



# Season 5, Episode 1: Blown-Away Books + What We Did Over Summer Break

Mon, 8/1 • 53:13

**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 those strong opinions. So get ready.

**Kaytee Cobb** 00:23

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 press books into your hands.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 00:33

I'm Meredith Monday Schwartz, a mom of four and full time CEO living in Austin, Texas, and I am refreshed from our break and ready to talk about books.

**Kaytee Cobb** 00:42

And I'm Kaytee Cobb, a homeschooling mom four living in New Mexic and I missed the lake, but I'm happy to be back on the mic. This is episode number one of season five and we are so glad you're here.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 00:54

Season Five. We're here.

**Kaytee Cobb** 00:57

Five? Gosh. That feels like a big number.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 01:00

I know it's definitely a number but yeah, I mean, it's hundreds and hundreds of episodes, but it is yes, we're both really glad to be back on the mic. We are. So a couple things, we're gonna let you know a few things. In our deep dive today, as always the beginning of the season, we do a deep dive about what we did on our summer break. So what reading did we do or not do? How did that change from normal? So we'll talk about that later on. And we are going to start off with Patreon. But before we do that, I want to let you guys know that you have to listen to the show all the way through this week. And that is because we are going to press books into your hands this week. But friends, it is the last time that we are going to be pressing books into your hands. Because we have a new end cap segment.

Thanks to the bookish friends. Thanks to our listeners, we got a fantastic idea. We're going to tell you what that is. But you have to listen all the way to the end of the show to hear it.

**Kaytee Cobb** 02:00

Yes, that's a teaser. We don't do teasers very often, but you get one this week.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 02:04

Absolutely big tease. Alright, so first, it is the first day of the month. We love it when things are nice and tidy this way, the beginning of the month is the beginning of the season. And so we always in we keep the whole rest of our shows completely ad free. But we start out the first episode of the month with an ad for ourselves. And that is really helping us figure out if you aren't already a bookish friend for \$5 a month, maybe to convince you that you might want to try there's a couple of reasons this month that we think you might want to do that. Kaytee, do want to talk to them about that?

**Kaytee Cobb** 02:40

The first one is purely logistical friends. Patreon renews on the first of every month. So if you join on the first, your like trial period, if you will, for that five bucks is good for the entire month. You get all 31 days of August to check out all the content we have there. And we have a lot of content over there. So if you last week, were sitting at home in your reading chair, missing us and saying "Gosh, dark weeks are the worst," it's okay, we have you. We've got we've got your back times 120 ish episodes, so you can go over there and get access to everything we've ever made for patrons.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 03:18

Exactly. And that's really the other reason that we think you might want to consider it besides the fact that you love listening to a podcast without any ads in it for the entire rest of the month. You never have to have a dark week again. You can listen to All Things Murderful. You can listen to the brand new content that Kaytee is bringing. You can listen to the Indie Press List and we this month it the Indie Press List store is Bookshelf Thomasville. Annie B. Jones and her crew are bringing the fire with the stack that we're going to be talking about later on this week on Thursday. So it is a great time to become a bookish friend. Again. It's \$5 a month. It's a great way to support us. It's a great way to do some self care for you. We hope that you'll join us

**Kaytee Cobb** 04:00

Mischief Managed Meredith.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 04:02

All right, perfect. Okay, so let's get into it. Kaytee, what is your bookish moment of the week? Your first one of the season?

**Kaytee Cobb** 04:10

Okay, Meredith. So I am going to quiz you first. Do you remember assigning me homework at the end of last season?

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 04:17

Was it something to do with Judy Blume?

**Kaytee Cobb** 04:19

It sure was.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 04:20

All right. Yes, I do remember. I've been thinking about that.

**Kaytee Cobb** 04:23

Okay, well, just like when I was in school, I waited until the last possible moment before my homework assignment was due and this morning, I binge listened to Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret. Oh, I have to report back.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 04:37

Yes. What did you think?

**Kaytee Cobb** 04:38

So this is my first Judy Blume. As far as I know, I've never read any of her stuff before. It is just barely over three hours on audio, which is why I was able to do the entire thing in one morning. Did I think for myself that a middle grade novel from 1970, a 52 year old book would completely resonate with my middle school experience? No, I did not. Was I absolutely wrong about that? Yes, yes, I was. And I can admit it here freely on mic, I was a late bloomer like Margaret, waiting and waiting to get my period. And so 52 years after publication, I can tell you that this middle grade novel held up for a first time 38 year old reader, I felt like I absolutely understood Margaret, the like situations with questioning her faith, or what is faith, the situation with Spin the Bottle, all of it. I was like I, I was delighted.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 05:34

Yes, it is absolutely an evergreen classic. I think 100 years from now, girls, women will be able to read it and really resonate with it. So I'm so glad that you read it. That was one that I was because I'm 48 years old, I was lucky enough to grow up in the generation where we all were reading it at the same time. And we all were sitting at sleepovers trying to increase our bust. We were just thinking that we would be able to do that. And, yeah, all of her books have a very special place in my heart. But thank you for reading it Kaytee.

**Kaytee Cobb** 06:06

You know, if as long as you're not a mom, that gives your like seven or eight year old iPhone, I feel like everything... Like it doesn't even feel that dated to me, because that's the only thing missing is like, Oh, well, then I texted my friend and had her come over. Other than that, it feels like Well, this was I mean, this was my experience. And this is what my 11 year old is doing now. Like he's not waiting for his period, obviously. Right? His like childhood friendship experiences very similar to this. So it didn't even feel like that old to me, which I found very interesting.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 06:36

Good. So it's holding up that, you know, that was my concern, because I hadn't read it since I was 11, 12, 13. I was like, Huh, what's that going to be like, but I'm glad that it was good. Good. Excellent,

**Kaytee Cobb** 06:46

Perfect. What's your bookish moment?

