



Season 5, Episode 15: Circling Back + Getting Out of a Reading Funk

Mon, Nov 7, 2022 • 1:02:17

Kaytee Cobb 00:11

Hi 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 already know, we don't shy away from having strong opinions. So get ready.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 00:23

We're 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.

Kaytee Cobb 00:33

I'm Kaytee Cobb, a homeschooling mom of four living in New Mexico and snuggling under a blanket with a book is my favorite cold weather treat.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 00:41

And I'm Roxanna Kassam Kara, a mom, a marketer and a mood reader living in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. And I love it when the universe speaks to me through books. This is episode number 15 of season five, and we're so glad you're here.

Kaytee Cobb 00:56

Oh, I also love a universe speaking to me through books. I love a bookish serendipity moment. I'm very excited to hear more about this Roxanna.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 01:05

I'm excited to tell you about it, Kaytee.

Kaytee Cobb 01:07

Perfect. Right here at the top of the show. I'm going to let everybody know that our deep dive today is going to be about getting out of a reading funk. This happens to all of us. In fact, Meredith just talked about this last week. But Roxanna and I were ready to dive into it today, so be looking forward to that. But first, we have some mischief to manage. Roxanna, it's the first Monday of the month, which as you know, is the only time we ever have ads on Currently Reading. And it's an ad for ourselves. We're going to talk a little bit about Patreon today. Roxanna, did you know that we are super duper close to hitting our 2022 goal, which was 2,022 patrons because we like the little poetic justice of that, as of today

when we record which it changes every day, so this might not be current info for when it drops, we have 2,005 patrons, which means we're only 17 away from hitting that goal. So excited.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 02:00

That is so incredible. I know you guys messaged when you hit the 2,000 mark, and it's so amazing. This think of that many bookish friends all talking together and remembering and commenting. It seems like such a vibrant community. I love checking in.

Kaytee Cobb 02:15

It is so fun and bookish friends exist all over the world. We this month want to invite you to join us to be one of those last 17 to help us hit our goal for 2022. If you're listening, and you've thought about it, maybe this is the month you do it. And I'm going to give you a great reason to join. One of the things that we use Patreon income for is not just to keep the big show running an ad free, but also to pay the amazing women that are part of our team from our show regulars like Roxanna to our podcast manager, Megan who keeps us running like a well oiled machine. If you've ever been grateful for the lack of ads, or the breadth of our team, Patreon is probably the place for you. It's only five bucks a month, you get tons of extra content. You get buddy reads and spreadsheets and the Facebook group and the Mighty Networks group and all the rest. But perhaps most importantly, you can bring us one step closer to meeting that 2022 goal. And you'll know you're supporting a woman owned and woman operated business.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 03:13

I love that Kaytee and I will say that it is my favorite place on the internet is going to the Facebook bookish friends group. It never never fails to bring a smile to my face. And it just brings up ideas I never honestly would have thought of and it's just enriched my reading life so much. So here here.

Kaytee Cobb 03:30

Love that so much. So you can join at the link in our show notes. And that is our Mischief Managed. Roxanna, that means now we get to get into our bookish moments, the week the way we always start the show. What is yours, my friend?

Roxanna Kassam Kara 03:44

Okay, Kaytee, I think you know which one I'm gonna bring. So the very first time I was a guest on this show, was way back in Season Three, Episode Five. And I can see Kaytee smiling here. And you know, you know what I'm gonna bring. In my bookish episode back in season three had to do with my favorite childhood book, which is called There's A Rainbow in my Closet by Patti Stren. And I talked about how this book was really a touchstone of my childhood and how I read it over and over, and then eventually lost track of it as I grew up. And then as an adult, I talked about how I looked for it every time I entered a bookshop, but with no luck because it was out of print. And then one day I went to this dusty academic bookstore and there it was amongst all these tomes, and I was so amazed. And I took it off the shelf and opened it. And on every page, there was a sticky that said, Will you marry me? And I turned around and my boyfriend at the time, had a ring and proposed to me and the bookstore owner was waiting there with a bottle of champagne and two glasses. And honestly, it was one of the best moments of my life. Of course, I said yes. And it was just, it was just it's a highlight a bookish highlight

of my life, of course. So anyway, I talked about this moment on that episode, and last week you forwarded me an email from none other than Patti Stren herself, who is the author of this book and you know, honestly my longtime imaginary kindred spirit. And you said, you know, "I think this email is meant for you Roxanna". And she wrote about how she loves Currently Reading how she loves you and Meredith how she listens to every episode. And how she heard that episode. And she wrote the most like, effusive, heartwarming letter and she even made a little drawing for me and you know, There's A Rainbow in my Closet is filled with these drawings she had that that the main character Emma would make and it was like, Oh, my God, like Emma made a drawing for me this just like speechless. I don't think I've ever been starstruck before. But I was at that moment. I was literally bowled over. And it just as I said, in my bite size intro, it does feel like the universe talking to me through books. For years as a kid, I thought about writing the Patti Stren. Now I even looked up her address, and I kept it. And I never did. And I always think back actually about that moment. And like I really should have written her and I just should have let her know. And just think that she found me through the magic of this podcast of Currently Reading. It just felt like the most incredible full circle moment.

Kaytee Cobb 06:18

This is so great, especially because that was almost exactly two years ago now. We're at season five, Episode 15. And that was season three, Episode Five. So that was a long time back. But for that to get to be like a circle back bookish moment, from way back in the archives, if you will, it was so exciting for me even to open that email and be like, "Oh my goodness, Roxanna is going to be over joyed." This is so excellent.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 06:43

I really was and it just made me realize the reach of this podcast, like I would put something out there two years ago, and then my, like, favorite author from childhood would find it and contact me like, come on. That's, that's the kind of thing you read in books.

Kaytee Cobb 06:59

Seriously, it sounds like the plot of a novel. I love it. Well, that is a perfect bookish moment. And again, I love that circle back element. My bookish moment this week has to do with preparing for Halloween. So in real time, it's October 29. We have just a few days left. And we've been kind of crafting and doing some crafty things around this house, including many trips to both Joanne's, Hobby Lobby, Michaels, all the crafts stores. I ended up buying fleece and Minky fabric for each kid. Not for costumes, but to make them custom blankets for this winter. This is a bookish activity for two reasons. First is that Meredith and I talked a few weeks ago about our perfect fall reading ambiance. And the problem with mine is that I have one special blanket that I really love to snuggle under when I'm reading, and my kids like to steal it. They think it's not my blanket, it's for them. Right? And that ruins my fall reading ambiance. Well, no more, they each have their own blanket now that has a pattern they love on the front, and a fabric that is very soft on the back, which means I can cuddle with my favorite blanket and read to my heart's content. The other bookish thing about these blankets is that each of them now has motivation to sit on the couch snuggled under a blanket for long periods of time. And what's the best activity for that? I am finding them reading all over the house with their special blankets pulled on top of them.

