



# Season 4, Episode 30: Judge Judy's Undies + Bookish One-Night Stands

Mon, 3/7 • 53:32

**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 books that we've read recently. And as you know, we won't shy away from having strong opinions, so get ready.

**Kaytee Cobb** 00:24

We are light on the chit chat, heavy on the book talk, and our descriptions will always be spoiler free. Today we'll discuss our current reads, a bookish deep dive, and then we'll press books into your hands.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 00:34

I'm Meredith Monday Schwartz, a mom of four and full time CEO living in Austin, Texas. And I'm just gonna admit it. Sometimes I love a one night stand.

**Kaytee Cobb** 00:43

And I'm Kaytee Cobb, a homeschooling mom of four living in New Mexico and I'm more polyamorous than monogamous when it comes to my reading. This is episode number 30 of season four, and we are so glad you're here.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 00:56

All right, Kaytee, I am so glad to be back behind the mic back from Memphis, my weeks and weeks of absolute joy of being with my new grandson. But I am so excited to be back in a normal routine. And talking books with you.

**Kaytee Cobb** 01:12

I'm excited to be here too. We even had a little bit of spillover. Like we couldn't wait to talk books before we got on mic today. There was lots of chatter in our messenger chat.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 01:21

Exactly. I have a lot of booktalk that I want to do with you. So first, we want to tell you guys a couple of things. First of all, our deep dive today is going to be about what I am calling and if you get mad about it, blame me because it's my phrase, "one night stand" books. Now. it's not what you think. It's palate cleanser, slump busters, but a really specific kind that I think doesn't get a lot of attention. We do want to say right here at the top of the show that we're calling them "one night stand" books. And while the

conversation itself will be no spicier than any other conversation that we have Currently Reading, the fact that we're calling it "one night stand" and the little bit of innuendo that will probably follow that, we want to let you guys know about it right up front. We know a lot of you guys listen with your littles. And we always want to make sure you have a heads up just in case you don't want to, you know, get into conversations about what any of these silly things mean. So we just want to let you know that right up front. The other thing we want to tell you, you guys are not going to be surprised by this, it is the first episode of the month, which means it's the one commercial that you're going to hear from us all month long. The rest of your episodes every single Monday will be completely commercial free. But we save the first of the month to talk a little bit about the currently reading Patreon group. Those members are what we call "bookish friends". Now Kaytee, what I wanted to talk about this month that people get as a part of paying \$5 to be a Patreon subscriber to Currently Reading is they get the Indie Press List, and they get All Things Murderful, and they get to be a part of the Facebook community and all of that good stuff. But one of the things that I look forward to the most is Kaytee Reads Too Much, which is your show that you do once a month, that basically allows you to go over in a really interesting way, the books that you read, but didn't make the show because you really do read too much.

**Kaytee Cobb 03:22**

I do read too much. I mean, just doing the math, we know that there's three current reads per episode, and we do roughly four episodes a month. So that's about 12 books, 12 books a month. And I read 20 to 25 on a pretty regular basis. So a lot of times I'll have books showing up there that either already got talked about on the big show that I have a different opinion about, or books that were part of the indie press list that I want to kind of keep a little bit closer to our Patreon supporters, or books that I have a spicy opinion about that I'm not really comfortable sharing on the big show. So there's, I do six superlatives, talking about six of those books. And then I do a rapid fire recap of every book I read in the month for Kaytee completists, which are the people who really want to hear the whole shebang, all the way through each month. And it's it's been really fun. I love the new update to it. And I love how it flows now.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz 04:11**

So it's a great way to support us. It's a great way to let us know that you love what we're doing and to let us know that you love the fact that during the big show, you don't have to listen to any commercials. Okay, so that's our Mischief Managed for this month. Let's get into our bookish moments of the week. Kaytee, what do you have this week?

**Kaytee Cobb 04:31**

Okay, my bookish moment this week was so fun. I got to meet up with Megan, our Megan who does our show notes for the first time in person. She and another one of her bookish friends and one of our bookish friends, Katelyn, who have been besties for 20 ish years, decided to plan a girls weekend for mid February and they came to Santa Fe as their destination. Along with bossing them around about everything they should do and everywhere they should eat, I also bossed them by saying you will save a day for me while you're here. She did. I got Mindy and Katie Proctor to come up as well. And we made a whole afternoon out of it. We had lunch, we went to bookstores and bars, and we walked all around the plaza. And then we get to experience a stunning sunset. We even filled up a very sad little

free library while we were out and about. If there were shownotes of the conversation that the five of us had together, I'm guessing there would be over 100 titles in those show notes, because we just talked and talked books, all afternoon long, it was awesome. It was such a bookish moment. It was like six hours together and it was perfection.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 05:32

I was really, really so excited to see that you guys got a chance to get together. It looked like it was so much fun. What a great group. We can get that same group and we can add me and Mary, we can have like a little Currently Reading staff get together. That would be so much fun.