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 06:48

My bookish moment of the week is I am super excited, you guys, in the middle of August, so just a couple of weeks from now I am going to be interviewing Catherine Ryan Howard, through Fabled. So Fabled does great author events. Fabled does great book preview events. So definitely get on their mailing list because man, they're all done via zoom. So you can just you can watch it anytime or you can do it live. The chat is always fire in those. And right around the middle of the month we are going to do an event with Fabled. Currently Reading and Fabled and I will be interviewing Catherine Ryan Howard about her new book, Run Time. Catherine Ryan Howard, of course, the author of The Nothing Man, 56 Days, all of her books are fantastic. I read Run Time. I really liked it. I'm super excited to talk to Catherine for the first time. I'm a gigantic fan girl, really hoping I can hold it together. But that is one that I think it's going to be a lot of fun. So definitely my bookish moment of the month is going to be been able to do that.

**Kaytee Cobb** 07:45

Do not miss that. I'm feeling like the slightest bit of betrayal that I'm finding this out at the same time as everybody else.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 07:52

Well, the only reason for that Kaytee is because I was just today solidifying details of it. So I didn't want to say anything until I knew for sure that it was going to happen. But poor Catherine, you know, she's in Ireland. So she it's going to be one o'clock in the morning when she's talking to us. And it's going to be like seven o'clock in the evening for us. So she is very committed to, to doing her best to be you know, the fantastic author and everything that they have to do these days, but she's just a delight. She cracks me up just as a person. And I'm really excited to talk to her about Run Time and so it's gonna be good. I'm looking forward to it.

**Kaytee Cobb** 08:29

I'm excited. That sounds wonderful.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 08:32

All right, Kaytee, let's get to our current reads. What is your first current read?

**Kaytee Cobb** 08:37

Okay, my first current read this week and I had a lot to choose from because we have been off for so long is Stay Gold by Tobly McSmith. Oh, my heart, wrenching it out of my chest and beat it to a pulp why don't you. This is a debut YA novel from 2020 that was pressed into my hands by bookish friend Aimee Iniguez and was right up my alley. Our main character is Pony. He is trans and just started at a

new school and is trying to fly under the radar. This is known as "going stealth". So he's starting school without all the baggage of having been known by his dead name and his assigned gender at birth. But that means that every bathroom break is a little bit terrifying, that someone could find out his secret at any moment because he doesn't want all the weight of like being picked on by the jocks and the everybody, right? We also meet Georgia. She's a cheerleader at the school who runs with the popular crowd but wonders if this year she'd like to focus more on academics, or if that'll kill her reputation. Either way, she's for sure not dating this year, because this is a wide net. Well, on the first day of school, when Georgia and Pony lock eyes, they both have something to lose if they pursue their obvious connection. Now with the name Pony and the title Stay Gold, readers of a certain age will notice the outward connections to The Outsiders by S.E Hinton. There are absolutely coming of age and fitting in storylines here, just like the classic novel. I did find a tweet from S. E. Hinton from about a month before this book released, who posits that this book is a total ripoff of The Outsiders? She is spicy and fiery on Twitter?

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 10:17

Oh, Wow, I wasn't expecting that Kaytee. That's not where I thought that was going.

**Kaytee Cobb** 10:22

I know, I was shocked as well. I will say that the book The Outsiders is mentioned one time in passing in this book. And while the title and the title character do have nods to The Outsiders, that is the only way that it's connected. And it's very clear that S.E Hinton had not read this story, before she decided to make these allegations, and it's really unfortunate. It's really sad, frankly. But all that being said, I didn't feel it was derivative of the classic. And it doesn't even feel like a modern retelling of that beloved classic story. The Outsiders has a few really tough scenes though. And this one does. Also, Pony is not fully accepted by his dad and that causes a lot of familial strife. And there's also a scene that's really rife with anti-trans sentiment and some violence. It's hard to read, especially if this journey is personal to you or a loved one. Anyway. All that being said, I gave it five stars. I binge listened to it in a single day. I loved it from beginning to end. I was so glad that Aimee pressed it into our bookish friends hands. It's Stay Gold by Tobly McSmith.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 11:27

Oh, that sounds so good. I love that.

**Kaytee Cobb** 11:30

It was really good.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 11:32

All right, my first current read is bringing a big fat juicy fantasy novel, which you guys know, every once in awhile this is just my favorite, favorite way to go. And this was a great summer read. This is Scorpica by G.R. McAllister. I loved this one. Here's the setup. When our story starts, there has been 500 years of peace between the five queendoms of our story, but that ends when girls inexplicably stop being born. As the drought of girls, which is what it's called, lasts years and years and years, it sets of a cascade of political and personal consequences across all five queendoms of this known world, throwing long standing alliances out the window as each queendom begins to turn on each other, and