They're like magical, the fact that they will find these blankets, go find a book because they want to snuggle with the blanket and the reading is ancillary to that. I love it so much. It's doubly bookish.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 08:39

That sounds so adorable. You've got to post some pictures of your kids everywhere like in snuggled up these little blankets. It's a perfect fall reading moment.

Kaytee Cobb 08:47

It is it makes me so happy. I love it so much. Okay, let's get into our current reads. What is your first book this week? Roxanna?

Roxanna Kassam Kara 08:57

Well, Kaytee, the first book I wanted to bring to the show today is called *The Woman Next Door* by Yewande Omotoso. I know this book has been mentioned on the show a couple times, but I loved it so much that I really wanted to make sure I gave it the full treatment. It's smart, interesting and thought provoking, but it's been buzzed about in a misleading way. And I really wanted to correct that. So, here's the setup. Hortensia and Marion are two women in their 80s who live next door to each other in a swanky housing colony in Cape Town, South Africa. Hortensia is a world famous fabric designer, and Marion was a leading architect. Sounds charming so far, doesn't it? Except that they loathe each other. This housing colony that they live in was Marion's first project as an architect and the jewel in her crown. In this colony, she designed the perfect house and the house she planned to live in for the rest of her life, until Hortensia managed to scoop it up first and moved in. And the envy and resentment Marion feels eats away at her, especially because Hortensia is Black. Hortensia is bitter and angry and dealing with the pains of old age. She is smart, and she's caustic and she has no time for the likes of Marion and her racist views, and she calls her on it on every turn. But now Hortensia has decided to renovate that award winning house that Marion built. And when Marion sees the construction equipment move in, she is seething. But there's an unexpected construction disaster and the women are forced into even closer proximity. As they confront each other, they learn to face some uncomfortable truths in their own lives. Now, this was such a unique and surprising premise. And it was one of my favorite books of the year. But it has surprisingly low ratings on Goodreads. I think it's 3.77 or something like that. And I think I know why. You know, I've seen this book described as Grumpy Old Men for women, or it's been described as howlingly funny. But let me say this, and this is important. This book is absolutely none of those things and readers who go in expecting it to be a light hearted heartwarming curmudgeon story will be dismayed and disappointed. And I think that's what's leading to those low ratings. I honestly think those were reviews on popular magazines and websites. And I'm not sure if those reviewers actually read the book. They just read the premise. This is what I don't know for sure. But it seems to me that they read the premise. And then they kind of seem like, Okay, this seems like a funny book. Well, this is what we'll put in. And then you see in those reviews, this is not what this book is. What this book is, is a slice of life novel that looks at the universal from a very small point of view. It's a very real portrait of two older women struggling with their past life choices, and the difficult history of the country they live in. It feels like an accurate portrayal of few female relationships. And the reckoning that comes with advancing age. It's a light hearted premise. But Omotoso really digs into deep issues here. These are not, you know, enemies to best friends like this. That's not the trope. This is enemies to enemies. Like they hate each other at the beginning and they maybe come to a grudging

compromise, but they're not best friends by the end of the book. But one of the things I love best about it is the writing style. Omotoso's writing cuts like a knife. She has a way of phrasing things, that just brings them into stark light. So one of my favorite lines from the book is "She tied a block of concrete to her ankle and let it drag her down. Hating after all was a drier form of drowning." Or she says, you know, it saddened her that what she considered the best thing about herself was a puzzle to her husband, which doesn't seem like a lot. But you know, you could sit with that line and think about it. So she has, you know, a lot of amazing lines there. She also does have some phrases that have an edge of humor. You know, she has this one line that says the medication took turns making Hortensia feel like a superhero and making her want to punch everyone. In other words, it had little effect on her. This book is unique. It's surprising, and it's thought provoking. And it was one of my favorite reads. I've never read anything like it. And to me, that's the making of a very good book. That's *The Woman Next Door* by Yewande Omotoso.

Kaytee Cobb 13:23

And it's a backlist gem. That's exciting.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 13:26

It's very backlist. And you know what I love about it is she's just really a masterful writer. And so as this house is deconstructed in and then reconstructed, the their relationship follows kind of that same path. So it's just a it's a really interesting look at a relationship between two older women that you don't get a lot. And though it's backlist, I didn't hear a lot of buzz about it. And the buzz I heard was wrong. So I wanted to make sure I brought it so that more people get to read it.

Kaytee Cobb 13:54

Correcting the record. Love it. Okay. My first book this week is called *Answers in the Pages* by David Levithan. So this short novel was on the listener press episode at the end of Season Four. I was intrigued by it, but I didn't pick it up until October for one reason or another. This is a book about banning books and what that looks like from a student perspective and a parent perspective. And what it looks like from the side of the marginalized voices who are represented in those pages. Here's the setup. Donovan is kind of our main character. But really, this is a book of interconnected storylines. He's a middle grader who is assigned the book *The Adventures* by his favorite teacher. He left it on the kitchen counter thinking nothing of it, and he certainly didn't expect his mom to pick it up and read it. But his mom does. Not only that, but she reads it the way that most of us would be horrified by: she reads the last line first and that puts a bee in her bonnet. So she flips back through the book, which is ostensibly about two kids trying to stop an evil genius. And then she takes it away from Donovan and sets up a meeting with the school principal. And suddenly the entire town is talking about this one middle grade novel, or more like freaking out about it, because no one knows for sure. But maybe the two main characters of this middle grade novel are gay? And is that okay for kids to read about? Because we don't even know for real right. Donovan's mom is trying to get the book banned from the school and Donovan is caught between his family and his teacher whom he adores, and his friends who are wondering what the big deal is anyway. Donovan isn't sure if the boys fall in love by the end of this book or not, although he does borrow the book from a friend to read the whole thing himself since his mom took his copy. So it doesn't keep it out of his hands. But he does know that even if that is what the end means, it shouldn't matter to him, or his classmates or his teacher, or its principal, or his mom.

