting, because I realized, oh, that's something that I do. I love that a lot, too. Could I do that in my reading nook? Could I do that in different areas. So it's interesting to apply to your own life. And she also talks about navigating the shifting roles in a marriage over time, and how challenging that can be. She's a writer, he was a sculptor early on in their 20s. And she really expects to have a very bohemian unconventional marriage. You know, she talks about passing the kids back and forth like a baton. And very unlike her parents traditional marriage, right where her mom stayed home with the kids and her dad was the sole breadwinner. But then you know, years go by, and her husband goes from sculpting into software. And at some point, she realizes, oh my god, like my husband has the exact same job in the exact same company that my dad had. And I am home with the children. And it's just funny how, you know, life takes you along its path. And she has to really think about okay, well, what does this mean? And how do we want our lives to change. So I just think it's a perfect, mellow, listen, during a fall walk. It's beautifully written and reflective, but very accessible. So I'd say if you like Tom Lake or Search, this might be the book for you. I will say that I think you have to be in the right headspace for this book. So when I first started it, I think we were either just moving or had just moved into our new place. And I was in a space of transition. And I just didn't have kind of the patience, you know, the, for this book, and thinking through all those big issues about how I was going to live in my house. So I just wasn't ready to deal with it yet. Now that I'm more settled, it was the right read for me. So I just say reader know thyself, and that's House Lessons by Erica Bauermeister.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 29:24

I love that concept of prospect and refuge. I love it when there's something that's given like a name that you've experienced, but you didn't really know it was a thing or why it was so satisfying. Or I just I love the concept of prospect and refuge that just makes so much sense.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 29:41

Yeah, she had a lot of that woven in which I found really interesting. And then I really did find it interesting as she kind of moves through her life, how her marriage and family setup changes as we've

all found in how she navigates that with her husband. It was just a really, you know, it's another woman walking the path and it was just interesting to hear you know how different people live their lives. No.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 30:01

I'm glad that her books have really been working for you this fall. Yeah, they really have. Alright, this is not going to surprise you because you heard me rail about this Roxanna. But I want to talk about The Exchange by John Grisham.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 30:14

Oh, I'm excited to hear I'm glad you waited for the show to bring it up. I'm excited to hear what you have to say.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 30:18

Yes, so it's coming out. And so I just felt that I needed to, I needed to get my thoughts out into the world, so that people can make a smart choice with their buying decisions. Here's the setup. This sequel to The Firm purports to tell us what became of Mitch and Abby McDeere. Again, from his blockbuster novel, The Firm after they exposed to the crimes of Memphis law firm Bendini, Lambert & Locke and fled the country. This new story starts up 15 years later, and Mitch and Abby are living in Manhattan, where Mitch is a partner at the largest law firm in the world because, of course he is. When a beloved mentor in Rome asks Mitch for a favor that will take him far from home, Mitch finds himself at the center of a sinister plot that has worldwide implications, and once again, endangers his colleagues, friends and family, because of course it does. Alright, I don't know exactly what I expected from this book. But this was not it. I like everyone else of my generation was super excited. When I heard that there was a follow up to John Grisham's classic, The Firm coming out, the minute I got a copy through Net Galley, I downloaded it and started reading it, like I abandoned three books to read this book immediately. My first indication that this was not going to be a similar experience to reading the original novel came when I had read the first 25% of the book, and realized that exactly nothing had happened. Well, no things started happening, but then abruptly came to nothing. And we were then effectively starting back at zero. At that point, I came very close to setting the book down. But then things started to pick up and I was feeling better again. But the John Grisham of today is clearly not the author who wrote The Firm all those years ago. This John Grisham really likes to take his time with everything, we get so much detail about things that absolutely do not matter. We get the minutiae of the McDeere's daily life with their kids, we get the history of building bridges in Libya, and all manner of other things, but the way it was paced, you would get something interesting happening, and then all of a sudden, you'd slow way down. And the second you were going to set the book down, because you just couldn't stand it anymore. The pacing would pick back up again, it was incredibly even all the way through, and I had to force myself to finish it. Because I just kept wondering when something interesting was going to happen. And the answer is, it didn't. I got to the end of the book. And I got to the acknowledgments page, and I literally said out loud to my beloved Kindle. Are you serious? That's it. That's the book we were waiting for. I think I just feel like this book was an exercise in futility. There was nothing about the Mitch McDeere character that felt like he had to be the lead character of this book, you could have inserted any lawyer character, it just felt like they were writing it as Mitch McDeere to make it a follow up, because that would enable them to sell books and make it more successful. Yes, at the beginning, you get a little bit of closing of the loop of what happened in the first book. But other than that, I really