new threats to each nation rise from within. This book is so good. Okay, we've got a warrior queen, who must rise from the childbirth bed. She has just given birth to fight for her life and her throne. This was an epically memorable scene. We have a healer in hiding trying to protect the secret of her daughter's forbidden power. We have a queen whose visceral desperation to retain her power leads her to risk using some very dark magic. We have a really wonderful magic system, which is drawn from sand. It's so cool. I loved the world building. I loved the magic system in Scorpica. The history and structure of the five queendoms was fascinating. And I was taken in from the beginning. There's the Amazon like Scorpicans who depend on their ability to produce daughters to join their warrior ranks, and as their nation dwindles, all manner of unrest begins to grow amongst the Scorpicans. And then there's the magical Arcans, the record keeping Bastion, the farming Sestia, and the traders T R A D E R S of Paxim. So these are our five Queendoms. And all the Queendoms are ruled by women. And they depend on daughters to be their heirs. So basically, this is a story where you come for the matriarchy, but you stay for the fantastic storytelling. It's so well done here. I especially like the sections on Arca because that region has its own specific politics, and this very specific magic. And it was almost like a story within the story. I think those sections were my favorite, but I loved all of it. I think part of the reason this was such a big hit for me, and I'm finding this over and over again is that there were plenty of characters to root for. But there were an equal number of characters to really hate. And I really liked that mix. And then there were some characters that were one and switched to the other halfway through. But in ways that made sense. And this just made it so page turning because you just you everything was very fluid. You just didn't know what was going to happen. Next, we come at the story from multiple points of view. And I loved the fact that we kept getting more and more interesting characters. As I get to each new chapter, I would say, Ooh, she's interesting. I will say that there's plenty of gory battle and that there are some scenes involving several different kinds of sex. This did not involve very much of the book and I don't feel like it was the focus of the book at all but I would be remiss if I didn't at least say that it's in there, right. We're all trying to protect Mindy from these kinds of reads. If you like novels with good examples of female friendship, this is going to be a novel for you. If you like warrior women who rule with strength, but also wisdom and female heart, this book will be for you. If you like Circe, this book will be for you. I should mention that it says there right on the cover of this book that this is book one of the five queendom series. And so while most of the big plot questions are wrapped up at the end of this book, we also have a clear bridge to the next book happening. That didn't bother me at all. There was plenty of resolution. There's no release date yet for the second book, but I can promise you I will be pre ordering it from my indie the second it is. This is Scorpica by G R. McCallister.

**Kaytee Cobb** 15:59

So you're for sure going on to book two. I love that.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 16:03

Yes, absolutely. I liked this book as much as I liked Furyborn like this is it's a...

**Kaytee Cobb** 16:07

I was gonna ask about Furyborn.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 16:09

Yeah, it's it's if you like Furyborn, this is going to be in your wheelhouse. It's so just cinematic page turning fantasy.

**Kaytee Cobb** 16:18

Awesome. Love that. Okay. My second book this week is a minority opinion according to the entire rest of the world. Okay, I want to talk about Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow by Gabrielle Zevin.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 16:37

I was just getting ready to start this Kaytee and I saw you had just finished it.

**Kaytee Cobb** 16:41

Oh, maybe I shouldn't talk about it.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 16:43

No, no, no, I want to know.

**Kaytee Cobb** 16:45

Okay. Well, first, let me say there are 5000 ratings on Goodreads. And if you count four and five stars, 90% of people loved this book. I am an outlier. Okay, so Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow is the newest release from Gabrielle Zevin, author of books that I have really loved in the past including The Storied Life of A.J. Fickry and Young Jane Young, both fantastic novels. This book was highly anticipated by so many in the bookish community. Our main characters are Sam and Sadie. They first met as young kids in a hospital. Sam was there having another surgery on the foot that was crushed in a car accident. Sadie was there because her sister was undergoing chemo. So they're both there a lot. It's enough time that they get to spend in like recovery rooms, playing games together, especially Oregon Trail that a friendship does form. That was the beginning of a friendship that quickly crashed into a fiery crater. But then is rekindled more than a decade later at a subway station in Boston. It then spans states and decades and success and heartbreak, and disability and death. This book is really a book about friendship, but the backdrop is video games. Soon after that new meeting Sam and Sadie decided to collaborate on a video game. And within just a few months, they are stars, young video game stars, having pulled together the groundbreaking game Ichigo. The two of them are complex and fully drawn characters. The side characters are rich and vibrant, even the ones you love to hate, and definitely marks one of my very favorite people in the book. And let me tell you, most people love this. For me, however, this book was a slog. It is 416 pages, and for me that was too long by a solid 100 pages. Mary did let me know when I recorded with her last and I had already started it that you don't become really invested in it until about halfway. That was true for me. I pushed to that halfway point and by then I did care about the characters and what was happening to them, especially Sadie, Sam and Marx. But that means I had already read 200 pages where I was really bored often, and feeling like nothing was happening. I've heard regularly that you don't need to care very much about video games to care about this book. And I don't care about video games except for Oregon Trail because I'm a child of the 80s. But that's about it. Overall, I found this book to be too big for its britches, and that bummed me out more than anything. I wanted another hit out of the park from Gabrielle Zevin because I adore her writing. Our sweet Mary though gave it five stars and calls it a work of art. Publishers Weekly called

it one of a kind as an achievement. I found it to be dull and overwrought. But I will admit that I finished that second 50% in about three days versus the first 50% which took me more than 10 because I was plodding so hard through it. So I ended up giving it two and a half to three stars. And it's Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow by Gabrielle Zevin.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 19:44

Okay, well, you're right when you say that huge number of people love it. But, you know, not everybody does. We oftentimes will have outlier, you know, outlier opinions. That's all right.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 19:48

