



Season 5, Episode 50: A Look Back on Season 5

Mon, Jul 24, 2023 • 41:00

Meredith Monday Schwartz 00:10

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

Kaytee Cobb 00:23

We are light on the chitchat heavy on the book talk and our descriptions will always be spoiler free. Today, we have a very special episode for you.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 00:31

I'm Meredith Monday, Schwartz, a mom of four and full time CEO living in Austin, Texas. And I love a bookish look back.

Kaytee Cobb 00:39

And I'm Kaytee Cobb, a homeschooling mom of four living in New Mexico. And I cannot believe our baby is five. This is episode number 50 of season five. And we are so glad you're here.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 00:51

That's right, Kaytee, this is the last episode of the season. Yes, last episode of season five, which means Currently Reading it's all the way through its fifth year.

Kaytee Cobb 01:01

Yeah. Which is ridiculous. And of course, I always match up currently reading age with Onalee's age. And she's also five. And it's like, it's just very exciting to be like, we're like a legit child. Now. We're no longer a toddler. We're no longer a baby. We're fully into childhood.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 01:20

Right? We can tie our shoes. It's very exciting. We can help with chores. Right?

Kaytee Cobb 01:25

Right. All right, Meredith. So this is like you said our last episode of season five. And just like we have done every year, we are taking a look back at what we've learned this year, some of our favorite

moments, some of our regrets or flubs, and just doing a little yearbook journey for season five of Currently Reading. That's right,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 01:46

Exactly. And we probably should say that, as you guys know, if you've been with us for a while we do this in a very specific way. We do what we call crush where so we do a bunch of episodes all together in just a weekend or two. And then that creates the ability for us to take what this year is going to end up being five years five, not

Kaytee Cobb 02:08

five years, five year break. Hope sorry, hopefully, soon.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 02:11

Hopefully not, it's going to be a five week break. But for the listening audience, Kaytee, it only ends up being one week off.

Kaytee Cobb 02:19

Yes. And that does a few things for us that lets us both have a summer, it lets us rest and recharge. It lets us build up a backlog of books so that we can be bringing great combos of books as our current reads for the next season. And it gives us time to step back and evaluate and think about maybe things we want to do differently, or new projects that we're excited about. So this summer break that we have coming up, which is made possible by crush week is really important to keeping this podcast fun and fresh, and new and original every week.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 02:51

Right, exactly. And also this episode specifically that we've done each year, we call it the best of but it's really become a look it gives you and I have the ability to look back. And this year going through this process, I really did see some things about season five that were different and better and good and hard. And all of that, and also gave me the ability to think a little bit about what I want the show to be for the listeners in my life as we move forward. So it's useful to do this, I think

Kaytee Cobb 03:26

definitely. And I would recommend that anyone that has any kind of work pursuit or creative pursuit, take time on a regular basis to do a reflection like this because it means something to look at your work as a whole.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 03:39

Yeah, absolutely. All right. So let's take a look at season five.

Kaytee Cobb 03:43

All right. So usually every year we get started with just a raw data stat. Our most downloaded episode of this season, a little bit different than in years past was actually episode one followed very quickly by only like 100 downloads difference by our top 10 books of 2022. That is almost always our top episode

of the year, because people revisit it throughout the year. Maybe they come back again later. And there's a lot of great book titles in that episode. So it tends to kind of stand the test of time. Absolutely.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 04:15

And it's followed really quickly. I know by the listener press episode, that's always one that's really popular too. So

Kaytee Cobb 04:22

Right. But statistically, we don't know that yet, because of what you were just talking about with crush week. So that does end up being one of our top episodes of each season. But we don't have those statistics until after we've recorded this episode because of the way that we record the end of season stuff.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 04:37

Right, exactly. So what I've been doing for the last two years that I've really loved is as we create our list of our top 10 books of the year, which of course we do that for a calendar year. So our season runs more like a school year. Yes, our best of runs the calendar year and so what I've been doing is I've been using this shop on Etsy easy to create, I just send her my list of after I do that I send her my list of top 10 books. And then she puts it together in like she puts the books in the the title and the author on two multicolored spines and then creates a 8x10 cardstock picture for me. And then down at the bottom, it says Best Of and then whatever year it is, and I've been framing that and putting it in my library. And eventually those will then frame my library double doors on the inside. So it's really nice to have that visual reminder of each year, and what books I was loving. So that's another way that's another reason that I love that we do that show.

