



Season 6, Episode 18: Reading Trackers + How The Holidays Changes Our Reading

Mon, Dec 4, 2023 • 1:04:49

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 we read recently. And as you know, we won't shy away from having strong opinions. So get ready. We

Kaytee Cobb 00:24

are light on 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 fountain.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 00:34

I'm Meredith Monday, Schwartz, a mom of four and full time CEO living in Austin, Texas, and I'm getting all the Christmas vibes from my reading.

Kaytee Cobb 00:42

And I'm Kaytee Cobb, a homeschooling mom of four living in Arizona. And I like big spreadsheets and I cannot lie. This is episode number 18 of season six. And we are so glad you're here. Oh, Kaytee,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 00:53

the spreadsheet goodness, the Christmas he spreadsheet goodness is upon us. It's It's here.

Kaytee Cobb 01:00

It's here. I'm so excited. It's here.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 01:02

Yes, I am so excited. That

Kaytee Cobb 01:05

gets us into our little bit of mischief that we have to manage for today, Meredith because it is the first Monday of the month, the first Monday of December. And for me, that means I have a hard deadline today. And all our bookish friends are getting to open their emails, which has a Christmas present for me. And it is the 2024 reading tracker, which as always, is bigger and better and has more features and more tabs and more goodies than ever before I pulled the bookish friends I said what would you like, like in your perfect world? What would you like to see? And they delivered in a big way? Yes, they

Meredith Monday Schwartz 01:43

have a lot of opinions. A lot of people, hundreds and hundreds of people have been using this spreadsheets, a lot of people Kaytee we know from some surveys that we've done. This is the reason they become a bookish friend, this is the the spreadsheet is the thing that is worth the \$5 a month that it costs you to be a bookish friend, no, of course people could if they wanted to dip in for a month, grab that spreadsheet, and then they could bounce. And that's totally doable. And that is totally okay. But I'd be willing to bet no matter how fantastic your spreadsheet is, and it is fantastic. Once people join for \$5 A month or \$54 if you buy a whole year, you get some savings. And you get all the content, you get all things murderful, you get the indie press list, you get Trope Thursday, you get all the bookish friend community, they end up staying, they think they're going to commit it for a month, but they end up staying. So our exit rates are really, really low for which we're grateful. And again, that brings us back to the spreadsheet is awesome. And I am a bookish friend, who is so excited to see it in my inbox today, because I started using it two years ago. And it has completely changed the way that I track my reading, in that I have so much more usable data. Now. Now, I just want to say for a lot of people, they want all the bells and whistles. They want all the tabs and columns and but some of us are more purist and we don't want so much. Here was the thing that changed my mind, Kaytee about using the currently reading book tracker, you don't have to use it all you make it so easy to hide the columns of information that you're that a person might not be interested in tracking, so that you don't even know it's there. It doesn't even it's not even in your consciousness, it's still available. If like me after you use it for a year, the next year, you're like, maybe I want a few things more in my tracker. They're available to you. But you don't have to have it. So it's great for the person who wants all the stuff. And it's also great for the person who just wants a really nifty swift way to track just a few things about their reading that mean a lot to them. Yes.

Kaytee Cobb 04:01

And the cool thing is because it kind of every option is included, you can choose what means a lot to you. So you might be somebody who really cares about making sure you're reading a lot of female authors, which we have a lot of bookish friends that care about that a lot. Or maybe that doesn't matter to you at all. And you hide the author, gender column, and you really care about your settings of your book, and you want to make sure that you're reading all over the world. And that's the column that you care about. And it fills in a map for you. So because all of those things already exist. You don't have to say well, I guess I'll just track this because that's the only thing I can track. Nope, you can track it all, honey. Okay,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 04:38

but I'm gonna need you to back up rewind. One thing that I don't actually track right now, but I have considered tracking is the setting of the books. Tell me again what you just said about the map because this is new information to me.

Kaytee Cobb 04:51

Well, so there there's a map for author origin, which is where your authors are from and that automatically gets filled in throughout A year by locations that you check off as you fill in where your

authors are from. So you can fill up the whole world in the year, if you want to, if it's important to you to read widely in that way, the setting column is a little bit more finicky, because if you put in fake places, which I do, it's harder to make it work, right? If I'm like fantasy Kingdom number 12. This is Nexia or whatever it is, you won't put it into the map for you because it doesn't exist. But you can instead choose to use the author origin, the nation of origin column to track the countries where your books take place. And then that map is actually filling in the places that you're reading from, instead of the places your authors are from. So you can customize what you want that map to show. Right?

Meredith Monday Schwartz 05:48

It's flexible, it's flexible. So also, the other thing is for a lot of people, I mean, it's done in Google Sheets. So a lot of people are very familiar with that. But for some people, maybe they're nervous about working in Google Sheets are nervous about how to make it work for them. But you do a lot of things to help our bookish friends get very comfortable in their reading tracker.

Kaytee Cobb 06:10

Yes. So coming this next week, we dropped the spreadsheet today on Monday, December 4. And coming this next week, I'm going to have to live spreadsheet orientation zooms one on an evening on during the week, and one on the weekend, in order to let people kind of tour it with me. So they can see this new house, they can see all the features that I included this year, they can ask questions live. And then the other reason that it might be worth it to stay a patron all year long is that I am tech support over on Patreon. So if you get stuck, and you say, Kaytee, I broke it. I'm so sorry, I broke it, that's fine. If you send it to me on Patreon, so I know you're a bookish friend, I will help out, I'll help you add new features, I'll help you fix your broken columns, I'll help you redo the things that went awry for you, you do a lot of work.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 06:57

And that is part of the reason Kaytee that we are not offering it as a standalone, which we've done in the past, we've offered the ability for people to buy just the spreadsheet in the past. But for that reason, if you're a bookish friend of a current bookish friend, when you have any sort of issue, you get you as tech support for no additional charge. And also because we think and the numbers bear out that if you join us just for the reading tracker, you are likely to stay because you probably will find something else in our content and surely in our bookish community over on Facebook that you will absolutely benefit from your reading will be better for being a currently reading bookish friend. I'm confident enough to say that that clearly.