Okay, so we're going from a big book that everybody has heard about to a book that I will guarantee you most nobody has heard about, but you should because it's really really good. This is true crime and it is called *The Suspicions of Mr. Whicher, A Shocking Murder and the Undoing of a Great Victorian Detective* by Kate Summerscale. Okay HSPs you need to miff for a second because even the setup of this is hard, but I can't get around it. This is true crime. All right. It's the shocking nature of the murder that made this case so groundbreaking. Here's the setup. In June of 1860, little toddler boy, a three year old Saville Kent was found at the bottom of an outdoor privy with his throat slit. The crime horrified all of England and because of the press coverage, it led to a national obsession with the art, the brand new art in 1860 of crime detection, which is ironic because the case ends up destroying in the process the career of perhaps the greatest detective in the UK at the time. But in 1860 the quote unquote detective was a relatively new invention. There were only eight of them in all of England at that time, and they were rarely called out of London. But this crime was so shocking that Scotland Yard sent its best man to investigate. And that man was Jonathan Whicher. Whicher quickly believed the absolutely unbelievable that someone within Saville's family had killed the little boy. It was kind of a locked room situation. But without sufficient evidence or a confession, his case was circumstantial, and inspector Whicher returned to London in absolute shame, and he never really recovered, though he would be vindicated five years later. The real legacy that he leaves though, is that this case is often cited as the inspiration for so much detective fiction that came later and Jonathan Whicher is that prototype. So I had really been craving some good quality True Crime. Guys, I feel like a lot of true crime that's been coming out lately is either about a case I'm not interested in or doesn't have a resolution and or it's just badly written. And none of those things do it for me. So I was really excited when I was perusing the shelves at Half Price Books, which has become my go to place to look for true crime you're gonna be hearing about more good true crime coming, and I picked this one up. It was excellent. This book, like I said, is completely true. It's completely based in fact, but in its structure, it is modeled after a Victorian detective novel. Oh fun. The murder itself is horrible. And the set of suspects is small as we know someone in the house did it. Or we think we know that. Our lead character is that fantastic Jonathan Whicher, one of those eight Scotland Yard detectives, and he is exactly what you want in a detective. He is quiet. He is incredibly smart. He is very observant, and he is not afraid to get to the bottom of things, no matter how messy it means that he will get. This book takes us through the crime and the investigation after and then in the second half of the book, it gives us not only a full and complete resolution to what happened to this sweet boy, but it also helps us to see the back half of what should have been a successful detective career for poor Inspector Whicher. This book absolutely reads like the best Victorian novel, although it has much more accessible language and I'm so glad that I read it. If you like detective novels like Sherlock Holmes, and Agatha Christie, if you love the historical mysteries



by Anne Perry, if you really wish that Edgar Allan Poe had written more about Auguste Dupin, or if you're obsessed with Jack the Ripper, this book will be for you. This is *The Suspicions of Mr. Whicher* by Kate Summerscale. Alright, what's your third book?

**Kaytee Cobb** 19:48

Yeah, it happens.

**Kaytee Cobb** 24:09

Okay, my third book I am in love with. It's *A Caribbean Heiress in Paris* by Adriana Herrera. If my review for this book could include just one soundbite it would be rawr, because holy bananas. This was a May pick for the Indie Press List from Cafe Con Libros in Brooklyn, New York. Adriana Herrera has written a metric ton of romance over the years of her career, and this is her latest release, which came out in May of 2022. Her bio says she loves writing stories about people who look and sound like her, people getting unapologetic happy endings. And so we travel abroad to Paris in 1889, to the Exposition Universelle, where merchants from all corners of the globe will showcase their wares. Luz Alana Heith-Benzan arrives with 300 casks of rum from her family's employee owned distillery, ready to take on the world as one of the only women participating in the exposition. When her table is unceremoniously taken over by James Evanston Sinclair, he goes by Evan, the Scottish Earl of Darnick, she has to stand up for herself and she walks away feeling frustrated but vindicated. Evan however, walks away, utterly entranced by this fiery femme fatale from Santa Domingo. What follows is a marriage of convenience trope in which they both further their own aims, but feelings grow anyway. This is the first in Herrera's new series entitled *Las Leonas*, which are *The Lionesses*. This group of friends must each get their own book because it's a series eventually and I am for it. The steam factor here is off the charts. Fantastic. Yep. As in when I thought about Mindy listening to the story, I cackled witchy laughter of glee, thinking about how much it would set her cheeks afire. Luz Alana and Evan both have strong personalities, an eye for business and take no ish from anyone. I pumped my fist in the air with feminist delight anytime Luz had to stand up for herself because she embodies the strong woman so well. When we set it up for the Indie Press List, we mentioned, Meredith that Herrera so seamlessly makes her romance diverse that you don't even notice it. It doesn't feel like a bingo card to check off. Instead, her characters are varied in race, class and sexuality. And it's just part of the story. If you're looking for an open door, historical romance that is feminist and diverse and sexy as all get out, look no further and clear your calendar because this is the perfect fit. It's *A Caribbean Heiress in Paris* by Adriana Herrera.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 26:48

Yes. I cosign on this recommendation, for sure. Absolutely love it. It's got a gorgeous cover. It's all the things that I like in my romance. It's you know what I mean? It just fits that perfect, checks all the boxes for me. And you're right. I hope she does a really big series here because I love the way she writes her, especially her female characters.

