



Library podcast

Conversation Hearts: An Inclusive Love Fest for Romance Readers and Writers Part 2

[00:00:00] This podcast is being presented in two parts. You are listening to part two.

[00:00:11] [piano] [music] Welcome to the Seattle Public Libraries podcasts of author readings and library events, library podcasts are brought to you by the Seattle Public Library and Foundation to learn more about our programs and podcasts. Visit our web site at www.spl.org to learn how you can help the Library Foundation. Support the Seattle Public Library. Go to foundation.spl.org.

[00:00:42] Welcome, everyone. This is such a thrill. Can we all just take one moment?

[00:00:53] So my name is Claire Scott. I was formerly a librarian here at the Seattle Public Library and I was a youth services librarian. So I let a lot of story times. And on the side I enthused about romance so much that my dream of having a romance event at the Seattle Public Library finally came true. Today, I am no longer I know I'm no longer here in SPL. I am now working with teenagers who I sadly couldn't convince to come here because it was a little too steamy for them. So I was like, don't think this is a place for you, but this is really a dream. So before we even start, I'm going to have you all do something that I do with my very small children. Just pretend that you're very small children right now.

[00:01:39] Take your hands. Put them above your head in a heart. Oh, my gosh. You look so fantastic right now. We're gonna give a great big stretch with a big, deep breath in and then you get to wave your fingers. Sending all of this love to the authors here on this panel and also to each other, the readers in this room. Are you ready? One, two, three. Send that send that love to your readers, send that love to your authors. Let's give a round of applause for our authors who are here today.
[applause]

[00:02:16] So I am so delighted. I've got an eye on the clock here on my phone. If I glance down, that's what's going on. I am stepping in because unfortunately, Robin Bradford, who is supposed to be monitoring this panel and would have been exceptionally good at it, it has the flu. And so we found out at about 2:00 a.m. she wasn't gonna be here. And so I am going to be doing my best to attempt to fill some very big shoes and get to be here with this rock star group of panelists. Let me ask a question. If I'm this far from the mike. Are you still able to hear it?

[00:02:50] Yes. OK, terrific. Great. That I won't lean in quite so much. So I would like to just take a second to introduce all of the fantastic people on this panel. I guess I'll start at one end and just move on down.

[00:03:07] Oh, hold your applause until the end. Please, if you can even handle this.

[00:03:13] So here at the very end, we have Austin Chant. [applause] Yay. Oh, I blew it. [laughter]

[00:03:25] Totally. OK. You're great. Oh, you know, we should do it. We should also do names and pronouns. Sorry. Claire Scott. My pronouns are she/her. Do you all want to do your own pronouns as we go down? Yeah. OK. Wave and shout your pronouns. Awesome. Great. Thank you. So if you have not been hearing about Austin's queer trans fairy tales for the last few years, you have missed out. Let me tell you, Peter Darling in particular is my favorite. It is a reimagining of Peter Pan, and it's the kind of magical retelling that I just wish that we had had 20 or 30 years ago, when unfortunately, Austin was maybe not as strong in his craft as he is today. [laugh] And so I am so, so thrilled to have him here, he is local to Seattle. If you have a chance to check those out at your local library or buy them from your local indie bookstore. You will not be disappointed. Rebecca Weatherspoon is sitting next, do you want to shout out your pronouns. She/her, let's do it, they works too also. Oh, we can pick this up.

[00:04:24] That's better. I'll pass it over to. Oh, so much better. Thank you. So this is honestly a personal dream come true. It is. No, I'm not even kidding. When I was when I was at first dreaming about maybe we could do this at SPL, I was like but could we get Rebecca Weatherspoon that could we get Rebecca Weatherspoon? Do you think? She's, she's in L.A. It's not that far. Everyone will confirm this on the planning team. So women of color in romance is one of the greatest things on the Internet and has been now for many years. If you are not yet throwing your money at their Patreon, you are missing out. Please do that immediately. If you have any money to throw, you can fix that today. That is the place to put your money. Her books are like you had a chance hopefully to hear her speak already. So there's nothing that I can add to that except to say that if you haven't read them yet, her books are like a warm, cozy blanket of adult communication and porn and women getting love. It is a delight and a joy and I have no words.

[00:05:28] Ok, next. Are you ready, Piper? OK. Shout your pronouns. Yay! Oh, I had the mike. Sorry, Piper.

[00:05:38] Piper J. Drake, pronouns she/her because I had the mike. Right, romantic suspense featuring tough, soft, hot, competent heroes. Some of them are men. Many of them are dogs. [laughter] They are they have very, very competent dogs. And so I have to say that I actually saw Piper on a on a panel. I don't really read romantic suspense very often. It's not my jam necessarily. So I was like, oh, but this author was really funny and really good. I was like, I'll read your books. And since then, last spring, I have read them all. And I can tell you if like competence porn with men and dogs. You should check them out. And ladies as well. Yes, sorry. There are also ladies. They are also competent. Excuse me. Yes. OK. Are you ready, Livia? OK. Shout your pronouns. Pronouns she/her.

Fantastic. So this is a Seattle crowd. So I want to make sure that all of you know that you should 100 percent be reading Olivia's book recommendation column in the Seattle Review of Books. It is called Kissing Books.

[00:06:40] If you have how many of you have read kissing books? So good.

[00:06:43] Fantastic. So it is it is an outstanding an outstanding column. And she also had a heck of a year since we said, hey, Olivia, do you want to do this? You write that really good column and you know, you're kind of great. Since then, she was invited to publish Avon's very first ever f f historical, a nerdy dream of a book with a gorgeous cover and that it has basically exploded in this like burst of Sapphic tool and like needlework if you haven't had a chance to read. The Lady's Guide to Celestial Mechanics it is on the back table back there, you can also get it from your public library. And finally, last but not least, Jasmine Silvera is here at the end of the table, Jasmine, would you shout your pronouns. She/her. Outstanding. So here's Jasmine's tagline on her website. She writes stories about things that go bump in the night, including headboards.

[00:07:42] Isn't that the best? Not always at night.

[00:07:45] She writes romantic urban fantasy that will keep you turning pages and seriously contemplating the romantic potential of necromancers. So if that doesn't give you certainly a second to consider. You certainly should. So we have basically a dream panel here that is going to run itself. I am looking forward to putting this mike down. We're gonna be talking about the future of romance. And I think everybody here has some thoughts to share. Just to kind of get us started with a first question. What do you think the future of romance looks like from an author's perspective, not just the books that you're reading right now or writing or will write, but how you fit into the profession?

[00:08:26] Sure, yeah. Thank you.

[00:08:29] This is an interesting question for someone whose publisher just shut down.

[00:08:35] Which is sorry if that's a grim note to start off on. It's but I think it is. Yeah. The thing that I think about a lot as especially as a queer author in this genre is how much work it takes to make sure that we still have this space. In the last couple of years, we've seen a lot of publishers go down for a variety of reasons and just a lot of, you know, a lot of stuff that is already, you know, queer authors are already in many ways marginalized and in many ways struggling to get their work out there. And then there are also wind up being all these kind of just institutional barriers and just, you know, now you have to republish your book after going through all this work. Now you have to find a new home for it. Now you have to go through all these steps again. And in the meantime, like you're you're not making money. And so I think what I think about a lot is we we need to continue to do a lot of work to make sure that the structure is in place to get these books out there and to make sure that they're getting all the love they need getting in front of audiences, because audiences have only gotten thirstier in the time I've been writing. I haven't been writing romance for that long, I think three or four

years now. And what that's really exposing me is how many people love and want this stuff. But we have to have the structures in place for authors to actually get in front of readers.

