



Season 6, Episode 26: Patreon Free Trials + Bookish Friends' Best and Worst Books of 2023

Mon, Feb 5, 2024 • 1:06:15

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 having strong opinions. So get ready.

Kaytee Cobb 00:24

We are 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 00:33

I'm Meredith Monday, Schwartz, a mom of four and full time CEO living in Austin, Texas, and I clearly can't be trusted to choose books for myself.

Kaytee Cobb 00:42

And I'm Kaytee Cobb, a homeschooling mom of four living in Arizona, and I may be using book shopping to cope with anxiety, but I'm okay with it. This is episode number 26 of season six. And we are so glad you're here. Oh, Kaytee, I've

Meredith Monday Schwartz 00:54

done that. Many, many a time used book shopping to manage some anxiety

Kaytee Cobb 00:59

this week has been like honey, that bank account. You don't need to log into it. Just pretend it doesn't exist.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 01:05

No need to look. No need to look. All right. Well, we've got a couple things that we want to do. Kaytee, we are first going to let you know that we are going to our deep dive today. We got some interesting data. And we thought you guys might be interested in it too. We got Kaytee did some of her spreadsheet magic. First, she did a survey of our bookish friends. And she asked them what were your favorite books of the year 2023. What were your least favorite books of the year, and then your spreadsheet magic came into play. And you created top 20 And sort of bottom 20 people's least 20

favorite books in this group. Hundreds of people responded. were some interesting things about both lists. And we're going to talk about it in the deep dive.

Kaytee Cobb 01:51

Yeah, I'm excited to get into that. Sometimes I'm like, is this gonna be boring, because it's just a lot of books. But there's some really fun things that trickled out of that data in that survey, right, including books that

Meredith Monday Schwartz 02:01

appear on both list, that's our favorite, that those are the most interesting ones. But first, Kaytee, it's the first week of the month, so we have some mischief to manage. And this month actually a really different kind of offer to everybody. Yeah,

Kaytee Cobb 02:17

we're excited some time ago, Patreon decided that they would start allowing creators to offer a free trial of their Patreon content. And we have seen other creators do this. And we hadn't played with that functionality at all yet. So today, as our first Monday of the month ad, we are letting you know that we're opening the doors for the first time ever to non paying patrons of currently reading. That means you can go there right now, you can click Join for free, and you get to peek behind the curtain for a full seven days, you get access to every piece of content that is behind that paywall. And if at the end of the seven days you say, Oh, heck yes, I love this, you can stick around and we think you will. So we're very excited to let y'all in let you join the Club for at least a week and check it out behind the curtain. Right? It's

Meredith Monday Schwartz 03:07

very, it's very, very interesting thing to be able to do. Now, Kaytee, I want us to be as we always are as transparent as possible. If memory serves, Patreon is going to ask them for their credit card number at the get right. So this is one of the things you need. Here's what you need to do. If you know what you want to do, like you know, you just want to listen to a bunch of indie press list episodes, right? You know, you want to get in there and you want to listen to every October indie press lists that there's ever been because you've heard all about them, or you know that all things murderous thrillers and mysteries are super interesting to you. You want to head straight there. So let's say you know that you're just going to be in and out in seven days, and you've been waiting for us to make this offer that is totally okay with us. We want to be really, really clear about that. What I want you to do is click on the link now from the show notes. And then before you do much else, I want you to give yourself a calendar reminder, or tell Alexa, remind me in seven days to go cancel my patreon for currently reading. So I want you to set the reminder now, so that you don't have this issue of like, well, but then they're just getting away with it. Because what if I forget, I want you to set the reminder. Now it's easy to do, you can do it in 15 seconds. And then you'll know that you can truly listen to all the content that you want. And you won't have to pay a dime for it. So we are never about the dollar amounts. We're always about more people being able to get more bookish goodness. And this is a way for you guys to be able to see what all the hubbub is about. We certainly talk about it all the time. And also you can for those indie press list episodes or the All Things murder full episodes, they all link over to independent bookstores to make those purchases This. So the more of you who do that, Kaytee and I are, that's what we want.

That's the goal that that's the result we are looking for. If you end up liking what you hear and you want to stay on, yes, obviously, we would be delighted, we really want to welcome you into our bookish community, there's a lot of great things going on. But again, there's, this is an easy way to maybe go in, get some content you've been wanting, and come out again, without having to pay anything at

Kaytee Cobb 03:39

all, definitely. So the two small caveats to that are set your reminder and the 2024 reading tracker is not going to be available during that seven days, it'll come right back at the end of all those free trials for our bookish friends that did stick around. But since tech support comes with that, that's a paying subscriber benefit that continues for as long as you have a membership. So that's the only caveat, we'll even let you into the bookish friends group, you can poke around on Facebook and see how many amazing readers there are that are ready at the drop of a hat to give recommendations to commiserate with you over a book. It is the best community on the internet. And we know that you're gonna love it. Oh,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 06:07

yeah, you should go in there and test it out. Like go in there and ask for the the most niche thing we had somebody the other day in this group, this mother flippin group, somebody went in and asked for books about competitive fishing. And I was like, Alright, this is it. We're gonna break the group. This is the question that breaks the group the credits. And I went back. And do you know that people had answered that God forsaken question have

Kaytee Cobb 06:32

like seven answers. When I went back and looked at maybe an hour later? What in the world?

Meredith Monday Schwartz 06:38

And I said God forsaken question. It was a great question. I'm totally glad our bookish friend asked that question. That's exactly where those kinds of questions should be asked, because I think she got some really good answers. I just was amazed that it happens. So go in there, give it your best shot to try to break the group and see if you can ask a question that you won't get a bunch of recommendations on. It really is a great group. So yeah, the seven day trial is a fantastic opportunity for you to just dip your toe in, or your whole foot or your calf and to see how you feel. We

Kaytee Cobb 07:08

will be thrilled to have you. Please come check us out. Come try it as a bookish friend.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 07:12

All right. Yes. Just follow that link in the show notes. All right, Kaytee. I'm realizing now that I'm so excited to be recording again. And I have so much to talk to you about that. I jumped in and started driving. And it's Episode 26, which means this is a Kaytee episode. Yeah,

Kaytee Cobb 07:27

it is. But I recorded two in a row with Mary and Roxanna. So it felt to me like you know, this is kind of a freeform episode. We're just back in the saddle again. It's totally great.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 07:38

We're just enjoying ourselves. Okay, well, then, I think we should do bookish moments of the week because I really want to hear about yours and I need to talk in mine. Okay,

Kaytee Cobb 07:47

okay. I mine is a little brief. But of course, it relates back to my bite size intro this past week, I had a bit of a personal situation to deal with. And I was happily comforted in my anxiety by an email from our friends at Barnes and Noble that their annual 25% off pre order sale was live. I went through the bookish friends posts. I like they helped me too right? they're amazing, okay, I was like, who's pre ordering what? What do I need to add to my cart? I chatted with a few trusted sources as well. I ended up putting in pre orders for eight upcoming releases, mostly using gift cards and rewards credit. So I spent a pittance mere mere like 10s of dollars. It's a gift to future Kaytee to know that eight different times during the 2024 year, I will get a book that I decided to surprise myself with during a hard week in January as a gift to myself. I also met up with the bookish Friends of Arizona yesterday afternoon and bought another six books there. So it's fine. Everything's fine, right? I just have a lot of books, and they make me happy. And that's my bookish moment. Right. Our books

Meredith Monday Schwartz 08:52

are our friends that travel the journey with us when the road is wide and when the road is thin and harrowing. And so both of those things are good.