**Kaytee Cobb** 05:48

That's exactly what we need for sure.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 05:51

All right, so my bookish moment of the week. So as I said, My daughter had our grandson Jeffrey in the beginning of February. And so I spent multiple weeks in Memphis, either in the hospital with them and then when we came home, and you know how it is when you have your newborn world, right. And also, there was an ice storm thrown in there. So we weren't really going anywhere, except just the places we absolutely had to go. And you're kind of in that surreal, like every day bleeds into the next day kind of situation. Well, when I got back, the very first thing I really wanted to do was I really wanted to go to my library just because I wanted to like, go somewhere and see some people. So I went to my library. And as I was walking in, I saw what I see once a month in my library, and I realized it always brings me so much joy. And that is the circular that they have in probably all libraries have called Book Pages, you know that one.

**Kaytee Cobb** 06:46

I don't think they have that at my library.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 06:48

It's kind of like a large size newspaper insert, but it's for color. And it's got articles inside it. And it's got booklets inside it. And it is just the best thing. And I get so many of my best recommendations, initially from Book Pages. So it's there for free. So every you know, like one every four trips, I get to go in and not only get all my holds that they've so lovingly put together for all of us, but also, I get to get a new Book Pages and take that home and pour over it and circle the titles I'm interested in and they have stuff for kids too. And just I really, really like it. So if your library has that, take a look at the kind of front area where they have those kinds of things. They might have it and maybe you've never even noticed it. It's really useful. I absolutely love Book Pages. Alright, so those are our bookish moments of the week. Let's talk about current reads. Kaytee, what's your first current read you want to bring to us?

**Kaytee Cobb** 07:48

Okay, the first current read I have this week is The Inheritance of Orquidea Divina by Zoraida Cordova. This was one that we read with the Read the Damn Book Club, which is the four of us, right? Morgan made the selection but then Stephanie, Mindy and I jumped right on board, and we swallowed down the

audio in just a few days. At the beginning of this book, Orquidea sends out invitations to her family. They are to return to the family home in Four Rivers, Texas for her funeral and the reading of her will. It's time to settle her estate even though she's still alive. Her descendants arrive from their scattered lives to find her not just at death's door, but sitting in a chair with roots growing from her body into the floor. Here begins the unraveling of Orquidea's story, her past mixed with a present time that threatens to unravel the family as well. This book is rife with magical realism and Ecuadorian culture. It's also chock full of characters that you will not soon forget. Much like the family Madrigal of Encanto, each family member here has a gift of sorts that they have to recognize and use and their matriarch is holding them all together. But unlike the Madrigals though, you are not going to consume this with your children, as there are a number of descriptive sex scenes. Part family drama, part road trip, part Ecuadorian legend and all gorgeously written, this book not only has a cover that gave me heart eyes, the story did as well. As a bonus, the author's website is the best one I've seen in forever. You can find a playlist that matches the book, an invitation to Orquidea's funeral that you can print out for yourself, a cocktail inspired by the book, and all the gorgeous covers that they released around the world. I loved it so much. I loved like scrolling through the website while I was listening to the audiobook. It is a multimedia experience. This one just totally stole my heart. I really enjoyed it. Although Mindy on the Mindy scale was like "I don't love these sex scenes. They're a little descriptive for me." So this was The Inheritance of Orquidea Divina by Zoraida Cordova.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 09:57

Kaytee, I've heard about this book multiple places, I've seen it multiple places. Never until now, had I heard any of those things that you just brought out. And now I really want to read it. Like you just completely made me want to read this.

**Kaytee Cobb** 10:14

I think it helps that I had seen Encanto, you know, 48 times before I read this book. So I was making those connections. But this is like the grown up version of the Family Madrigal. It's really, I mean, there's no Lin Manuel, but it's really fun. And it's interesting. There's like circuses in here. There's just all kinds of interesting things that you'll never pick up on if you don't read it.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 10:39

I love it. Okay, that sounds like a really, really good one. All right, my first book is a second in the series. And I feel really, really good about it. I liked it so much, I'm going to read even further into the series. So again, it's got to be a good series for me to feel this way. This is Good Girl Bad Blood by Holly Jackson. So this is the sequel to the massive bestseller that Holly Jackson wrote A Good Girl's Guide to Murder, which I love, love loved. Here's the setup. After everything that happened in the previous book, and the true crime podcast that she released about that case, which now has gone viral, our lead character, Pip, has decided that she is not a detective anymore. But she's gonna have to break that promise because someone she knows goes missing. The police won't do anything about it. Because it's a disappearance that for a variety of reasons looks like it could be voluntary. But Pip's spidey senses tell her that there's something more going on here. And so goes our story. I want to be really careful, obviously, about how much I talk about a second in the series, because I don't want to give anything away at all. So I'm stepping carefully here. But I like this book so much and I like this series so much