honestly don't know what the point was. Trust me when I say I was disappointed. as disappointed as any of you will be. This book wasn't interesting. I didn't need it to be exactly like the firm, but I needed it to be something. And this was absolutely nothing more than a waste of my time. This was The Exchange by John Grisham.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 34:18

That is so disappointing man. I love this book, too. I mean, I think everybody of our generation. Oh, yes. Sorry. I love The Firm too not this book. I haven't read this one on your very sage advice. I think everybody of our generation knows exactly where they were when they read that book. And so I think to come back and do a sequel is very gutsy. And you have to have something to say, you know, I think about I brought a few episodes ago Rachel's Holiday, which was sort of a blockbuster at the time called Chiclet book. And Marian Keyes, the author of that came back with Again, Rachel and that's Rachel in midlife going through different issues and has she's really grown as a character. And you feel like okay I understand what she's going through. But I think when it starts to feel like it's just a story written, and they could have put anybody in there, and they just kind of slid him in to sell more books, like, that's really disappointing.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 35:11

Yeah, I mean, absolutely. And the other thing is that there's so much that I can't say about the plot, and the plot holes in the ridiculousness of the plot, because I don't want to keep everything spoiler free. But there were so many times where I was like, seriously, John Grisham. Like, I am not an idiot. Why would you think that did that? Like, there are just so many times where I felt like, it was just ridiculous, it was just absolutely ridiculous. This got two stars from me, which I almost never give a book, two stars. I mean, that's almost as low as my ratings go. And again, you guys know, especially over the, you know, we have strong opinions, but I've become really, I think it's super important to me, when I read a book that doesn't work for me to talk about what I did like, and then what maybe didn't work for me, that's what you always hear from me, in this case. First of all, it's John Grisham, and he does not care, nor will he be affected by me giving my honest opinion about this book. He's written so many books, he writes them so quickly. This was not the great work of his life. So I feel perfectly fine, being really honest about the fact that there was nothing and I looked for it in my own mind, there was nothing about this book that I could put into the category of this worked for me, the whole thing was a waste of time, and it felt like a money grab. And that is what is likely like, the last time I gave a review, like this was the latest Phillip Margolin book, another, you know, certainly not as he's not as big as John Grisham, but another author that has a long career of being able to write great books and John Grisham. I mean, yes, Pelican Brief, the firm, you know, what was his very first one

Roxanna Kassam Kara 36:57

A Time To Kill

Meredith Monday Schwartz 36:58

A Time to Kill, and several other The Brethren came later on several other legal dramas that were really, really good. He's just gone off the rails here. And so I felt like I needed to be honest about this one brutally honest about this one, because it really makes me mad when it is so clearly a money grab and someone's name or their past history being used to get money out of our pockets. Again, I read this

through Net Galley, so I didn't actually pay for it myself. But I wanted to put this out there just at least, so that our listeners would have a sense of maybe what to expect that it's very, very different than what The Firm was. So from there, take everything I say with a grain of salt.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 37:41

Well, that's sad, but true. Thank you for sharing your thoughts, Mer. All right, so

Meredith Monday Schwartz 37:45

big left turn with your final current read, which as we said is going to kind of we're going to use this as a segue and we're gonna spend a little bit more time on it. You're reading a book that is of exceptional quality, and that we liked a lot.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 37:59