Kaytee Cobb 09:00

Yes, mountains and valleys.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 09:02

Alright, so my bookish moment of the week as I said in my bite sized intro, I should not be trusted to choose my own books. I don't know what is wrong with me this January, Kaytee I had a really good 2023 in my in my reading felt really good about it. I got into 2024. And for some reason, I keep knowing kind of what I'm in the mood for. And then choosing books that are not any of those things. It makes no sense. It's like some sort of robot is controlling me. I don't know why I'm doing it. I think partly is because I keep like I felt like my reading tastes are changing a little bit again, they change and then they change back change and change facts. This is not a permanent situation. But I'm feeling like I'm wanting books that are much more substantial. And I'm really becoming fussy in a way that I haven't been before with the quality of the writing

Kaytee Cobb 09:59

Interesting. Now

Meredith Monday Schwartz 10:00

as someone who has read mostly mysteries and thrillers for most of her life, including a 10 year period of time that we don't talk much about, where all I read were cozy mysteries, the quality of writing is not something that is often, you know, top of mind for me. But now, this new reader I am becoming is incredibly fussy. And yet she also is afraid to jump into books that are super long or super hard or

super, you know, I don't want to get stuck behind something. I don't know. I don't know. But there is light at the end of the tunnel. Okay, okay. Because of late since I decided when I was preparing for this episode, yesterday morning. To talk about this, I have made two really good choices. One of them I'm going to mention super quick. So I'm not going to talk about it again for a long time. I want you to put it on your pre order right now. Okay. This is a book called The God of the woods, by Liz Moore. She is the author of Long Bright River, which everyone loved. And I didn't read, I can't do a lot of opioid books, because of things of my my dad. So I didn't read Long Bright River. But I got an arc of The God of the Woods, which is a story about a rich family, a very rich family, who lives in the Appalachian Mountains, like along the Appalachian Trail, and they own tons and tons of land, beautiful home on that land. And then they own a camp. But this is a camp for a lot of like rich people's kids. Okay, so it's like, kind of become known for this like rich people kid camp. Well, one day, a 13 year old girl camper goes missing. Right at the beginning of the book. That 13 year old girl happens to be the daughter of the family who owns the camp. And I'll also add 14 years previously to this time, their eldest son also went missing, never to be found. This is a mystery. It's got a serial killer subplot. This is written so well. The pacing is perfection. It is a family drama, think succession, but put boots on everybody. But they're also really like high powered bankers, but then also in the woods. It is so good. It is so good. Now, why am I mentioning this now? Right because I just went into it saying, Okay, I'm just gonna start this because who the heck knows I can't choose books anymore. And it was really, really great. But also get your pre order in for this book, do it through your Indie. That's always our suggestion. If Barnes and Noble is still doing their thing, they're I don't know they're not they're not. Right, so ordered through your Indie if you don't have an indie order through Fabled in Waco, Texas, because I know folks show Elizabeth's gonna have a million in one copies of this. Just know that on June 11th, you will have a book delivered to you that is going to you're going to absolutely love. It's one of those chef's kiss Mystery Crime Drama books that just makes you say, Why can't everything be like this? I

Kaytee Cobb 13:12

love that. I love finding that experience. Exactly.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 13:16

That's what I keep chasing. And then I'm when I'm so disappointed when I don't get it. So anyway, hopefully, this is a short lived thing. And once I get further into 2024, I'll sort of get into a better a better rhythm. Yeah,

Kaytee Cobb 13:30

I'll be interested to hear if other people say the same. My January has been very wonky. I'm at like less than half of my normal reading pace right now, which is very strange. Yeah. And we have at this point in real time, we have like three days left in January, like I'm not going to make it to my regular reading pace by the end of the month. So right. Let's just see what happens. Right?

Meredith Monday Schwartz 13:52

So you have been picking books and finishing them and not necessarily being stuck behind them. But I just get done with them. And I'm like,

Kaytee Cobb 14:00

but that's just as bad. Because when I did is just like that. I'm like, Well, I don't want to talk about that on the show. So it's kind of like I read nothing. Exactly.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 14:06

If I don't if I don't have a point of view on a book. And it's just like, Yeah, three stars. I don't know. What the heck is the point of anyone listening to be back at it?

Kaytee Cobb 14:15

Exactly. Terrible. It is. I would much rather hate a book than feel me. Yeah,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 14:20

at least have a point of view about it right? Or like No, who would really like it. That's also something I'm fine with. All right, Kaytee. Well, let's talk about some current reads. Did you I'm sure you brought some non meh books. Oh, yeah,

Kaytee Cobb 14:32

I have. I have some that I have strong feelings about. They're not all from the last week. So my first one is actually nonfiction. It's called The Elephants of Thula Thula by Francoise Malby-Anthony, this book was actually sent to me by our mutual friend. Her name is Rochelle gardener, who keeps me in great galleys from the authors that she represents. She runs a literary agency. She is a literary agent, and she and I are fellow elephant law. lovers, so she knew this one would be right up my alley. Francoise. Our author is the wife of the late Lawrence Anthony, who's books about elephant conservation. I've also read and recommend, especially The Elephant Whisperer. And this memoir, Francoise recounts the time following her husband's death when she stepped into full ownership of the game reserve they own in South Africa. This memoir is informative, while also being really touching. And I loved her very personal stories of dealing with poachers and the ways she had to explain visitor experiences to me because I was like, what, who goes to a game reserve? Is it people that want to shoot animals like I was just so far out of the loop on what a game reserve even is? That it felt like, you know, I ended up googling thula thula to see is this a place I could go and is, which is really exciting. So I'm like 50th birthday, it's, it's long enough away, maybe that is something I could plan for. So she gently walks us through elephants sickness, and sometimes death, which is very difficult. If you're an animal lover, it's hard to read. She works with the government and neighboring landowners to be able to expand her property and keep more animals on the grounds. And while the title alludes only to the elephants, we also get to meet rhinoceroses, and cheetahs and mere cats, along with many other animals that play a really integral part in the South African ecosystem. She also talks about the pandemic when all tourism ceased in South Africa. And then it happened again, because there was a variant of COVID that started in South Africa, so everything shut down again. And that's how they make money in order to provide for all these animals. I adored this book, but I've already passed it along to a man and his wife who just entered retirement. They love to travel, and I knew it would spark for them the same fire as it did in me to get myself to Africa and get to see elephants in person. This is like a bucket list idea for me. Rachelle made her own trip in 2022, and took us along for the ride by sharing photos and videos even in the bookish friends group when she went. Francoise and her team at Thula have formed a true bond with these animals while still giving them the freedom and space to be wild animals. They're not petting