Kaytee Cobb 05:37

I was just going to ask if this was like the family photos that sometimes you just open the frame and slide the newest one in front, or if you're going to keep all of them as a visual reminder. Do you? Are you inclined at all to go back to season one and season two to keep going with that?

Meredith Monday Schwartz 05:52

I am not because we recently did kind of a look back on on that in season one and season two. I was like that was my top 10 I was I was not impressed with past Meredith's taste. So well. Fair. So I decided to start with 2021. And then I just did 2022 Eventually there will be too many, but for right now I'm doing one for each year, and we're gonna see how it looks. Yeah,

Kaytee Cobb 05:52

very fun. All right, well, that actually leads right into some of our favorite episodes because we do love that listener press. We love getting to revisit our top 10 What are some of your other favorite episodes that we recorded in season five Meredith?

Meredith Monday Schwartz 06:31

Alright, so going back early on episode three, I laughed when I remembered we called it hold on to your butts. I wish we titled The episode after we record it right? Of course, that would be the only way to do

it. And so that episode ended up being one of my favorites for a variety of reasons. Sometimes when we record Kaytee we are I mean, obviously when you do this every single week, over the course of five years, you're gonna have varying levels of moods. And every once in a while you and I will both be in a really silly punchy mood, and feisty spicy. Whatever it is with this one for whatever reason we were both in that mood. We were having trouble not laughing. We were you know, poor Megan, when we get in those moods it makes for great tape, but it also creates a lot of edit opportunities. So episode three, hold onto your butts. I brought a book called The Dragons Bride by Katee Robert. This has become known in Currently Reading lore as the dragon with two peens. That's Yes, right. Also the book with two peens. So season five, episode three that that came into being. And I think to what I loved about that episode, is it for me, because this was a book, The Dragon's Bride that I had started reading on a lark as a joke in my Kindle. And then I ended up really liking it in ways I didn't expect. And so I was actually like talking to my friend, Betsie, I'm like, Should I bring this to the show? Or is this just beyond the pale, she read it too. And she was like, Look, this book is actually really good. And it's weird that it's good. And you got to tell people about it. And you promise people, you'll talk about all of your current reads. So I did. And a lot of people ended up reading it and liking it a lot. And so this was a turning point for me in that I've always felt quite a bit of freedom to bring whatever I was actually reading. But this turned it up a notch for me. This made me say, You know what, sometimes my reading mode is weird. And I want to read a Peter Pan reverse harem book, and then I need to bring it to the show. And I'm always surprised by the fact that no matter what we bring, somebody is interested in it right? And so that's a lot of fun. So that Episode Episode three, hold on to your butts. It did that for me it kind of just loosened up my grip on my thought about what was okay to bring in what was it

Kaytee Cobb 08:55

so that also that episode also gave you some notoriety on the internet, where you started getting sent all kinds of memes and reels, and posts and stickers, and all kinds of things where that became almost like a point of identity for you. Is there are there any feels about that? Well, I

Meredith Monday Schwartz 09:14

mean, I actually think it was before that, that I had this point of identity in my life as being someone who is very comfortable with things related to mommy and daddy alone time. And so there wasn't a complete shock to me but this definitely did again ramp that up a notch. So I do regularly receive a lot of DMs I receive gifts in my home of people sending me things always good natured never anything that so far it's never been anything inappropriate or where I was like what? But right I love serial killers and peens. And I guess at some point I have to just accept this about myself.

Kaytee Cobb 09:54

Are we putting it on your tombstone You think?

Meredith Monday Schwartz 09:58

You know what it's gonna go on my bench I'm going to have a memorial bench Oh,

Kaytee Cobb 10:02

yes. And that one and have a conversation about peens

Meredith Monday Schwartz 10:05

and serial killers and whatever else sit and read whatever your heart desires. Because on a bench, you actually have a lot more room to say things.