This novel is short, as I mentioned, it's only 176 pages. It could have absolutely gone on the deep dive we did a few weeks back about short books that pack a punch, but I wanted to give it the full treatment. So I held it back for this slot. Between the main storyline of the book banning and the other interwoven storylines of the book within a book, I did wish it had been a little bit longer. Alternatively, I could have done without the book within a book stories, and gone deeper into the real world one instead, but spent all 176 pages there instead of trying to pull together this other storyline, because that is the story that packs a punch. That's the story in the real world that gets under your skin and into your heart, whether you're a kid or a parent, or a teacher, or just a reader. And we are all readers, and we all care about stories and what should and shouldn't be allowed to be read by others. This book is going on my read aloud stack for the year so that I can have the same conversations with my own kids, because the dialogue that this book has within it, and spurs outside of it. That's the gift and that's the one that I want to share with them. So I do think this book is wonderful and important. And even a little bit heart squeezey by the end, but I do wish it were a little bit longer or a little less grounded in the story within a story. Overall, though, I really enjoyed it. It's Answers in the Pages by David Levithan.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 17:13

That sounds great, Kaytee and I love books that approach contentious issues like this from a different perspective. You know, we, I won't speak for everybody. But I can sometimes get polarized in my own point of view. And, you know, this is what books are for, like mirrors or windows. So it's nice to just sort of look into what that other perspective could look like, and how a caring mom might just want to, you know, keep her son protect her son from some of these things. And what does that look like? And then, like you said, have those great conversations with their kids about it.

Kaytee Cobb 17:42

Yeah, absolutely. It makes it very approachable, and it makes it easier for them to understand. What do you even mean by book banning? What does that mean, in the real world anyway? Because if I'm letting them read everything, what does that mean for that? You know, that's a good one. What's your second book friend?

Roxanna Kassam Kara 18:00

Well, my second book is a triple threat. It's a YA locked room murder mystery. It's set at a professional scrabble tournament in Malaysia. Have I got you yet?

Kaytee Cobb 18:12

I like Scrabble so I'm in

Roxanna Kassam Kara 18:15

it's called Queen of the Tiles by Hanna Alkaf. So Queen of the Tiles is a YA murder mystery romp that combines a locked room murder mystery, as I said, with teen dynamics, and a very well look at grief. So think of it as the bookish cousin to Gossip Girl and Pretty Little Liars but with soul. So I will say I'm not a big YA teenage angst person. But the Scrabble element here and the Malaysia setting really drew me in. So this story is that at the World Warrior Weekend, an annual scrabble competition that takes place in Johor Beru in Malaysia. A year ago, the winner of the tournament, the proclaimed Queen of the tiles, died mysteriously right after winning, and now her best friend Najwa Bakri is back to take the title and

avenge her death by solving the mystery. But suddenly, new posts start appearing on the dead girl's Instagram account with ominous word puzzles hinting at the killer's true identity. Now it's up to Najwa and her friends to figure out who the murderer is all while trying to be crowned the next Queen of the tiles. So this book sounds great. The premise pulled me right in and I will say it's deliciously full of drama, and rumors and secrecy and gossip, but with a scrambled twist. The wordplay is woven all the way through the story in a really entertaining way. I also really love the setting as I said, you know, I like to read books from all around the world. And I especially like books for locals as I call them. So these books are like the bars where the locals hang out, you know. They feel very much like a local book, not the top 10 tripadvisor sites, and the way the setting and the culture were woven in, and the pieces of dialogue that we're in Malay really made it feel authentic. I mentioned that this book has a soul. And that's another thing I really liked about it. So Najwa really is struggling with the anxiety and trauma caused by her best friend's death just a year ago. And the author is really thoughtful in the way she articulates Najwa's grieving process, capturing just how suddenly grief can engulf you, regardless of how much time has passed since the person you cared for died. Hana Alkaf also shows us how grief manifests differently in different people. But this is not a perfect book. And I would be remiss if I didn't mention a couple of things that bothered me. So the Scrabble word play is absolutely smart. And it worked really well, until it didn't. So it does start to feel a bit gimmicky, especially when the words used to link to the plot start to feel like a bit of a stretch. It felt like Hanna Alkaf was trying to cram in all the big words she knew, and then tie them to the plot in a way that started to feel a bit tenuous. And then finally, I'll say, you know, the mystery is a bit flimsy here and requires a bit of a suspension of disbelief. To me, it's really more secondary in the book, the setting and the Scrabble, steal the show here, but you do have to suspend your disbelief and just go with it. Don't ask pesky questions like why are there no police detectives involved? Where are the parents here? Why did it take a year to solve this mystery? Why are these teens running around trying to solve it? Just let it go... let it go and just enjoy the ride. I found this book engrossing and a really fun read and I think if you like Dial A for Aunties, this light hearted who dunnit might be for you. And that was Queen of the Tiles by Hanna Alkaf.

Kaytee Cobb 21:44

That sounds very fun. I do, like Scrabble and I do like not asking pesky questions. I think that's a very useful thing to know.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 21:53

Sometimes it's nice going in because you know, you can get really hung up on those things. And some books that are really looking for accuracy, I think they're important to ask. Other ones where they're just teen romps, just you know, you're just gonna drive yourself into a tizzy thinking about them, and you just let it go. And think of it is those you know, popcorn thrillers, sometimes those questions don't make sense and you let it go. I'd put this kind of in the same category, but it is really fun. You can read it in one sitting. And it's just it's just an interesting departure. If you're looking for something fun and you know, murderly but not scary.

Kaytee Cobb 22:26

Okay, I like that. And those pesky questions. Those are the ones that got in my way during Dial A for Aunties as well so I can see how that might be a good connection point here. Okay, my second one this week is nonfiction. And it's called Miss Chloe by AJ Verdelle. This book is nonfiction memoir, and was