that I definitely wanted to bring it to the show. Series can be difficult for me, because I find that the sophomore outing is often times either more of the same, and so I'm tired of it, or it's gone in a completely new direction and doesn't give me the stuff that I loved from the first one. Luckily, Holly Jackson hits it on the head with this one. But huge caveat here. When I started this one, not only did I not have high hopes, because it was second in the series, but I didn't love the fact that for the first 20% of this book, full 20% of the book, that whole first section feels like it should be the end of the first book, not the beginning of the second book. There's absolutely no way that someone who maybe read the first book, but then read some other books in between would have enough memory of the details of that first book, not to be kind of frustratingly lost in the beginning of the second one. Now, if you went straight from one book to the other, that wouldn't be a problem. But that's not what most readers do, at least in my experience. So I will say that that first 20% had me frustrated, and I almost DNF'd it, but because I was listening to this on audio, and because I had heard so many people say that they really really loved this particular book, I decided to give it one more run right to like another 45 minutes to an hour and see how I felt at the end of that. I'm so glad that that 45 minutes got me on the other side of it, because this ended up being an absolutely fantastic book. Once the actual case in this story starts to come into play, I was in from the beginning of that, and then it just completely took off. So if you've read the first book, and you're sort of like, "What the heck is happening?" hang on, it's going to get better. This is definitely one that I would say hang on. Holly Jackson does a really really good job of writing this Pip character and the ancillary characters around her. And she does a great job with adding in believable details that really keep the story moving along. In fact, by the time I got to the end, I was so completely freaked out by one particular phrase that it was honestly like an ear worm for me. I couldn't get it out of my mind. And I still think about it all the time. This was a 4.75 star read for me. I'm not going to give it the full five stars because I did almost quit at the beginning. But it was so excellent that the rest of the book made up for it and got me all the way to 4.75 stars. So this is Good Girl Bad Blood by Holly Jackson. Fantastic Ya True Crime-y. Podcasty, murder mystery. It's got all that good stuff in it.

**Kaytee Cobb** 14:51

Okay, Meredith, while you were talking you said if you've read the first in the series and you pick this one up, is this a case where you can just pick up the second book, or do you have to have read this first book?

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 15:03

Definitely. I mean, you know, I always feel like this about series period. But in this case, you would be completely lost for the first 20%. I mean, I didn't remember a lot of the details of the first book, but at least I had the knowledge of it. Right? Right, you would be completely lost. And also, even if like, you just literally paged to, like, if I were to give you a page number and say, "Hey, this new case starts on page blah," I still think the whole rest of the book, you'd be missing out on a lot because there is some enmeshment between the characters between the two books so definitely start with A Good Girls Guide to Murder because it makes the second one make more sense. And also because it's just a really, really good book. I did both of these on audio and I really, really like it in this format. With the true crime podcast elements of things, especially in book two, you get that full cast recording. It's just, it's a really good audio experience.

**Kaytee Cobb** 16:03

Good, good. Okay. I love that. Yeah, I have seen really good things about that second one in the series, so I'm excited to pick it up for myself.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 16:12

All right, what's your next book?

**Kaytee Cobb** 16:14

Okay, my second book this week is a middle grade book. It's *Too Bright to See* by Kyle Lukoff. Here's my bossiness. I'm just being so bossy lately Meredith, but I just have to say it. Do not read the full blurb on this because it will spoil this book for you. Here's what you need to know about this short and sweet middle grade book. It's the summer before Middle School and 11 year old Bug's best friend Moira, which that's a terrible name has decided the two of them need to use the next few months to prepare for middle school. Right. For Moira, this means figuring out the right clothes to wear, learning how to put on makeup and deciding which boys are cuter in the yearbook photos than in real life. This is what they spend their days doing. But none of this at all is appealing to Bug who doesn't particularly want to spend more time understanding how to be a girl. Besides, there's something more important to worry about. A ghost is haunting Bug's eerie old house in rural Vermont, and maybe haunting Bug in particular. As Bug begins to untangle the mystery of who this ghost is and what it's trying to say, an altogether different truth comes to light. Stop blurb no more blurb because that is the whole mystery behind this book. This book is perfect for your middle grader that doesn't mind a little bit of ghostliness, but it's not scary at all. You don't have to worry about bad dreams with this middle grade pick. It's also LGBT affirming and it's #ownvoices lit, packing all of that into a very small package. Bug is an endearing main character that you can't help but root for. And even though I don't like Moira's name, I did like her as a side character. The author Kyle captures the story perfectly. This is perhaps one to add to your middle grade March shelves and stacks. And again, it's very short. It's like four hours on audio 150, 160 pages. So not intimidating at all for yourself or for the middle grader in your life that wants more of this like endearing but a little bit spooky story. This is *Too Bright to See* by Kyle Lukoff.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 18:16

Okay, so a little bit of a left turn here. And I'm going to do something a little bit different with this current read segment, Kaytee because I'm going to put two books together in my current read because I just couldn't figure out a way to make these two work separately. Okay, you'll quickly understand why. So you guys know one of my obsessions in a really isn't obsession is all things Enneagram right? I absolutely live my life based on Enneagram. I talk about it all the time. It's really really important to me. One of the things I am constantly looking for because I get asked for it all the time, and Kaytee you do too, is a book about the Enneagram that is the perfect introduction book. Right. And so forever we've been talking about *The Road Back to You* by Ian Morgan Cron and Suzanne Stabile which is a fantastic book. Love it, love it, love it. But recently, a book came across my desk that I think is an even better. Earlier, more basic introduction for people who are interested want to dip their toe in. This book is called *The Enneagram Made Simple* by Ashton Whitmoyer-Ober. She's @Enneagramashton, if you follow her on Instagram. This book is really, really good. I like it so much. Okay, so here's what you get in this book. You've got a very strong basic introduction. You learned about the origins of the Enneagram, the