Kaytee Cobb 10:13

Yeah. So you could go the whole length,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 10:16

I'm going to have a long day on my memorial bench, it's going to be looking out onto the ocean in Half Moon Bay, California, just in case you guys want to visit eventually, one day, we will put it in show way more when that happens.

Kaytee Cobb 10:29

That's why we're taking a five year break so that we can get closer. Right. Okay, my, I think we should go back and forth a little bit here. So I will go to the next one that I wanted to talk about, which was if genre has taught me anything, it was episode five of season five. So we talked about if serial killer books have taught me anything. If fantasy in the YA realm has taught me anything. If middle grade novels have taught me anything, and the way that we like drew out lessons from these certain genres that both of us really like, was amazing. I mean, it just had me giggling all day trying to come up with witty summaries of these huge like all encompassing genres of books and figure out you know, what have I really learned from literary fiction? It even sheets can be interesting. Like, that kind of thing. I loved that episode.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 11:18

That was a very, very fun episode. That was an episode where I thought, I'm not really sure this deep dive is going to be very long, but that it ended up really getting going as we started talking about it. I think, Kaytee we have to talk about the no prep, current reads episode, we're sure episode 34 of season five. And that was something we did on purpose. It wasn't born out of like necessity, we actually decided in advance, we were going to do it. And that was of course, where we said we would choose each other's current reads based off of our bullet journals, or our sheets that we use, and we would just kind of do it on the fly. And I was legit nervous about doing that I was legit nervous that we were going to lose listeners and subscribers. Because if someone tuned in that day, I was like, what if they think we're terrible podcasters who don't care to prepare, but actually ended up being pretty okay,

Kaytee Cobb 12:11

it was good. And I think it's stretched us both in a certain way. And it also made us reflect a little bit on why prep is important. And what we're really spending our time doing, right, because we can, like we showed that we can just rattle off Oh, yeah, I did read that book. And I don't really remember who the main character was. But I do remember liking it. Although I think I wanted to throw it at one point like, we can actually pull those sentences and words out of our mouths on demand. But the prep time is what gives us the quality or the turns of phrase, or the metaphors or the fun or the Snark that we hopefully think you all come to are currently reading for. That's what we're giving you with our time that we spend preparing each week,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 12:57

right? And for me, there's no question that it's a setup that I really feel the difference in between not prepping and prepping, I want to be able to pull out the things in the setup that might interest somebody or that they should know is there. And I don't feel as much ability to do that when we don't prep. But it was a fun experiment. And I think one of the things that season five did for us was, you know, we are trying to not get bored. Yes. And we are also trying to make sure that you the listener doesn't get bored or that what we're doing isn't stale. And so this season, we built in some things that were new and different for both of those reasons. And for me as a person. This is something that I have really learned about myself that I like the building of something new or the fixing of something that's broken. Yes. And currently reading luckily has never been broken. But it was new for a long time. And now it's not. And so this is something that I'm having to say, Okay, there's a part of me that struggled when things are not new. And when they're really like, I'm good at setting things up for success, right. Like in from a business perspective, that's something that I, I have a talent for. And then as soon as they're successful, I'm sort of like, Okay, now what now what exactly. So, this season has been an exercise in injecting some of that newness in a tried and true format. And I actually think it's been really successful. I mean, for me, just in my feeling about it, it's been new enough to keep me from feeling on we but again, within a format that works really well for us and for the listener.

Kaytee Cobb 14:42

Yes, I agree. And I feel that as well. I think I've mentioned before, but one of the best compliments I've ever gotten is somebody told me I was a renaissance woman that I like to know a lot about a lot of things not a lot about just one thing. So I wanted to learn Everything about what it takes to become a podcaster, to edit to prepare to edit everything that goes into producing the show every week, but now I know those things. And so it is it's a, it's a sharpening of the saw. It's a keep moving forward. It's a How else can I challenge myself so that I'm constantly learning growing and becoming a newer revised version, you know, Kaytee to point out Kaytee 3.0, instead of just well, we got 2.0. And that's good enough for forever,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 15:30