[00:10:02] So that's my grim tone, too. Do you want to say.

[00:10:07] Yeah. No publisher of the business. I think that's. I mean, we all love books. We all love to read it. That's it's a wonderful way to spend your free time. But it takes money to run a library. It takes money to run a bookstore. And then as readers, you are spending your money or your time engaging in this form of media. And so the for me, the tricky thing is. I always get these kind of like. Back door acceptance of all of my work. So it's really weird, I'll have editors from big publishing houses walk up to me and say, I love RAFE and I want to say you never would have bought this book for me in a million years. And so that's the tricky part, is trying to write books about marginalized characters when there's still so many barriers to the money. I have kind of like an existential crisis when Olivia put out her book with Avon because I thought I couldn't sell lesbians to Avon and I was in a covenant with black lesbians. So I was like, this is gonna be a really hard sell. Had to literally had a nervous breakdown and was like, okay, if Olivia can do this, can I do this? So that's the thing. It's like the barriers to the money. And so that's the next thing I'm thinking about. And, you know, I want to write paranormal, but do I try and sell it or does someone actually want to buy sex witch? I don't know. So, yes.

[00:11:31] Yes.

[00:11:37] That almost happened. Okay. Anyway, I want to kind of build on what both of you are saying and the fact that it is a business and we do need to make space and continue to make space for various marginalized groups.

[00:11:51] And part of that is that we are trailblazers. Each of us here is a trailblazer in a different way. And every author is in it in their own way. And you need to be able to crystallize that and communicate it to traditional publishers so that they understand how they can represent you, because they are going to learn how to represent the majority. They're gonna learn how to represent the tried and true. They are looking for the trailblazers out there, but they need coaching. When you're a disruptive force in their world and so you need to be prepared to coach them.

[00:12:28] And sometimes we're like, but you're supposed to know and they're like, but you're the new person. And so everybody's working together to try to figure it out.

[00:12:35] But I'm also a major proponent of the hybrid journey. You'll see a lot of people talking about indie authoring and indie authoring can really do amazing things. And we've got a lot of love for indie bookstores. So that's also something where if you can work with both indie and trad and see the benefits of both, then that hybrid space is where you're also diversifying your profile and, you know, increasing your chances of survival in the long run. And I'm all about the Darwinism there. So it's it's one of those things where from the author's perspective, it's how do I plan a long tail career? How can

I survive? Because if I survive and I make space in this world, I'm also making space for readers and authors who are like me.

[00:13:26] So I am going to point out that I'm I know and I have known from day one that this book was a much easier sell because I was white and the two leads are white. Like, hugely. I was also going to mention that one of the things I was excited about was this was a big year for f f in general, which is just fucking magic. But I am also 90 percent sure that Avon bought this book for me to shut me up, so I would stop asking them for f f historicals as a reviewer.

[00:13:52] Like my editor was like the publicity team's been asking me for something like this. So I think they'll like this. And I'm like, yeah, that's because I've sent them like four emails, like guys.

[00:14:01] So it's been kind of a weird journey. And I think in terms of future author's career, certainly my own, but probably more than that. The idea of hybridity is going to be more important than ever before, you're going to need multiple channels, some of them are gonna be self-funded. Things like Petrine, like Patreon, and which I always called Patreon because I'm a dork and you're like my first publisher went spectacularly and catastrophically out of business. And so even with all the Avon stuff, there's a part of my head that's like, just wait. It's going to you know, there's always gonna be ups and downs. Things are always gonna be changing. Even with a big stable publisher, they could be pulling something like what Hachette is doing with libraries right now, which, you know, does nobody's career any good as an author. So you're definitely going to want to keep an idea of the breadth of people that you want to have business relationships with and the breadth of stuff that you want to write like Rebecca. The fact that you were writing in multiple genres has always been something that's really. Kind of been something that I wanted to shoot for because you, Zoe Archer, Eva Leigh, Courtney Mulan, Alyssa Cole, like there's so many people out there writing so many different types of romance and that used to be really the not done thing. You found your niche and you wrote 18 books and people can't do that anymore. Like but on the other hand, it's way more fun this way. So yeah, basically diversify, diversify, diversify. Every level.

[00:15:34] I think I don't have anything more to add from the business end because I think that's been covered super well here. I think if I think about myself selfishly and personally, I often think that the most writing is a very solitary endeavor and being an author can also be very solitary.

[00:15:53] But I see myself and in as an and this is as primarily an introverted person who just knows how to extrovert really hard is that I feel more powerful and more amplified when I'm working with other authors. And I. I see this happening a lot in my circles of authors is where people are looking for opportunities to do things together. And I'm not talking like a box set of 12 vampire books, but but actual like real collaborative stuff. And I like the idea of being in that space in the future as an author, as someone who I love this kind of interaction where we're all talking about what we're doing, when we're speaking with you about it. I love being in these kinds of settings and having these interactions which didn't charge me up to go back and write the next thing. So I I will feel like a my success for me professionally in and future me will be very happy if ever continuing to operate in these kinds of spaces, as well as doing my own individual work, which will be very diversified because I put my eggs

and all kinds of little baskets. You never know which one is going to hatch and do something fantastic. So yeah, that's all I got on that one.

[00:17:05] I think going along with that, that question of community made me think about talking about social media earlier as well.

[00:17:12] I'd love to hear from you all about how you think one of the things that I've seen in social media that I think is astonishing is the level of metacognition that romance readers have about themselves as readers and the back and forth. The writers are also readers. It's not like I'm here like literary fiction. Sometimes you have that moment of like, well, have you read all of these other things? And then there's like another think piece about I'm going to write Y.A., but I've never read any Y.A., you know, that kind of thing. Romance never that you know that you don't see that in romance. So I'd love to hear how you talk, especially Rebecca.

[00:17:41] Maybe if you wanted to start thoughts about how the interactivity and community building on social media in particular shapes that that future.

[00:17:50] I will say there are people in romance who don't read romance and they make it really obvious. You're like, oh, you know, do you read at all, actually? [laughter] Listen, these people are proudly operating when we tell you.

[00:18:05] What was the question again? [laughter] Oh, social media and romance in community. I just want to talk for a minute.

[00:18:11] Community building and social media, the direction of that into romance.

[00:18:13] I mean, I think I think, again, like were all along the lines of this being a business. Right. Social media is amazing, but the beauty of fiction is operating in a very real world. Right. So like, I don't know if, like, Jack is gonna get arrested for like securities fraud next week and Twitter is going to say, I'm for real. I mean, I really never thought Zuckerberg would be testifying before Congress like this is. So all those things are operating on like a really real world level. And so what I I think about all the time is if Twitter goes under, what what happens next?

[00:18:52] Right. Beverly Jenkins, who like it's like like I love her so much.

[00:18:57] Interacting with her has been very interesting because she's in her 60s. Obviously, she started writing before social media was even a thing. We're all very lucky that we're kind of like social media kids. You know, we like we're lucky enough to really get our careers going. While social media was like hot, it's like, well, I am nervous about really is.

[00:19:18] Where that's going and how that's gonna like maintain itself, because the stuff is not forever. And I think. What we have now that's very precious is the ability to communicate over these

long distances. There's a group operating out of the Philippines right now. They're called romance class.

[00:19:38] If you're not familiar with romance class. Oh, guys. Get out there and read their books. These authors are like their doing it. They are. I have never seen a writing community like this. Not only are they banding together to work on craft and community and all this stuff, they're writing really good books like really good books. And I feel like Twitter and social media. I would have never heard of them if it hadn't have been for Twitter. And I think being able to literally reach across the globe and direct message another author and say, oh, hey, here's this thing. And now I mean, another beautiful thing that's happened. Now we know about them. So we can carry their books. Now we have Filipino women coming into our bookstore and they'll literally stop and say wait wait. You have books by Filipino authors? We do. They live in the Philippines and we have some here who live in L.A. and we have books for you. So being able to build that community helps the business.