nine personality types within the Enneagram and how to make sense of that weird little Enneagram symbol. You learn about your specific Enneagram type. There's a short quiz that will help you determine what your type is. And then when you learn what your type is, you'll dive deeper into what motivates you and explores ways that you can grow and improve your relationships with this knowledge. So, I absolutely love this. I want to say if you are well versed in the Enneagram this book is not for you. You don't need this. It is basic in the best way possible. Okay, so don't hear me say Enneagram and automatically think, "Oh, I need to get this book." Because it's really just to hand people who want to dip their toe in. Ashton goes over each type in sufficient detail and then delves into all the basic principles including where we go in stress and in health, she talks about the centers, the wings, the triads, she also briefly explains how each Enneagram type interacts with each other. And she ends each type chapter, and I love this part, with mantras that are useful for that type and some exercises that you can try to be the healthiest version of you. It's very simple. It's very well put together. It goes deep enough that if you read this book, you will no longer be an Enneagram beginner. You will understand it and you know, be able to talk about it at parties. That's what we all want to do. This is why I don't go to a lot of parties, right? Because this is what I want to talk about it. So again, not breaking any new ground here. But if this is what you need, it's perfect. As a bonus, it is available on Kindle Unlimited. If you don't want to actually get the book at least follow Ashton at like I said @Enneagramashton. She's a great follow if again, you're wanting to learn a little bit about the Enneagram. So that is The Enneagram Made Simple by Ashton Whitmoyer-Ober. So the other book that I want to talk about that I also read very soon on top of that one is for those of us who've been studying the Enneagram for a while, and we do want to go deeper and this is a book called The Journey Toward Wholeness and it is by the queen of the Enneagram Suzanne Stabile.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 22:00

So if you have like I said, if you have studied, this is the great next step for your education. This book is written in Stabile's trademark clear, organized style. And this outing takes us deeper into the triads. So our types dominant center of intelligence, and the stances, our type's repressed center of intelligence. While there wasn't anything that I was totally surprised by, it did give me a deeper foundation in these elements of Enneagram study. I also loved the integration of a workbook-ish style here, giving you specific questions to ask yourself after each section to deepen your understanding, I really like to take in the books where I really want to learn something that's super effective for me, I really, really, really got a ton out of the section about my type in stress and in health and how to be more integrated. That's something that I think we all struggle with, but certainly type ones struggle with. So again, this is not at all for people who are just at the stage of wanting to figure out their type, or understand it day to day. But if you do want to go deeper, this is a worthwhile resource. So this is The Journey Toward Wholeness by Suzanne Stabile. So hopefully those two books together will give people no matter where they are, if they're interested, they'll be able to take it a step further.

**Kaytee Cobb** 23:25

Okay, my third book this week is Ain't Burned All the Bright by Jason Reynolds and Jason Griffin. This is a hugging book, but it's also one that I'm a little bit mad about. So let me tell you about it. This is this is a book you can finish easily in a single setting, or even multiple times. I read it like three times cover to cover in 45 minutes. It's not long at all. But first I'm gonna start with the bone I have to pick with the

publishing industry. I am a diehard Jason Reynolds girl. I follow him all the places. I'm on record as reading and loving and owning almost all of his books, and I did not find out about this book's release until release day. And that is a problem. There are people out there like myself, who are desperately in love with certain authors, ahem. And then the publishing industry is not doing a good job letting us know when our people are about to release something new. If I follow him everywhere, I should have known about this. Right? But instead, on release day. I was listening to an interview with him and figured out that he had a brand new book releasing that day. So I went I was already at my bookstore. Oh my gosh, do you guys have this? No. What are you talking about? There's a new Jason Reynolds book today. So I had to special order it into my bookstore and then after that they had it on the shelf because they were also excited about it. But I was very upset about the whole situation. Finally got it into my hands. Probably a week later, which is fine. We all survived. It was fine. But let me tell you about what I finally got into my hands. This book is gorgeous. It is a 348 page book, but it is made up of only three long sentences. Once I got it into my hands, I also found out it was the heaviest book I have ever held. Something about the pages. It's like, you know how when you pick up a coffee table book, you can tell that the pages inside are like, not magazine pages, but very, very thick so that they can be turned over and over again, this book looks like it's a regular sized book and then it weighs twice as much as a regular sized book. It's very, it messes with your head a little bit. So Jason Griffin and Jason Reynolds have been friends for many years and the way that their work comes together here in concert is breathtaking. I bought it in paper, heavy paper and on audio. And while I did love having Jason read it to me, it's so much more about the images on the page that audio really isn't enough. Even trying to tandem read it which y'all know I love to do where I'm having it read to me while I look at the images on the page was not working for me. I slowed it all the way down to 1x. But I wanted to spend more time on each page looking at each page than the audio left room for. You had to turn fast enough to keep up with the cadence of the sentences. So I still had I still had to turn off my Libro and be like, okay, just focusing on the book right now. Again, this is three long sentences. This is, I would call it COVID literature. Jason's main character, his dad is sick. They're looking, they're trying to catch their breath, the entire book, these three long sentences, we're trying to catch our breath, and take deep breaths and see what's around you. And I just, oh man, I even have goosebumps thinking about it again right now. So it feels disingenuous almost to bring it as a current read, like I said three long sentences. I read it three times in 45 minutes. It's not a long book. But it's powerful in the way that walking through an art museum is powerful. And looking at an artist's entire work on the walls in front of you is powerful, because you feel like Jason and Jason together here, bring you into the story so completely, that it's not just a book. It's not just three long sentences. It's so much more than that. It's stunning. I am so glad that I have it in multiple formats. But I'm very glad that I have it for my shelves, especially. And I'm very glad that I did find out about it's release eventually. It's Ain't Burned all the Bright by Jason Reynolds and Jason Griffin.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 27:39