Yes, my third book is The Covenant of Water by Abraham Verghese. So let's start with the setup. The Covenant of Water is a sweeping epic about love faith in medicine, spanning from 1900 to 1977. The book is set in Kerala on South India's Malabar coast, and follows three generations of a family that suffers a peculiar affliction. In every generation, at least one person dies by drowning, and in Kerala water is everywhere. As the novel begins, we meet a 12 year old girl who is preparing for her wedding day her groom is a 40 year old widower with a young son. We follow this girl who will be later known as Big ammaji, literally meaning big mother and her family through the following decades. And we see how the condition impacts the lives of those who she holds dear parallel to the story. We also follow stories from a wide cast of characters, including a Scottish doctor, a doctor who works in a leper colony, and a political rebel, the author weaves these disparate threads into an epic, breathtakingly beautiful story. The novel deals with themes of family, legacy, grief, love, sacrifice, but also explores sensitive issues such as social class structure, colonialism, discrimination, and addiction. And it was just such a pleasure to read with you, Meredith. Yes,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 39:17

this is another one of those books. We often say this, this book felt like a great buddy read because it felt like sometimes we say like too much book for one person in this case, I think it's, it's a book that is so much that it is really easily shared with another person. There's so much experience. It's so experiential. I felt myself really just becoming like traveling to these places, and becoming so enmeshed in this family that there were deep emotional. There were some scenes that I will never ever, ever forget. And it was so great to be able to talk about those as we were reading it.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 39:57

Yeah, I agree. And I think you I've seen some people read this sort of front and back three weeks or two weeks and done. I couldn't have done that with this book because it is so much book. And because to me, it really felt it had a very interesting rhythm, it almost felt like the ocean tied to me kind of coming in and going out coming in and going out and to buddy read it, because when it would go out, I would put it down, and then you know, because I'd read it in between books sometimes. So to hear you moving forward, sort of pulled me to move forward, not that it was ever slow, or I wanted to put it down. It was just the pacing of, you know, a story that 700 pages like how it's gonna go. And so it helped sort of

propel me through the book. And then like you said, talking about it helped me get my arms around everything that was happening, this really is a huge world that he's built.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 40:48

Right. And I think it's interesting that you say that, because Johnny's reading it right now. So you and I finished our reading a few weeks ago, Johnny has been reading it kind of right since we finished. And so he has been been talking about it with me as he's been reading it. So it's been fresh in my mind. And it is a book that I would say I mean, it is 700 pages, it's a book that I would say you feel the length of it. But as you said, because you feel the scope of it, not because the pacing is ever boring, there was never a spot where I was like, I just wish I wasn't reading this book, I want to set it down, I was very invested. It is a book that to me feels like if you pick it up in the first chapter, if you aren't drawn in after the first chapter. And these chapters aren't very long. That was another thing that I really liked about it is that it's very easy to read, because the chapters just kind of flow one into the other. It is one of those books where if you read the first chapter, and you're like, I am just completely not interested in what's happening. I'm not interested in this setting. I'm not interested in this 12 year old girl and what's happening to her, then I think you can feel totally okay with setting it down and saying it's not for me right now. Because this is a not a book that I would call a slow burn. I was in it. I was drawn into big Ammachi's story when she was that 12 year old girl. And I just was like, Whoa, I just jumped in with both feet.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 42:08

Oh, 100%. I will agree with that it doesn't feel like I think calling it a 700 page book almost does disservice to it. Because when you pick it up, it doesn't feel like that it just feels like a book, you open it up, and you are in and you're with her in this story. I'll also say because I think Catherine from Gilmore's Guide said this and it really helped me to know that that 12 year old girl does marry this 40 ish widower. But it's not an abusive marriage, you're not going to get sort of graphic content around that, you know, there's other issues that he covers within the book. But I know I had kind of held it at arm's length because I was like, Oh my God, this 12 year old girl, she's gonna marry this forty year old man in, you know, 1900s India, what's gonna happen, but it's not about that they actually have a very loving marriage. And he's a good guy. He's