**Kaytee Cobb** 27:09

Yes, I will add, I did not listen to it. I read it on paper. And I know everybody's like, well, Kaytee listens to romance and Meredith does not. I did not listen to it because a friend of ours did and she said she did

not appreciate the way that the narrator did the accents, especially for the Scottish guy. So it wasn't a hit for her on audio. So I'll just add that here.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 27:30

Well, and like I said, it's got a beautiful cover. It would be gorgeous. And yeah, it's got a really nice cover. Like you could definitely read it at the beach or the pool, and people would be like, Oh, that looks like a good book. It's not like an embarrassing romance.

**Kaytee Cobb** 27:41

Right. Exactly. Yeah.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 27:42

Okay, well, I am bringing my humdinger in the third spot, too, because I am so excited to talk about *The Displacements* by Bruce Holsinger. This book was probably my favorite book that I read over my summer break. I absolutely love it. I feel like I want to press it into everybody's hands because it's one of those books that most people will just be completely pulled into. So if you haven't heard about it, here's the setup. As we start our book, we meet the Larsen-Hall family who lives in Miami, Florida. The dad's a successful surgeon, mom Daphne is an artist. They've got three kids in their blended family. But then hurricane Luna, the world's first category six hurricane, hits Palm Beach and destroys it. Millions of people lose their homes and when I say lose their homes, I mean like the land it was built on is gone. They are, no one is rebuilding, it is gone. Houston is gone too. It's a big one guys. The family becomes separated and their lives are completely upended. They go from living the ultimate Miami luxe to being in a mass exodus of evacuees who are put into a FEMA mega shelter in a hot minute. They very quickly have to wrap their brains around this new normal and they have to survive in this new normal and very frankly, this family is not equipped to do a lot of surviving. But the fun doesn't end there. We also are following other characters, including a slimy insurance salesman turned drug dealer, and the badass woman who runs the mega shelter. And we've got a whole other cast of characters whose stories swirl around and then converge together to page turning ends. Kaytee, you know that I am all about Cli-fi right? Climate fiction. I love it. It's my new favorite genre. I feel like I could read them over and over and over again. This book has an amazingly propulsive plot. It has lots of details about the storm itself. Although my good friend Elizabeth Barnhill who recommended this to me from *Fabled* she did say she's the one she loved it but she said the one thing I wish I had more and more and more of was storm details. So this isn't a book that focuses the whole, the whole book is not about the storm. It's about storm and then aftermath. Okay, so we have the storm and it's and what happens afterwards. We have characters that you get to both see before and after the storm. And then you really have a lot of context about them and you care a lot about them. And then we have a through line of humanity, the whole way through that I think is just done really, really well. This was a surprisingly masterful read because I thought it was just going to be a summer thrill. This had so much more depth than that. I loved the family elements here, most completely. Bruce Holsinger does an amazing job of making us care about this family. And I couldn't help but put myself into the shoes of one particular character. And I was cringing and gasping out loud as things were happening to this character. I think it was so visceral because this book has so many details that make you feel as if you are the one going through the this displacement. The dawning knowledge that the life that you were living is now completely gone is absolutely horrifying. And it creeps up on you in this book in the most perfect way. I found myself

constantly looking around my house and thinking I need to be really grateful right now that I can like take a shower, and sleep in a bedroom with the door like these things were really occurring to me fast and furiously. So as I said, I'm all in for climate fiction. I feel like I could read it all day long. I feel like we need stories like this to show us what could happen if we don't make major change. And I think fiction is a really easy way for most of us to kind of get that drift. This is a five star read for me and it's one of those books that I think will please people who love character development, but won't leave behind those of us who love a good strong plotline. There's so much going on here, but the author never loses his thread or his through line. I absolutely love this book. And now I am interested in picking up The Gifted School which was by the same author. So this is The Displacements by Bruce Holsinger.

**Kaytee Cobb** 31:54

I did read The Gifted School and I'm very interested in picking this one up.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 31:58

So you liked The Gifted School?

**Kaytee Cobb** 32:00

I read The Gifted School.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 32:02

Okay. Okay. You did not necessarily like it.

**Kaytee Cobb** 32:06

It was fine. It didn't end the way that I wished it had. But, he does write characters very well. Yeah. So

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 32:16

I feel like that's exactly what he does really well. And I've heard people say, if you did like that book, and like his writing style, especially his writing style, then this book is even better.

**Kaytee Cobb** 32:26

Yeah, perfect. Yeah, I'll pick it up for sure.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 32:28

Okay, so those are our six current reads cainy. And so now we are going to do probably what will end up being not super long, deep dive about our homework, which was, what did we do on our summer vacation? So as you've said, Kaytee, we do our scheduling so that we can have what ended up being almost five weeks off of recording the big show. And that creates much more room in our schedule to do some different things. So Kaytee what, what was something that you did differently because we were on the big show break?

**Kaytee Cobb** 33:02

Well, our family took an epic road trip. We drove 42 and a half hours altogether, 2800 miles from the end of June to the beginning of July. So in June, I finished fewer books than normal for this year, because I got a lot of great family time. I was around people that I haven't seen, of course, during the

entire pandemic, but sometimes even for years before that, so getting to catch up with cousins that live all the way across the country for me because we were all there for a wedding. My cousin Kelsey got married. Onalee was the flower girl. She claims it was her wedding. Not Kelsey's wedding.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 33:39

Yeah, well it felt like that.