[00:20:40] So that's why I want to maintain the community, because it does help the business, but also helps us grow as like a human community. And it's it's global.

[00:20:49] I think a lot of platforms are out there.

[00:20:53] But, you know, Twitter and Facebook are two of the biggest ones. So I do have nightmares about what happens if Twitter or Facebook goes down. One of the things that I've done in multiple workshops, because there's a lot of people out there who have a brand who are trying to represent themselves, who are like, I don't need a website anymore. I got my Facebook page or I have my Tumblr profile or I have my Twitter. And I'm like, no, no, because you don't own that content. The stuff you posted there could disappear like that. I can't snap anymore. Sorry. I have some medical challenges like I was about to snap and I was like, nope, that's not happening right now. But so one of the things is that I think other platforms out there are going to still be there.

[00:21:33] From a technology perspective, to be able to interact with authors and readers and authors to authors, we're just going to have to find each other until another social media platform that allows that random meetup to happen or that random. I'm a lurker personally from all too old school forums like The Prodigy Days, like I would lurk and learn new and you know, so I'm lurking around on Twitter reading people's feeds, maybe not interacting, but gaining the courage to interact and read about them and stuff and and learn about their books. That part, that kind of spontaneous discovery is gonna be a lot harder if Twitter and Facebook went down. But things like are we saying Patreon or Patreon?

[00:22:16] The thing like that, it is patreon the P thing. That's a really good way where I know a lot of authors are allowing like for example, I do patreon to share my adventures and dictation or to share time management and project planning.

[00:22:30] And people get sneak peeks. I know a lot of authors allow their people who are fans and patrons and also public posts. So that's where the content is that you can get updates and stuff rather

than the blogs that used to happen before. But before there were blogs and before there were newsletters that actually showed up in your mailbox and you would send self-addressed stamped envelopes to your favorite authors to get like a book plate from them.

[00:22:56] I mean, we can go back to that and it'll be faster because it's electronic. So we'll still be able to interact with technology in the future. But I think that we're going to need another social media platform to rise up like a kaiju. I don't know. Somewhere in the Pacific, if you know Twitter, Facebook goes down. I'm OK if it's named Kaiju. [laughter]

[00:23:18] Quick on that. And that's that. There are like other challenges that could arise that we don't know about, like passage of laws like SESTA/FOSTA has already had a huge impact on so many creators. Not, I think, as much authors, but but any any people who are producing erotic content like these are extremely draconian laws in many cases. And we've already seen the removal of so much content from platforms like Tumblr, from Patreon even. Paypal paypal. Yeah. And as always, the people who are gonna get crack down on the hardest are the most marginalized creators. And so I think we always have to be wary of like who's running these platforms and who are we accountable to. Even such a thing as like Amanda, my partner in crime and I were looking at website hosts for a romance thing. And we had to be looking into like, does Weebly, allow this kind of content? How explicit are there regulations against it versus WordPress versus, you know, anything? It's especially for romance. I think it's.

[00:24:26] Scary, scary.

[00:24:30] Yeah, well, and I keep thinking about the thing Rebecca said before about she's always thinking about social responsibility and I've been thinking about that in terms of not just romance, but in terms of social media. So much this year. Maybe it's just the fact that I've been writing and overthink. Review blog for a couple of years now, but I keep thinking of romance as kind of like a moral space. And so. The author's behavior, of course, then also has to be like a separate moral space. Like we talk a lot about the separation of reality and fantasy from fiction in real life and somehow like we haven't really got around to talking about like how that impacts things like marketing and connection and community interactions when there's a lot of there's just there's so many like things that could be conflicts of interest. And there's certain disclosures that we do make and certain disclosures that we don't make. And I think, for instance, when when I started writing for Seattle Review Books, I came from the romance blogger background where I'm like, oh, every blog has the disclaimer at the bottom. Like, these books were provided by the author in exchange for an honest review.

[00:25:36] Right. And so I put put that at the bottom of every column and they're like, can't we don't need this like the literary world. That's just kind of a given. And I mean, like literary fiction, stuff like so places like The New York Times Book Review, they're just they assume that it's a review copy. And for some reason, the FCC does not care. And so it's this whole other thing. So I'm like, OK. So I should disclose financial relationships, obviously. But like, what about people that I'm buddies with? And yes and no. And sorry. This was a I guess, a bit of a tangent. But like I keep thinking about it in

terms of Twitter, because people like sometimes people will get mad and say, oh, romance readers only recommend their friends and everybody's clicky. And and I'm like, yes, but also no. Because, you know, sometimes I'm like, hey, this person had a funny tweet once. Let me retweet their tweet about their book. And like, you know, I haven't read this. This person amused me. People should know about this book. It's a little boost. It doesn't cost me anything.

[00:26:37] How?

[00:26:39] I guess, you know, this is always the question I'm asking these days is what do we owe to each other? How do we rise from the ashes of Facebook and Twitter and build a better network and community like, you know, my God. Can you imagine what Twitter would be like if they actually moderated the thing halfway decently?

[00:26:57] Yeah, well, so sorry, did you have anything to add? So. So I thinking positively optimistically about what what could be happening and what is happening now that's making us happy. What's exciting to you about romance right now? Something that you didn't see coming?

[00:27:14] Shoot it down. It's it's OK. I'm over, you're having a little brain break from the big talk. Something exciting about romance that you didn't see coming. That I didn't see coming. Oh, no. This is the wrong question for me. I see it all coming. And Cassandra. I think what I didn't see coming is so.

[00:27:31] I feel like I'm relatively new to romance as a as an author. I am I am a reader. I am a stealer of romances from my grandmother's shelf, from the way back. But in terms of like writing and producing and being part of the grand tradition of authoring, I'm really relatively new.

[00:27:48] So I didn't have a lot of know before.

[00:27:52] And what I didn't see that's been really exciting to me. I think is how much with caveats, depending on the spaces that you're in, there are these opportunities for inclusion and and community of authors who are telling stories that I never even thought would be told and published.

[00:28:11] And and those are like in my wildest fanfic reading dreams because I I went to fanfic to read a lot of things that I was never seeing published in a bookstore. And so. Oh, so maybe that's the thing because like AO3, everybody knows AO3 is the big fan fic site. Just want a Hugo award which recognizes it in the science fiction genre as a, you know, a force of major work being produced. And so, you know. Yeah, would I. It's kind of weird because I think a lot of people. Well, I personally read and write fanfic for the romances that I'm missing in pop culture and in existing media. So like that's been really exciting to see that kind of bubbling up. And so, yes, I get it. The Hugo is for science fiction. But let's face it, they're recognizing the romance writers. They even if they don't know it.

[00:28:59] One thing I'm looking forward to, so like Marvel killed the rom-com. Well, John Apatow killed the rom-com then Marvel killed it immediately afterward. I'm looking forward to a rom-coms

coming back in film and television. How that relates to romance publishing as a producer. Do not want any original content. They want I.P. So they're buying books to turn into movies. And a lot of what's happening now is that they're putting actual diverse casts in a lot of these movies and shows. I don't know if you guys saw *Four Weddings and a Funeral* on Hulu, the show. Mindy Kaling produce that and she knocked it out of the park. I mean, Muslim characters, Black characters. I mean, she just she did it right. And I was so happy to see something that the original content of it was so white. And then she was able to turn it into something else. And so I'm really hoping that more studios start snatching up books and making more. I mean, Julia Quinn's *Bridgerton* series just got bought by Shonda Rhimes and they're doing a diverse cast with that. And so I'm really hoping that stuff just gets more and more inclusive. And I think I really think like romance publishing is going to be what saves the rom-com in the rom-com. That's what I'm really looking forward to.