them and inviting visitors to ride wild animals. You observe them from afar, because they are legitimate, huge creatures. It's a labor of love. And I'm so grateful for this ability to get to peek inside this world. And hopefully someday I'll get to report back about my own trip to an African Game Reserve. And in the meantime, I get to travel there through my books. This one especially it's The Elephants of Thula Thula by Francoise Malby-Anthony. Oh, that one sounds really good. And I do remember Rochelle's trip and your shares She went to Kenya? Yeah. Beautiful. Yeah,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 17:38

absolutely gorgeous. All right. My first book takes us firmly in the fantasy realm, and I've been really excited to talk about this one. Because just a lot of people a lot of us have said what should I read after Fourth Wing? This, my friends, is what you should read. Spoiler alert. What I think you should not read is Iron Flame. I think you should we think you should read The Serpent and the Wings of Night by Carissa Broadbent. Alright, here's the setup. Our lead character is Araya a human who is the adopted daughter of the nightborne vampire King. Okay, she's a human. Her dad is a vampire. Okay. This life as a human amongst what have to be called predators has not been easy, but Araya survived by training all her life to be the most lethal version of herself. This girl can protect herself. And then she sees her chance to live a life where she can do more than be afraid all the time by entering the Kuzari a legendary tournament held by the Goddess of death herself only every like several 100 years because remember, vampires live forever. So this cadre tournament does not come up very often at all. And if Aria wins, she will be protected for the rest of her life.

Kaytee Cobb 18:59

But she's competing against vampires. Yes. And she's a human. Yes, she's happier. No,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 19:05

no, she's human. She's human. Yes. But winning the majority is no easy task since the tournament gathers. Here you go Kaytee the most vicious warriors from all three vampire houses. To survive, Araya is forced to make an alliance with a rival. Here's where the ro-man of romantasy comes into play.

Kaytee Cobb 19:27

Ro-man ha

Meredith Monday Schwartz 19:29

Rain is a vampire. And he is also an incredibly efficient killer. And he's Araya's greatest competition. But and you knew this was coming. What terrifies Araya most of all is that she finds herself drawn to Rain and also for like purely logistical reasons. They need to work together. But there's no room for compassion or passion in the majority tournament war for the House of Night brews threatening to change everything that Araya thought she knew about her adopted father and her home. Oh, this one is really, really good. So saying that this is what you should read after fourth ring or when you have finished fourth wing and you're like, I just kind of want to be in that headspace again. But Iron Flame didn't really scratch that itch. These are big shoes to fill. But I do think that The Serpent and the Wings of Night falls into this category squarely. And it also has received a lot of comparisons to the Court of Thorns and Roses. There's also a hefty serving of Twilight. So there are a lot of big shoes to fill in this romantic fantasy genre, right? And there's no question that there are so many pieces of this book that

will feel familiar to you ingredients that were definitely in other series, and have been used here in not so much of copy paste kind of way. But more in the same way that you use delicious ingredients in dishes. Yes, you can definitely tell that there is cinnamon in that pie. But just because there's cinnamon in that other dessert doesn't mean you don't want cinnamon here. So that makes sense. Like you have the same ingredients, but they're not used in exactly the same way. And I can see a lot of people just being like, Oh, this is just derivative. And this is definitely more than derivative. I really enjoyed reading the story. And it felt to me like this was more of a story than a book. And it felt great in that way. It felt like a great set of competitions. And also it had a wonderful magical construct. And it felt like we were in exotic locations, and we had big sweeping visions of magical delights. So it was very visual. I loved it for that reason. It also had a lead character that I really loved. Araya is young and naive, but also smart and a product of her upbringing in really interesting ways. I liked her complicated, but loving relationship with her father, that was really interesting. And I really liked her relationship with Rain. Rain is not as complicated as some of the other bad boy characters that we've gotten in these other series. We're not talking Zaidan here, but he's much more straight ahead. And just a huge, big wall of gorgeous goodhearted man. And I really liked that here. So there isn't a lot of unexpected. In this story, I want to be clear about that. There's not a lot of nuance, but there's a lot of adventure and excitement and romance and turning of pages as quickly as possible. And for me when I'm in the right mood for a new adult romantic fantasy. That is all I want. I thoroughly enjoyed being in this world. And I can't wait to jump into the second book, I should say that this book does a good job of ending the story that it starts within this book, and also obviously wants to take us into the second book, I think the author did a great job of threading that needle in the end in a very satisfying way. So this is *The Serpent and the Wings of Night* by Carissa Broadbent. And I will say four different people, not bookish friends, just regular people in my life came to me saying I just read a book that I liked as much as *Fourth Wing*. And it's this one. So I don't normally get recommendations for books outside the kind of book world. But this one clearly has captured the imagination of a lot of readers.

Kaytee Cobb 23:30

All right, I like it. I have had one very gently suggestive press for this one into my hands like kaytee maybe someday if you decide not to ever pick up *Fourth Wing* or if you do eventually because I still haven't. Right maybe this one you would want to have close by that. You're like adjacent press. So right now.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 23:51