right? So exactly, nothing is good enough for forever, right? Nothing in our business, nothing in our personal life, nothing in our marriages, nothing with our children, you always have to be adapting to the new season that you are in. And so I think for us, we've started to feel a little bit of freedom to kind of change things around one of the biggest changes that we made. In Episode Two, we finally made the change in episode two of season five is we got rid of the segment which had been so good for so long, the books that we want to press into people's hands, which, of course was at the end of the every episode, through season four. And we introduced the fountain section. Now, Kaytee do I think the fountain section is everybody's favorite section of the end, we're going to we'll get ready to do another survey. And I would bet dollars to donuts that a lot of people are going to say about the fountain section. And I am okay with that. Right? Because we couldn't keep doing the books, we had pressed all the books that it's just not possible to keep doing it. Not every week. No, not every week. And also, I think that the making the wish at the fountain section at the end of the episodes has given us that freedom and flexibility that has made it as again, another one of those things that we needed to keep us from feeling constrained within the format that is so loved by everybody.

Kaytee Cobb 16:56

Definitely. And in that flexibility, it allows us to press the book into people's hands if we want to, we can wish that somebody will read this book that we've loved for so long that we want to make sure is on your radar that maybe we talked about a year ago, and we want to bring back around but not as a current read kind of thing. And also gives us space to do things like wish that everyone would follow Eezeekat, which led us to one of my other favorite episodes of the year, we only had two guests. This whole year, we added three voices. One was Roxanna who we added at the very end of season four. And then we had Jason Headley, ezeekat and Lessa, the president of the American Library Association, those are the only guests we had this whole year, and they were incredible episodes.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 17:41

Well, Kaytee, why did we only have two guests this year?

Kaytee Cobb 17:45

Well, having guests is a lot of work is really what it comes down to. And there is that element of sharpening and that work is good. It does make us have to prepare in a different way and consider our guests and consider what questions we want to ask during the deep dive. But it also is a lot of coordination. It's different audio to edit for Megan, it does make for a more involved episode than just being with us. And with our show regulars, we are comfortable. We all know the drill. With our show regulars and with guests, we have to sometimes explain like, Oh, hold on, on a current read, we want you to get it at a desk, right? There's a lot more person to person work that happens with an episode with a guest.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 18:29

Exactly. And also we have been told loudly and clearly that people really prefer it when it's the show regulars, you and me or any of the combinations of of show regular. So that's definitely true. It's not to say that we won't do guest episodes in the future. But that's not something that we're really highly prioritizing right now. For sure. The other just one episode I want to sneak in there that has actually given me an idea for the future is episode season five, Episode 37. We talked about the reading retreat that I had recently done with three of my good bookish friends, and really got into the details got into the weeds of how we did that. I mean, it's a very, very detailed episode. I've gotten so many DMS from people about that episode saying that they've planned their own and here's what they're doing and how they're we're really inspired by it. And several people have said, I wish that you would do like a piece of content, maybe behind the paywall. That is about that reading retreat, kind of with some templates and all of that. So I am really considering that as a piece of content to put the behind the paywall maybe for bookish Superfriends, maybe something like that. So that is something that I'm noodling on.

Kaytee Cobb 19:47

Right. And we do like to keep those creative spaces and those ideas open. And I think that's something that we're going to talk a little bit more about in a little bit. But let's also talk about some of our favorite books that we brought to you Season Five of the podcasts. These are not necessarily favorite books of all time, or even favorite books of the year, just ones that we really enjoyed talking about for one reason or another.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 20:09

So one of the first ones, of course, we've talked about Dragon's Bride we also I think about, I'm kind of basing this on the response that I got afterwards of people reaching out and saying, I picked this up, and it was really impactful for me. So Search by Michelle Huntington was one that a lot of people said, I never would have read a book like this, which I felt the same way about the book, but it ended up being really impactful. So that was one I got a lot of really fun messages about The Rook by Daniel O'Malley, which was just a delightful, different page turning romp that wasn't a mystery. It's more sci fi. And so that was interesting. That was something that was different for me. And then In the House of Brede was one that I got a lot of people saying, I have never read Rumer Godden, I've never read a book about nuns. But this was so impactful. I felt the same way. And then of course, we have to talk about, but just really briefly, because everyone's done talking about it, the juggernaut that has been the Fourth Wing. And so that has just taken over Kaytee, I do feel like I need to get some props from you for not having that be the book that I was gonna force you to read over your summer vacation I was