Yeah, there was something very, very odd about the fact that this took everybody by surprise. Right? So it's, it's got to be something more than just like, Oh, his marketing team... There's got to be something in the supply chain or something that kept them from being able to release it like they normally would for a big named author like this.



**Kaytee Cobb** 28:01

It's so strange to me. I mean, I feel like yeah, it's especially so this is like a random tangent that can totally get cut. But Kendra Adachi, has been talking about her Lazy Genius Kitchen, and how the boat that it was on went through a storm and ended up at the bottom of the ocean. It was supposed to release in March, and now it's releasing in May. But they knew so far ahead of time. This all happened in January, eight weeks out, they knew that they couldn't have a March release date as they planned. Why, even with a supply chain issue? Why wouldn't we know that there's a book coming and nothing's happening at the right time? Like it just makes me so mad that it wasn't clearly communicated.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 28:43

Well, you know, I'm going to quote, my patron saint Judge Judy, where she says, "If something doesn't make sense, it's not true." Which in this case, means there's a piece of information we don't have and if we had it, it would all make sense, right? So something doesn't make sense. So. Okay. And I yes, I have literally read everything that Judge Judy has written.

**Kaytee Cobb** 29:05

I didn't even know she wrote things.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 29:08

Yeah, she writes things. Yeah. either. She writes things and she talks about kind of undies that she wears, in fact.

**Kaytee Cobb** 29:14

What? What?

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 29:15

Yeah, yeah, no, I'm just saying there's a little piece of info for you. So this is a huge left turn from my previous two books in that previous segment because this time I'm going to talk about something completely different and that is the absolute barn burner of a book that was White Smoke by Tiffany D Jackson. Holy Hannah. I mean, okay, I talked about Tiffany D. Jackson, you guys know she's an absolute auto by author for me. The last book I brought to the show was Grown. So absolutely loved it. I've read three, three books by her now and then I sat down to read White Smoke. I was unprepared. I was unprepared for White Smoke. Here's the setup. Our lead character is again, I love all of her lead characters, our lead characters Marigold, and Marigold, and her newly blended family moved from their small California beach town, to the embattled Midwestern city of Cedarville. Think a city kind of on the outskirts, the suburban outskirts of Detroit would put you kind of in the right space. Her mom has accepted a new job with the Sterling Foundation that comes with a free house, one that Marigold now has to share with her super attitudinal Eddie Haskell like 10 year old stepsister, Piper. Piper is a great character you love to hate. The renovated picture perfect home on Maple Street sitting between dilapidated houses, surrounded by weary neighbors is "sus" as my 10 year old would say suspect, suspicious from the very beginning. Super sus. A lot of these things make no sense, okay, as soon as you arrive at this house, but that's only half the problem. Inside we've got more problems. Household items vanish, doors open on their own, lights turn off, shadows walk past rooms, voices can be heard in

the walls, and there's a foul smell seeping through the vents that only Marigold seems to notice. Even worse, Piper, the annoying 10 year old sister, step sister, she keeps talking about a friend who wants Marigold gone. As the house closes in, Marigold learns that the danger is not just limited to the house on Maple Street. The city of Cedarville has its secrets too and secrets always find their way through the cracks. Oh my gosh. Tiffany D Jackson does like horror.

**Kaytee Cobb** 32:01

And I just looked behind me feeling like there's somebody in the room. Like I just freaked out again.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 32:07

Oh my gosh, she I mean, again, I was already a fan. This one took me to a completely new level because not only because it was really good for what it was but I love when authors try new things and really stretch out. It's not completely out of what she's done before. It's not like she was writing *Anne of Green Gables* and wrote *White Smoke* but just it was enough of a stretch to go like "I was not prepared 100%". I do have a feeling that she will get better and better as she really hones in on a style if she continues to do horror because there were some places that I can see kind of being smoothed out. But the bones are there for her to be absolutely fantastic in this part of the genre. It is very safe to say that what so many blurbs about this book say is true, which is that it is a riff on the movie *Get Out* and reminds you also a lot of Riley Sager's *Home Before Dark*. It is a great mashup of those two things. This book is definitely full of scary moments. And I could not read it alone at night. I definitely had moments where my heart was racing and I was legitimately freaked out like you said and kind of like, I was like feeling like I was being watched or someone was in the room with me or did I smell a weird smell? She, Tiffany D Jackson wraps this book up with a really satisfying ending and I just continue to be so impressed with her. I cannot wait to see what she does next. This book was 4.5 stars for me and a strong seven on the All Things Murderful scary scale. So we're pretty scary here people for sure. This is *White Smoke* by Tiffany D. Jackson.