Kaytee Cobb 07:42

Yes, I would stand by that wholeheartedly. So that's patreon.com/currently Reading podcast, five bucks a month or 54 for the whole year. And then you're guaranteed 12 months of incredible bookish content, and the brand new spreadsheet or 2024.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 07:58

You're a freak in the sheets. And we are all so glad of it Kaytee

Kaytee Cobb 08:01

that's me the freakin the spreadsheets. All right. Now we've managed our mystery for the month. And I'm gonna let everybody know, kind of at the top of the show that we are going to talk for our deep dive today about how our reading changes during the holidays. Holidays are a little bit kooky in the calendar. And that can mess with our reading lives in a number of ways or improve it in a number of ways. But first, we'll get started the way we always do with our bookish moments. Meredith, what is yours this week? All

Meredith Monday Schwartz 08:26

right. Well, this week, as we sit here today, recording this is the end of the Thanksgiving weekend, right? We record well in advance of when the episode drops. And so this is the weekend that a huge percentage of us here in the United States, we celebrate Thanksgiving, and then we immediately turn our attention to Christmas. So I decorated my entire house which is becoming a heavier and heavier lift every year because every year I go a little bigger because I have another grandchild and I really feel like I need to do Christmas right? And so I got all of that done. And then my reward at the end of that is that I take out all of my Christmas picture books. And I love seeing the familiar covers every single year. My favorite one of course and I think Kaytee, at least one of your favorite ones if not your very favorite is Mr. Willoughby's Christmas Tree and it's just such a lovely picture book is short enough to be in my estimation the perfect bedtime picture book because to me bedtime picture books should not be overly long correct. It is perfectly Christmassy. It is great for ages little little all the way up until even now I bet you I could convince Jackson to sit with me and Jeffrey and read Mr. Willoughby's Christmas Tree because it brings so many good memories for him. That's by that's Robert Barry, if I remember correctly, is the author there but that was my bookish moment just remembering how much Christmas picturebooks brings so much joy to my holiday season

Kaytee Cobb 10:01

such a good bookish moment. And I also have a beautiful Christmas picture book basket that I adore and getting it out every year and seeing the kids get excited about these books they haven't seen for 11 months. Makes me very excited. Okay, Meredith, I'm switching my bookish moment on the fly, because I have realized that what I actually want to talk about this week is a book that I just recently bought at The Poison Pen bookstore in Scottsdale, which is where I met up with our bookish friends when I got to meet the Arizona bookish friends for the first time, I found this beautiful, illustrated Christmas murder mystery children's book. Oh, that's a lot going on there. It has 24 chapters. So you read one chapter a day, and it's called The Secret of Helmersbruk Manor, a Christmas mystery by Eva Frantz. And it is beautifully illustrated throughout 24 chapters. Like I said, it's by a Finnish author, and was just translated to English this year. So I usually like to have a family read aloud that we're reading throughout the month of December, and sometimes it's The Best Christmas Pageant Ever, which I love as a family read aloud. Sometimes it's The Life and Times of Santa Claus by Frank L Baum. There's any number of books that I've read aloud like this, but this one with the mystery at the center. I think it's gonna be very special for our family this year, especially because as I've mentioned before, my mom is Finnish. So having that Finnish connection here is just the icing on the cake for all of us. And it's hardbound. It's beautifully illustrated. Like I said, it's published by Pushkin children's. I can't wait to get into it. I'm totally going to bring it as a current read at the end of December because it's fantastic. I'm so excited. So that is The Secret of Helmersbruk Manor. A Christmas mystery by Eva Frantz.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 11:50

That sounds excellent. I cannot for some reason find it in anything other than like a Kindle edition, which is nobody. Nobody wants that.

Kaytee Cobb 12:01

Or will I do I'm gonna go back and get you a copy. Right. So I just

Meredith Monday Schwartz 12:05

wanted to see if we can tell like I wonder if poison pen website has it.

Kaytee Cobb 12:11

If it's available at the poison pen website. Then Megan will link the poison pen website to get that copy from them directly. Blackwell's does have it Blackwell's does have it Okay. Okay. And delivery, free delivery from Blackwell's is included. So it is available there if we can't find it anywhere else to link in show notes. Excellent.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 12:30

Okay. All right. I'm so glad that it's available there. And it sounds like just such a fun, fun thing for a run up to Christmas. Yeah, you have to let us know what you end up thinking about

Kaytee Cobb 12:41

it. We're excited about it. Okay, let's get into our current reads. We're very far into this. Or

Meredith Monday Schwartz 12:47

Megan, she's like with these people. Just just a straight line. People please. Okay, great line.

Kaytee Cobb 12:53

What is your first current read this week, Meredith? Okay.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 12:55

A few weeks ago, I talked about the book, a Murder in the Family. And that's by Cara Hunter. And I mentioned then, that when I was in the UK, I had real I had come to realize that I thought that a Murder in the Family was her first book. It's not she had written a police procedural series and as a huge, huge, huge author in the UK. So this book is the first in that series. This is Close to Home by Cara Hunter. Here's the setup. At the start of our story, eight year old Daisy Mason vanishes from her family's Oxford home when the neighborhood is having a huge festive costume party like everybody's there. Everybody's in costume, immediately called to the case is Detective Inspector Adam Foley, an experienced detective who knows that nine times out of 10 the kidnapper is someone close to the child. Most likely someone in the family or well known to the family and Daisy's family is filled with suspects. Her mother is cold and detached and weirdly obsessed with appearances. When you think that would be the very last thing on her mind. And her father is defensive when he's questioned by the police. And then they're Daisy's little brother who's so withdrawn and he seems to know something but he refuses to say anything. DI Foley works against the clock to find Daisy Mason before it's too late. But with