Kaytee Cobb 21:25

fully prepared on I know, I like I have a copy. It's at my house. But we did talk about it. We kind of talked around it briefly beforehand. And you asked me on a scale of one to 10 How mad would you be? Yeah,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 21:37

yeah, yeah. And more than anything, the reason I didn't do it is twofold. I really think eventually, you're gonna read it, and you're gonna like it. And I didn't want to affect your enjoyment of it by forcing a timeline on it. Okay, so that was, that was the first part of it. And the second one was, I wanted something that was a little more of a bespoke recommendation, something that was really just for you. So that was that was another another reason why I didn't choose that. What were your the books that stick out for you from the season?

Kaytee Cobb 22:05

Well, I realize they've actually calls back to that same episode that you're talking about. But Chain Gang All Stars is a relatively new book for me, but I can't stop thinking about it. I love talking to people in DMS about it and hearing their responses to it, and hearing how it struck them in different ways. And loving that it really could be a book for everyone, but it's gonna push everyone in a different way. I think it's so fantastic. In that way. I am gonna put Babel on this list, even though I never brought it as a current read. I brought it as my top book of 2022. Yeah, and we did talk about it in that episode. But then it became a current read just a few episodes later with you, and Roxanna. So I ended up not bringing it as a current read. It's still like I could talk about that book, I could do a whole episode, just me giving a seminar about Babel and why it was the perfect book for me for 2022. Yeah. And then I had to put some nonfiction on here, An Immense World by Ed Yong is a chapter by chapter it's perfect as a slow but steady, I absolutely recommend the paper even though I have heard that he reads the audio. And his voice is fantastic. But the way that I learned about animals and the way that it brought my eyes open into the world around me, and then hearing from people that said, I picked this up with my husband, we read it together, or we listen to the audio on a car ride. And I had the book in front of us so we could both look at the pictures or I buddy read this with my sister and both of us are now sending photos of you know, butterflies to each other because we have a different appreciation for the world around us. I

loved not just the interactive element of reading it with Katie, but of reading it with the reading world as they picked it up the Bookstagram world around me and wanted to report back about their experiences.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 23:47

Yeah, that was one that again, just seemed to really, really impact a lot of people in really specific ways.

Kaytee Cobb 23:54

Yes, because it makes you look at everything differently. Okay, so now I'm going to take the next one first because we're going to talk about regrets and I'm going to say my biggest regret for the season is that I didn't hear about Fourth Wing before it got huge because I do think that I'm going to really love this book, but I got so dug into my heels over how big it got so fast. How fast it got so big that I am now avoiding it like the plague like I may as well be COVID quarantined from this book. I just scroll past as fast as I can. I don't want to like see posts or hear anything about the audio or nothing. I have a copy on my shelves. I do know that I'll love it when I pick it up. It's exactly like it is a Kaytee book. It is exactly perfect for me. But if I had read it just before it got huge, I would have been so excited and now I have to wait because it will ruin it for me. So I hate that that timing worked the way that it is basically my regret about that because even by the time you and I recorded the episode, I feel like the next day it started getting really big on the internet. And then by the time the episode released, it was insane. Everybody was insane. They had all lost their minds. So, yeah.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 25:09

Alright, so I thought about this one a lot my biggest regret of the season. I mean, obviously, we didn't love the reshuffle with the whole Mindy situation that was difficult. And we won't go into that. But there's no way that I can talk about this section without mentioning that at least briefly. The other thing that I wanted to think about is that this season, mostly because of me, we didn't concentrate on growth a lot this season. And I feel like I to a certain extent, put some brakes on it, because of my own ability, just balancing everything in my life balancing my big day job balancing, my daughter and her husband and our grandchild moving near to us, which is wonderful, and also is something that needs to fit into my everyday life in a new and different way. And so all of those things together, I think this season, I very purposely said, we're not going to concentrate as much on growth. And yes, there's always a part of me, my Enneagram oneness wants to say, is that wrong to not be constantly having the foot on the gas pedal, but then there's a part of me that also knows for my own growth, I need to be able to sometimes say, this is okay, the way that it isn't, it doesn't need to be more more more all the time. And so my ability to sort of name that and then say, this is okay, felt like a personal when,