**Kaytee Cobb** 33:41

It felt like it felt like Onalee's wedding. It was really special. We spent time by the lake. I could live at the lake. I want a lake house someday. It was just every morning I would go out on the dock and every evening that's where I ended my night. It's my favorite place.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 33:58

Yeah, yep, lake house would be an absolute dream. Well, good. So you used it to spend a lot of really really good family time which is excellent as I did more reading than normal over our break. I actually feel like I was able to get to a place where I was able to spend that time we would have been working on the show I was able to say you know what I'm going to spend this reading because I always talk about how we don't have enough time to do that. But I did find that my reading over the summer was tending, my mood was tending toward big as it almost always is big sort of commercial summer reads so there are some summers where I find myself going to more classics or that kind of thing. I didn't I wasn't interested in a quiet book this summer. I wanted just some bigger splashy new release kinds of books but then I did do a reread, a re-listen on audio of Glass Houses which is I think the thirteenth in the Louise Penny Inspector Gamache series. And I'm actually going to be bringing that to the show because I had a lot of insights as to why that series is so great based on that particular book. But it was really, that's the kind of thing that I wouldn't normally do. But that we were on our break and I got a new puppy when we were on our break. That was one thing that I did do. And his name is Blue, and he is a blue Boston Terrier. And he has bright blue eyes. And he is only about six pounds right now. So he's just the cutest thing that you've ever seen in your life.

**Kaytee Cobb** 35:34

And he's the cutest thing.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 35:36

He's really cute. He's a very good boy. And so, a lot of time, a lot of time, as you know, when you take when you adopt an eight week old puppy is going outside, giving puppy plenty of time to use the bathroom outside all of those things. And so I've gotten a lot of outside reading, and a lot of that's been on audio because it's just kind of a quick, easy way to be able to follow him around in the yard, but I can still be listening to a book. And that's the great thing about getting a puppy you having the dog who's your sort of partner in life is they don't mind you if you're reading a book or listening to a book.

**Kaytee Cobb** 36:12

Yeah, definitely. You can be just physically present and that's good enough for them.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 36:16

He is like you want to read for three hours and I'm just gonna sleep on your lap. I am golden. So yeah, that's that was getting Blue is that the highlight of my summer break.

**Kaytee Cobb** 36:27

Okay, I also have a kid update because my kids have done a lot of reading this summer. And I want to like highlight that a little bit. So first, I will say they counted their bug bites. We don't have mosquitoes in Santa Fe. So when we went to the lake in Minnesota, they were updating me every day. I'm up to 19 bites. I'm up to 23 bites. And I was like oh children, your your lives are so privileged that you don't know, you know that you can have 100 bug bites on your body at a time like it's gonna be okay.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 36:57

I was gonna say I am covered in mosquito bites you would not even believe Texas, right? Not friendly in the summer.

**Kaytee Cobb** 37:05

Right? Micah my oldest son who is almost 12 binged the entire Lunar Chronicles series by Marissa Meyer starting with Cinder. My almost nine year old binged all of Nevermoor, or the three books that are out so far by Jessica Townsend. And my almost six year old is getting a Kindle for his birthday next week, because I like to empower them to read past their bedtime, as often as possible and as early as possible. So he's getting the kids version of the Paperwhite, which is exactly the same, except it comes with parental controls and a case which is perfect for him. Right.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 37:39

That's excellent. I have been having a hard time getting Jackson to read this summer. He's always you know, he's been a reluctant reader for a while.

**Kaytee Cobb** 37:45

He's so busy, too.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 37:47

He's busy, but he really I mean, come on, you know, we can put down Fortnite for a while and we can read for 20 minutes, but he just acts like it's the biggest ask. He asked. Like I've asked, I've asked him to climb to the top of Mount Everest. It's just the biggest sturm and drang every single time and it's I just feel like, you know, I know that 10 Almost 11 is, you know, not a great time for a lot of boys wanting to read on their own. I think it's so wonderful that your that your boys do, Kaytee and you're clearly are doing something right that I have not caught on to because yeah, Jackson is just more reluctant than ever, and we're just going to ride out this phase. You know, we just continue to say no, we do 20 to 30 minutes of reading a day, no matter how we feel about it. But I will look forward to a day when he actually wants to read.

**Kaytee Cobb** 38:34

Yeah, we do have we do have the problem, though, that you were already talking about with Blue and the earbuds that sometimes I have to be like, "Hey, Micah, eyes on me. Please. Can you turn that off for

a second because you cannot be listening to audiobooks all the time," And he's like, "but you do". I'm like, oh, pot kettle. Dang it. Yeah, seriously? Absolutely. That's its own problem.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 38:57

All right. So the other thing that I love to do over the summer is I really love to listen to audiobooks by the pool and I love to swim and I'm going to put air quotes around swim okay because let me tell you what this looks like. This is me in a pool with a pool noodle and my earbuds in. I'm not, my face and hair and my Ray Bans are not getting into the water so my son's oh you can't even call that swimming. I'm like look, I am making my way back and forth across the pool under my own power. But it does involve the pool noodle which is my precious and I will do an hour even though our pool Kaytee our pool water, yesterday morning. 92 degrees. It's bath water, so it's bath water. So anyway, but I still enjoy me and my pool noodle, Barry, we go back and forth with each other and we listen to audiobooks and I enjoy that about the summer.

**Kaytee Cobb** 39:55

I love that

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 39:56

I'm very tan. So there's that

**Kaytee Cobb** 39:58

You are very tan

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 40:00

There's that

**Kaytee Cobb** 40:01

It's lovely. Yeah.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 40:02

So anything else about your summer that was was different for you? Are you back in your normal... Let me ask you this, are you back in your normal reading routine?