everyone around him keeping secrets, we all worried that this kidnapping investigation will not last very long before it turns into another kind of investigation. All right, my notes here. My first note I wrote was she got me. She got me over and over again. Cara Hunter, as I mentioned author of Murder in the Family. This actually was her big breakout hit the first one in this DI Adam Foley series and I do think you should read this series in order. It's absolutely gripping. It's page turning. It's a one more chapter one more chapter potato chip kind of book. It's got really short little chapter segments, I'm gonna call them because they don't have official numbered chapters, but the segments serve as the barrier. And it's, that's perfectly fine, super easy to lose yourself into the story, this book will definitely get four and a half stars for me so you can know I absolutely loved it. There are just a couple of things, though that kept it from being the perfect book for me first, and I really hope and believe that this is going to be solved as we get further into the series. But the strangest thing about the construct of this otherwise straightforward mystery is the fact that the lead character di Adam Foley is weirdly he feels weirdly tangential to his own book. There's something strange about the way that Hunter writes this character. He has an interesting backstory, which you definitely care about. We know that something has happened to his son, but we don't get a lot of details yet. But I think what kind of put me off was that you never get any sort of physical description of him. He doesn't seem to exist in the same realm with the rest of his squad do we get to know quite well, it's weird. It's like he's kind of ghostly. Although there's nothing ghostly about this story. Also, this book could be construed as being mixed media in that it does have snippets of Twitter threads and news reports that break up those otherwise a numbered chapters, and that was perfectly fine. It didn't take anything away from the story. But it didn't actually add anything to the story either. I really want to say that while I loved mixed media, I don't think we need to be shoehorning it into every book, we can have a straightforward narrative. And if it's written well enough, we don't need to know what everyone's saying through all their hashtags. Also, I will say a lot of people said, Do not listen to this book. For that reason. I just want to put that out there. Lots of people said I didn't like this book. And it's because I listened to it. So bear that in mind, but again, I read it, and I really, really liked it. I actually preferred this book a little bit to Murder in the Family. And I was guessing the entire time and I completely gasped at the ending. This book is exactly the reason why I tend to love British and Irish crime fiction because it's just smarter than many American thrillers that are coming out today. So if you love a strong police, procedural and if you love Lisa Jewell and Sharon Bolton, you are going to love Cara Hunter. And a great place to start is with this one. It's called Close to Home by Cara Hunter.

Kaytee Cobb 17:38

That sounds great. And I'm so glad that you found more from her. And then it delivered.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 17:43

Yes. And I bought multiple when I was in the UK. So I was guessing that I was going to want more than one. Yes.

Kaytee Cobb 17:49

Good call past Meredith. Nicely done. Past Meredith made a good call for me also, because I read The Book of Cold Cases by Simone St. James, on your recommendation.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 18:00

I love this one.

Kaytee Cobb 18:01

So this is one that Meredith brought to the show toward the end of season five, it was season five, Episode 44. I went back to look it up, which I think is the last almost the last episode of season five. I grabbed it for a book swap right after that, but I waited to read it because I knew it would be a really good October book for me. So I finally picked it up just recently. This book starts out with Shay Collins in 2017. She has a true crime blog called The Book of cold cases, which has a thriving community but doesn't pay the bills. She also has a regular job, but this is the thing she's passionate about while she's working the desk at her day job one day she sees a woman she is sure she recognizes but can't place her name when she peeks at her intake form she sees named Beth Greer, so she asks her for an interview. Who is Beth Greer though? Well, 40 years ago in Clear Lake, Oregon, two men were murdered with the same gun in cold blood, with strange notes left behind. Beth Greer was identified as the woman scene leaving the scene in what came to be known as the lady killer murders. She was young and beautiful and wearing a long trench coat with beautiful red hair and couldn't account for her whereabouts that night, because she was at home completely drunk and alone with no one to vouch for her. Since there was no hard evidence linking her to the case just circumstantial. She was acquitted but everybody still suspects her so she's been living in isolation inside her mansion ever since. To Shay surprise, Beth agrees to her interview request and she starts to meet her at the mansion. In order to ask her questions about the case. She relies on trial records and interview transcripts from 1977 40 years ago, as well as Beth's connections to her previous lawyer and the cop who worked the case at the time when she needs to bounce ideas off of someone she contacts a detective she knows to see if she's putting the pieces together correctly and I really loved those parts of it. He's inspector he lets her come along on ride alongs their relationship throughout this book the way that they work together almost entirely over the phone was what we made it for me while at the mansion though things happen that she cannot explain. But she's not sure if it's her own childhood trauma rearing its ugly head, which includes an attempted abduction. Or if there's really something not right about the place, and the person inside it, I could not put this book down. I would call it a stolen moments booked for me. And that I was trying to find any stolen moment to pick it up. I didn't have this long chunk of time where I could sit and just binge read the whole thing at once. So I was like, hold on, just six more minutes. I'm just gonna finish one more chapter. Leave me alone. Oh, wait, I got a few minutes here. I'm gonna grab it now. Because I couldn't wait to see what was going to happen between Shay and Beth. And the PI that she's earned not the PI the detective that she's working with on the side. This book is perfectly rainy because of Oregon gray sky creepy vibes kind of novel. I was very intrigued by the central mystery. And the characters are what kept me turning the pages as fast as I could the whole way through until I finally was able to gobble it all down. So this was The Book of Cold Cases by Simone St. James.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 21:05

I love Simone St. James, and I'm on a quest to be a completist of her stuff, because she does the slightly supernatural. blending it with real life police investigation stuff better than almost anybody. I just, she's so so good. And there's a scene in that book in the kitchen of Beth Greer's house, that I will never unsee Yes, so good. Yeah. I love that when and I'm so happy to be going to another one that I know

you and I both loved and I again, my apologies for the fact that I'm bringing another October IPL in depressed list choice because novel neighbor did such an amazing job that I just absolutely have to talk about *Our Hideous Progeny* by C.E McGill.

Kaytee Cobb 21:57

I'm so glad you're bringing this because now on the show, I've referred to our children as hideous progeny. Now it's making that connection for them.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 22:04

When you did that, I thought nobody's gonna get that unless they're unless they remember the Indie Press List. So it's good to be a bookish friend. Yes, exactly. All right. I absolutely loved this book. And I think this book is great for the entire gray gloomy time of year, whether it's spooky season all the way into January, February, you just need to be great. Gloomy, right? Okay, here's the setup. Our lead in this brilliant novel is Mary, who is the great niece of the famous Victor Frankenstein. Okay, I can't even take because I want to say Frankenstein. Yes. Because I'm a child of the 70s. Right. Okay.