just published earlier this year. Not long after Toni Morrison's death in 2019, AJ Verdelle in these pages, chronicles her own writing journey and how it interweaves with her friendship her literary friendship with Toni Morrison the subtitle in fact is "A Literary Friendship with Toni Morrison." And goodness couldn't we all just take a little second to dream about what it would be like to have a friendship with someone as a stunning and like world changing and world shaping as Toni Morrison like Oh, Tony, can we grab some coffee? What? What it's just crazy, groundbreaking. AJ Verdelle's first novel, *The Good Negress*, was published in 1995 and won critical acclaim. It was also nominated for many literary prizes. But the most unexpected and life changing part of that newfound notoriety was that AJ met and then became friends with Toni Morrison through its publication, who was already legendary. Toni Morrison received an arc of the book and then blurb-ed it which was, of course, a dream come true for Verdelle because who would even think to dream that much less think it might come true? 25 years down the road, Verdelle tells the story of how she admired Morrison from afar received the blurb lifetime and how that blossomed into a friendship that formed and shaped them both. Being friends with Toni Morrison was sometimes a challenge. As in she challenged AJ to push herself to new heights, to think about her writing in new ways and to reach for new opportunities and reach a hand back to the writers coming up behind her. She was also a comfort and a blessing. They would spend hours talking inside Tony's apartment about everything from the books they were reading to the foods they were eating, sometimes totally devoid of any literary connection. She calls her Miss Chloe, because it's a more familiar term of endearment. So not everybody got to call Toni Morrison Miss Chloe, only the people very closest to her heart. This story of friendship is interwoven with riddles, own struggles with her second novel, and then with the time around and after Toni Morrison's death, when Verdelle reckons with her writing career as a whole, because even if you go look at her writing on Goodreads, now she has *The Good Negress*, she has Miss Chloe and then it's pretty sparse in between. There's not a lot happening for those other 25 years. This book is well written, and the parts about her daily life and interactions with Toni Morrison, a literary icon that nobody can argue with were interesting and written in vivid detail. But that didn't feel like the entire story of what this book was about. It was mostly about AJ Verdelle's own life and writing career with sprinkles of Toni Morrison for flavor. Even though I wanted more Morrison, I did really enjoy this overall. And I also added *The Good Negress* to my TBR as well. So I guess that's another win. This was Miss Chloe, *The Story of a Literary Friendship with Toni Morrison* by AJ Verdelle.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 25:46

That sounds fascinating and what a what a great lens to look at that amazing author in a more personal way that none of us will ever get. And you know, when you say, oh, no, there's always that question. Like, if you could have a dinner with anybody who would it be like she probably said, Toni Morrison and then actually got dinner when I said, like, come on. That's crazy.

Kaytee Cobb 26:05

But like many dinners, not just one she was like, there for her often. It's nuts. Yeah,

Roxanna Kassam Kara 26:11

That's that's I can't even imagine. But how incredible. Okay, well, the book I'm bringing next Kaytee is a direct answer to your wish a few episodes ago for an interactive reading experience, where you could taste the foods and drinks you're reading about,

Kaytee Cobb 26:27

Oh, fun.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 26:28

That sounds like such a Roxanna book.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 26:28

Yes. Well, I experienced this a few months ago, and it was one of the highlights of my reading life. The book is called *Infused: Adventures in Tea* by Henrietta Lovell.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 26:34

It is such a Roxanna book, but it didn't start out that way. So let me tell you. So Henrietta Lovell once worked in corporate finance, but she gave it all up to pursue her passion for tea and bringing high quality tea to the masses. So she visits farmers around the world who grow the best quality tea at small scale. This is a collection of essays where she visits tea estates and regales us with her experiences from around the world. From hunting wild rooibos tea in the cederberg mountains of South Africa amidst an epic thunderstorm to finding the hidden gardens of the Weishan in China, to visiting the Shire Highlands of Malawi and crafting the most exquisite breakfast tea. Lovell is like one of those people you meet at a party who's clearly the best storyteller in the room. And before long, she has every single person in the room hanging off her every word, and dinners just sitting getting cold on the table while people listen to her stories. She is completely an Enneagram seven, and I'm so here for it. I mean, she has a story about visiting the state that makes Jasmine Silver Tip tea in Fujian, China and she talks about how every June at the height of their summer, they pluck these Jasmine leaves just as they're about to release their scent. And then they bring them inside and layer them in baskets with this precious white tea called Sliver Tip. And then they close the doors and the heat of the Jasmine on the summer night scents this tea all night long. And then in the morning, they discard all these Jasmine leaves and then they pluck fresh ones, and they layer them with the tea again. And they do the whole thing again, every night for six nights until they have the most perfect scented tea. Like come on. Don't you just want to taste that tea?

Kaytee Cobb 28:28

Yes.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 28:30

So I randomly heard about this book in an article and I ordered it from the library. But I didn't have high hopes, like really a book about tea sounds like it's going to be pretty dry. But then I read it and I got all swept up as you can tell. And of course I wanted to see and touch and taste this tea. I mean, I wanted to taste what wild rooibos tastes like after a rainstorm. And I wanted to sip golden eyebrow tea crafted in ancient forest in Weishan. I was just completely enthralled. And so I googled Rare Tea Company. And I was thrilled when I found out that I could order this tea that was you know, Henrietta Lovell's company, and they shipped internationally. So I ordered a gift set for myself, which included a signed copy of the book, along with all the tea she mentions in it. So when it came, it was beautifully packaged all the way from Britain, and I would read a chapter and then immediately go and make myself a cup. It was honestly the most indulgent experience. Also, this was during lockdown, and I hadn't traveled

anywhere and small pleasures were really hard to come by. So this book really was a highlight. I honestly think the two things that saved me during the pandemic were rare tea and Meredith like that's what got me through. I will say that Lovell's style is charming, but a little over the top. She's brimming with enthusiasm and often gets carried away by her own writing. It certainly isn't for everyone, but I was charmed by her guilty pleasure and her fanciful prose. I mean sometimes it's nice to get carried away by someone else's unadulterated enthusiasm. And recently I picked it back up, you know, we're having a full on fall here with activities and travel and in person meetings back in full swing. And I gotta say, I'm just craving a little of that quietness from the lockdown. So in the mornings when it's still dark, I make myself a cup of that Jasmine Silver Tip tea and I go out on the front step and drink it while I watch the moon over the cedar trees. And just a little bit of calm in my mornings, which is just what I need. Now, the last thing I'll say that with the holidays around the corner, I wanted to recommend this is a wonderful gift experience. The book itself is beautiful. It's Jade and gold with this brocade on it. So it's very pretty. See that? Like it's just, it's, it's very giftable and very precious. Yes, it is. It's a little bit textured. Yeah, so it's just very pretty. So now you can't order the book and teas together in a gift set anymore on the website. But you can go to The Rare Tea website and order some of the teas and get them book separately. And I really think you'd make a great gift for anyone who needs to be reminded of the small but exquisite pleasures in life. It's really changed my life every day. Now I drink good tea, and I love it. It's such a moment in my life. So that's *Infused: Adventures in Tea* by Henrietta Lovell.