[00:30:18] Absolutely.

[00:30:20] This was already kind of mentioned, but I've been really happy to see more FF come out this year because I think that's something that romance, the romance community and also the fanfic community and the intersection of them has struggled with a longtime of like on the one hand, everybody gets to read whatever they want to read. But on the other hand, there's just sort of this glaring void of women and at a certain point like it within ourselves.

[00:30:43] We need to take a hard look at that and take responsibility for that to the degree that we, you know, individually can while still, you know, reading things that make us happy and chill. But I I've been on the judging panel for the Ripped Bodices Inaugural Rewards and Romance Fiction, which are going to be a great source of book wrecks soon.

[00:31:03] And I have been so pleased at the number of my like top books of the year that are FF. I think my might like top three recommendations right now are all FF and they're they're books that are like out there. They're books that are like on that table back there.

[00:31:17] And well I was going to say if some of them for my recommendations panel. Come to the recommendations panel next.

[00:31:26] But I will shout out like Courtney Mil Courtney Milan and Alyssa Cole are particularly like they're they're killing it this year. K.J. Charles as well. So, yeah, I've been really happy to see that.

[00:31:38] And I think we would be remiss to not mention the fact that this year, like this year of amazingness in FF romance started in January with Alyssa Cole, who has been around forever.

[00:31:50] She has been self-publishing for like, what, 18 years?

[00:31:54] I mean, some enormous amount of time, a long time. And then Avon published maybe not 18 years, some I wish it's true.

[00:32:03] She started when she was five and it was incredible. Not long enough to incubate one of my interns.

[00:32:09] So she so she self-publish for a long time before getting that the sort of massive mainstream Big Five breakthrough of well, first through Kensington with the Loyal League series. And then I'm going to Avon with just talk about amazingness.

[00:32:25] I feel like we should be like everyone if you're not reading Alyssa Cole yet. But starting in January with Avon's first FF ever, I think was was one of the novellas once those best cover of all time. Also, if you did not know the models on that cover, best cover of all time are an actual couple in real life.

[00:32:40] [unaudible] [laughter] She's holding up the cover back there.

[00:32:48] So really, as if you had to dream about the far future, no holds barred, no realism, no feasibility. What would be cool? What do you want to see?

[00:33:00] I want to see romance that includes trans black women because I feel like I mean, trans black women are being murdered at a ridiculous rate right now and they need their voices heard and they also need their joy in fiction. They also need their joy in fiction. And I would really like to me.

[00:33:22] I mean, me personally, it would be like crazy erotic adventures in space.

[00:33:31] I love space. I've got it.

[00:33:33] And it includes and it really includes everyone. It includes like all the gender up, like disabled Pete, like everyone gets to be there. That's that's like really what I want. I want the bonkers fantasy, like lots of boning. And then everybody gets to be included.

[00:33:52] I would like to read and have access to so many things without without having to.

[00:34:00] Gosh, I lost my brain.

[00:34:03] I would like to read all the things without and be able to find all the things. Right. Because one of the things that's difficult is you just talking about disability as well. Like we use very able language when we say, what would you like to see? And I would like to read. I would like to be able to hear it. I would like to be able to consume it. However I can.

[00:34:23] And when it comes to marginalized voices, I cannot ever say that I'm perfect about calling out and doing the right shout outs to everybody. But you know what I want for the future is for us to be able to do it and not have someone in the audience like this is new. Why are we taking time to do this? Like, I don't want people to ask those questions. I want people to be here for the story and not ask why we have to do this or why do we have to do this. Like, I want that education. So people are

just it's normalized to be inclusive and and it comes like breathing because we get tired in educating. But we also don't ever want to stop educating because we won't get there. So that's what I want for the future, is to just experience that situation where we don't have to educate anymore because it's like breathing. This is normalized.

[00:35:13] It's inclusive. Well, mine is fairly related and it's a little wacky. We're talking about the future. But what I want for the future is historical romance that knows how to address the true breadth and depth of history. Yes! Like, oh, my God.

[00:35:27] History is so weird. It's so weird and it's so different than historical romance imagines it. Like it's so restricted geographically. And that can be really fun because like you can get really granular and play with tropes on a very micro level, which is great, but we could still do that. And also maybe having, you know. If you want to send more letters to Avon from a backdoor. Yes, seriously?

[00:35:48] No, listen, listen. No, no. Yeah, I've been bugging the crap out of them. Listen. And this is this isn't even for me. The fact that there is like like to like Judi Lynn basically wrote them. Yeah. But that there is not more Asian like the stories, we could be. Seriously. The fact that there's not more Asian historicals drives me bonkers. Medieval Spain, all of African histories, all of African histories like seriously. But I we need more African like actual African-American because like we've been through some shit. Yeah. And I would love more historical. I mean [unintelligible]. Native American historicals. [unintelligible] Oh yeah.

[00:36:26] Wow, I wanna be in this world. [laughter] I was excited about that like yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I don't even read a lot of historicals but yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I would read more.

[00:36:35] So I write in a in a in a space that I feel has kind of gotten a little flat, an urban fantasy romance. And so my future wishes big as they could possibly be. Or to put more specifically people of color.

[00:36:51] But as in heroic moments, in those kinds of stories where we're moving beyond, you know, our past is important our present is important. But I want us to get into our fantastic as well. And to get into our our sense of dreaming and adventure and fantasy and not tied into our past trauma necessarily. So I I as much as I love like Ta-Neh, Ta-Nehisi Coates' Water Dancer, I was like, where? Let's get where is the fantasy that that's that's starts with us ahead I guess. And so. Yeah, so that's what I mean. That's I don't feel like that's that far off but it's and it's a small thing but. Yeah.

[00:37:32] Yeah. So how many of you in the audience know that one of your most powerful things you can do as a public library patron is make purchase suggestions. How many of you know how to make a purchase suggestion at your public library? All right. Use that power if you don't know in whatever public library you are at. They take purchase suggestions. It is on the library's website, put it in through ask a librarian or however they will buy it. Put in pre-orders at your bookseller because they hear it once, though. They'll order for you. They hear it twice. They'll put it on there. Just I have big feelings about soapboxing, especially self-published authors make sure and they had some a dig into

overdrive. And you sometimes have to put it in 10 times. You can put it in with your own name, and if you have siblings, you put it in with your siblings' name. If you have a friend who is writing diverse romance, remember that you they can tell their friends to put it in, put in your mom's name, put it put it in there. Tell tell all the authors, you know. So we we we started a little late because it took us a little while to get up here, but I'd like to before we kind of take a stretch break and move into the next panel, which is gonna be recommendations and which I think I think all of us are. [laughter]

[00:38:41] We hope the entire panel is staying here to tell you what we think you should read.

[00:38:47] So but I'd like to take just a couple of minutes if we have any questions in the audience.

[00:38:53] Questions from the audience. Anybody? We've got microphones we can pass out to you as well.

[00:39:01] All right. All right. Oh, yeah.

[00:39:10] So that question is how how can we be activist readers as well?

[00:39:16] You can drop feedback on most of the publisher's websites that I know. You can tweet them on social media if they hear good feedback about their authors. They pay attention to that. That's a big deal for them.

[00:39:28] So I'm in also. Get from your library stuff that's like similar that you like. Also, they want to see that stuff is like already moving. Publishing is really weird. And sometimes they have a hard time like breaking out of their patterns. So if you want more FF historical like request Olivia's book like request Alyssa Cole call like that kind of stuff because they want to see that the stuff that's already out there is also moving and it makes it easier for them to go look a little bit to the left of what's already out there.