Kaytee Cobb 22:41

I get that one. By the way. There you go. All right, you got it. Okay.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 22:45

So, Mary is the great niece of the famous Victor Frankenstein. Mary knows that her great uncle disappeared under very mysterious circumstances in the Arctic. But details of this disappearance are a mystery to everyone. So our story is set in the 1850s, which is a time of so much scientific discovery. And Mary wants to make her name. She's very sciency. Like she's very, but she's a woman, right? And not very rich woman. She really wants to make a name for herself and for her husband, Henry, who's a geologist in the world of science. But despite the fact that she is one of the best scientists and researchers out there, she doesn't have the wealth or the connections to really take it to the next level. And then Mary discovered some old family papers that provides some clues as to what was behind her great uncle's past and his disappearance. And she thinks that she may have found a way to secure that more secure financial future for Shannon Henry. Their quest takes them to the wilds of Scotland, and then they meet Henry's intriguing but reclusive sister Maisie, one of the best characters ever. And there is a deadly chase with a rival who is out to steal their science and beat them in the race to create something that probably should never have been created. Oh my gosh, this book was totally unexpected. When it was on The Novel Neighbor's Indie Press List list. I'd never heard of it before. When we got it. It has one of the most beautiful covers, but reading about it. I was sort of like, we shall see I was a little bit. You know, I just didn't go I was a little bit skeptical. I loved McGill's vibrant portrayal of the 1850s setting. I loved the laboratories, the excitement of all the scientific discovery, and the libraries that our characters research in and have lots of clandestine discussions in I loved our lead character, Mary, she's absolutely fascinating. And I loved the love story that is at the center of this book, which is done in a really romantic way. It's my favorite kinds of love story that like slow burn, and you just really want them to get together. The book itself, of course, ask some really important questions. And it takes its time in finding its own answers. This is not high literary. But this is not a thriller, either. It's a slow burn, that is very much worth every bit of patience that the author asks of us. I very much enjoyed being along for the ride. And in fact, slowburn or not, I read this in one long evening, I'm just

going to tell you, Johnnie and I had had a fight. And I went into the bedroom, in a huff with my blanket and my book. And I was like, well, this books, the only thing I have in here, so this is what I'm reading. But luckily, it was raining outside. And I just sat and read for like five and a half hours and finish the entire thing. Johnnie probably wouldn't like me saying that we were in a fight when that happened. But that's what's true. So I'm just gonna leave it out there. What I will say is, if you liked The Essex Serpent, or if you saw the Essex Serpent, and maybe dipped into it, and wanted it to be less slow, and boring, then this book is the book that you wanted the Essex Serpent to be, it's hard to land on a perfect genre classification for this novel. As I've said, it isn't a thriller. And it's not gory out there sci fi, but it does have some science fiction elements, but also some elements that had me really, really thinking about turn of the century British literature, I decided to call it literary speculative fiction, and I think that is the right place to land. I absolutely loved this one. This is Our Hideous Progeny by C.E McGill and again, follow Novel Neighbor on Instagram because they are such a brilliant hand selling force, whether you can go to their store, or just get their recommendations on Instagram. Yes, the

Kaytee Cobb 26:55

hits just keep on coming from the novel neighbor. Okay, this is a very large left turn. I'm going to talk next about The Great Sex Rescue by Sheila Wray Gregoire, Rebecca Gregoire Lindenbach And Joanna Sawatzky. Okay, I picked this one up on the recommendation of a friend who I will leave nameless, although she's talked about it elsewhere publicly. I just don't want to bring her in here without her permission. I ended up grabbing it right away because she said it was so life changing for her and I know it will be for many others as well. Which is why I decided to bring it to the show. Even though a little bit awkward. Perhaps you might want to fast forward if the title threw some red flags for you. Sheila Wray Gregoire is the author of nine books about sex. They are all published by Christian publishers and span more than 20 years of research and writing. Her daughter Rebecca is a co writer with her on a number of those titles along with Joanna Sawatzky. Together, these three women surveyed more than 22,000 Christian women about their sex lives. This book answers the question, what if it's not your fault that sex is bad in your marriage, I found it incredibly interesting, as a peek into a world that I'm very unfamiliar with. My parents raised me in a Christian home. But there was no purity culture, no promise ring, and no threat of hell in the home that I grew up in. I have enjoyed my time in the bedroom throughout my life. So for me, this book was more a peek at what could have gone awry in that process, and what messaging I want to be sure to impart to my children about sex and pleasure that isn't about judgment and condemnation. It was incredibly difficult to read in sections, because of the ways that the survey results revealed the lack of pleasure and consideration that women especially are experiencing in the bedroom with their spouses. There's a really strong message in the Christian church purity culture, that anything before marriage is bad and sinful. And mostly that young women are in charge of pumping the brakes in that area to keep their partner from sin. So then, when these women get to the marriage bed, they feel like they have an obligation to perform sexually, but also have spent the entirety of their sexual lives to that point, pumping the brakes that makes it really difficult to enjoy the situation. To me, this felt like a pre reading step for a woman who wants to pick up Come As You Are by Emily Nagoski. But even that title or cover is too much for her to consider. It's probably obvious from the setup that it's geared toward cisgender women in heterosexual relationships, and doesn't take into account other permutations of bedroom coupling. However, if you, dear listener, were ever raised in a Christian church with that kind of messaging. No matter what kind of relationship you ended up in this book could be immensely helpful for you to figure out what's normal, what might need further

counseling or therapy to make sex more enjoyable. And that's why I'm bringing it to the show, because there's still a strange double standard stigma that exists around women and sex and enjoyment. And I think it's worth picking up to get an understanding about why that is, and what needs to change in that narrative, in order to make it better forever. One across the board. So this was The Great Sex Rescue by Sheila Wray Gregoire. Rebecca Gregoire Lindenbach and Joanna Sawatzky. Well, I'm glad that you brought that one. I think that's really, really important. And it will land in the hands of the right people. I hope so. I think that's I was like, you know, maybe I shouldn't know. I'm going to, I think it's worth talking about,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 30:20

hey, I mean, that is equally if not way more important than me talking about Unhinged.

Kaytee Cobb 30:26

Right, but they're important in different in different ways.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 30:29

Exactly, exactly. All right, Kaytee, I'm going to take a deep breath before I get into this next one, because this is the one before we before we went on, like I said, I've been really looking forward to talking because sometimes when I feel a lot of angst in my reading life, I can't get past it until I talk to you about it. Okay, okay. So like I'm my body's already clinching up. It's clinching up because this is one of the worst kinds of readerly problems that you can have the problem I've had with this book I'm going to talk about okay, I want to talk about The Year of the Locust by Terry Hayes. Terry Hayes is the author 10 years ago, we've been waiting 10 years for this book, because his first book was I Am Pilgrim. Alright, put a pin in that we're going to come back to it. Okay, here's the setup of The Year of the Locust, the marketing copy, on the book itself, everywhere you can find it is terrible. It's really terrible. And that should have been a red flag. But okay, I'm just gonna keep it really, really simple. Because this is all you need to know to get into this book, which I do think is a really excellent book. But also, I wanted to throw it against the wall, it gets complicated. Here we go. We start with our lead, who tells us that we should call him Kane, he is what is called a denied access area. Spy, he works for the CIA. And being denied access areas by means that he goes into the most dangerous places on earth. He does really dangerous, really secret things, and then gets out without anyone capturing him at least most of the time. This is his specialty. And Cain is very, very good at it. A lot happens to Cain over the course of the 700 pages of this novel. But the main thrust for our purposes here is that he is chasing a very dangerous, very clever terrorist, who is super motivated and out to kill as many Westerners as possible. And Cain needs to stop him. Let's just keep it super simple. We're reading a spy novel, right? Okay. As I said, I've been waiting for 10 years for this book to come out. And when I realized that it was coming out on November 7, which is the same day that another really big book came out. I realized that I was more excited to pick up this one than that other really big book, which iron flame is a really big but you guys know if you've been listening for any length of time you have heard me talk about I Am Pilgrim. It is one of what I call the books I can put in anyone's hands. It's a spy thriller, but it is so smart that you can put it in anyone's hands and they are going to come back to you saying that was so good. Where can I get more to which I have said, well, there's a new one coming out, but we've been waiting forever. And then it finally came out Kaytee, and I read it. I got it from Blackwell's because one thing you need to know hear me say this, it came out on November 7 In the UK, okay. comes out, I think in March in