Kaytee Cobb 31:23

Well, between this and your recommendation for *The Monk of Mokha*, which you gave to Meredith, you're like changing our warm drink experience from both directions. Roxanna, I love it. I love it.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 31:36

I and I will say I'm not like, you know, I drink my Tetley Tea bag in a cop like I'm not a big fancy tea drinker, nor a big fancy coffee drinker. But these stories really just captured me both both of those books. I like hearing that. I like hearing it in a nonfiction sort of story account, that memoir account is what really pulls me in. And that's why I loved both of those books.

Kaytee Cobb 31:57

So excellent. I love it. So if you're a coffee drinker, you can pick up *The Monk of Mokha*. Yeah, and if you're a tea drinker, maybe *Infused* is the reason for your existence today. I love both of those. Okay, so now I have realized that we are coming up on three nonfiction recs in a row, which again, this is the first episode of November, Nonfiction November, maybe you're looking for some nonfiction to add to your TBR. So the third one I want to talk about today is my second book in today's current reads that came from last season's listener press episode. It's called *In the Shelter Finding a Home in the World* by Padraig O Tuama. In the press for this one, Abigail Moorish called it a companion and a candle for spiritual pilgrims. That kind of language, from just a regular human being gets me a little excited, and a little nervous, both/and right? When I listened to the press while we recorded, I thought this was a book of poetry. And it does have poetry in it in every chapter. But it's way more than that. It's not a book of poems. It has poetry in it. While reading this book, I kept picturing a labyrinth, not the ones of Greek mythology with a minotaur in the center that's gonna eat you and kill you. But the ones of the church, like sharp Cathedral in France, or the one outside my hometown Cathedral of St. Francis here in Santa Fe. It's a meandering path, doubling back on itself, wrapping close to itself and then traveling far away,

all while working its way slowly toward the center. There's an undercurrent of Catholic theology here, because this is O Tuama's memoir, and Padraig was raised in the Irish Catholic church, but he's also a gay man, and not accepted by his church or his community because of that. So if it sounds like I'm trying to sell you on some kind of churchy evangelicalism know that this is not that. He pushes back against the big C church, he questions its theology and its borders, and its exclusiveness. He questions the way that people talk inside it, while drawing near to and then pulling away from the ways that God is depicted within and outside the church. It's a literary journey, rather than a memoir in itself or a book of poetry. There's quite a bit of repetition in the way that poets use repetition and circling back in order to play with language and perception. This isn't a drink it down, chug it down book, it's more like a cup of tea. It's a slow burn, which you pick up and walk away from over and over again, maybe you leave it on your mug warmer, and it'll simmer on the back burner of your brain and your heart as you visit it over and over again. The small group of readers that I read it with took it at a pace of only one to two chapters a week, because that gave it time for us to sit in the words and meander around in that labyrinth a little bit before discussing them. So well I got excited about this book, and then even more so when I picked it up, because it's beautiful, and it has deckled edges and it has a very texture full cover. And it's an interesting size and feels good in your hands. I also kind of approached it from the side like I didn't want to look directly at it kind of like when there's a scary beast in the jungle and you're like, maybe I shouldn't meet it, I was, I was unsure what I would find inside, unsure if I was going to feel preached to or excluded or looked down upon for the ways that I believe. But instead, it felt more like an invitation, a greeting, a kindness, it felt like home. Thanks to Abigail, not just for recommending it, but for organizing that kind and introspective group of readers to dive into it together. If you, listener, are interested in whether this is a book for you in any specific way, you can totally message me and we could chat about it together to see if it might be a good fit because again, it pushes back and pulls against in all these different ways. And not everybody is going to find a good home in this book. But I loved it and gave it five stars. It's *In the Shelter: Finding A Home in the World* by Padraig O Tuama.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 35:57

Sounds like it was a really great challenging experience and a great one to buddy read.

Kaytee Cobb 36:01

Oh, it was such a good one to buddy read. And those are my favorite kind of books is getting into getting to dive into a book with someone else and kind of pull it apart together and pass bytes of it back and forth to each other, right. Because like it's such a richer experience that way, which kind of leads into our deep dive, we are going to talk today about getting out of a reading funk. And sometimes that means you can't find something to read with your buddy reader. Because you're just in a blah, state of mind. This did remind me this idea for a deep dive reminded me a little bit of your bookish moment. Last time we recorded Roxanna, when you talked about how your reading state was also reflective of your state of health. And I definitely I've been thinking about that ever since the last time that we recorded together. So I want to know kind of your first thoughts about like, what does a reading funk look like for you? How does it affect your daily life? That kind of thing.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 36:59

Okay, well, that's a great question. And I will say, you know, when we were thinking about this as a deep dive I, I had a few thoughts. So the first was, I just want to put it out there. So everybody can kind

of sit in this. If it's right for them, you don't have to get yourself out of a reading funk. So, you know, I've been a reading funk most of this year, to be honest, like there's been brief shining moments, but truthfully, it's been a roller coaster of year, a great year, but lots of ups and downs as I talked about, you know, health and moving in a bunch of stuff. So I just haven't been able to find my reading momentum. And that's what being in reading funk means, for me means I haven't been able to find my reading momentum and effortlessly move on to the next book. But you know, that's okay. You know, it's a year where there's a lot going on. And I always say reading is one of the most low stakes areas of my life, right, like, with family and kids changing schools, and career and mosque and all these other things. My reading is there to support me, I'm not there to support it. So for that reason, to me, it doesn't matter how many books I've read, it doesn't really matter what kind of books I read for this year in this season. It doesn't matter what speed I listen to my audio books that like none of that matters, like what matters is that my reading supports me. And for me, what that means is three things: that it recharges me, it calms me down, and enthralls and captivates me. And if that means I'm reading a romance for the fourth time this year, which not to say I am but I am, it's fine. If it's doing those things for me, it's fine. So now I'm not saying don't track and don't set goals and don't level up, if that's your season of life, by all means, like dive right on in. But just know like, I find for me, this is probably honestly more for me, I find it hard to sometimes accept things and sit in uncertainty. And I've just decided that this year, it just means I'm going to let things go like I had all these great big goals. I knew. I loved literary fiction last year, I really wanted to pick more of it up this year. Kaytee, you were like, "Let's do a deep dive on literary fiction." And I said, "Well, I can't because I haven't really read anything here." So,

Kaytee Cobb 39:14

I was like "Roxanna, you're our most literary show regular. Let's dive into it". And you were like, "Mmmmmmm".