It hasn't been so all everywhere. Yeah,

Kaytee Cobb 23:53

yeah, exactly. I'm trying to remember but I feel like I looked at the cover. And I was like, Oh, yes, I do. Like the idea of this cover. Yeah, dark. So yeah, yeah. Okay. My next book is not one that I'm very happy about. But there is a ride involved here. So this book is called *Erasure*, by Percival Everett. This book released in 2001, and was just recently released on audio right after Christmas. It's the novel behind the new film, *American Fiction*, which also released right around that same time. Have you seen the previous for that? Meredith? I have. Yep. Okay, so I pre ordered the audiobook after seeing that trailer for the movie, because I was like, yes to everything in this movie. The book is usually better. Right? So let's see. Hopefully, yes, right. Now, here's the setup. Thelonious Ellison goes by monk. He's

a prestigious black writer, but the kind that gets a lot of nominations for things but nobody actually wants to read his book. That kind of writer right. His work has never been a best seller. It's rarely recognized at all because it's too soon. rebol Nobody wants to read it. It's boring. It's pedantic. It's excessive. He's struggling. He's barely making ends meet, he's unable to contribute to his siblings care for their mother as she ages, when another writers debut novel, we live in the ghetto rockets to the top of the bestseller list and is universally praised by morning shows and NPR and everyone in between. He's mad, should he have to write a black novel to be recognized as a good author? In a rage, he writes a parody of a novel novella. And he submits it to his agent. It's filled with stereotypes and drugs and language. And it's offensive on every level, like it's horrendous. He wants his agent to send it in under a pen name to show these acquiring editors how ridiculous their multimillion dollar offers are. But to his surprise, a bidding war ensues. And his book is the next one to ride that wave of success. In the meantime, he's raking in the cash and pretending he has nothing to do with the novel. Because it's appending. It's a whole mess and the reader and we the reader are riding that wave along with him trying to figure out how he's going to extricate himself from the situation that he created. The premise here is great. And I love this part of the setup that I just gave you. I'm excited to see the movie because I think that part is going to translate really well to the screen and would be adapted wonderfully. Casting also looks spot on from the previews. However, I did not like this book, I am completely puzzled by the fact that the author decided to include the entire text of the parody novella within the text of this one, it is horrific to read. And of course, that's the point. But I think we as readers would have been better served with a single chapter or a few paragraphs of that text to give us the flavor of it. And then being brought back to the actual novel that I had picked up, it did finally get back after almost 30 to 40% of the total book, it went back to the other novel that I wanted to read. But in the meantime, I had heard about trigger warning, pause for your children, multiple rapes had listened to entire conversations that only involve two people saying fu to each other back and forth for 15 repetitions in a row, and had a protagonist multiple dreams of stabbing his mother to death described in lurid detail. All of that's in the novella described graphically, if I had had the paper copy on hand, or if another reader decides they want to read this book, I am legitimately recommending that you read the first paragraph of my pathology, which is the book within the book, and then skip forward to the point where monk is again, the main character, I think the overall commentary on publishing, and what we expect from any bipoc author is legitimate and still applicable today. 20 years after the original release, we see regular requests for books that include joy for protagonists, who have been only represented as victims and stereotypes of a community as a whole. Still in 2024, we still hear this. So yes, I do recommend this book. But for me, like I would almost tear out the entire 100 pages right in the middle, I would have been much better served by skipping that large swath in order to keep to the story and commentary that I came from. Every reader is different, though. So I found critical reviews that only liked the internal novella, and not the story surrounding it. They felt like it was too preachy, too pedantic. They didn't like the loneliest monk as a character, they thought the inside was so funny, so satirical. So fantastic. So I'm not necessarily write about this book, you may have a totally different experience, and I hope you do. And I hope you tell me about it. But in the meantime, for me, erasure would have been much better with the center section erased almost completely so that I could have enjoyed the story as a whole. And the commentary on social norms and publishing would have much better served me that way. So this was Erasure by Percival Everett. I felt like I'm like feisty about it as

Meredith Monday Schwartz 28:51

well. You know, what's funny, Kaytee is that I was listening. I've heard this talked about by multiple people, including people that I know personally, and the word satire is often used. And my first thought whenever I hear that is I hope Kaytee doesn't read it. You never ever, ever gonna like a book. You you want something to be straight or ahead. And satire takes you to a place that is just not it. Not only is something you don't like it's something that makes you angry.

Kaytee Cobb 29:19

It does a lot of times, and I keep being fooled by it. But I loved the outside story of this. Like I don't I think I gave it like three and a half stars, but it was like, Really, this would have been a five star novel for me if we had only gotten a taste of that internal thing and just left the rest on the side. Yeah,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 29:36

no, and I thought the same thing I thought read it in print and then give yourself the ability kind of just skim or as you said first chapter and then it reversed a little bit and then go back to it. So have you read anything else by him? Have you read The Trees?

Kaytee Cobb 29:49

I have The Trees sitting on my shelf at home, so I haven't read it yet, but that one has been kind of universally recommended to me. Yeah. This one was like, I love To the preview, and so I took it upon myself to put it into my hands. And maybe that's where I went wrong. Maybe I can't put pick books for myself either. That's the problem here. Well,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 30:09

the good news is I think what's going to happen with the movie is that they're going to largely do what you want. Done. Yeah, exactly. So I'll be interested to see what you think about the movie because it does look fantastic.

Kaytee Cobb 30:22

Casting. Gosh, every time they like switch the camera, I was like, Oh my gosh, I

Meredith Monday Schwartz 30:26

love Yeah, it's so good. It looks great. It looks really really good. All right, well, my second book is surprisingly, a memoir. But the only way I'm gonna read a memoir is if it is heavily involved with murder. So this is What the Dead Know by Barbara Butcher. This was a five star read for me loves this book. If you love mysteries and thrillers. Listen to this because you're gonna want to pick this up. Here's the setup. When it opens, Barbara Butcher, our author is early in her recovery from alcoholism, which is described in detail. So just be aware of that. When she finds her true calling a job in the medical examiner's office in New York City. She is breaking ground by joining the team. She's just the second woman ever hired for the role of death investigator. I want to be really clear about this. She's not a medical examiner, she is a death investigator. That is something different. And it's much more like what actually happens in CSI than a medical examiner medical examiner's don't normally go out and like deal with the bodies of the death investigators. Okay, she's the first woman to last for more than three months. And this is in Manhattan. And so the job is gory. And sometimes it's even dangerous. In fact, in