the US, but you can get it from Blackwell's right now. And I did and I got into it. Now one of the best things that I did was, I said yes, when Renee from booktalketc who also has been waiting for this book, she also was a really big fan. She said, hey, what if we chat as we're reading it? And whoa, Nelly, has there ever been a book that I needed to be chatting along with somebody as I was reading it? All right, this book is long, as I mentioned, it's 700 pages almost. And those pages are tightly packed with text. I'll tell you that this book took me a full week to read and that's with me reading at every moment possible. And I read a lot as a barometer. In that time, I would normally have read at least four books. Let me start out with what I didn't just like I loved about this book, and I loved a lot about it. This book does require a ton of attention. It's what I would describe as a literary spy novel to start. The prose is wonderful. Terry Hayes does so much more showing than he does telling. He really develops his characters through tiny little details and through their actions, not through exposition. He is so good at that. And there are so many A heart pounding moments and so many different locations. This is just what I loved about I Am Pilgrim. You go from exotic place to scary place to exotic place, and you never know what's going to happen. But every single time your heart is pounding, I will also say that I loved the fact that this book is quite gory in several sections. Please know that it's it's really, really gory. They don't pull any punches here. There are a lot of awful ways to die, Kaytee, and Terry Hayes knows them all. He has a powerful friend at Google, I think, Yes, seriously. And the tech and the behind the scenes of the CIA is absolutely riveting. It must be made up because of course, this guy does not give away all of our secrets, right? But I'm okay with that. Because I'm completely fascinated by the world, the back behind the scenes world that Terry Hayes has created. I found out after I did a bunch of research after reading this book, that he was actually the screenwriter on the Mad Max movies. And that makes a lot of sense now, but, and this is a huge wall sized. But some things happen in the last 20 ish percent of the book that had me not just scratching my head, they had me wanting to throw this gigantic, heavy book against the wall. And there's a part of me that also wanted to stamp my foot and kind of throw a tantrum. And for the first 75% of this book, it was five stars. And I was really thinking top 10 of the Year, no question. But then this, this set of things happen. And it almost felt like two books were kind of very artlessly, seemed together. And it was such a disappointment, if I'm honest, the word I kept feeling was hoodwinked. I felt like he took too long to write his book, 10 years and the author, the publisher finally was like, just give us anything. And he was so mad at being rushed, that he slapped this ridiculous last 20% on the end, just to make his publisher mad. But the thing is, you know, who got thrown under the bus, the reader, the readers who've been waiting for this for so long, I don't feel like he took into consideration his readers, or what we might expect after waiting this long. So although I'd been hoping to give this book a resounding five stars, I absolutely can't. That last part left me shaking with rage. If the book had been this bad all the way through fine. It just wasn't a good book for it for it to be jacked up so badly at the end after it was so good. It just feel really, really unfair. I talked about it with Renee and with a couple other good bookish friends. And the question came up, would we have felt better if we had known going into it, that it was going to be a genre mashup, which is really as much as I can say? And I think the answer to that is probably yes. If I'd had some sense that there was this, this thing getting ready to happen toward the end, I think I could have taken it more in stride, which is why I'm deciding to talk about it that vaguely but talk about it. Nonetheless, here. I feel like I want to recommend this book to people because I want to be able to read the first 80% of it. Again, as a first time reader, it was that good. But I also can't in good conscience not mention the last 20% and the fact that to say it goes off the rails is the world's biggest understatement. So I'm just so let down by the way that this author who I trusted, led me astray. I'm both mad and sad about it. This is The Year of the Locust by

Terry Hayes, who I don't actually know if I will read another book by in the future because I I just don't feel like he treated me. Well treated us his readers. Well, after making us wait for 10 years.

Kaytee Cobb 39:20

Yeah. What a bummer. That makes me so sad. It

Meredith Monday Schwartz 39:22

was such a bummer. It was such a bummer. Like, I don't know, I mean, I just I just loved I Am Pilgrim so much. That's such a good book, too. Anyway,

Kaytee Cobb 39:32

on the upside the cover is very pretty when you posted it. I was like I kind of want that book. Yeah,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 39:38

the mean it's a British cover. And it's an it's a really, really good cover. And the cover makes a lot of sense within the bounds of the book and it's a great title. And the title makes a lot of sense and there's like it had everything going for it makes me so mad. I'd waited me, he could have just ended it. Like at the 80%. Mark. Oh, that's even worse. Well, that's why it feels so purposeful. That's why it feels like a poke in the eye. Because it's like, he had so much do you know that he I, after I was done with this, I was literally tantruming to the point where I was almost in tears. And Gianni was like, why don't you do some like searches and see if anyone's interviewed him and like, find out what he says. And a British paper did do an interview, and I listened to it. And I liked him a lot less after listening to it, I got to say, but one of the things that he said was that he wrote a million words. And what we got in this book is 250,000 of them. So in his mind, he cut it by 75%. Right? And so I was like, Dude, you should have kept cutting like another, like 75,000 words, and we would have had a masterpiece. But anyway, I'm ranting, I'm this has now gone in. It's now gone into full on rant, but my readerly heart hurts Katie and I just can't I've had trouble moving on.

Kaytee Cobb 41:08

Yeah, I know you. So you finished it four days ago from when we recorded how? I mean, is your reading life recovering? Or are you still just like looking at books with sci fi? Like, they're all going to betray you?