Roxanna Kassam Kara 39:21

I love it. I've been trying to pick it up. And I've tried to force myself and haven't been able to do it. Now I'm reading one with Meredith. And we're reading Babel. I love it. But that's the only way I'm really able to get through it. So you know, I'm just going to kind of go with the flow this year and stay in that funk. And then try again when the seasons ease up a bit.

Kaytee Cobb 39:43

I like that. I you know, we picked this deep dive about a week ago, maybe a little more. And I basically felt like ever since we chose it, I went into my own reading funk and I'm not saying that those two things are related. But all week long, on this week especially, and it could just be because I was mindful of it, I was picking up especially on audio books, and I would get 10 to 20% in and be like, "I just do not care about anything happening in this book". And I would just throw it to the side. And these are books that I was excited to read that maybe I have had on my TBR for a long time. And we know I'm a planner reader, like I can pretty it doesn't, my mood doesn't affect my reading very much. But I do still want to enjoy whatever I'm reading. So that's, that's where the funk comes out for me, like I want to have some kind of illusion of control over my reading life. But I cannot force myself to read something that's not interesting to me, for whatever reason at that point in time, and that was happening, a LOT this week, it was very meh. Like, malaise, reading, malaise, malaise.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 40:52

I love that. And I will say, it happens to me most in audiobooks, too. I love that reading malaise and, and I will say, you know, sometimes you have to go with it and accept it. And sometimes you're just like, no, like, this is not for me, I need to get out of this funk, because I'm just not enjoying my reading life anymore. And it's one of the places I enjoy the most. And I need to turn it around, you know, and so I do think that's completely valid. And what I would usually do, honestly, but I think, you know, sometimes I'll see posts on the bookish friends group saying, "I'm in a reading, rut. What should I read next?" And I think before you go right to sort of the tactic of what should I read next, you really have to think, diagnose that rut, right? Like, yes, why are you in a rut? And what does that mean to you? So like, it could be that, you know, as I said, for me, I have a lot going on, I don't have the bandwidth to read what I love right now, or differently, and that's okay. Or it could be that you got attracted by all the new shiny books of the season, and you're feeling unsatisfied, and you don't know what to pick up next. Or, you know, it could be that, you know, you're a plan reader, and you're getting stuck behind books that you thought you'd enjoy. Or you're a mood reader and you finish the book and you don't know what to pick up next. You know, for me, often it's format, I found I was getting stuck behind paper books, but I've really only been reading at night now. So Kindle books are what's working best. So whatever that reason is, I think, you know, the lazy genius always says name what matters, like, identify the problem? What is it that's got you in the rut, like you just did? It doesn't have to take ages. You just did it really succinctly. But that's how you can at least that's the first step of getting out of one.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 40:52

Yeah, yeah, for me right now it's it's mental health. There's a lot going on at our house, we're finishing up this bathroom remodel, and it feels like it's been taking for ever. And it's affecting my my sleep, my attitude, my brain. So it feels like everything sucks, right, including my reading life. Just all of it sucks. So now we're gonna like we're gonna have a swing up deep dive, and we're gonna talk about the different ways that maybe you deal with a reading funk and it could be going and asking your trusted bookish friends, what should I read next? But I'm guessing we've got some more tactics in our back pockets here. Roxanna, what, what else have you been doing? Or do you even care to change the kind of funk that you've been feeling this year?

Roxanna Kassam Kara 43:18

So okay, so, you know, I'll start with a framework because I love that framework. But so that first piece is, you know, you're in a rut. Do you want to change or not? Right? If yes, what does that mean to you? Why are you in a rut? And you know, what's, what's the main issue? So then once you've diagnosed, right, you need to diagnose how to get out of the rut. And I think this is where sometimes people fall down. Like, what does that mean to get out of that reading funk. So, you know, I will feel out of a funk. If I, maybe if I read more like is that it? Or no, you're still reading the same, but you're reading all romances, and you're tired of them. And you'd like to read different kinds of books, or, you know, maybe you're reading things that are easy for you and you want to challenge yourself with a different genre and get into that. Like, for me, I'll find when I'm in a rut, I'm still reading the same amount of books, but I read easy books, but I only get out of them what I put in. Like literary fiction, I have to put in a lot and I get out a lot. But sometimes I don't have the bandwidth, you know, or it could be that you're reading a wide genre of books, but you've read too many three star books, and you want to read more five star books. And so you have to look at your recommendation, you know, resources, like I think this is where

using your reading spreadsheet, your reading tracker Kaytee is really useful. Just go back and look at why you you know, when you were in a rut when you started, what's changed? And what would change to get you out of that rut.

Kaytee Cobb 44:40

Right. One of the things that I decided to work on this week was a reading adjacent project. I took a random Goodreads meander this week where I added a tag and I went through my read books for the past few years tagging anything that Katie Proctor and I read together and I've mentioned this before. But Katie is my Roxanna. Right? You and Meredith are reading partners. Katie is my reading partner. So I tagged anything that we read in tandem with each other where we were messaging every day about the chapters we had read, or anything that we read close enough together that we could send plot points, like, "Oh my gosh, he just proposed" or whatever, whatever kind of silliness that we wanted to share with each other. And so as I went back through, it's been about three years since we started our reading journey together, and I hit 100 bucks exactly, on my Goodreads tag, and I got so excited. And that excitement is what was missing in my reading funk. So I was messaging Katie, about, you know, which ones did I miss, etc. And then I was like, "Okay, what are we reading next? What are you reading right now?", and I just got fired up again about reading together. But just reading in general. The other thing I did was I picked up a verse novel, which is not a short book, but it is a fast read. So this is a middle grade verse novel. This one was *The Door of No Return* by Kwame Alexander, who is probably my favorite writer in verse. I love his books, *The Crossover*, *Booked*, *Rebound*. So I had pre ordered this one and I decided to pick it up when nothing else was hitting for me, especially on paper. And the great thing about a verse novel is that this one's 400 pages. So it's not small. It's not like I read this little teeny, tiny book, but it's poetry. So the pages are light on text. So it feels like making good progress when you pick it up and read for 20 minutes, and all of a sudden, you've taken down 30 pages instead of 10. You know, like, I don't know, if my math worked there. Let's say you're normally a one page per minute reader, in a verse novel, you might read four or five pages a minute, so they just go down a lot faster, a lot easier. In fact, if you've got the time and attention, you can read this whole thing in probably an hour to an hour and a half. And for me, what this did was allow me to see progress, even in small chunks of reading time, it got me back into the groove of wanting to pick up a paper book. And it got me excited about sitting down with that paper book and making progress with my eyeballs. And that's what I needed right then because my eyeballs were, were only wanting to look at screens. And they were like, you can listen to an audio book and play your logic puzzles and not have to worry about using your eyes or your brain in a very difficult manner right now. And so that was a good fit for me.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 47:30