Kaytee Cobb 26:42

like personal growth instead of business growth is kind of what that sounds like, to me, you being able to be okay with that and yourself. Instead of saying, Well, I know the right thing is to always want more, because that's what society tells us is the right thing. So it feels like a win on a different level. On a personal level,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 27:02

it is I think, because I know the things that we could do to I mean, we've grown a lot and our numbers continue to grow, and our listenership way bigger ever than we ever thought it would be all those things, I know the things that we could do to go to the next level, and deciding proactively not to do those things continues to be a struggle for me. So like to this is like now like marital therapy, but I just is it a regret? No. And yet I would be lying if I didn't say there's not a part of me that's like, did I do this season right for the show, for our business for what we're building? And is there a right or wrong? No, but my inner critic finds ways to be critical about it. So anyway, that's fair. That's what I'm thinking about.

Kaytee Cobb 27:02

Fair, I do have one other thing to add to this section where we kind of talk about feels around the podcast. And to me, it feels like some of what we see either in comments or reviews or even in our bookish friends group is that there's almost a stratification happening between our listeners where they think there's a like, I'm, I'm a Meredith twin, or I really love Roxanne has books or Kaytee's books, or Mary's books, like, like, you can only be on one team within the Currently Reading team, which is weird, because we are all a team. And we talked about this every week. The The intro is we are bookish best friends who who sit down every week to talk about what we've been reading lately. And there's plenty of overlap where Meredith can love Fourth Wing, and eventually I'm sure I will, too. And it's not a wall. I'm more of a Meredith because I loved it first, maybe. Right, it feels like there's enough place that there's overlap that I guess I wanted to take this moment to remind our listeners or encourage our listeners that you don't have to be on a team of our show regulars. There's not a there's not a team lead for currently reading that we all are readers, we are all excited when you pick up a book we are all loving when you hate a book we loved or vice versa. And that I have some feels about that. I guess because it feels like that has happened more this year than in years past. It used to just be I just I don't care who talks about what book I just love currently reading. And to me it feels more like that has changed some during season five. Okay,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 29:32

I I'm gonna be really honest about the fact that when I saw this on the show rundown I was like, I'm not sure I knew that that was happening. And part of that is a function of the fact that I just don't have the day to day bandwidth to be as involved in the different conversations that are that are happening so that you know, but you're right. We do have so much overlap and we benefit so much from each other's reading style. And right we're all just to reading what we love and hoping that we're talking about books in a way that helps you know that you will either love it or it's a book that maybe isn't exactly for you. That's the That's what we're each one of us doing.

Kaytee Cobb 30:11

Right? I think it comes down to comments like, well, I don't like to listen to insert name here. Talk about books, because it's always middle grade. Well, guess what, Meredith and I talk about middle grade plenty, you know, like, there's not a person that only reads some type of book. Yeah. On this currently reading universe, right? We all contain multitudes. We all love some murder. Sometimes, we all like to get a little deep and literary in our feels, sometimes, and maybe some more than others. But that's okay. It doesn't mean that you're more one person than another, read your own reader. Right? All of you are your own reader.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 30:47

Right? And all of us contain multitudes. And maybe that's really one of the major things that we've always been trying to show on the show with the fact that we talked about all of our current reads, which is you never quite know what the next book is that we're going to say. Okay, my next current read is because we don't I mean, yes, I do read a lot of mysteries and thrillers. There's no question about that. But then, you know, I might bring Dragon peens next, or I might bring a you know, nonfiction about the Secret Service, which was another one that people DM to me about a lot. And a lot of people putting that and pressing that into their dad's hands. I can't remember what that book is called right now. But so right. You never know.

Kaytee Cobb 31:26

Zero Fail.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 31:27

Zero fail. Oh, there you go.