**Kaytee Cobb** 33:57

It scared the bejesus out of me also, and a friend just live messaged me as she was reading it and I got freaked out just listening to or reading her live messages. I was like "Oh my gosh, stop."

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 34:09

Oh, I know. It's really really good. Now you guys know I love to read these kinds of books in October, you know, September, October, November, creepy season. You can definitely get it or make yourself a list, put a note on your calendar that you want to get it and remind yourself if you love to read seasonally. Like Jennifer McMahon's *The Drowning Kind*, this is a book that I definitely could also see reading in summer and it would still be really really really evocative. So I really liked that book so much. Okay, so now we're going to talk a little bit about our deep dive. We're going to talk about one night stand books and these are as I mentioned at the top of the show, like a slump buster or a palate cleanser. But a one night stand book is a very specific kind of slump buster or palate cleanser. Right and so the reason that this came up was because I and this has happened with other books, but just most recently, I read *The Ten Thousand Doors of January* by Alix Harrow, and just loved it, loved it loved it loved it. I'm going to be talking about that on the show. And then I loved it so much that I literally

felt like "Okay, that's it. I'm never going to read another book because no other book is ever going to be as good. My reading's broken. I'm done." Like I just was bereft afterwards because I was like, "It's ruined me for all other books," and I kind of you know, harrumphed around and harrumphed around and finally, I was like, "You know what, I just need something, something that is going to get me out of this space," and so I picked up a book called *Pretty Little Wife*, by an author named Darby Kane, again, I'm going to be giving it the full treatment on the show in the not too distant future. But suffice it to say it was a one night stand book. 100% a one night stand book. It was absolutely perfect. And it did exactly what I needed it to do. It sucked me in, and it kept me turning the pages for a few hours. But honestly, finger gun to my head today, I could not tell you what that book is about. I will have to go look at my notes of which I made copious ones. All I know is that after reading it, I was able to move on to my next great read. And for that I am grateful. So here's my suggestion, Kaytee, and I want you to either agree with me or totally disagree with me. I'm suggesting that sometimes to break a slump, we need specifically something that will shock your system. That's short term, shallow, very interesting in the moment, but utterly forgettable in the long term. Do you see a place for a one night stand book in your reading? Or do you get out of a slump in a totally different way?

**Kaytee Cobb** 36:57

I 100% do this when I have been reading. It doesn't even have to be that I read the perfect book, which does happen but not as often as I would like. It's also the fact that sometimes I have too many heavies in a row, right, like too many long drawn out lovemaking sessions with a book and I need to wham bam, thank you, ma'am and get back into my big quick roll. So I pick stuff that's short and forgettable. It can be middle grade, romance, a thriller. I mean, there's a lot of genres that can fit into this spot. Our friend Sarah calls this alcohol and Advil. So alcohol is the book that gives you the hangover. Advil is the one that pops you back up out of your slump. And I love that image as well. The one night stand book, though, is absolutely something that I will finish really fast. I would love if it's on audio, if it's under six hours, honestly, because then I can get through it easily in one sitting, you know?

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 38:02

Right, it's got to be the kind of book that's gonna throw you back up against the wall, right? Like, it's not gonna be like, we're gonna sit around and talk for a while to sort of see if we want to do this. It's got to get you from page one. This is you know, this would a one night stand book is to me. It's got to from page one be taking all of my attention, so that I can't even think for a moment, about *Ten Thousand Doors of January*. You know what I mean? It's got to just wipe everything from my memory for that short period of time and kind of clear my chakras and enable me to get to that next space. So do you have some, so we talked about, there are I mean, certainly, the thriller genre falls into this category, I think pretty easily. But yes, there are other genres that fall into it absolutely. So do you have a list of some books that have done this for you?

**Kaytee Cobb** 38:53

I have authors that I usually will pick up if I'm in that space, and it again, will depend on what kind of book threw me there because I can get book hangover from a middle grade book, if it's *The Remarkable Journey of Coyote Sunrise*, right where it just devastated me in the produce aisle of the grocery store. And then I don't want another middle grade book, then I'll go thriller. But if I had a really

great character driven, literary, all of this kind of feels foreign coming out of my mouth novel, I'm not going to pick up a thriller, maybe I'll want something sweeter to like, really lighten my mood. So then I will pick up a verse novel like Kwame Alexander or Jacqueline Woodson, very short, very easy to read in one sitting quick, quick, quick, all the way through, or a graphic novel will do the same thing for me because it's again, it's like the feeling of flipping pages and getting pages read and thinking about something else.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 39:53

So maybe, yeah, also what we're saying is that it needs to be I mean, I'm playing with this in real time. But does it also need to be the complete opposite of what just put you into that space? So I was coming off of *The Ten Thousand Doors of January*, I needed a wham bam thank you, ma'am thriller. Right. But if I was coming off of, you know, *We Begin at the End*, a thriller wouldn't have been that thing I probably would have needed. A cozy and for me a cozy, there are cozies that could be one night stand books, utterly forgettable, wrap you up from the very beginning, you know what I mean? And kind of largely a one or two like a short read, something that it's gonna be over really fast.

**Kaytee Cobb** 40:42

What about... do you have go to thriller authors that work for your one night stands?