And so So you did exactly that. Like you figured out why you were in a funk. What could get you out, what did it look like to get out, and then you went to like a tried and true and you got yourself excited again. And then you went to a tried and true tactic. I love that. And I definitely you know, I do that too. I'm often in a funk because I'm a mood reader. And so I'll pick up something, I really like it, I put it down. And then you know, people have that rule, like, Oh, I'll pick up something within 24 hours. I like I can't do that. So sometimes there's days that go in between me picking up books. Now, I'll always be reading something on the side, whether it's a reread or whatever. But sometimes it takes me a while to get into the next book. And I feel like I'm losing time there. And that's when I can get into a funk. So I do think having a slow but steady, or a buddy read going that you can just dip into if you're having decision

fatigue, or you know, your mental health isn't quite there. It's like great, I'll just read another chapter of this book. And it's not about do I enjoy the specific chapter that I'm reading or am it's just like getting the momentum back and you pick it up, or, you know, Meredith talked about slow but steady audios. Maybe you download the next like you read the next chapter, you listen to the next chapter, or the next essay, and a collection of nonfiction essays, just to get yourself going get yourself through. And then when you hear the next exciting book to pick up again, great, you pick that up again. But it's something that just sort of sustain you and keep that momentum going.

Kaytee Cobb 48:50

I think that's another great point. The other like the final thought that I have is, and it just worked out for this week. But tomorrow, Meredith and I are recording the November Indie Press List. And what that means is this week, I've spent time with five books at least dipping in to each of them. And the good thing about this for my reading funk is that I was able to tell myself right at the top, "You don't have to finish this book. You don't even have to read past 25% You just have to get a flavor for it. You just have to get your feet on the ground in this book and see where it goes for you." There are five very different books, five very different genres. This is not a Meredith book flight. This is not, "I'm in the mood for a mystery. Which of these five mysteries should I keep going with?" This is a book flight of a different kind where it's like I'm in the mood for a book, and I don't know what in the heck it is. But this indie bookstore, Bookmarks in North Carolina has curated this amazing list of five titles. Let's see what happens. It's like an adventure that I get to go on and and that that routine at the end of every month, because of the way that we record, the Indie Press List is actually really good for my reading life. Because when I get to the end of the month, I can say, "It doesn't matter if one of these grabs me, and it doesn't matter if all five grab me. I'm allowed to read as much or as little as I want of any of these books. And that's okay. And that's okay, Kaytee. Just let it be the way it is." And for a planner reader, and for someone who sometimes has a very hard time DNFing especially, that is a real blessing. In a time in my reading life, that is a little funky. So that was my last little observation about my reading funk and the ways that I've kind of come at it from different angles this week, especially.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 50:47

So can I give you the opposite point of view as a mood reader?

Kaytee Cobb 50:50

Yes, yes.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 50:52

As a mood reader, if nothing is hitting, and I have that decision, fatigue, guess what I am DNFing all over the DNFing place. I'm just everywhere. Throwing things up, and I'm like, "This doesn't work. And this sucks." And I don't sometimes give books a chance. So I actually need to go in and say, "No, I'm gonna read till 25%. I'm gonna read at least until then and then I can decide". Because if I'm waiting for a book to just grab me, for sure, there are books that that just grabbed me. But often, they're not as satisfying as I wanted the end. And like I said, I have to put in the work up front, to get the payoff at the back. So you know, sometimes if I give myself that I have to read to 25% these the books I said, I liked, I'm gonna try them. And let's see. And then if I get to 25%, and it doesn't work, fine, right? I tried it. But I

sometimes need to treat myself like a toddler. And just go in. And sometimes that will get me out of a reading funk, too.

Kaytee Cobb 51:50

I'm picturing you with a with a plate full of books at the dinner table. And your mom is saying your reader mom is saying "Just one more bite. Roxanna, if you want to treat you have to take one more bite."

Roxanna Kassam Kara 52:04

That's what it is. My son Micah when he was when he was a kid, like loved throwing his food. So he would take the tiniest bite. And then just, you know, like all toddlers, like literally throw it in my face. And I took it as a personal affront each and every time.

Kaytee Cobb 52:19

According to my life, it is.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 52:20

Right? Like, and I'd be like, give it a couple of bites for the love of God. Like, what is it with you? And sometimes I feel like I'm just that same toddler inside, and I just need to just chill out, read it, wait a bit and see how it is. And then that helps, too. So it's funny, right? Different strategies.

Kaytee Cobb 52:36

That's the real key is we all have a bookish toddler inside us. And sometimes you need your bookish mom to say bookish toddler, it's time to take one more bite. Yeah. And see how it goes.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 52:47

Yeah, exactly. Like write down the strategies that work for you. If you can't do an Indie Press List, you know, like a group like that maybe you can go to the library, and pick out five books that are vastly different and try them and set up your own end of month reading adventure, which sounds like such an amazing tradition to come back to every month, right? Like, let's see what works for you. And then to me, it's like I do it once and then I forget about it. So like write them down somewhere, have a note on your iPhone or whatever. And then you know, the next time you're in it, how you can pull yourself out.

Kaytee Cobb 53:18

Well, I'm picturing your framework as a flowchart. At the top, it says are you in a reading funk? And then if you follow the yes arrow, here are some options you could explore. And if you follow the no arrow, then why are you using this framework anyway?

Roxanna Kassam Kara 53:35

Yes, and I want to change? Yes, I don't want to change it. Maybe like or I have the bandwidth? Of course you want to change? Yes. And I have the bandwidth to change that and put energy to changing that. Or no, I don't have the bandwidth to change that. Okay, and then go from there.

Kaytee Cobb 53:50

Yes, yes. I love this plan. Megan will work on it. Poor girl. I'm always volunteering her. Okay, I love this. I think we gave a lot of great strategies. And now we get to visit the fountain. Roxanna, what is your wish this week?