the very first chapter, she almost gets killed. Because a suicide has booby trapped his apartment, and she absolutely loves this job. And we get to then love it, too. I love books about people who find like their thing and then they do it. It's so it's so like, redemptive. I love it. Barbara Butcher, yes. That is her actual born. The name is not. But it's true. It absolutely is. She writes with the kind of like New York attitude and bravado that you expect from someone who has spent decades out in the field in New York City, investigating more than 5500 deaths. And 680 homicides within those Her story, Warts and all bodies and body parts and all is what we get and what we love in What the Dead Know. Okay, so Roxanna, my HSP delicate flower friend saw this written up in I think she was reading the in the next newsletter. And she was like, Well, clearly, this is a Meredith book. And she was exactly right. I did this on Kindle, which was a perfectly great way to take it in. And I tried to figure out, okay, this is a memoir, but it really, really worked for me. So I was very cognizant of, okay, why did this work? For me, I think, first of all, is that Barbara Butcher is a gifted storyteller. Or maybe it's her ghost writer, because she mentions having had help writing the book, the pages turn themselves in this book, I loved getting to know this woman and hearing the stories of her life, she has had major struggles with alcoholism and depression, and her unflinching look at both of those things was really, really vulnerable. So again, I do want to just mention that no, that both of those things are in this book, if that's a trigger at all for you. And because of that vulnerability, I absolutely believed everything that she said about her career as a death investigator for the New York City Medical Examiner's Office. So the death investigator are the people who look at the body through the lens of the crime scene. I'm not sure I even knew that this role existed, because it certainly doesn't in any of the police procedurals that I watch on television, and I watch a lot. Again, as I said, this is not a medical examiner, examiner, and she's not a police officer. It's a role that bridges those two things. And it's absolutely infinitely interesting. I want to be very clear that when I say this book is graphic, you need to listen to me, there are a ton of descriptions of dead bodies. And she does not shy away from giving you all the details, though she does it in a respectable way and with as much context as possible, and certainly with a lot of respect and compassion for the deceased. That person is always her top priority. She does not leave that behind in the writing of this book. This is not a book that she's filled with lurid details to sell books. These are honest portrayals of what these death investigators see every day. There are a lot of stories of people who are in the most vulnerable parts of their lives. So there are obviously trigger warnings for suicide and pregnancy loss and all manner of grief and mourning. Basically, this is a book that is right Oxana is worst nightmare. And she knew it would be an absolute fit for me and I so appreciate that. This was a five star memoir for me and I highly recommend it if you're interested, especially in the novels of Patricia Cornwell, it seems like these two Barbara Butcher and Patricia Cornwell would be great friends, and apparently, they are in real life. I was so happy to find out about that. The other book that I would suggest, if you like, this one is a book called The Trauma Cleaner, one woman's extraordinary life in the business of death, decay and disaster by Sarah Krasnostein. She is a crime scene cleaner. So I think that's another book that would play well with this. This is What the Dead Know, by Barbara Butcher, and I love her.

Kaytee Cobb 32:07

If that sounds so interesting. It's very interesting. Like, I was like a peek behind the curtain like a Wizard of Oz, right?

Meredith Monday Schwartz 32:26

Because not only is it like the day to day of it, but also there's stuff about her actual life and what she's going through. And then at the last part of the book, there's like, some politics of how she's like kind of moving up in the ranks and kind of gets to this like, not politics, like, Democrat, Republican, but like office politics kinds of things. And her mentor and kind of all this stuff was very interesting. I liked it so much.

Kaytee Cobb 36:21

That sounds that does sound perfect for you, like go figure that Roxanna would somehow stumble across this book that is so horrifying to her. I know exactly. She's like,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 36:32

every time she does this, I imagined her like with pinched fingers, like the underwear, the very corner of the bucket being like, you're gonna like this.

Kaytee Cobb 36:41

Oh my gosh, that's hilarious. That's the perfect image. I love it. Yeah. Okay. My third one has a game element that is kind of similar to your first one. I'm going to talk about Thieves' Gambit by Kayvion Lewis. So this book is blurbed as being a combo of The Inheritance Games, meets Ocean's 11. And yes to all of that, Ross quest is our main character. She is part of the quest family, which is known the world over for pulling off master heists. It's her heritage, her ancestry, and they've been able to escape her entire family from the stickiest situations without a scratch while pulling a heist with her mother on board a boat and planning to strike out on her own as she has written her mother an email that is delayed sending, because she's going to take off after this heist is done. Instead, Ross's mother is captured. And the only way to get her back alive is to play an exorbitant ransom fee of Q Dr. Evil \$1 billion dollars so much money and she's like, What are you talking about? I'm 17 years old. How am I supposed to find a billion dollars. Ross is heartbroken by the idea of losing her mother even though she couldn't wait to get out from under her thumb. So she enters a game a dangerous game called the Thieves Gambit. It's an underground series of international heists where it's not against the rules to kill your competition, the winner will receive a Wish granted for anything in the world. In Ross's case, that means she would be granted the funding to save her mom's life and free her to return home her mother to return home. With the stakes so high Ross tries to live by the family motto of trust no one whose last name isn't quest. But some of these competitions she will not be able to finish on her own. So does she trust her childhood Nemesis who entered the same competition that she did, or the hot guy who might just be a smooth talker and betray her at the first opportunity. This is a YA New Adult teen situation and they're all going to have to find a way to survive the gambit if any of them wants their wishes. Granted, this book is marked as Thieves Gambit number one, and Book Two is supposed to release later this year. However, just like Meredith said, with The Serpent and the Wings of Night, she wraps this one up well enough that I didn't feel mad that book two wasn't out yet. Which is a problem that I sometimes have with series books, like either give me the whole thing, or don't even talk to me about it. Right. So she did a great job where I don't feel like I have to continue the series if it doesn't grab me later whenever it's available. Because I was perfectly happy with where these characters ended up. Both those book and the one I talked about before were ones I chatted about with Bhumi during the past few months on trope Thursday, which is another piece of our Patreon content. She keeps me in books that

keep me reading even if in the case of erasure. I didn't always love the novel, or in this case, I really did. This one was great, diverse, teen older teen fiction with a fantastic heist at the center of the story and I really enjoyed it. There is some death. It's definitely not for like middle graders that are reading up into ya. There's some scary situations that happen here. I loved it though. It's Thieves' Gambit by Kayvion Lewis.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 39:58

I have seen this one. I think it has a really Creepy cover right dark red

Kaytee Cobb 40:01

with a lot of black on it with Yeah, like super graphic. It's very cool. Excellent.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 40:06

That sounds really really good. Okay, my third one is a testament to my own ability to choose books for myself. Because the the book I want to talk about was chosen for me one night when I went to the bookish friends group and I was like, Okay, I can't choose books myself because I keep choosing puny awful books. So please book his friends. Tell me what book you want me to read. And the first one that is a book that I actually own in print. That's what I'll read. And luckily, it ended up being a five star read for me. This is The River We Remember by William Kent Krueger. Here's the setup on Memorial day, 1958 in Jewel Minnesota, the body of a wealthy landowner Jimmy Quinn is found floating in the alabaster river dead from a shotgun blast. The investigation falls to Sheriff Brody Dern who is a highly decorated war hero, who still is carrying around the physical and emotional scars from his military service. But even before we get the results of the autopsy, a lot of rumors start to circulate around this very small town that the killer must be Noah Bluestone, a Native American World War Two veteran who has recently returned to Jewel, with a Japanese wife. as suspicions and accusations mount and the town teeters on the edge of more violence. Brody Dern struggles not only to find the truth of Quinn's murder, but also to put to rest the demons from his own past. Okay, that part that's all marketing setup. That's what we find out and I think it's a perfectly fine setup. Let me tell you, when I posted saying I'm going to read The River We Remember I had no idea what it was about, except that it was on my shelf. And Elizabeth, Elizabeth Barnhill from Fabled texted me when she saw that go up. And she said, here's all you need to know, in the first chapter. There's a rich guy found in a river with his eyes plucked out, and I was like I'm in. So if that's that last part is all you need. Go into it, because this is what we this is what we find here. This has happened to you, Kaytee, I know. And it's it is one of my favorite things about reading when you run across an author who you've known, like you've known intellectually, is out there and people forever have said one of the best, but you've never read that author. And then you finally do and you're like, Why have I not read everything this man has written ever? Yes. This is what happened to me, William Kent Krueger. And The River We Remember, was it was just the perfect entree to his writing? For me. There's no question that Krueger writes place as well as he writes people. I read a couple of reviews who said he paints with words. And that is a really, really good way to describe his writing. I loved my time on the Alabaster River in southern Minnesota. It's a place that I've never like, I've really not only never been there I've never even thought about but what a gorgeous landscape He gives us even as he doesn't shy away from a lot of really difficult things. We see people in 1958. Still in the trenches of racism, we see veterans of World War Two home and struggling with all manner of undiagnosed PTSD. And we see women having to soak up all the bad things that their men