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 40:47

Yes. So there's no question for me, I you know, again, again, I'm not saying these books that I'm about to talk about are five star books. I'm saying they're one night stand books. And I really need everyone to realize that there is a difference here. Yeah, you know, okay. *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley. You guys know how I feel about Lucy Foley's last couple of books. But her first one, *The Hunting Party*, perfect one night stand book. Right. *The Last* by Hanna Jameson. I don't know if you remember me talking about this one. This is a great one night stand book. It's like some sort of something happens in the world and all you know, this group of people's in Switzerland, I think, and all of a sudden all their phones start notifying them that some horrific something has happened. And then the world just like shuts down and they're trapped. And then someone gets murdered. It's like the perfect one night stand book. You're gonna go through it so fast. You're probably like I can't right now remember all of the details. But by the time you're done with it, you will be ready to move on to another book. I also think Ruth Ware's books. are perfect.

**Kaytee Cobb** 41:54

I wrote down Ruth Ware. Yep, I agree.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 41:57

Right? They are like the turn of the... That's not *The Turn of the Screw*. *The Turn of the Key* her new, not I don't think newest one, but whatever. newer ones. Just a really, really great. It's gonna get you out of this mood. If you're pining for you know, your last book. It's gonna grab your by the collar, and it's going to say you're going to pay attention to this for right now and then you're going to be ready to move on. I think she does a really good job. I think Harlan Coben books, *The Stranger* is one that I'm thinking of. I think a lot of Harlan Coben books fall into this category: easy, simple, straightforward, twisty enough to

keep you interested thrillers that you can knock out really fast. And then I think the ultimate, ultimate one night stand book, just the ultimate is Verity by Colleen Hoover.

**Kaytee Cobb** 42:50

Oh, because it's got all those elements in it.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 42:54

I mean, I dare you to be able to pick up that book and not finish it super fast. You're not gonna probably love it, because it's not that well written. And it's got some dumb crap in it. But I guarantee you by the time you get done, you're gonna be like, Oh, okay, now I'm ready for, now I'm ready for something new and fresh and long term something.

**Kaytee Cobb** 43:17

Yeah, yeah. I like that. It's like getting that text. Hey, you up?

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 43:22

Yeah. The Verity is a you up book. No, absolutely. No, you're not going to feel good about having read it. But you're going to be ready for your next read. And that's what we're trying to get here. We're not looking for a book to marry. We're just looking for a book to get us on our way.

**Kaytee Cobb** 43:38

Exactly. Yeah. I have Greer Hendricks and Sarah Pekkanen also on this list, like An Anonymous Girl. I remember very little about that book. But I know I read it real fast. Right. I put a few romance authors on this list. Like Chloe Liese. I love her books. I can't tell them apart. I don't know which ones which. That's okay.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 43:59

Yeah. Oh, I mean, there's no question that my go to romance author Tessa Dare, she is perfect for this. Pick on any one of the books that you can get your hand on. It doesn't even matter. You're never going to remember one book from the next but you will fly through you will absolutely fly through it.

**Kaytee Cobb** 44:17

You will fly through it. I also love John Marrs, but his books are a little bit one night standy for me too, because that's all I can think about while I'm actually in that space.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 44:27

Especially his first two books.

**Kaytee Cobb** 44:31

Yeah, I think mostly I would end up saying that I would never pick up for a one night stand back or for one night stand someone gorgeous and literary.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz 44:40**

So I even will find that in some moods a really, really sugary sweet book like a very sugary sweet book will be exactly what I'm looking for. I'm thinking of a book that I read really recently that was so sugary sweet, I can't even justify bringing it as a current read but if you want a really sugary sweet Christmas book, there's a book by Debbie Macomber, who I love, and you guys know I love her books. She wrote a book called Mrs. Miracle. That is a perfect one night stand book. If you're in that right mood, where that's what you need, it's so sugary sweet, you would never want to eat, it's like eating too much cotton candy, where you're like, "Oh, God, I know, I'm never gonna eat cotton candy again." But right then it was the best tasting cotton candy in the world. So whatever your one night stand book is, it's going to be unique to you and it's going to be unique to your needs in that moment. But hopefully, we've given you guys some ideas that this might be a way to get out of a book hangover. And also that it's really, really normal and okay, to need a book that's just super quick, and maybe not what you normally read or not what you want to tell your book club that you read, but it can be useful and move you on toward those other five star books that you're going to find really soon.

**Kaytee Cobb 46:01**

Yeah, if you wouldn't consider putting it into a monthly wrap up at the end of the month, it might be a perfect one night stand book.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz 46:07**

Exactly. Exactly. All right, good. Okay, so Kaytee let's then go to the other end of the spectrum, and let's press some books into our readers hands. What are you pressing this month?

**Kaytee Cobb 46:22**

Well, as we discussed at the beginning of the episode, this is the first week in March. We already talked a little bit of middle grade this time, but I had to bring a gem for middle grade March this week. So I am going to put on the press list because I love it so much, Amari and the Night Brothers by B.B. Alston.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz 46:40**

Oh, yes, for sure. It's not on the press list already?