Meredith Monday Schwartz 42:55

a good, he's a good guy. And he's a good guy who treats her with a lot of respect from the very beginning. So it is, I think that's a good thing to say. Because it does start out with that on page one. You are not dealing with a 40 year old guy trying to take advantage physically or emotionally of a 12 year old girl. That's not what happens.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 43:14

Yes, yeah, exactly. And so that I think pulled me in to kind of find out what exactly does happen and knowing knowing that made me want to dig in deeper, because I wasn't holding it at arm's length. And I will say a lot of happy and sad stuff happens in this book, there is for sure. A lot of tragedy and a lot of death and a lot of celebration. But it doesn't feel like an epic in misery. You know, sometimes, like

literary fiction, or these long books, you read them. And there's just trauma after trauma after trauma. And at least for me, I found some of these books really, really hard like *A Fine Balance* by Rohinton Mistry. I know, people love that book. I close that book and was just I was just done because it was just so it was too much here a lot happens for sure. I think anything you know what would happen in three generations. But there's also very interesting writing style where it's a little bit distant, somehow, not in a bad way. But just that, you know, like used to say, Meredith, you read this at night, and I did too, because it didn't feel like gut wrenching. So even though good stuff and bad stuff is happening, there's a bit of distance there, which I think actually really helped the book because you could float through it then without getting like, you know, your heart torn to shreds every 15 pages, right?

Meredith Monday Schwartz 44:33

I would say the narration felt more omniscient than anything else. So in that distance that you're talking about, it was almost like I felt very connected to the story through the narration. But I felt like the narrator was protecting us from the immediate because of the context of the long scope of this, if that makes sense. Like the the narrator almost gave us this sense of Yes. You know, in there are some big really tragic things that happen again that I will never ever forget, I cried a couple of times reading this book, Johnny was at a coffee shop. And he got to one really memorable scene. And he had to set the book down because he was really fighting tears. And so there is that. But then to your point, there are tremendous moments of joy. There are tremendous moments of humor, there are a couple of scenes that just had both of us absolutely laughing out loud. There's also some really satisfying, I don't know that I want to call it magical realism, there's a an ongoing, minor part of the plot that has to do with a ghost that lives in the basement of this of the cellar of the of their home. It's not scary, it's a really wonderful part of the story. But there are some threads of magical realism, we'll use that term for want of a better one that flow throughout. There also is Dr. Verghese is a doctor out Abraham Verghese is a doctor. And there's a lot of medical elements to this story. I think that's the thing that I would say that people should really be aware of that they might not be aware of, is that there are several different like, I can probably think of 10 different scenes that are very graphically described. Yeah, they're, they're very much in context of the story. But I mean, he doesn't hold back, and there were a few things. I was like, Ooh, okay, that's a visual, I wasn't ready for that, you know. So I mean, he, and again, he, he does this really, really well. But I think it's important to know that it's there.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 46:43

Yeah, I agree. I think you know, you talked about the omniscient voice. And you're right, you're kind of connected, but not deeply in in until you get to one of these scenes. Yes, you're right, because that's

Meredith Monday Schwartz 46:55

where he does. Yeah, that net go.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 46:59

Yeah, and then guess what you are in it, because he has a very visual writer. So either it's get the very graphic detail of the surgery, which there's a lot of surgery and a lot of disease. And you know, that kind of is the heart of the book. And the part of it takes part in in a leper colony, there is some graphic description there. I was okay with that, funnily enough. And there's also I found, the other part of that happens is there is like you said, these intensely visual scenes, like my context is sort of like Bollywood

movies. And I don't mean like the Happy singing, dancing kind. But I mean, the, there's sometimes really tragic scenes that I could play over in my mind that are really dramatic. And there's a few scenes in here, one in particular, which is probably the one Johnny teared up, but I would just guess there's one where we read, and the rain is falling, and this thing happens. And I will live with that my whole life. That's that story, but not in, oh, my God, that visual, more like he just touched something in me by that scene, and he has a few of those that really get you and I almost think like that's what makes the book because you're just you get to this point, thank God, it's not all the way through. You need some time to breathe in between you need 50 pages.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 48:16