Meredith Monday Schwartz 41:19

Right? So what I knew I needed to do was I knew I needed to I read Bookshops and Bonedust right afterwards, which Betsie Ikenberry. It was like that this is what you need to do because it's so completely different. And it was a really, really good palliative palate cleanser like it it made it healed my aching heart. And then I've been reading pre reading a book that is I happen to know is going to be on the indie press list in January. And I am really, really into it. So those two things together have really helped. Oh,

Kaytee Cobb 41:55

good. Okay, well, you've gotten the right, like intensive care. afterward.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 41:59

I needed I yeah, I needed to go into a reader. Er, yeah,

Kaytee Cobb 42:03

book ICU. That's where we send you. Okay, my final one is also a very large book, I don't have quite as complex of feelings, but there are some complex feelings here. I'm gonna talk about The Reformatory by Tananarive Due. So I got this one as a galley. Super excited to dig it. And I couldn't wait to pick it up. But I did, because I try to wait until the month before a book comes out to read it so that I'm not bringing something and being like, and you can get it in March. Right? Because, because that's not fun for you all as listeners. So I picked this one up on Kindle in September because it was a county. And then I realized that I felt like I had been reading for many moons and I was still only a few percent in like four. And I was like, what, what's going on here? So I sat down and I worked on indie press list reading for the end of that month, and I went to Europe and I read other stuff on my Kindle instead. Came home, got my ducks in a row and pep talk to myself. Okay, Kaytee, you can do this. I made it my main Kindle read again. And a week later, I was still only up to 15%. So I made it my main main read like no paper, no audio. You're reading this book, Kaytee And I made it to 30% so I could not figure out what was happening. Why was I so stuck behind this book. I was enjoying the story. I wanted to know what was going on. But I was totally stalled out. So I waited until the book re released which was on Halloween, and I grabbed the audio on libro FM. And I finished it the next day. I did all 70% in one day. Wow. Great. So let me tell you about it. We are in 1950 in Graystone, Florida, where we meet 12 year old Robbie Stevens and his sister Gloria. They're essentially orphans after the death of their mama left them with only their father, and then he was chased out of town after false accusations of raping a white woman. That means when Robbie kicks a white boy from school, he is sentenced by a judge in a courtroom very harshly. He sent to the grace town reformatory for quote unquote, only six months, but boys have died there. And far less time than that. So his sister rallies everyone she knows her great aunt, her employer, the social worker assigned to his case, and even tries to contact the NAACP in order to get Robbie out. He's all she has left. And her father is in Chicago trying to avoid being nagged by the police. So he can't even set foot in town without peril. Robbie in the reformatory meets Redbone and Blue, two other boys on his first night at Grace town, and they show him the ropes, how to avoid calling attention to himself how to avoid being sent to the Fun House or the shed, which you don't want to go to, and how to keep the other boys from putting a target on your back. But Robbie can see what those other boys can only sense the reformatory is haunted by hence, the boys who died there in the past still roam the grounds and he can see them and talk to them and hear their terror from when they were dying by being engulfed in flames. Like this is a very detailed haunty-ness, so he's got to get out before he becomes one of them. Tananarive Due says in her author's note at the beginning, and at the end of the story that her great uncle died at a Florida School for Boys, much like the one we read about here. And in The Nickel Boys by Colson Whitehead. That small novel, The Nickel Boys, clocks in at right around 200 pages, this new release is a chunker with a capital C, because, as you heard in the setup, this is not light, or breezy in any sense of the word. And it's also 600 pages. So now we go back to my initial struggles with this book, I didn't have a paper book in front of me to gauge how big it was. I had no idea that when I was trying and struggling to read 10% of my Kindle book before I fell asleep at night, it was 60 pages that I was trying to cram into my brain. That's a lot of reading for bedtime for poor Kaytee, my brain doesn't work that way. I can read 60 pages in a clip in the middle of the day, not when I'm getting ready for bed, so I couldn't see or feel my progress, which is why I kept stalling out so badly

when I had time to devote to this one. And when I was able to get into the meat of the story, which was around 50% of the book, which again, is a full book in that's 300 pages, it became unputdownable, I was fully enraptured. But it took that full book length amount of time to get to that point. So I did really enjoy this book by the end. I liked the twist, I had my job physically dropped open at one point and messaged our friend, Alex Cox and said, Alex, look at my face right now. I cannot even believe what's happening. And she was like, Kaytee, I know I'm here for you, girl, keep on reading. I was on the edge of my seat, twisting my hands around each other as I listened because of the way she pulls this story together. By the end. However, I could have had a stern word with her editor to say that we needed about 1/3 fewer pages here, a 400 page book or a 450 page book would have been tight and gotten us to that faster thriller pace a lot quicker. For that reason, I gave it a round four stars, maybe four and a half because I loved the reading experience by the end. But opposite to Meredith's book, the beginning just was not working for me. I wasn't getting pulled in fast enough to get me excited about it. So it definitely couldn't be a five star experience. This was *The Reformatory* by Tananarive Due, boy,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 47:24

I mean, I'm glad that you were able to finish it and that you have a really clear sense of what was working for you and what wasn't. So many people have had that exact same experience saying like, Man, this book just owns me. I feel like I've been reading it for three and a half years. But then they finish it and really love it. Right. So that comes down to exactly what you said and editing. There's an editing issue there. Because for a lot of people, they aren't going to struggle through that first 30%. They're just going to they're just going to walk away because none of us want to get stuck behind a book. No.

Kaytee Cobb 47:54

And you have to know that the payoff is going to be good for you as a reader. Like it took me hearing from Alex and her saying no, this was excellent. And I did really love it for me to be like, Okay, I'm buying the audio. I'm getting into this book to start enjoying it the way that I could have. Yeah,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 48:09

well, I'm glad that it ended up being a great experience because I'm hearing that her backlist is really great too.

Kaytee Cobb 48:15

Yes, I've read a couple others of hers and they're incredible, really good stuff there. Okay, six current reads a lot of book talk in there. Now, we're going to have let's see if this is a mini Deep Dive. We're going to talk about holiday reading. How does it change do you read more or less do gravitate toward different genres. And my reading this whole year has been complicated and holidays are no different. So Meredith, why don't you kick us off here?