Kaytee Cobb 31:29

Carol Leonnig.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 31:30

There you go. Excellent. Excellent.

Kaytee Cobb 31:32

So somewhere.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 31:33

So glad you have that a bit that recall ability Kaytee Yeah. So yeah, you never quite know. And we each of us Contain Multitudes,

Kaytee Cobb 31:40

for sure. All right, we get this question every year. But people want to know, is there anything new coming up in the podcast? Is there anything we should have on our radar? Anything that you and I are percolating behind the scenes? And for both of us, we have an answer, which is that we we already told you our new thing. Right?

Meredith Monday Schwartz 32:00

Right, exactly. We're doing our new spin offs, which is really again, harkens back to what we were talking about, gives us the ability to do something new within the bounds of what we already love, and what we're already building. And so Popcorn in the Pages with you and Chad, which I absolutely love. Journey to Three Pines with me and Roxanna, we very particularly decided to and we had a lot of different ways we can take each of those they can each be their own shows. Yes, right. We could have put it all behind the paywall. We very specifically decided no, that's not what we want to do. We don't want to shove more behind the paywall, there's so much there already, let's go ahead and put this into

the regular feed, let's create a system where it doesn't have to be every week and give ourselves the ability to just do something in an in a new format within the bounds of the community that we've already built. So I love the spin offs. And Roxanne and I are just today going to record the next episode of Journey to Three Pines. And it's so much work to put together but it's so joyful that work and it's so we are so looking forward to doing the recording because it's different than what we do with Currently Reading and the same with Popcorn in the Pages.

Kaytee Cobb 33:12

Definitely very fun fact, I was preparing for our next episode of Popcorn in the Pages and I had to find a notebook. So I can start taking some notes, right like you're doing with Three Pines as well as I read Jurassic Park, and I just pulled one off my shelves that had a ribbon. So I could flip to the next spot. And I knew where to write in. And the page that was marked on the ribbon was from 2021. And it was things we were actively mulling for currently reading and both a book to screen show and a three pints deep dive were on that list from two years ago. Oh, wow thing we had played with for a long time before we actually even started making it happen.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 33:50

Right. Exactly. And I you know, I mentioned in Journey to Three Pines that that I actually had the idea for that well before the idea for Currently Reading. And I'm so glad that it ended up happening this way. Because I don't think Journey To Three Pines would have found the audience without currently reading, you know, it's 100,000 monthly downloads so that you know, like it's just it happened in the right happened in the in the right way? For sure.

Kaytee Cobb 34:14

Definitely. Yeah. And both of us also have talked about some podcasts adjacent projects that may or may not come to fruition. We don't have a new plan for next step. The next big thing coming from Currently Reading, but we do always have little ideas, little projects percolating in the background. Meredith, you talked about one a little bit earlier that came from one of our episodes this year.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 34:36

Right, exactly. I'm really considering how can we put together a really nifty piece of content around the idea of reading retreats and I've done some things for my day job and here comes the guide that I'm thinking we can kind of use it as a jumping off point. I just I feel like that could be a fun thing. But again, it's at the it's at the nibble. It's at the the kind of percolating point I'm not ready to Say that it's going to happen for sure or exactly what form that's going to take or where we're going to put it or any of that. But we are always thinking of those new fun things that we can that we can add that will be good for all of you. And also fun things for us create just keeping us creative.

Kaytee Cobb 35:16

This year, or within the last little while, we both have made changes to our solo Patreon content as well. So you and Elizabeth have really gotten into a groove on All Things Murderful. This month in July Bunmi and I have released our 12th episode of Trope Thursday. So we are one year into that new project. And it has been really fun to get to know her reading tastes better to get to get those behind the scenes looks at both bookstores and the publishing industry. And I think those two pieces of content, do

the same thing. They really get us to expand our ability to talk about books and our knowledge of the book world in different way for both of

Meredith Monday Schwartz 35:55

us. Yeah, and I'm absolutely loving. Right, what Elizabeth and I are doing on All Things Murderful, I do think that we have really found our groove both as far as the content that concentration, mysteries and thrillers. But also Elizabeth has become really, really comfortable on the mic. And so every week, I just feel like I'm laughing harder and harder at her turns of phrase that you know, and of course, she brings amazing mysteries and thrillers to us that keep my TBR absolutely teetering. And Trope Thursday is really so fun and so interesting. And so different from any of the other content that we do. Bunmi is developing a huge audience of her own because she's She brings a really specific point of view. So yeah, between the Indie Press List, which of course is always bringing fantastic indie bookstores, to our audience, and then All Things Murderful, Trope Thursday. Those are some really strong content behind the paywall. And I continue to be really happy with what we're offering.