And he gives you that right and that's that's where that pacing, or that's, you know, that kind of like waves coming out and coming back in. I feel like the pacing was really well done here. Because he he gives you that I do just want to say that there are a couple of very graphic and harrowing childbirth scenes also, which people definitely need to be aware of. Even if they turn out well, it's just know that that those are there. So there's that I want to touch quickly as we get ready to wrap up on this on the fact that I think it's important to know because this is another thing a lot of people have brought up I tried to read Cutting for Stone three different times his his previous book, I tried to read it three different times. It's one of Kaytee's favorite books. So it was important to me to really try to read it, for whatever reason, and I could I'm toying with the idea of going back and trying again, now that I've read this one of his just to see if I've changed as a reader enough to really get Cutting for Stone because I know a lot of people love, love, love that book. I couldn't get into it. I've not yet been successful getting into it. This one Covenant of Water. Like I said both feet from page two. So a lot of people have said, you know, Well, should I try this one? If I just couldn't get through Cutting for Stone? I would say absolutely. Yes. If you love a sweeping generate multi generational family drama, with excellent writing, but a through line of plot that moves you through all the way. I just would highly recommend this book. This was a five star read for me and probably one of my best of the year. I really really loved it.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 49:51

Yeah, I totally agree on both counts. So I don't know if you remember this Meredith but when we first started buddy reading after we finished ACOMAF we were We're looking at, what should we read next? You'd left me a message like, do you want to continue this? I was like, Yes. And I suggested Cutting for Stone, because I had also tried it three times and had been able to get through it. And you said, you know, I've tried it, I can't get through that one. And it was like a weight that was lifted from me thinking I can just leave this alone, because I think I gotten 30% in and couldn't read it. It's my best friend's favorite book. People love it. But I never had that problem with this one. I was in from page one, like you said, it will be one of my best of the year, it was five stars. I think it's a modern classic. I think it's a Masterpiece. And I think that resolution, there's a visual, a scene right that it ends. That's basically like a movie scene. There's one scene at the end, and you can just see it, like snap to that scene and fade to dark. And that will just stay with me forever. It's just really, I think it's a modern classic that I won't ever forget.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 50:52

Yeah, I completely agree. One other thing I want to say is that one reason that this book came to my attention was, of course, you all know if my love my enduring love and devotion to Oprah. I love her. And she loved this book. And she did a beautiful job not only of choosing it as her book of the month or book of the entire summer, but she also did a lot of podcast episodes that are available both as audio and then on YouTube, with Dr. Verghese, and they did these wonderful conversations, I highly recommend them, I highly recommend that you wait to listen to those until you've read the book. Because what we quickly found, and I you know, if I could go back and change anything about our reading experience, it would be that there's a couple of spoilers that were, I think, unintentionally given away as they were having a great discussion about the book. And I really think it was unintentional. But the net effect is there were things that I kind of knew were coming, and they affected my reading of the book, and I wish that I hadn't known. So I just want to say bookmark those, because I think they do add to your understanding of what his intentions were, and his experience was of writing the book, but wait until afterwards to watch them if you don't want any spoilers whatsoever. So that's our discussion of Covenant of Water. Again, spoiler free, we both obviously, highly recommend it. And again, just so glad to read that book with you and to have that shared experience with you, Roxanna and I would always say, if you aren't currently buddy reading with anyone, give it a try. Because man, it can really deepen your experience of a book.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 52:32

I totally agree. This is one that I think will go down in our forever memories of one of the books we've read together. So happy to read it with you.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 52:39

Yeah. All right, let's visit the fountain. What's your wish for this week?