[00:39:58] And also just from an author standpoint, the best thing you can do for an author is tell a friend about your book. If you like a book, you like an author. Tell your mama, your cousin, everyone you know. Hey, go out and get this book. Get it from your library. Some people don't have the book, but it's fine. Get it from your library. Tell everyone, you know. RAFF for me those. That was my big book of the year. That was such, so much word of mouth, people telling people about my book. So just tell everyone, you know, when you like a book.

[00:40:30] Hey, this is Sweetpea in the back of the room, the bookseller from King's Books. In this August, we had our first inaugural bookstore Romance Day at bookstores around the country. And it was kind of the soft launch this year. And next year is going to be even bigger. It's I don't know if there's a date yet, but it's gonna be next August. So harassed your local bookstore and have them work on their local romance authors and have an event at the store. And then you can name drop me. Because all the regional booksellers know who I am, [laugh] but harass them. If they're not doing a Bookstore Romance Day event in August, make them. [laughter]

[00:41:08] I enjoyed your segment.

[00:41:10] I went to sleep a little bit. I'm a very spacious person I believe in giving space and being respectful. How many books do you write a year?

[00:41:21] Sometimes nothing. [laugh]

[00:41:24] I think at most I have.

[00:41:26] I don't think I've ever written more than three that where some of them were novellas, and I know that a lot of people publish less than that. But I just I like as somebody who works full time, like if you're not writing full time. It's challenging to do more than that, I think.

[00:41:42] Well, how would you feel if somebody wanted your full time, your full attention? You give me full money. Well, what I mean is that's why I'm like, wow, how many books do you write a year? Oh, well, so. Well, I think that's a good comeback.

[00:41:56] Are we all hybrid authors? We all are. Yeah. I'm fully indie. Okay.

[00:42:03] So Jasmine self-publishes her own books fully and then the rest of us, we work with publishers and we also put out our own books so we can put out our own books on our own schedule and that we make more money off of that. We're putting out on our own schedule, depending. And then if we sell books to a publisher, that's a whole other thing. They have to decide how much money they're going to give us. Hopefully we're lucky and we have a great agent and they decide to give us more money. But some authors, it just depends on how fast you write. I depending on what's going on in my life, I can write three or four books a year. But last year I only wrote I only released one book, but I had to turn in another book. I had to do a proposal for something else. So it all just depends on kind of the mechanics of what's going on.

[00:42:47] So between like one in four. And even as. I I think one of the things to also keep in mind is that every author or creative, whether you're creating art, you're creating books, you're creating movies. Inspiration is not a steady stream supply. And you cannot create if your well is empty. And author's experience, real burnout with life and life has been hard. The last couple of years for a bajillion different reasons. It gets complex. You don't know what different authors are going through. I can tell you that I average approximately two novels and two novellas a year. And I also keep a full time job in which I travel about 75 to 85 percent of my time. But I also recently this year came down with a disability that came down like a cold. But like I developed a disability. And so I am relearning how to write via dictation and still having to meet my deadlines has been a challenge. And so my writing has slowed down. My collaborations have slowed down. But a real choice that an author has to make when readers who love them tell them the most wonderful thing and say we would love for you to write full time is in fact that we need health care. And so the money that we need to make is not just to eat, not just to live and survive, and not just to support our families, but also to manage our health care, which is, you know. And so it's not a simple answer. And it's also not a simple answer,

write more books to make more money. It's also not a simple answer of are you working trad or working indie, honestly. There's a very complex recipe that goes into it. And it's going to be different for every single author and the life that they live and the things that are going on around them.

[00:44:33] Well, I write approximately 1.5 novels a year because I'm slow. So usually what I do is I do a full book and then research a bunch and write some one or two short things as well. So I've done novellas before. I can actually write steadily if slowly, like when I'm on track, when I get stuck, it's a nightmare. But fortunately, I know the cure. I am lucky enough to be able to write full time because my husband works in tech and that's how I get health insurance. And that is also stupid lucky. And it does give me like an advantage in many respects. And it's just always a process of learning. Like I'm I'm writing a book a year now, but it was not always doing that even when I was writing novellas. I would try and working in research. Time has been like a huge challenge to me, figuring out that I actually work work much more efficiently if I trick myself into thinking I'm lazy like. So it's been. It's been a challenge and I definitely have been working very consistently hard for most of my career, but in different ways and the money and the exhaustion have kind of gone up and down with that.

[00:45:48] Yes, I'm fully indie now. So that means that I write my books, I don't edit them.

[00:45:54] I have editor for that. I don't design the covers. I have a cover designer for that. But those are both people I have to work with. I have to find them, I have to hire them. I have to work on creative briefs for them. I also then have to do my own marketing and promotion.

[00:46:04] I do whatever event kind of management that I'm doing. Stocking books in my house so that when I get to places I have them to sell. So I manage my own website, social media and whatever other little odds and ends come up around. And I can have to turn an annual report for the State of Washington as a small business owner. So that's on my to do list.

[00:46:27] So yeah, so I only write a book a year.

[00:46:30] I also have a five year old. So yeah, I mean maybe I could probably quite also write big books. I write I write 300 page toms. They're good for stopping doors. Our throwing it spiders against the wall. They will kill just about even that giant Pacific Northwest spider that we all know and love. So, yeah, I mean, hey, your time everybody's managing their time very differently and they have to for whatever their lives demand. Again, I have a spouse who is employed in tech and covers that aspect or I don't think I'd be able to do what I do now even as a full time writer. I have a five year old. She needs vaccines and I'm a vaccinator.

[00:47:09] So there's that. Visits to the doctor, playdates, ballet lessons. Now we want to do something else. I don't know. You know, so like, I want to have my family experience a certain quality of life. And so that takes more than unfortunately right now. My writing is going to support. So. Yeah. So we're all very different.

[00:47:31] Yeah. All right.

[00:47:33] Last last question. This is a one word answer.

[00:47:36] Sorry. They did not get this in advance. I work with teenagers now and they asked me these questions at random and I have to answer them very quickly. So I just got this one a couple weeks ago. If you had to replace all of the grass in the world with one substance that is not grass, what would it be?

[00:47:56] Simple substance?

[00:47:58] It can be whatever you want. It just isn't grass. It can't be grass. [laughter]

[00:48:03] I'm sorry I didn't prepare this, and this is why, Robin would be a better moderator. Candy. What's that? Candy, candy. I was gonna say jelly bean. Jelly beans.

[00:48:12] But like jelly belly beans not like bootleg jelly beans, like Joe's. They gotta be good jelly beans.

[00:48:19] Chocolate.

[00:48:21] Messy but good but I'm with you. Dark. Come on, messy can be fun.

[00:48:25] Yeah, well, I was thinking like landscaping, so I'm going succulents. [laughter] All right. You can eat those.

[00:48:32] It was like that really soft moss. That feels good to walk on barefoot.

[00:48:36] It doesn't take a lot of water because I'm from California originally and we worry about water. [chuckles]

[00:48:42] All right. Well, thank you. Thank you, everyone. [applause]

[00:48:47] Sorry to throw you that curveball at the end. Being on this panel actually. Oh. Oh, I love you so much.