can mete out, all while keeping every damn thing running. The death at the heart of this novel is my favorite kind. It's a rich, unhappy, cruel man dying in a horrible way. And then we sit back and watch all the layers and layers of that mystery unfold. And through that we get to know the town and the sheriff who keeps that town safe. That lead character Brody Dern is very flawed and yet somehow I found myself able to root for him. That's a trick and it had me thinking that William Kent Krueger's writing is as layered and intelligent as Louise Penny's writing because this book put me in mind of the Three Pines series, flawed people seeking redemption, trying to love each other. While the real world keeps elbowing its way in. I think he'll be my go to author to read every time I read a Louise Penny and don't know what to read next, as to pacing, which for the purposes of currently reading is my word of 2024. It's important to know that this is a true slow burn but literary mystery. Krueger takes his time, from the first page to the last, finding it more important that we understand the people and the place than just the plot. And this is my absolute sweet spot. This is the kind of book I need to be reading. This is why It was a five star book for me. I want to give you a trigger warning for sexual assault and abuse as I think that's key to know before diving in. Some of these things happen on the page, but every one of them is handled with serious grace. This book is a well worn Leather Jacket your farmer grandfather wore every day. It smells like tobacco and fields and warmth. And it is so so good. This is The River We Remember by William Kent Kruger.

Kaytee Cobb 45:28

That sounds fantastic. I read This Tender Land by him a couple of years back when it was big. Yeah, but that's the only one I've read of his but I felt that same. It's like care for his characters and depths of writing. Even though that one I wouldn't even put on the mystery shelf. I wouldn't say it's more of a coming of age novel. But it he just he really does have a fantastic way with words. Yeah. Right. Exactly. Yeah. And

Meredith Monday Schwartz 45:55

I know, I know, so many listeners to All Things Murderful have recommended the his long like 20 or so long book series. I think it's cork O'Connor. And I think the first one is iron something. Or

Kaytee Cobb 46:11

Iron Lake,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 46:12

yes, thank you. And so that is going to be probably the next one that I pick up. Although Roxanna and I are talking about reading Ordinary Grace together this

Kaytee Cobb 46:22

summer. Yeah, I've heard great things about that one, too. Yeah. So good stuff.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 46:27

All right, Kaytee, good stuff. And we are 50 minutes into this episode.

Kaytee Cobb 46:32

There's stuff that's gonna get cut from the beginning. We got confused. It's fine.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 46:35

I know. But we are we've been talking for a long time. Alright. Let's start talking about the this deep dive that we have here about the bookish friends. They have weighed in over 600 of arts we have 2500 bookish friends, people who support us on Patreon, over 600 of them really quickly, like super within just a couple of days. Yeah,

Kaytee Cobb 46:57

I only I only left it open for a week total. Right? Right. And we didn't

Meredith Monday Schwartz 47:01

really even promote it that much. Or like it was sort of like, Hey, do this if you want to Well, 600 of them were generous enough of their time to give us their list of favorite books of 2023. And their least favorite. There were some interesting things here. kaytee. What were I mean, I think we need to give them we're going to put the full list. We're not going to bore you with lists of 20. Favorite and not and not favorite, right? That's, that's not a fun listen on audio,

Kaytee Cobb 47:26

it's not, but

Meredith Monday Schwartz 47:28

you have a good way of doing that. Kaytee, what are you going to do with that list? Yes, the

Kaytee Cobb 47:32

Monday that this episode drops also into the Patreon feed, we will drop just a text version of this list or an or an image version of both of these lists so that the bookish friends are able to maybe add to TBR or removed from TBR as they see fit based on all 40 books that show up on the two lists and and it's not 40 books, Meredith, because there are a number of repetitions that showed up on the least favorite list. And the most favorite list, which I think is always a really fun thing. And of course, we're going to point out some of those. But like we said at the top of the show, there is a free trial for Patreon this week. So if you want to see all 40 of those titles, you can go over to Patreon. Join for free cancel as soon as you're ready, and get a peek at all of those titles. So that'll be fun for everybody to check out.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 48:23

Right. And it's good to know to like, Wait, so we started doing these lists, because we wanted to be able to every year, we collect this data, and then for the rest of that year, we give this best and worst list all 20 on each, to each indie press list store that we're working with, to give them a baseline for what kinds of readers they are choosing their stacks for, right? Because we the whole point of the indie press list is that it's bespoke to our group.

Kaytee Cobb 48:50

Yes, yes. And it is interesting, because we know what kind of books sell on the indie press list. And then they also get this kind of information from us. Because one of the things that we've noticed in the past regarding these lists, which we've talked about on the big show before and last year, we said nothing about them, but still used them for the indie press list program is that we see a lot of literary fiction on the Favorites list. A lot of mystery and thrillers on the least favorites list. But our group loves reading mysteries and thrillers. They adore mysteries and thrillers. And so what we see here is that they're taking the chance they're reading a lot of mysteries and thrillers. But those picks are not always panning out. Yeah. And then when they take a chance on something different, which is for a lot of our readers, a literary fiction pick, it ends up being some of their top books of the year, which is very interesting to me. Right.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 49:44

And to me, that's because the books that make our list of Top 10 are the ones that were more memorable for us. And they're usually more memorable because they are something didn't we it was a different experience than we normally have. And then what if you read a lot of mysteries or thrillers it's free really then easy to be like I read so many. And there were a couple that were really big fails. So to me it just the amount of mysteries and thrillers that our group reads is clearly shown in this best and worst list. Yes,

Kaytee Cobb 50:13

definitely. Okay, so let's talk about some overlap here. Because our, our first overlap is the big one, right? The one that snagged the number one spot on both lists, the favorite and the least favorite. It's our dear friend, it may be the number one book mentioned on 2023 podcast episodes, as you're currently reading. It's Fourth Wing by Rebecca Yarros. Right, peep

Meredith Monday Schwartz 50:37

our group both absolutely loved it more than anything in the world and hated it. Yes, yes, they

Kaytee Cobb 50:43

did. Yes, I did. Very,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 50:45

very divisive.