**Kaytee Cobb** 40:11

I would say I am mostly back in my normal reading routine, except my kids are doing day camp this week and then overnight camp in two weeks. So I've got like different permutations of my children around the house, which is still out of routine. So it ends up being a little bit like, oh, I have to, you know, set that aside and be able to attend to this situation that normally would have been kind of worked out on its own. So that's a little bit out of the ordinary, but otherwise, we're kind of back at home, getting into the groove of doing regular chores, that kind of thing.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 40:42

And you go back to school, you homeschool, but do you go back to school on a certain day? Or have you like, do you not even know when school like I know what day school will start for Jackson. Do you know?

**Kaytee Cobb** 40:52

I will probably start watching people start school and say, Okay, great. Next Monday, we're gonna start school, because I'll kind of base it on what other people are doing. But I don't have a date planned yet. It'll probably be around mid August.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 41:05

All right. Well, that's the benefit of it. Right? You can decide that when you want to. It's great. All right, good. Okay. So as we said, you guys, we you guys remember at the end of season four, which was just a couple of weeks ago for you and a long time ago for me and Kaytee, we, I said kind of nonchalantly, not not really having any idea what was gonna happen next, I said, "Hey, you know, we need to find something that's not the books we press segment", because apparently I've been complaining about it since season one. I didn't even remember that.

**Kaytee Cobb** 41:35

Somebody found evidence on season one, episode 24 that it's been difficult for a long time.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 41:41

Right. So years of years of difficulty. And so I said, a if anyone has any idea for something else that we can do? Let us know. I honestly thought like maybe five people would be like, Oh, think about this. Holy Hannah. Kaytee, I feel so bad. Because you were the one who ended...we underestimated you all. I did. And I think you probably wouldn't have but then you you know, you put everything together, we looked at a document,

**Kaytee Cobb** 42:07

which was eight pages, single spaced,

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 42:10

Oh, my god, amazing ideas. I mean, just some really, really, there were not only was there the idea we ended up choosing from that group, but there were many, many great ideas that we you know what I mean? So I feel like, if we get sick of doing this next thing, we have six other things that we could go to, like, such brilliance in this in this group of readers. So we wanted to do one more episode of books that we want to press because we wanted you guys to know when you were listening to the last one. We didn't want it to just be like, surprise, we're done with that. So this is that episode. These are the last two presses that we will do and then we are going to tell you what our next cap segment will be going forward. And I think you guys are really gonna like it.

**Kaytee Cobb** 43:00

I think it's gonna be really fun. And I think even if we only stick with something for a year, we have 25 years worth of ideas now, so we're gonna be fine for a long time, which feels really good to me to not be like, "Oh, well, we're stuck pressing books for the rest of time. So we better find more incredible ones."

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 43:21

Right? Well, you know, I thought we could scare them. And we could say we actually got so many great ideas. We're going to completely just scratch everything about the show and start an entire show. No, yes. Because we have we got so many great ideas. Okay, Kaytee. So what is the last book that you are going to press?

**Kaytee Cobb** 43:37

Meredith, when I sat down to prep for this show, I had the most incredible song from Hamilton in my head from Washington when he sings One Last Time.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 43:48

Oh, yes, gets me every time.

**Kaytee Cobb** 43:51

And it makes me want to weep, but I will not. Because today I am bringing a book that brings me so much joy. It's The Guncle by Steven Rowley. So this is how I am going to teach them how to say goodbye with my one last time. In May of 2021, when this book released, it completely captured me. I'm officially a Steven Rowley fan girl, a completist. And I will continue to read whatever books he puts out, which I just checked, and the next one is expected in 2023, has a working title of The Celebrants because I just adore him. In this title we meet Patrick, his best friend of decades has just died from cancer. That happens off the page. That is before the book starts. His hurt is compounded by the fact that she was also his sister in law, having married his brother. At her funeral, said brother let's Patrick know that he has to check himself into rehab and he really needs Patrick to take their kids Maisie and Grant back home with him to Palm Springs, California. Patrick reluctantly agrees because he has to, but that means he's processing his recent grief and his older buried grief, all while trying to figure out how to Uncle these two kids full time. What follows is a summer that none of them will ever forget and a book that stamped itself on my heart. It could be the sarcastic and snarky way that Patrick doesn't follow the traditional parenting guidelines, yet loves these kids wholeheartedly. It could be my relationship with my own gay bestie and my kids Guncle and the way that so much of this felt like it could have been our own story, although hopefully not starting with my untimely death. It could have also been the summery vibes on the cover and reading it around my birthday that year, which for me, marks the start of summer. Everything about this book hit exactly perfect for me at the time, I just adore it. It's a five star read for me, I love it. So one last time, I will be pressing The Guncle by Steven Rowley.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 45:40

Oh, I think that's a really, really good press.

**Kaytee Cobb** 45:42

It's very Kaytee press.