Meredith Monday Schwartz 48:41

Well, what I will say I was kind of looking back on it. And what I will say is there are lots of years where I set out to have a plan for my holiday reading. And then it doesn't go to plan. And a lot of that is around. I'm kind of always into Thanksgiving. But then for some reason, some Christmases I just like last Christmas. I just really struggled with just getting into the whole thing. I just I felt like I had to pull myself

into the holidays on every level. And so my holiday reading really showed that I didn't do a lot what I did felt like tricolor Li and overly sweet and just didn't work for me this year. And I don't really even know what it is. But this year, I'm feeling myself really gravitating into the Christmas holiday spirit decorating wasn't as big a deal. I got all my Christmas shopping done early. I'm feeling pulled towards lots of different kinds of holiday reading. So I am looking forward to maybe dipping into some books that feature the Christmas season. I like to do that with my mysteries a lot. That's something that I really enjoy. But then also what happens is a book that I'm reading at true Christmas time, oftentimes Then I have to wait like a full year to bring it to the show because by the time I'm ready to bring it to the show, everyone else is like, sweetie, it's January we're not interested in your in your Christmas in the Cotswolds. So I've just learned to let that be okay. And so this year, you might hear some of like, last year's Christmas free, just because of the way that that works. So that's a weird complication. But I am feeling more Christmassy this year. Shorter Christmas reads shorter, especially like middle grade is something that I often feel pulled into. And what's the Kate DiCamillo Edward Tulane Roxanna has been reading it recently. And I just bought that one. And I think I'm going to dip into that next. What about for you? What does this holiday hold for you? Yeah,

Kaytee Cobb 50:47

over the past few months, I've I feel like I've gotten a little bit more moody in my reading than I have in the past. Less planning more intuition Weege board style reading. I'm more Meredith right now in my reading, than even to the fact that I've gotten more merciful. I've gotten some horror, I brought murder and horror today, especially encouraged by the novel neighbor, which their indie press list keeps coming up. But I read all five of those books for October. And I think four of the five in November, they just, they fed my reading for two months. And it was very niche and very, like gleefully fall reading, right. So I've also read a second and mystery series that I really enjoy. This month, I would like to try to lean into broadening that again, maybe getting some deeper, more literary stuff, the kind of writing that makes you crave a paper book in front of you, where you can see the actual craft at the sentence level. Because especially since I've been lost in spreadsheet land for a month now that leaves me no time to read paper books. I don't even know the last time that I finished a paper book that wasn't essays right now. Because if I have time, that's not sitting at the computer where I have to have my brain focused on the computer, then I have to do the other things that keep our life together. So I'm like, doing chores and driving people places. And it's all audio all the time for me. Yeah, so I want it feels like a reward like I want to be able to sit down, turn on the new gas fireplace in our new house. Look out at the pool that's not at all frozen with no snow anywhere on the ground. But feel a little bit of that, like fireplace, Blanky, lay down, enjoy your warm, cozy sentence level writing, I want that, even though I haven't been able to find it. I also have had a really hard time lately, finding those books that match my reading mood because I DNF almost as many books in November, as I did for the entire rest of the year from allow for each October, I doubled my DNFs in November, which is not great. And some of them I made it 50% Before I realized that it wasn't working for me. So I needed a clean slate. And I'm looking forward to almost giving myself a buffet like your book flights where I can say, Kaytee, you think you want literary right now. And maybe that is what you need. But maybe you should also try this super propulsive thriller, this trickly sweet romance, this middle grade delightfulness and just see how it goes for you and see what grabs you because it feels like nothing's working right now. Unless it's on audio and I want to sit down and get lost in a book. That's all I want this Christmas, like Santa bring me a book to get lost in? Well,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 53:37

so do you feel that you have some ones some books like that to choose from?

Kaytee Cobb 53:42

I have, you know, I have my long, long TBR shelves, and I keep pulling down sets of about 10 that I think might be good to draw me in. And then when I actually go over there to pick them up. I'm like, maybe whatever's happening in my brain with my picker is not working. Right. Right.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 54:00

Which to me oftentimes means that just there are just too many things going on in my brain and I either need to reread something like oftentimes at this time of year, I will do a reread of it. The next one in the Harry Potter series of what you know, the next from whatever I read the previous year, something that feels just really, really something I know it's going to work for me because it's worked for me before. But do you want these books to be Christmas or holiday themed? Or can it be anything?

Kaytee Cobb 54:33

I don't usually do that a ton. I feel like by the end of the year, I usually have read one or two books that I could say are Christmas themed and it could be in any genre, but that have a through line of holiday or like last year I read one about Kwanzaa because I had never read a book that featured Kwanzaa and I was like, look, it's holiday themed. Kaytee, you can do this and I enjoyed it. But I think that was the only one I read for the whole year. So it doesn't have to have a Christmas vibe to it or a holiday vibe to it. It could be snowing. I do like it when my books are cold in the wintertime.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 55:08

Right? And have you read The Afterlife of Holly Chase?

Kaytee Cobb 55:11

No, but I should read that one. Did you read Jon Clinch, Marley? by Jon Clinch? No,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 55:15

but that is on my list for for this year. And I feel like I was gonna say I haven't read it yet. So I don't know for sure. But I feel like that might give you the sentence level in front of the fire writing that you're looking for. But The Afterlife of Holly Chase is a great it's much lighter and is really great on audio. But it doesn't have to be done on audio. I just, I just enjoyed the audio experience of it. But that is a really fun take on the Christmas Carol, but very updated and with a female lead. I really really liked that one. And then from a mystery perspective, The Christmas Murder Game was an absolute. Yeah, this I mean, okay, it's not great literature. But it was the it was perfect for it. I was looking for last year at this time, where I wanted to thriller, and I wanted Christmas to really feature in it. And I want it to be fast and not require a ton of me like I wanted that kind of like one night stand book. This is better than when I stand book but The Christmas Murder Game, I would definitely put into the category of put it on your list in case that sounds good to you. It's like inheritance games, but for adults and make it Christmas. Okay.

Kaytee Cobb 55:16

Okay, I did read Marley, I think two years ago and it's excellent. If you like the Christmas Carol. It's such a fun, like spin on it where you feel like okay, I've read the story, but I don't know this part of it. Right. So really good. I highly recommend that what

Meredith Monday Schwartz 56:48

I'm looking for there is I'm really hoping we can get I mean, it sounds like we will get more of the backstory of of Marley himself. The Unlikely Escape of Uriah Heep that one is one if you've read Marley or you're wanting that kind of vibe. It's really really good. It's very bookish. It's very winter kind of Victorian London, but more modern than that. That's a really really good one for that vibe. I

Kaytee Cobb 57:15

have few now. Okay, good I can play with and see if they're gonna scratch my wintertime itch for me. Right?