Kaytee Cobb 36:57

I think our patrons are pretty happy with them as well. Yeah, they tend to stick around once they join us. Right, which is good news

Meredith Monday Schwartz 37:04

we do we have a very low turnover rate. And that piece has really grown this year in ways that we weren't quite expecting, because we didn't add a brand new piece of content. Usually we see a step forward in our Patreon subscribers when we add a new piece of content. But this year, again, we decided not to do that. And yet we still saw growth. So that was, that was really nice, not stratospheric growth, but growth, I would say organically the way that it should be growing.

Kaytee Cobb 37:31

Yes. And we did add a new tier on Patreon. This year in January,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 37:37

That "y'all are nuts" tier

Kaytee Cobb 37:40

I guess if you really want to tier Yes. But that has been fun too, because we get to have these many behind the scenes conversations or share things that get cut from our big show episodes that maybe aren't for the entire world to listen to. And that is just with a very small group of people, they literally they're getting maybe two to five minutes of extra content per month, and have decided that plus an extra list of books from our indie bookstore of the month is worth extra money, which is very strange. And also awesome.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 38:11

Well, right double the money. That was a really big surprise of season five, we really thought it was gonna be like 10 people who took us up on that. But we were we were really surprised by that. And it is fun to have a place for those stories or the kind of little bit deeper dives on things that we wouldn't

normally put out into the into the general world. It's but we'll we'll be like, Oh, that might be really good for the book of Superfriends.

Kaytee Cobb 38:35

Definitely. And I did check this morning. Just a little fun behind the scenes tidbit. We have 322 bookish Super Friends right now.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 38:42

Y'all are crazy.

Kaytee Cobb 38:44

That's really great, though.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 38:46

We love you. It's totally great. It is totally, totally great. All right, well, that. That's a great look back on the season. I'm really happy with season five. I mean, I

Kaytee Cobb 38:56

happy with season five,

Meredith Monday Schwartz 38:57

you know, UPS downs. It's it's been good. But overall, I still love doing the show. I love the community that we've built. And I look forward to doing it every single week.

Kaytee Cobb 39:11

And I miss it when we're not doing it, which is our next little piece of info for this episode is that we will be not here Not in your earbuds on July 31, which is the last Monday of July. But we will return as always, for season six on August 7. That'll almost be a birthday episode for Meredith. And we'll tell you what we did over our summer break. And we'll bring you a whole new season of currently reading and all the great books you've come to learn that you can hear about from us.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 39:42

I love it. I love it. All right. That is it for this week. That is it for this season. As a reminder, here's where you can connect with us. You can find me I'm Meredith at @Meredith.reads on Instagram,

Kaytee Cobb 39:55

and you can find me Kaytee at @notesonbookmarks on Instagram

Meredith Monday Schwartz 39:59

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.

Kaytee Cobb 40:09

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

Meredith Monday Schwartz 40:15

And we've talked about it a lot this episode, if you want to become a bookish friend, that is a great way to get a lot more content from us, and it's only \$5 a month. You can do that at patreon.com/currentlyReadingpodcast. You can also of course rate and review us on Apple podcasts and shout us out on social media. All of those things make a huge difference in us finding our perfect audience.

Kaytee Cobb 40:39

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

Meredith Monday Schwartz 40:45

All right, until next season, may your coffee be hot,

Kaytee Cobb 40:48

and your books be unputdownable.

Meredith Monday Schwartz 40:50

Happy reading Kaytee

Kaytee Cobb 40:51

Happy reading Meredith