**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 45:44

It is and my press is very Meredith press because I'm gonna go mystery and I'm going to give you the first in a 12 book series. So if you really liked this one, I'm not going to leave you hanging. You've got 11 more books that you can read. Alright, so the book that I want to press because I have to say that I was thinking I had just written up what I wanted to say about Mr. Whicher the you know, the the Victorian true crime that I talked about earlier. So I was in a Victorian mystery kind of mood. So I want to press Death at Bishop's Keep by Robin Paige. Here's the setup. Our lead character of this historical mystery is an American writer. Her name is Katherine Ardleigh. Kate is nosey, outspoken, free thinking. She is definitely not your standard Victorian woman to say the least. She is and then she's also American. She is asked to come to England after it's discovered that she's related to a rich, upper class British family. So at this point, everything is looking like my own childhood fantasy, because I would just love to have found out that I was related to a British family and I had like, you know, I had come into property in England. But then of course, because we're in the middle of historical mystery, a body is unearthed at a nearby archaeological dig. So enter our second character, Sir Charles Sheridan, who's an amateur detective, he shows just as much interest in the murder as Kate does, so they're equally interested. He is a very modern man himself. He especially for this time period, he believes that photos, fingerprints and science will change the face of crime fighting. The stage is set for some amateur sleuthing and some light romance and I for one could not be happier. This series is a delight. I love Kate and Sir Charles. I think their relationship is so much fun. It's a perfectly charming enemies to lovers kind of trope, but the historical mystery elements take center stage here. This is not a romance. Robin Paige gets the details right. You feel like you're right there with them, trying to figure things out without any of the tools that we totally take for granted now. This book doesn't have anything gory in it. It's just a smart mystery and a fun romance. If you love Sherry Thomas and Deanna Raybourn series, you will love this one. And like I said, there are 12 books to enjoy. And I have read six of them. So this is Death at Bishop's Keep by Robin Paige.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 45:44

It sounds so good. I love a great female centric mystery.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 48:11

It's good. That's excellent. Okay, Kaytee. so now we have pressed our last books.

**Kaytee Cobb** 48:16

A big reveal is coming.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 48:17

A big reveal is coming. We are going to tell you guys about what we are going to do for our end cap segment. Our new segment is going to be called "Join Us at the Fountain". All right? At the end of every episode, we are creating a place. You are going to come with us to this place. All right, you are going to come with us through whatever your favorite kind of garden is. For me, that's an English Garden. All right, so imagine your favorite kind of garden and in the middle of that garden, it's very quiet. There are plenty of benches and places for you to read and there is nobody who's going to bother you. And in the middle of this garden is your favorite kind of fountain. Whatever fountain you think it's especially great. I

like a very soft kind of sounds like someone peeing fountain. Vaguely. Yeah, yeah. Maybe you like a big Vegas fountain.

**Kaytee Cobb** 49:09

Splooshy, Bellagio.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 49:11

Right. So whatever kind of fountain does it for you, we want you to imagine so at the end of every episode, you are going to join us at that fountain. When we get to the fountain Kaytee and I are going to each toss a penny in and we are going to get a wish. So each week we will start the segment with something like "I wish..." dot dot dot. This idea came from listener Stephanie Town. She said what about an open ended statement that you could change every week? Something like I wish I could. One week it's go back and reread a book for the first time or the next week it's I wish I could make a movie from this book. We love this idea because we think there are so many places we could go with it Kaytee.

**Kaytee Cobb** 49:55

It's much more open ended than a press. We could still use this to press a book into your hands. I wish I could tell every reader to pick up such and such right? It leaves that possibility open, while also giving us the option to go negative one. I wish they would stop making such and such as a cover. I wish they would stop republishing this person's books.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 50:19

I wish I wish I could figure out how to deal with this bookish problem, because so maybe I need some bookish therapy,

**Kaytee Cobb** 50:25

Yeah,

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 50:26

I wish that I could go to this really specific place because I have three books that I've read that have been set there. And here are the three books, I love Stephanie's idea, because it just gives us so many directions that we can go based on our mood. And Kaytee, I also think it's really fun, because you and I then will be able to totally surprise each other with what our wish that week is going to be. And I am positive that we will open up a weekly thread on our social media and give you guys the ability to join us at the fountain and tell us when you throw in your penny, what wish are you asking for. So I think it's going to be really, really fun. Join us at the fountain you guys.

**Kaytee Cobb** 51:08

I am so excited to roll this out to have a new thing to share with all of you. But to keep everything else that you already love about Currently Reading. So you know that you're still going to have us regularly, you're still gonna get bookish moments and current reads and a deep dive, you're still gonna get listener presses at the end of the season, where they belong to enrich your TBR is all summer. And now we get to make bookish wishes every week as well, which will be perfect.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 51:35

I think it's going to be so much fun. So you guys, let us know what you think of this idea. We will roll it out for the first time in the next episode. And yeah, I'm really excited. Stephanie Town, we appreciate you so so much for this fantastic idea. And really, all of you again, thank you so much for taking the time and so many of you did to really think this through and give us these ideas. We are so grateful to you.

**Kaytee Cobb** 51:59

We are. Y'all are the best listeners on the podcast internet. We love you.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 52:04

No question. All right, that is it for this week. As a reminder, here's where you can connect with us. You can find me on Meredith at @Meredith.reads on Instagram.

**Kaytee Cobb** 52:13

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

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 52:16

Full 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 on our website at [currentlyreadingpodcast.com](http://currentlyreadingpodcast.com).

**Kaytee Cobb** 52:26

You can also follow the show at @currentlyreadingpodcast on Instagram or email us at [currentlyreadingpodcast@gmail.com](mailto:currentlyreadingpodcast@gmail.com).

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 52:32

And if you really want to help us become a Patreon subscriber. Again, it's \$5 a month and you get so much more content from us. You can also rate and review us on Apple podcasts and shout us out on social media. All of those things do so much toward helping us find our perfect audience.

**Kaytee Cobb** 52:50

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

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 52:56

Alright, until next week, may your coffee be hot

**Kaytee Cobb** 52:58

and your book be unputdownable.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 53:00

Happy reading Kaytee.

**Kaytee Cobb** 53:01

Happy reading Meredith