[00:48:55] And then people don't know this. Or maybe you do know this. Claire was not originally going to be moderating this last panel and did an amazing job. Thank you so much. [applause]

[00:49:04] That was my first time, everybody. No. Always remember your first. All right, folks. Buckle your seat belts for live adrenaline fueled readers advisory. So while our panelists are up here working hard frantically on their phones, their good reads, muttering to each other, texting their lifelines, pulling out all their skills. I'm going to give us just a very quick overview of what we're doing and what to expect. And sadly, we don't have a screen to show you. So there's no, like, good gifts behind me here. You'll just have to imagine them. So those of you who are librarians may not be familiar with the

term reader's advisory, which is basically just making book recommendations to people. And a lot of times what we do is we we plan and we script out all these things where we say all we're going to book talk. Just like on Reading Rainbow, we're going to tell you all about these books that you should read. And we do a lot of scripting and plan it out in advance. But I thought, wouldn't it be thrilling to take all that preparation and support away? Wouldn't it be amazing to see what we could do LIVE? And so here we are with this group of people that has been thrown in it. In fact, pretty much today. Ready to do What Should I Read Next?

[00:50:30] So if you haven't had a chance to fill out one of these pieces of paper, you can grab one and, you know, fill out more than one if you want to. Here's how it works and what we're gonna do. Okay. Oh, my goodness. This is so exciting. So most of you have had a chance to look at and fill out a little piece of paper that says something like your handle on Twitter, Instagram, whatever pseudonym or name you wanted to give. You told us what you liked by circling the things you enjoyed. You crossed out the things you're not into. You wrote in some you told us a little bit about like specific authors or fix or book the books that you like. You said definitely avoid whatever. And what else should we know? We are now frantically looking at every single one of these sheets of paper because in addition to being writers, these folks are all readers. I'm not a writer, just a librarian. So I have no excuse. [laugh] And no, my partner is a writer. So I feel like I can I can truly, you know, be grateful to not be a writer at the worst possible job. So here so we are going to come up with our recommendations based on what you told us in real time. Look at these faces. Look at these brains. Has any author ever had to work so hard at a conference before? Probably. Probably. But this is very hard. We are also going to ask you to keep your ears and eyes open, because one of the things that is best about romance readers is that romance readers are metacognitive about their reading in a way that no other genre reader is. Everyone thinks about what they like to read. But when you ask a romance reader what they like to read, you hear. This is library. This is a library. And things like this happens all the time.

[00:52:10] You usually say, well, tell me a little bit about what you like and this is why I like whatever you know. But you ask a romance reader what they like.

[00:52:18] Well, I like a slow burn. Friends to lovers. Bed sharing is really good. There was only one bed and I prefer it when it has this tone.

[00:52:27] I like an alpha, but only if he's not, you know, like an asshole. And and, you know, they just go. They know what they like. They will tell you genre. They will tell. We will tell you genre. We will tell you tone. We will tell you tropes. We know about ourselves as readers in a way that almost no other readers do.

[00:52:46] And this is an amazing thing.

[00:52:49] And so this means that while these folks are also coming up with recommendations here out in the audience, chances are you are going to also be thinking of recommendations that you have. So I'm also giving them some time to think here. So here's what I would like you to do as you

follow along. Listen to people's requests. If you have a recommendation to share, write it down and note the person's name or handle or at least what they like. When it's time, which we're hoping to have time at the end. You get to share. So we would say, for example, this does mean you have any. Where's the person that I was like, oh my God, you have to read from scratch. OK. We'll start with this one. So this is for Lauren. Lauren likes historical and contemporary FF especially three-plus some is good. Time travel's awesome. No alpha heroes, no suspense. And if they like Alyssa Cole, all things expanse and definitely avoid alpha holes. This is a reader up my alley. So now if you have recommendations for this reader, hold onto them in your head. Their names, Lauren, hold on to them in your head, because at the end you are going to come up and grab this mike and have 30 seconds on a timer to recommend to each other.

[00:54:03] We also have a room that's gonna be open over here so you can like find each other and continue to make those recommendations and share them out. We have a hashtag SPL convo hearts 19. Every one that we don't get to today. We'll come up with some selections for you and put them out on Twitter. So don't worry if we don't get to yours today. So, Lauren, I'm going to start by saying we already introduced everybody, but as we go along, I think we might be useful for us to say what we like to read. Yeah. Would that be useful to you or you're just. They're so engrossed in their work. So I'm Claire. My pronouns are she her. OK. So I like I like historicals. I like contemporaries. It turns out I like crazy soft splats. I do not like assholes and have a hard time with an alpha. I love a beta hero. I love queer romance. And I mostly don't do suspense. For this reader, so heads up if you need to pass them over to me. Those are those are the things I like and love. OK, have this reader have you read From Scratch by Katrina Jackson? Oh, great. Awesome. You don't actually have to say who you are, but that was that was an automatic like high school teacher.

[00:55:02] Move right there, sorry. OK, so From Scratch by Katrina Jackson not only has my favorite romance cover other than Once Ghosted, Twice Shy by Alyssa Cole, it is the story of a burned academic. She doesn't get tenure and she hates academia. Academia is the worst. This is the kind of book where, like, you know, when you read a romance and you're like, wow, this person sure knows a lot about like, you know, ship maintenance. And then you find out that they have like two masters degrees in ship maintenance. This happens all the time in romance in particular as a genre. So you read this and you're like, wow, this author sure knows a lot about academia. It turns out that her day job is in fact, she's an academic and the main character hates academia. She finally gets out of it. She's like, you know what? Screw all of this. I am going to move to a tiny, small town in the middle of nowhere, going to rent this house for \$1 a year and I'm going to open a bakery. So the town that she moved to is a lot like, you know, that in Beverly Jenkins historicals, there's the town that was formed entirely by folks who had been freed after being enslaved. And they like has this amazing town history.

[00:56:10] So it's like that, except it's contemporary. It is the ultimate small town romance. She gets to the town and she's like, man, this chief firefighter is hot. And she's like, but you know who else is hot? His best friend, the police chief, also extremely hot. The police chief, meanwhile, has moved to the town because he has decided he's had enough of being a police chief in systems of police brutality and these other towns. And he's like, I'm going to totally turn. Make sure that this never happens in

this town. Police chief looks to the firefighters like, man, we've been besties forever. I would totally bang that guy. And then they're like, man, I knew Baker. She's so hot. And the three of them get it on. No angst. Amazing baking. Ultimate happiness. Super steamy. And oh, my God, it's so good. Utter delight. You made it. She's also fat has fantastic fat rep. That's From Scratch by Katrina Jackson. Sorry, I spent much more time talking about that than I should have. I was just so excited. Also, Heart and Hand by Rebel Carter. She's a mail order bride. She's been corresponding with these two dudes who were like, we would both like to marry you. Please. In this tiny town in the west. She goes, happiness ensues. It's wonderful.

[00:57:15] Who's got one? All right. Easy win here. I got one from Glenda. Oh, wait. There's a question back there. [inaudible] This one this one was. Oh, so so that was From Scratch by Katrina Jackson and Heart and Hand by Rebel Carter. Maybe Eric or somebody else.

[00:57:33] If you or Misha, if you have a chance to maybe like live tweet. From Scratch, I'll write them down, too. OK, we'll take pictures. It's so hot. It's so good. All right.

[00:57:45] Easy win here for Glenda. You're asking for time-travel, which I got you. I don't know if I can give you the female female aspect of it, but from a time travel perspective and oh my gosh, romantic elements. This Is How You Lose The Time War by Amal El-Mohtar and Max Gladstone and O-M-G. It is FF. I wasn't sure. OK. So yes. Also FF. Huh? So yes.

[00:58:11] Perfect right there. I have 2 4m eps who requested friends to lovers contemporary. MM bisexual and non-binary characters. Avoiding billionaires and abuse. So I had two for that. Defying Convention by Cecil Wilde is a really sweet romance about two characters who have been best friends on the Internet but never met each other in real life. Meeting up at a fan convention and cute shit ensues and Documenting Light by EE Ottoman, which is about two trans historians who wind up working together to uncover the history of queer figures from their their shared history. So that is Defying Convention by Cecil Wilde and Documenting Light by EE Ottoman. And I can keep going.