Roxanna Kassam Kara 54:08

So my wish at the fountain today is both a wish and a tip. So I'm gonna come up to my fountain here and my big wish, is that I could make revisiting books a bigger part of my life. So you know, I used to be a big re-reader. I re-read all the time, and I just don't do that as much anymore. You know, I'm part of this thriving, bookish community. I'm always getting introduced to new books or backlist books I haven't heard of, and I'm sacrificing re-reading books because of all the amazing stuff out there. Right. And that's great. Like, I want to continue to do that. Which is why my wish is not that I could re-read books, but revisit books. So I'd love to hear from listeners, how they revisit books in their lives, or even if they do so, you know, how do you kind of we have all these best friends we make through our books. So and sometimes I just want to go and sit and have coffee with them, not necessarily spend a week with them again. But you know, it's, I'm not sure I have a strategy for doing that. So I have one tool that I use sometimes which, which does help, you know, I don't have a big bookshelf or keep a lot of boxes, you know, though I now I have a book bar in my basement, which I sometimes visit, which I love. But I do have a Goodreads list where I keep all my books. And what I'll do there sometimes is go back to a book that I missed. So like, you know, when Meredith was reading *In This House of Brede*, what she brought to the show, I had read that and recommend it to her. And when she was reading it, I really wanted to dip back in, but it's a, it's a big commitment. So I didn't want to go and read it again. So I went to Goodreads, and I typed in, *In This House of Brede* Quotes, and then it kind of brings up a whole list of quotes. And that I find really helpful because I don't necessarily want the plot summary or the characters again, what I want to remember is how I felt about that book, and those little nuggets that really got like an aha out of me and, and why they really resonated with me. And what I find is often other people have highlighted the same things or different things that I didn't necessarily pick up. And so I'll go through, and I'll read through those quotes, and it just takes a couple minutes. But it's such a nice little dip back into a book. And you know, if I'm feeling really like I really love them, I might write some down my commonplace journal, honestly, usually don't, I just read them. And that's enough of a moment with a book. And then I'll go on. But my bigger wishes, as I said, I would love that everyone listening tell us how they revisit books, so I can make that a bigger part of my life.

Kaytee Cobb 56:41

That's a great idea. And many thanks to the readers that go in and put in their quotes from their favorite books, because I don't think of that as a strategy I use. But I've definitely done that before, especially when we had the books we press segment at the end of the show. And I would get very excited to talk about a book and I'd pull it up on Goodreads. And then I would scroll down to the quotes and say, Oh, I remember that part. I get very excited about talking about that book again. So that's a great wish.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 57:12

Thank you. I'll put my coin in. Plink.

Kaytee Cobb 57:15

Perfect. Okay, this week at the fountain, I wish to tell you all about a wish fulfilled. So a few episodes back on episode 12 of season five, I wished for a buddy reading app and I said, somebody out there is going to know that this thing exists. And guess what? Someone did. There is an app and it's in the Apple and Android app stores called Fable. Not Fabled is one of our favorite bookstores of course, but Fable, is a buddy reading app that has millions of books available on it to buddy read. So how this works is you create a book club and you can create a private book club and only invite one person to it. You can create it only for yourself and use it to keep notes about quotes you love in the chapters of the books that you read. And as long as the app includes that title, it will auto populate every chapter of the book into a thread in the app for you. And then you go invite your friends to read this book with you. And as you read, you put notes into the app about each chapter as you go, which means you do not have to be synced up. Somebody can be putting notes in chapter four while you haven't even started, or somebody can be just starting the book and you're already done. And you can still see what other people thought about each of those chapters. Each of those plot twists each of those characters, each of those, the setting or whatever you have. So this month I've just started using it. I'm trying it out with our currently reading bookish friends buddy reads for November which we have one nonfiction one Solito by Javier Zamora and a fiction one, which was from the October Indie Press List. And it has been so fun to watch those thoughts come in watch people interact. There's about 80 readers interacting about Comfort Me With Apples by Catherynne M. Valente, and I, I'm just loving it. It's like, it's like I put this bookish wish out into the universe. And then the internet provided for me. I'm so excited about it. I want everybody to join Fable and find a book club that's reading a book that you're interested in and try out this app and see how it feels to read a book with other readers that are invested in the characters and excited about the plot developments just like you are. So that is my wish that people would download Fable in response to my previous wish from Episode 12 that we would have a buddy reading app.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 59:45

I mean, that is just so cool. Right? First of all, the universe speaks to you in books, right? You said I'd love to see this app that's this really kind of niche app but like could really improve your quality of reading life. And especially for something like Comfort Me With Apples where there's, you hear a lot of twists and you don't want to, you know, ruin it. And then I saw you put that on bookish friends and everybody's like, I want to do it. Oh, yeah, me too. And me too. And I was like, oh my god, this is gonna be a project because it just sees so many people. And it seems like, no, the app can totally handle that. It's got it all in there, you're doing this amazing thing. It sounds like so much fun. What an amazing wish come true.

Kaytee Cobb 1:00:21

It is a wish come true. And I'm going to I'm going to give you one more little thing here, Roxanna. So Katie and I made our own mini book club on Fable. And we have decided to move our buddy reads over there so that as we read, we can see the notes about each chapter. Because it also keeps a reading history. So you can go back and look at past books that that club read together, and, and be able to look at what you thought about different chapters or what quotes you pulled out and made a little graphic for. And that way, it's like a it's like a timeline of our reading friendship starting from book 101. Because the other 100 we had already finished.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 1:00:59

That's so cool. And you'll always be able to look back on that. That's so cool.

Kaytee Cobb 1:01:04

Yes, very excited about it. So that's my wish. Plink splash. All right, that is it for this week. As a reminder, here's where you can connect with us. You can find me Kaytee at @notesonbookmarks on Instagram, and Meredith is at @Meredith.reads.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 1:01:18

And you can find me Roxanna at @Roxannatheplanner on Instagram.

Kaytee Cobb 1:01:22

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.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 1:01:32

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

Kaytee Cobb 1:01:40

And if you really want to help us become a Patron. It's just \$5 a month it helps keep the show ad free and you get lots of great bonus content. You can also rate and review us on Apple podcasts or shout us out on social media. All of those make a huge difference in our being able to find our perfect audience.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 1:01:56

Bookish friends are the best friends. Thank you for helping us grow and get closer to our goals.

Kaytee Cobb 1:02:01

Until next week, may your coffee be hot

Roxanna Kassam Kara 1:02:04

and your book be unputdownable.

Kaytee Cobb 1:02:06

Happy reading Roxanna.

Roxanna Kassam Kara 1:02:07

Happy reading Kaytee.