Kaytee Cobb 50:47

But it is worth noting there that there were more than five times as many votes cast for the top spot in the Favorites category as there were for the least favorite category. So even though it is the top on both the least favorites were much more varied in submission. There were a lot more different titles submitted over there than there were on the Favorites list. Right,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 51:09

right. Well, I'm just going to run through the top five on each list just really quickly, just so we can like have an idea of what we're talking about, right? Otherwise, they're like, can you just tell us what the list

said? Okay, so four favorites of the year, the number five Covenant of Water by Abraham Verghese number four Demon Copperhead by Barbara Kingsolver. Yes. Number three, Hello, Beautiful By, Ann Napolitano. Number two, Tom Lake by Ann Patchett. And number Fourth Wing by Rebecca Yarros. So those were those were favorite. All right, and then as to least favorites of the year number five, The Wishing Game by Meg Schaffer, number tied for number three, Pineapple Street by Jenny Jackson and Happy Place by Emily Henry. Number two I Have Some Questions for You by Rebecca Makkai. And number Fourth Wing by Rebecca Yarros. So that kind of at least gives you the top top of both of them. So we didn't have any overlap in that top 5 Fourth Wing was the only was really kind of the big get the big most divisive one. But some of the other books that appeared on both lists

Kaytee Cobb 52:22

were Shark Heart by Emily. Habeck, which was one of my favorite experiences of the year.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 52:28

Yep. And I can really see that when being super divisive. Yes, definitely. The other one that didn't surprise me to see on the list, because I've seen such mixed reviews on it. But they've all all the reviews I've heard had been either I loved it, or I hate it in is Happiness Falls by Angie Kim. Now I for me, Angie, Kim's writing just does not do it for me say

Kaytee Cobb 52:52

and I just bought that one. And it's on my TBR shelf. Yeah,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 52:56

I didn't love her first one. And I got you know, I just did a quick sample of this one, there is something about her writing. That just doesn't work for me. But it worked for a lot of people. And I've even seen top 10 lists where it was the number one book of the year. So that's the fun thing about these lists is to be like if we instead of like looking at it and being like how could anyone like Tom Lake? No, we need to say I'm so glad for him. I'm so happy for all the people who loved Tom Lake. Yes,

Kaytee Cobb 53:27

right. Definitely. Yes, I love that. One of the things that I pulled out of this data, which I found really interesting, even though we didn't share the 2022 lists, we did have a couple titles that showed up on 2022. And then 2023. And everything else was a new release for 2023. So Lessons in Chemistry and Remarkably Bright Creatures were number one and number two for 2022 respectively. They show up again on the top 20 favorites of the bookish friends in 2023. So those ones had some staying power. They stuck around long enough way further down. Demon Copperhead was number 10. In 2022, because it released toward the end of the year, it was an October release in 2022. So not very many people had read it 2023 wins the Pulitzer. It's got these long legs, and here it is at number four for the top 20 favorites of the year. So it also stuck around for a number of different reasons. But I found that really interesting because there are a couple that just they had that staying power. And I love that for them.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 54:30

What were the other ones that what were the other ones that are on both? Okay,

Kaytee Cobb 54:33

there and there are two more other than this, the ones that we've already mentioned that are on both lists. It's Romantic Comedy by Curtis Sittenfeld, which is number 20 on the Favorites list and then tied for number 11 with Iron Flame on the least favorites list. And then Hello Beautiful by Ann Napolitano, which was number three on the Favorites list. Y'all already heard that one but made it for like a big giant tie for number 13 on the least favorites list. So those four five books, they were just really widely read, and people ended up having a lot of different feelings about them. And we love that. Yeah. Absolute strong opinions. Right? It's every week. That's what we say. Exactly. We

Meredith Monday Schwartz 54:34

absolutely absolutely love it. The only thing we always say about our strong opinions is have a reason for them. Right? Like, don't just bomb somebody with like, I hated this book. It was awful with your dumb if you liked it, but like, you know, let's be able to talk about what worked for me in a book and what didn't. But yeah, I love the fact that we can all absolutely love and hate totally different things. Now Kaytee let me ask you this question, which I did not prepare you in advance that I was gonna ask you because it just thought of it just now. Is there a book on either list that you just think is wrong? Now that I've just said everyone can have their opinion? Is there What if you had to pick one thing to say, you can all have yells opinions, but you're wrong about this? Well, I

Kaytee Cobb 56:00

definitely have some books that I loved a lot that ended up on the least favorites list. And one of them is it made my top 10 its Happy Place by Emily Henry. And it's tied for third. So it's not like coming in at the rear for the least favorites. Like a lot of people really did not like it for it to make it to that top three spot. Yeah. And that, like, I mean, I'm okay with people not liking it. But it does almost personally offend me, because I loved it so much. And because as we talked about on the show, it hit me in such a tender spot in my heart that it doesn't, it doesn't matter what other people thought about it, because it's still so precious to me in the way that it entered my life and the timing for when it entered my life. So I just look at that. And I'm like, Okay, well, I'm just gonna use some whiteout and pretend that doesn't exist. And that's fine with me.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 56:54

Right? So for you, that book falls into the category of what I talked about with a lot of my my close in real life bookish friends, I am not accepting criticism on that book. And sometimes we just have a few sacred cows that way, right? Where we're just like, I'm just not accepting criticism on that. So I mean, my theory on happy place, or even pineapple Street, which we're both high up there, and also Fourth Wing, is that there were people who knew what they were going to get. But it was so hyped that they had some sort of FOMO and then ended up getting exactly what they knew they were gonna get. And then they were like, but I didn't like it. And I fell in and I will raise my hand and say, I also read Emily Henry, knowing full well, but 99% of the time books like that don't work for me. So you're not going to hear me tearing it down because read or Know thyself. Right. Like it wasn't mis sold to me it. It was what it was

Kaytee Cobb 57:49

exactly what you were told. Yeah, right.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 57:51

Exactly. Right. So the only one that I just think people are wrong about is I just think, to have *The Whispers* by Ashley Audrain be on the worst list. I just think it's just, it's just wrong. That's a really, really good book. That's a really smart piece of domestic suspense. And just because you don't like, you know, unresolved endings, that's your problem. Like I, I, I stand by the fact that that book is really, really good. That's the only one that I'm gonna say, you're just, you're just wrong about that one. Yeah,

Kaytee Cobb 58:24

you can have your opinion, but it can be a wrong opinion. Right? It's all

Meredith Monday Schwartz 58:29

the rest of these. I'm gonna give you I'm gonna give it to you. I'm gonna give you Tom Lake. I'm gonna give you *Hello, Beautiful*. I'm gonna give you all okay, but there are a few books on this list. So I'll ask you this one more question. Kaytee. Are there any books on this list that you are like, Oh, I know. I'm going to be reading that book. Like I haven't made it to that book yet, but it is. I'm very sure I'm going to I'm going to read it.