[00:59:00] I'll go. I'll go for now. So this is for Lily, who has a bunch of different things here. So I have some that will suit some of these. I don't have hockey, hockey or Scotland. I'm sorry Lily, but I do have some fantasy historical enemies to lovers and stuff like that. I just wrote K.J. Charles at the top of this page because K.J. Charles primarily writes historical and historical fantasy and they're all great. But specifically I wanted to recommend the Magpie Books, which is a series of suspenseful paranormal romance novels that are their definitely on the like scary and gory side.

[00:59:35] So if that is your thing, go for that. If not, maybe not. That is the Magpie series by K.J. Charles. And then I also wanted to recommend for enemies to lovers, An Unnatural Vice and The Henchmen of Zenda, which are two like very pulpy, very excellent. Also a little on the scary and gory side, because those are the recs you're gonna get for me. Yeah, but just like read K.J. Charles writ large.

[01:00:01] I also hope everyone here is recommending their own books because recommend your own books. I have one from Laurie. Hi Laurie. We're friends now. Funny urban setting contemporary. MF or FF. No time travel, no inspirational. You liked Rooked Royals and Hell Hunk. More realistic than paranormal. We got some good ones for you Treasure by me. Someone else wrote it.

[01:00:23] By the way, I do not recommend my own book. It's an FF new adult book about two black girls in college. One is a stripper. They actually meet at her sister's bachelorette party and then later find out that they're in the same major at college and then they fall in love. It's really sweet. Red, White & Royal Blue, which is an MM story, which is Prince of England and the president's son get together. And it's the first Latino president. Right.

[01:00:48] So you have interracial MM there. I think this is Mating the Huntress. I didn't write this one down. OK, go ahead.

[01:00:57] This Mating the Huntress is also for Sharon. Charity, ma'am, where you are. This one's for you as well. OK. If you have not yet read Talia Hibbert, just write them all down. She isn't mine, she is one of my top like five auto by authors, probably on my top five authors of all time. Mating the Huntress is a little bit out of character for her because it's she hasn't written many paranormal that she's published I guess. She may have written a ton of them. It is the story of a supernaturally powerful huntress heroine. She her whole family. They they hunt down werewolves at the very beginning. There's a werewolf hunt. The werewolf hunts down the huntress in the woods. Oh, no. He bites her sweater. He sniffs it. My gosh, it smells so good. It smells like fate. It smells like love. [laughter] The next day he goes to a bakery and he was like, what? I smell the same smell of love. Who could it possibly mean? Meanwhile, I know they didn't. I only do bakery books. [laughter] I do other books as well. She's. She's like a barista in the family's coffee shop. There's a there's a reason that she can't possibly hunt the things because of a prophecy or something. Whatever. It doesn't really matter. But she's like, I'm going to show them all. I'm going to show them what I can do. Why this dude is a werewolf. I can tell I'm going to hunt him first. Meanwhile, he's like, oh, she's so hot. She smells so good. I want to make her a nest. I want to bake her cupcakes. And she's like, I'm going to get him. It's enemies to lovers. It is hilarious. He wants to wrap her up in a like happy, happy, wonderful blanket of love. And she is like, I'm going to decapitate you. And he's like, I love you so much. [laughter]

[01:02:35] She's so hot how she could decapitate me at any time.

[01:02:38] It's so great. Mating the Huntress by Talia Hibbert. Also, you should read everything else by Talia Hibbert, like, just consider it an auto rec. Oh, my God. So good. Oh, my God. Oh, hello, Larry.

[01:02:47] Also on this list, Better at Weddings Than You by I'm going to butcher her last name. I'm so sorry, Mina Esguerra. I'm probably pronouncing that wrong. But look up the title Better at Weddings Than You. It's about two, not rival, but two wedding planners who are brought in to plan a wedding because there is a feeling that the groom is actually in love with the original wedding planner. So

they're trying to remove her from the situation. It's so good. Set in the Philippines. It's just amazing. You, Me, U.S. by Brigitte Bautista, also another romance class author set in the Philippines.

[01:03:21] Kind of a.

[01:03:23] It's a male female female book about like a bisexual heroine who's kind of like coming into her own. And lastly, I wanted to recommend my book, So Sweet, which is about a young lady who is broke and so decides to become a sugar baby, but then ends up ultimately getting in with a billionaire and the money situation improves.

[01:03:42] Awesome fat wrap in that book.

[01:03:44] Plus-size. [unintelligible] While we're talking about historical paranormals and all of that goodness. I have a request from Liv for historical paranormal. That's it. That's what we got. She said two recent. They said two recent faves are Joanna Chambers' Gentlemen Wolf, Cat Sebastian's Hither Paige. Which, yes. Oh my gosh. Definitely avoid crappy writing. Noted. Most medical books make you want to throw my Kindle. I like a lot of stuff. We'll give a lot of stuff. A try. And I just have a list of author names because there's a lot of great historical paranormal out there. K.J. Charles, if you haven't already. I mean, just all of it. All of it. Even the stuff that's dark, I'm normally as fluffy as it comes. Except when K.J. Charles is writing it. Isabel. Yeah. Isabel Cooper's No Proper Lady. Time travel, historical paranormal. The Terminator meets My Fair Lady. Basically, she's from the future sent to kill the tentacle monsters that have taken over the earth in two centuries because some evil magician has read a spell and opened a portal and the tentacle monsters came through. So she's there to kill the magician. But to get close to him, she has to learn how to behave in society. So she's from this post-apocalyptic wasteland and she's in like sunny agricultural regency England going. What do you mean you have all the butter you could want? And he's like, let's get you some stew, sweetie. It's it's just it's a little dark. It's the right amount dark. And it's just fun as heck. Also, Zen Cho's Sorcerer to the Crown, regency romance and magic and British Empire politics. And it's so much fun. Gail Carriger's whole series is lovely, Mary Robinette Kowal's Glamour in Glass and all of those just straight up, very straight laced Jane Austen. All sorts of Jane Austen with magic.

[01:05:29] Yeah. But bashing through all of the feminist issues.

[01:05:33] Yeah. Yeah. Like just absolutely gorgeous magic descriptions.

[01:05:37] Also unreliable narrators. That's Mary Robinette Kowal's Glamorous series.

[01:05:41] Yeah. And then Zoe Archer has a couple historical paranormal series, one of which I think is like seriously under read, which is her Sinner's Heart series where a bunch of Georgian nobles sell their soul to the devil for really shallow reasons and then realize it was a terrible idea. And it's very fun. And that is also on the dark side.

[01:06:00] She also has her Blades of the Rose, which is much lighter and more like, you know, 19th century magic, Indiana Jones. But trying to get things out of the museums instead of into the museums.

[01:06:11] One more paranormal historical. It's called a Highlander in Her Bed. It's a little older if you want something. I put this on the bonkers list. It's it's time travel paranormal. Like, basically a woman like goes to this house and like Highlander is like haunting a bed. It's so ridiculous. And it's so fun. So fun.

[01:06:33] So a Highlander in Her Bed. It's really good. To add to the bonkers historical time-travel list. Has anybody read The Viking Wants Forever by Koko Brown? Oh, my God, it's so good.

[01:06:45] It's so brilliant. It is one of. OK. Sorry.

[01:06:50] A black heroine who's a comic book nerd.

[01:06:52] Do you want the mike? Yeah. I love them so much. OK. Basically a woman who runs a comic bookstore like does like Dungeons Dragons that everything. She's like a total nerd. Loki basically sends her back in time just to, like, mess with her.