Roxanna Kassam Kara 52:44

Okay, so as I said, off the top, Meredith, I'm cramming in as many books as I can to this episode. So my wish is obviously book centric. So there has been a lot of talk this summer about Tom Lake by Ann Patchett. And it's my favorite book of the year. So far, I really don't see that changing. So I wanted to talk about it as my fountain wish today not to tell you how great it is. Because I'm sure everyone has heard that. My wish is that more reviewers and book podcasters talked about the fact that this book is not for everyone, and that there are important points that might make this book perfect for you, or one to stay away from. So I'm going to take it upon myself to fulfill my own wish, tell you some of these things about this book. So you can decide if you haven't picked it up yet. Or if you've picked it up and put it down. Here are some things that I really think you need to know. Number one, this book is very mood driven. I'd say what Shadow of the Wind by Carlos Ruiz Zafon is to fall Tom Lake is to late summer, you know those last wistful days. That's what this book is about. Not a lot happens. But that kind of wistful melancholic, sepia tone is really what this book is about. So even if you're a planned reader who doesn't read according to mood, you could pick this book up at the wrong time and just completely be stuck behind it. If you didn't know that it is just so much about the mood. So I wanted to make sure everybody knew that. Now I love books with a strong atmosphere and strong sense of place. I happened to pick it up during late summer. So it was a perfect fit for me. But it might not be for everybody. Now the story just quickly for everybody who probably already knows but it's about a mother sitting in her cherry orchard basically telling her adult daughters the story of her life and really at its

heart. It's a story about contentment. You know the main character goes through ups and downs, but ultimately she's content with her choices. And I love this because I think about contentment and choosing contentment in midlife a lot. But I could see how that contentment could look to some readers as almost self satisfied smugness. And I'll just bridge this by saying I think there's a lot of unacknowledged privilege in this book. There's a privilege of a loving, tight knit family, there's a privilege of a mother daughter relationship that is open and loving. There's the privilege of having an almost ideal pandemic experience, there's the privilege of being white and owning a farm, and not the temporary foreign workers who work the farm. And none of these actually acknowledged so it might rub people the wrong way. And I thought about this because there's a great conversation in our bookish friends group, about the pandemic experience, where, you know, some posters had a really hard time with the idealized pandemic experience presented in the book, which is really this mother and her three daughters sitting out in the cherry orchard laughing. And they're supposed to be picking cherries, but a lot of times like the father comes in, and they're just lying on their backs looking at those sky. And you know, the posters were like, well, I was homeschooling and managing my elderly mother and trying to keep my immunocompromised husband from getting sick. Like this didn't ring true. And I just say that, you know, in listening to interviews, I heard Patchett say that she came up with the idea of the book before the pandemic, and just decided the pandemic would be a great way to keep all her characters in one place. So it's really more of a plot device. You know, she has written a pandemic book, which was the book of essays, *These Precious Days*. This is not it. So I think all those things think, you know, she's focusing on kind of that sepia toned, magic, really hopeful moment in life. But it's not a universal experience at all. And so I think knowing some of those points might help you decide whether it's for you or not. And then the last thing I'd say, I did hear Sarah from Sarah's Bookshelf, say she picked it up, it was really heavy on the *Our Town* stuff in the beginning, and she put it down. And I think it was been a lot of discussion in *Our Town*. I think at the beginning, it's almost like a minute by minute picture of these, you know, auditions, like in the small town for *Our Town*. And even when I started I was like, Is this book an hour long? Like, does it take place in an hour, and it's just minute by minute of these auditions, because it was it was so zoomed in. But after the first couple chapters, it does zoom out, and it tells you a much larger story. So I think if you were kind of thrown off by that, you know, just read a quick summary and then go in and trust that that stuff does actually progress out. So I'm not here to say whether it's a book for you or not, I just don't think it's for everyone. And I think those points are good to know, when you're deciding whether it's a book you should pick up or not. So that was my fountain, which hopefully fulfilled Meredith,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 57:26