Meredith Monday Schwartz 57:23

Exactly. And if somebody is looking for something really sweet, and I am talking really sweet and sometimes I am so in that mood, but it's very sweet. It's Mrs. Miracle by Debbie Macomber. Now you guys know I have my weird Debbie Macomber fetish. And every once in a while this murderful heart needs her some Debbie Macomber and Mrs. Miracle is one of the sweetest of the sweetest of the sweet. Don't ask me if you read it and it's too sweet. But if that's what you're looking for, it's a very fast, very holiday read. Like if you just want something on Christmas Eve and like you want the opposite of your bickering relatives. Mrs. Miracle will be a balm for your aching heart.

Kaytee Cobb 58:05

Okay, I have one of those too. And I read it last year. It's Small Things Like These by Claire Keegan. And she has I feel like she's really over the past year people have really gotten out into her. Yeah. But it's only 118 pages. So it's a novella. I think I read it on Christmas Eve last year or on Christmas night. And it was absolutely snowy, perfect. Delicious for that exact moment in time, which is why I haven't brought it to the show because it was a year ago now. But excellent and literary. So like good sentences, but easy to digest and easy to sink into. All right,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 58:35

good. So those are some good holiday choices. I think more than anything, what we need to say to ourselves and to each other is let your reading be what it's going to be you don't have to read Christmas. You don't have to read winter. You can read thrillers, you can read nonfiction, whatever you whatever makes you feel happy is the perfect holiday reading. Whether you have a lot of time on your hands, or not sometimes the holidays are really like filled with like, I can just sit in front of the fire and sometimes they're so busy that you feel like it's the worst time of year for your reading because you just don't get the time so whatever it brings is okay,

Kaytee Cobb 59:17

definitely. I love that. Okay, let's go to the fountain and make some wishes, Meredith. Okay,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 59:23

Kaytee, I am going to give you a special dispensation for this fountain wish and I'm going to tell you you have permission to just get on your phone and just do whatever you want to do and because you do not need to hear me say this because I am going to wish and all of you who've heard me talk about it a million times. Just give me this okay. I am going to wish that if you want a really good literary spy thriller you read I Am Pilgrim let me pitch I am pilgrim one more time. If you've heard me do it before fast forward a couple of minutes. Kay you get on your phone. I am Pilgrim is so good. And I don't want what I said about the year of the locust to keep people who want a really good literary spy novel. Even if you never read spy novels. You will love I am pilgrim it is almost a perfect book. If you're looking for a great gift for anyone in your life not for small children, it's gory to their eyeballs being poked out, so be aware. But if you don't know what to give your father in law for heaven's sake, give him I am pilgrim. Okay. So let me read you just a little bit about it. An anonymous young woman is murdered in a rundown hotel and all of her identifying characteristics have been dissolved by acid, a father is publicly beheaded in the blistering heat of a Saudi Arabian Public Square. A notorious Syrian biotech expert is found eyeless in a Damascus junkyard, and smoldering Human remains are found in a remote mountainside in Afghanistan. One path links them all and only one man can keep the rest of us from being obliterated off the planet. I recommend this book to everyone. It has a 4.29 rating with over 160,000 reviews. This is I am pilgrim the only book that you should read by Terry Hayes. Unless you want to read unless you want to unless you want to read the year, the Locust in as long as you know what's going to happen. What if we just tore

Kaytee Cobb 1:01:26

off the back 20% of pages? It's seven pages. So that's 140 pages of

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:01:32

the year the locust? Yeah,

Kaytee Cobb 1:01:34

yeah. Would it be okay? No, I mean, it would be weird because if I just said a post it note there that says stop here. If you

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:01:40

need to know when to stop DME, and I will tell you when to stop who I like that. That's a direct

Kaytee Cobb 1:01:46

line. Yeah. Okay, I'm going nerdy with my wish, you can go on your phone, if you like, I'm going to wish that Google Sheets would frickin allow select multiple in drop downs. This is super nerdy. I'm so sorry. But it's obvious that my bookish moments and my wishes and everything in between this week are very spreadsheet focused, I'm okay with that. It's my nerdiest month of the year, I'm living my best life. Right now. The only way that you can select multiple in a drop down in Google Sheets is with a script, which makes everything run super slowly. It's like going back to dial up internet when you try and do work within a spreadsheet. And I don't like that. But I would like to be able to say, multiple authors, female, and have it be very specific when you want to select two things. Or if you have an author that has American parents and Palestinian parents that you can select US Palestinian as your author. I just want

that to happen. So I have some workarounds in it right now. I don't like it. Sometimes fountain wishes get granted. So I want Google to hear me now. By next Christmas. I want to be able to select multiple in the Google Sheets drop down. That is my wish this week ping splash, Kaytee

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:03:01

a lot of your wishes get granted. Like

Kaytee Cobb 1:03:04

I gotta speak it. I know. It's so nerdy and people are gonna skip it. And I don't even care. I have to say it out loud into the microphone because something magical happens. Yep,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:03:12

it could. It could vary. I can hear right now I can I can hear that wish being granted.

Kaytee Cobb 1:03:18

Google just working on that behind the scenes stuff. Come on, guys, help me out

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:03:22

here while they listen to currently reading. So this is how it's gonna happen. Right. All right, Kaytee. Well, hopefully we both get our wishes that I think each of us deserve.

Kaytee Cobb 1:03:32

I think we do too.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:03:33

I agree. 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.

Kaytee Cobb 1:03:42

And you can find me Kaytee at @notesonbookmarks on Instagram full

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:03:47

show 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 at our website at currentlyreadingpodcast.com.

Kaytee Cobb 1:03:55

You can also follow the show at @currentlyreadingpodcast on Instagram or email us at currentlyreadingpodcast@gmail.com.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:04:03

As we mentioned, if you want the reading tracker, all of our content and to be a part of our bookish community, which is over 2000 readers strong, you can join us as a bookish friend. It's only \$5 a month and it gives you so much more good stuff. You can also rate and review us on Apple podcasts and

shout us out on social media. All of those things make a huge difference in us finding our perfect audience.

Kaytee Cobb 1:04:29

Yes, bookish friends are the best friends. Thank you for helping us grow and get closer to our

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:04:34

goals. Alright, until next week, may your coffee be hot and

Kaytee Cobb 1:04:37

your book be unputdownable.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:04:39

Happy reading Kaytee.

Kaytee Cobb 1:04:40

Happy reading Meredith.