Kaytee Cobb 58:51

Well, I probably it won't surprise you, Meredith. There's actually only I think maybe only one nonfiction on here. And it's a memoir. And I've heard it just widely praised. Sara did an interview with the author. It's *The Many Lives of Mama Love* by Laura Love Hardin. Yeah, I like it's gonna find me. I'm gonna read that book.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 59:12

Right. That feels like a book. That would be a really good fit for you. I absolutely yeah. And they and Sarah in on her show. And then certainly in her community. Yeah, there's a lot of love for that book. So that sounds like a good fit. I can tell you that. I'm definitely going to read *Demon Copperhead*. That is That is terrifying

Kaytee Cobb 59:30

Demon Copperhead.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 59:31

Yeah, I have to I mean, it'll be a buddy read. But that's one that I'm I'm gonna read for sure. Because I feel like with my love of Dickens, and my love story set in the Appalachians i It's it'll it'll probably work really well for me. I also love Barbara Kingsolver. All right, Kaytee. Well, those are kind of some of the things that stuck out to us. Anything else that has stuck out to you about this list?

Kaytee Cobb 59:53

Yes, I do have one more thing because we had one bonus question that we've never asked before on the survey and it was one their favorite format is for reading the bookish friends. Yeah, so I really loved

getting this, it was just this tiny piece of data. 39.4% of our bookish friends said they prefer to read and krint 25% said audio 22 said digitally and the remainder said tandem read, which I listed as multiple formats, which could be picking up one book in multiple formats. Or don't make me choose, I can't have a favorite child. I think either of those people both would have chosen tandem read there. But I just thought that was so fun. And then also I asked the number of books that people read in the year and of the 600 people. The average was right at 100 bucks a year. So far, but higher, or readers, there was high books. Yeah.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:00:44

Interesting that I didn't see that part of it. But that's a high number, I would have expected something closer to 40. No,

Kaytee Cobb 1:00:51

it was a very large number. And that was I mean, there are we have bookish friends that read 300 350 I have to add lines to the spreadsheet for people like good. Good for them. Sure.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:01:03

Yeah. Yeah. But then we but but a lot of bookish friends who are reading just a couple of books a year and that is totally okay. Definitely quantity of books does not a bookish friend make. Right.

Kaytee Cobb 1:01:16

Absolutely.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:01:17

All right. Good stuff. Kaytee, Thank you for pulling all of that data together.

Kaytee Cobb 1:01:20

Yeah, it was a lot of fun. And I'm excited to hear what the bookish friends think. Surprises or what they wish they had seen on something or How come nobody else listed this. It should have been in the top 20. Everybody go read it. So I love those conversations that come out of this data. Yeah, for

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:01:35

sure. All right, let's make some wishes at the fountain What's your wish this week?

Kaytee Cobb 1:01:40

Okay, my wish kind of harkens back to our conversation last week with Knox and Jamie but I'm going to wish for more duologies in the world. Basically, I want to be Taylor Swift and enter my duology era. I don't mind a book that keeps going to another one. But I'm so over for myself reading another book in a series and realizing at the end, that there's another one coming. I like I just I don't I don't want to do that anymore. This is a me problem. Many people love reading books in series. And of course, I have series that I continue to read in like Grey Wolf is coming in October of 2024. I will absolutely be reading book 19 in the inspector garage series. But I just want most authors and publishers to let go of the idea that their readers will be best served by 12 books. Let's embrace the duology let's get ourselves into this like to book arc give us a storyline that ends in a timely manner. Let's enjoy ending well, like some of our

favorite TV series have pulled off before they had to jump the shark. That's my wish for 2024 and beyond ping splash.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:02:43

All right. I like that one. Okay, my wish is that for all of you who love mysteries, thrillers and horror, I want everyone to go follow the Instagram account. Mother dot horror this Instagram account is run by Sadie Hartman. She is so smart, y'all. This woman just the way she does her Instagram. The way she does her reviews. Her content on Instagram of which there is a ton for free, is so smart and makes it so easy for me to both hear about and find out about new horror books that might be of interest to me. All kinds of horror, body horror, Gothic Horror, historical, like all kinds, but also she does a Patreon that is not an audio patrons. It's an all content Patreon that is so worth the cost of admission. It's very, very worth it. I have found so many books that I have added to my TBR Betina I just read a book called Near the Bone that was came as a direct recommendation from Sadie and it's basically like I'm going to be talking about later but that book for example, is when I had never heard of before, it's by Christina Henry, who you love Kaytee. It's a great audio production and it's like if you if you like Vaster Wilds but you wanted it to involve Abominable Snowmen. Okay. So, you know, like who knew? Sadie knew that mother.horror. So if you like those kinds of reads, and you really like it when people are articulate and quick in helping you identify when a book is going to work for you. And she's great with comps and kind of vibes and she hasn't given me a recommendation that has done me wrong. So I wish that if that kind of book is something that you enjoy, I wish that you would follow mother dot horror on Instagram, pink splash light. Alright, 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 1:04:54

And you can find me at Kaytee at @notesonbookmarks on Instagram. Full

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:04:57

show notes with the title of every book 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.

Kaytee Cobb 1:05:08

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

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And if you want more of this content, now is the time go take advantage of the seven day free trial, which starts tomorrow morning, right

Kaytee Cobb 1:05:23

today. This morning. As soon as it's up, it'll be open.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:05:26

And if you like this kind of content, and you want more of it, now is your chance. Go right now while you're thinking about it. Join us for free for seven days on Patreon and take a look take a listen to all of

the content that is there for you. You can also help us by rating and reviewing us on Apple podcasts and shout us out on social media. Every one of those things helps us to find our perfect audience. Yes,

Kaytee Cobb 1:05:53

bookish friends are the best friends and we hope that you become one of them. Thank you for helping us grow and get closer to our goals.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 1:06:00

Until next week, may your coffee be hot and your book be unputdownable. Happy reading Kaytee.

Kaytee Cobb 1:06:06

Happy reading Meredith