**Kaytee Cobb 46:43**

It's not on the press list. It's been almost exactly a year since I read it. So you know, I like to let them simmer for a while even though as soon as I finished this book, I knew that eventually it would end up on the press list. This is a gem of a middle grade fantasy and involves the real world being suffused with magic and magical creatures and magical mysteries. Amari's brother Quinton is a golden boy, as in everyone in the neighborhood looks up to him. When he disappears without a trace, the cops write it off as a typical Black boy in trouble. But Amari knows that it can't be the case. So when a briefcase is delivered, inviting Amari to try out for the Bureau of Supernatural Investigations, where Quinton was working, she knows it's a sign from her brother. What follows is like Men in Black style trial mixed with the classes and classmates of Harry Potter. This book has everything I was wanting in a middle grade fantasy in it, and I loved it from beginning to end. I own multiple copies of this book. And even though book two has been delayed until August of 2022, when we originally thought we'd get it in April and no

I'm not mad about it at all, my preorder stands and Amari and the Great Game will be on its way to me on release day. I cannot wait to get it into my hot little hands. This first one in the series is Amari and the Night Brothers by B.B. Alston.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 48:01

Okay, you know what, I totally should have brought a middle grade book for middle grade March. I will do that next week for sure, because I have several that I really want to put on the press list. Until then I further feel bad because the book that I am bringing is another one night stand book but also I think just a really great page turner. So it's one of these that kind of falls into both these categories. For a lot of people it's going to be like "I want to go through it real fast. It's interesting but I want it to be over," and for other people they're going to be like "Where's this book been on my life?" I want to press Fantasticland by Mike Bockoven.

**Kaytee Cobb** 48:33

Oh yes.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 48:35

Which couldn't be any more different from Amari and the Night Brothers if they tried. Okay. Here's the setup. Since the 1970s, Fantasticland, which is a theme park... you guys know I love theme park books, has been the theme park where the tagline Fantasticland, it's "Fun is guaranteed." But then a hurricane hits the part of Florida actually that never usually gets hit by hurricanes like this and it isolates the park and the about 300 mostly teenage and early like late teens, early 20s employees who have volunteered to stay behind and make sure that the theme park is kept safe while it's closed down for the storm. So five weeks later, the authorities who rescue the survivors encounter a scene of horror. You guys this is horror, this is horror, hardcore horror. Okay. Photos soon emerge online of heads on spikes outside of rides, and human bones littering the gift shops. And those photos go completely, absolutely viral. So the question that we're left to ask is "How could a group of survivors, mostly teenagers commit such terrible acts?" This book is a major Whoa Nelly book for sure. It's a book that grabs you by the collar and will not let you go, you will speed through this very, very quickly. So, there are big upsides and big downsides to this book. But as a one night stand book, I stand by the fact that it cannot be beat. There are people who compare this to Lord of the Flies, and those comparisons are very, very apt. It's like a very upgraded, Lord of the Flies. And this book, also, I should say, makes the Hunger Games look like a Disney movie, for sure, but it's absolutely riveting. It's written in a unique style of linked interviews, this is absolutely original, at least I had never read anything like this before and it moves the story forward in a way that keeps you turning the pages. Each story, each interview that's been done leads to the perspective of the next story and the next story and the next story, you're getting it from all these different points of view, like I said, and I feel like I need to say it over and over again, it's incredibly violent and gory. From the outset, it concentrates on teenagers committing horrible crimes against each other, mostly senselessly, as a person and most especially as a parent, I do want to say that it is difficult to read. But it gave me a ton to think about, as far as how could this happen? And then also, how much would my fear or self preservation as a 19 or 20 year old have either made me kind of hide and not stop bad things from happening, or even participate in bad things in some way? Because I thought that was going to preserve my own safety, right? Like, what would you do if you were in that situation? It's

interesting to think about, the key question that the book really poses is "What kind of evil lurks in each of us?" And so this book is absolutely thrilling. It's a one night stand, but you will remember parts of it forever. Just a lot of this you can't unsee. This is Fantasticland by Mike Bockoven.

**Kaytee Cobb** 52:01

This one is great as a buddy read, because then you can have your WTF messages back and forth to each other. That's perfect.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 52:09

Yes, I also think that it would be totally perfect as a like if you have a really long car ride like a solo car ride and you're like, I just need something that is going to make me forget my 10 hours of driving that I have to do today. This book would do that for you in a major way. Great airplane book too, for sure. All right, that is it for this week. As a reminder, here's where you can connect with us. You can find me on Meredith at @Meredith.reads on Instagram.

**Kaytee Cobb** 52:34

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

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 52:38

Full show notes with the title of every book we mentioned in the episode and timestamps, so you can zoom right to where we talked about it can be found on our website at [currentlyreadingpodcast.com](http://currentlyreadingpodcast.com).

**Kaytee Cobb** 52:48

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

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 52:55

And as we talked about at the top of the show, if you really want to help us, become a patron for just \$5 a month, or rate and review us on Apple podcasts or shout us out on social media. Each one of those things makes a huge difference toward us finding our perfect audience.

**Kaytee Cobb** 53:11

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

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 53:16

Alright, until next week, may your coffee be hot

**Kaytee Cobb** 53:19

and your book be unputdownable.

**Meredith Monday Schwartz** 53:21

Happy reading Kaytee.



**Kaytee Cobb** 53:22  
Happy reading Meredith