I think that is incredibly useful for a book that has gotten so much well deserved attention, I think it is really helpful to know that it is not a book for everyone or not a book for everyone exactly right now. So I think that was really, really by far the most helpful thing that I've heard anyone say about *Tom Lake*. And if I had heard you say all those things before I picked it up and quickly set it down, realizing it wasn't for me, I wouldn't even have bothered to pick it up, because you so perfectly talked about the things that rubbed me the wrong way. But again, reader know thyself, and for you your favorite book of the year. So I absolutely love that. And we need to have those those tools to make the right decision for us while also holding space for the other people for whom it's the perfect book. So I love that so much. Good job. All right, well, I'm gonna bring a bookish documentary to the show as my wish, I wish that if you like this kind of thing, you would seek out the documentary that's called *Hello Bookstore*. It was

available to me on our flight or nine and a half hour flight back from the UK. And I was like, Well, no better time than the present. I was reading. I like to do this thing when I'm on long flights where I'll read for like an hour, and then watch something and then read for an hour or watch something just to kind of break up the time. And I got involved in this documentary. It's just about an hour and a half long. And it's about a Lenox, Massachusetts bookstore, this tiny, independent bookstore that's been in existence for decades. And it's about running the bookstore. This man Matt owns the bookstore currently. And it's about him trying to make it through the pandemic, and how difficult that was. And it's about him and his love of books. It's about the fact that selling books and pressing them into readers hands is his calling. It's his special skill. It's his gift. It's also about Matt and his raising of his daughters who are now grown and we get to meet them. It's about the store itself. And we get to know it intimately how it looks in the morning, how it looks in the evening, how he has conversations over the phone, how he has conversations with suppliers. We see him going through really hard times during the pandemic and having to work to really make ends meet and really face the thought that his store might close. And then it's about what happens to keep it from closing It's about a life devoted to pressing books into people's hands where that's the result you're looking for, not to make a lot of money doing it. It was a beautiful, beautiful rumination on the love of a bookish, a very bookish life. And I just, I just loved it. It's quiet. It is not a rip roaring experience, but it's very, very quiet. It's perfect for a rainy afternoon and fall. It's available through Amazon Prime video, you can rent it for 2.99. It's definitely worth that price of admission and an hour and a half of your time, I think you will end up wanting to hug that bookstore, the bookstore owner in this documentary, which is called Hello bookstore, that's what it's called. So that's my wish that everyone would read it would watch it,

Roxanna Kassam Kara 1:00:51

I might just wrap this up and go do that right now. Sounds

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:00:55

so perfect. It's really lovely. Make a huge mug of chai tea. Yeah, get under your blanket and join Matt. And he's just when you first meet him, he's a little bit odd. And they're like the business person. Part of me got a little bit kind of, you know, triggered in the very beginning because I was like, what? What's going to happen to you to tell you right now, but just let it flow. Let it flow, let it wash over you. And I think you'll really love it. It's just wonderful. It was really, really wonderful. All right, that is it for this week. As a reminder, here's where you can connect with us. You can find me I'm Meredith at @MeredithMondaySchwartz on Instagram, and you can find Kaytee at @notesonbookmarks on Instagram.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 1:01:38

And you can find me Roxanna at @Roxannathereader on Instagram, full show

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:01:42

notes with the title of every book we mentioned in the episode and timestamps, so you can zoom right to where we talked about it can be found on our website at currentlyreadingpodcast.com.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 1:01:52

Our website also includes links to all the ways you can support the show, and great book lists. You can also contact us directly at @currentlyreadingpodcast on Instagram or via email at currentlyreadingpodcast.com. And if

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:02:04

you want more of this kind of content, you can join us as a Patreon subscriber. It's just \$5 a month and you get all kinds of bookish goodness. You can also help us by rating and reviewing us on Apple podcasts and shouting us out on social media. All of those things make a huge difference in our finding our perfect audience.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 1:02:24

Come join our bookish community. We would love that. Until next

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:02:27

week, may your chai tea be hot

Roxanna Kassam Kara 1:02:29

and your book be unputdownable

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:02:31

Happy reading Roxanna.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 1:02:33

Happy reading Meredith