[01:07:08] And then basically all of History Channel's Vikings, like all that shows up. She ends up at this Viking kingdom and basically realizes her best way of survival is to seduce the Viking king. And it's so funny.

[01:07:22] She messes with him so much and uses like like modern language. And she's like, you don't know what that means. Let me tell you all about it. I'd like to talk. Yeah. Oh, it's so good. They just bone, bone, bone, bone, bone. And the ending is so satisfying.

[01:07:39] So it's also. I gotta jump on this Viking situation. Wait, wait. Title, author? The Viking Wants Forever by Koko Brown.

[01:07:47] It's K O K O.

[01:07:49] So that was a The Viking Wants Forever by Koko Brown. I'm gonna jump on this Viking in the real. In the modern world kind of situation, and we don't know how they got here. Loki Ascending is the third in Asa Maria Bradley's Viking paranormal.

[01:08:05] Viking's, written by a Swedish woman who is out. Lives out in Spokane.

[01:08:12] Well I mean, Asa Maria Bradley is kind of local sort of kind of. Yeah, she lives out in Spokane. She's Swedish hardcore on the historical Viking situation, paranormal and Loki Ascending is Loki just goes chaotic, bonkers out here. And medical technology comes into play because the heroine refuses to use magic. So she uses, you know, for healing. She uses all the medical

technology of the modern day. However, it's failing because the source of this illness is magic and therefore you know shenanigans ensue. Hot stuff happens, etc.. So Asa Maria Bradley, Loki Ascending, I believe. Oh, gosh. Also, it's gonna. All right.

[01:08:54] Claire, are you taking notes? That we will someday later somehow. They're on the backs of the papers. [laughs]

[01:08:56] Someone hopefully somebody back there is also taking notes. Give those to me and I will make it happen right afterwards. We appreciate you. We scribbled real hard. All right. Right. I'm recording it as well. Yes, we are. OK. Hi. All right. This one's for Kelsey Kook and am I saying that correct?

[01:09:15] All right. So you got a lot of stuff circled here. We're going to try to hit some of them. We may not hit all of them, but the first one when it comes to bonkers slowed. Small town. And also contemporary mystery suspense situation. Is Forbidden Promises, it's like third or fourth in Katee Roberts' O'Malleys series, we've got like mobster people in hiding and contract killer also hiding next door. But it wasn't hunting her. But, oh, hey, I I ran into you anyway, and I know who you are SITUATION. And he's like the entire time the author is posting online how much she was like, no, no, do you don't do that? And you just went and did it anyway. So he's ridiculously out of control. Very, very Leverage inspired. So that was fun shenanigans or Forbidden Promises by Katee Robert. I'm putting it on my own to-read list. That one in particular. Like, I don't love the whole series, but that one in particular was a fun ride for me. And the sex is so naughty.

[01:10:11] Hot. Anyway.

[01:10:15] Not the Girl You Marry is not out yet. It's coming out this like Tuesday. All right. So you don't even need that from me. Hitting the friends to lovers road trip contemporary mystery suspense is one of mine from the True Hero series Absolute Trust. It might be back there.

[01:10:33] It involves childhood friends, friends to lovers, small town-ish. I mean, as as as as New Hope gets in Pennsylvania. Road trip, dog and a cat included. The dog lives. So does the cat. [laughter]

[01:10:51] This one's for Parnassus Reads. So they like shifters and they like MF and they like FF paranormal. Kink is OK. Hot sex is written in exclamation point. Avoid toxic masculinity and jerk heroes. I'm with you there and loving, consensual, respectful romances. So this one is my very first ever dragon shifter read. I read it for book club and I was so skeptical and it was so, so good.

[01:11:18] I feel like for dragon shifters, once you're in. You will go down a rabbit hole of shifting madness.

[01:11:21] I did not know. [unintelligible] There's a movie. It's from Russia, it's I am Dragon. Straight up dragon shifter deliciousness. I'm telling you, I'll watch it with you tonight. [laughter]

[01:11:33] Got it. I got it on Amazon Prime already. OK, so Highland Dragon Warrior also Isabel Cooper, who wrote No Proper Lady. So, OK, heroine is an extremely practical, smart Jewish scientist. She's an alchemist, technically, but she's a scientist in her approach. She's in her late thirties slash early forties. So that's older in romance land. The dragon shifter hero, not an alpha hole. He is a beta boyfriend superstar. There's super great lady friendships. Multiple practical lady side characters, all interesting. Lush writing, not overwritten, super sex positive, super consent focused. And there's like a dozen moments where one of the characters wants to be like, no, stay safe, don't do this dangerous thing. And then they stop themselves specifically and explicitly on the page out of respect for the other characters choices. It's so good. Tons of humor, tons of banter, high stakes dragon shifters. That one is a Highland Dragon Warrior by Isabel Cooper.

[01:12:28] That was for Parnassus Reads. Whoever you are.

[01:12:31] Ok, we had a couple more for Parnassus Reads as well. So because paranormal shifter's male-female, we could not allow this one to go by without recommending the Psy-Changeling series by Nalini Singh because. Yeah. All right. I was just checking. Shelly Laurenston. We thought about but we thought some of those males might be a little too toxic because they get pretty alpha hole. But the balance is the females can go head to head with them. And the bear one.

[01:12:58] There's a bear one.

[01:13:00] There's the Shelly Laurenston one where he's a he's a bear. He's a grizzly bear and she's a honey badger. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. That one's real good. And he's just like, I'll make you some honey. You know, I believe that. That one's called Hot and Badgered I believe. Yeah, Hot and Badgered. Yeah. Yeah, that one is a good call.

[01:13:15] I'm going to toss a shout out there for a rerelease that I'm putting out towards the end of this month.

[01:13:20] Red's Wolf. Paranormal male-female wolf shifter, saucy, shall we say.

[01:13:26] Maybe not as hot as the other authors here. For I think Ankaras? I am excited about this one because I manage to rec like two of my top three favorite books of this year. So there's a bunch on here. Friends to lovers, second chances, historicals, small town, slow burn, paranormal, inspirational, royalty, suspense, FF and enemies to lovers, time travel. And then also written in mermaids, nuns and mystics. I unfortunately don't have those things specifically. [inaudible] Excellent. [laughter] I have things that I feel like will be enjoyable in that category. So the first one is Proper English by K.J. Charles is historical.

[01:13:59] FF suspense about two women, one of whom is engaged to the other's old friend who wind up trapped together at a shooting party where someone is murdered. It's very good.

[01:14:13] Can I jump in? Something to add on that? So I am not always on the K..J Charles chain. The ones that go really dark are just they're. They're just too bleak for me on a lot of them. When she's fluffy, like even if you've been burned by K.J. Charles in the past and you're like this is not sufficiently fluffy for me. No, Proper English and then the other one with the house was the Georgette Heyer tribute one. Band Sinister. Yes, Band Sinister.

[01:14:34] Yes, Band Sinister too. You should go back just for those. The Alpennia series by Heather Rose Jones. Those are if you're looking for something that's like light on sex.

[01:14:44] And also like the main characters in that series are a young woman who is in a very like unstable social position and inheriting a lot of wealth, but also being surrounded by dangers. And the other heroine is a really bad ass sword's woman who becomes her bodyguard and they're just like exquisitely researched, like. Alte European history pieces and they're really fun. And then the last one is Mrs. Martin's Incomparable Adventure.

[01:15:17] Oh, sorry. The Alpennia series by Heather Rose Jones.

[01:15:20] Mrs. Martin's Incomparable Adventure by Courtney Milan is, I think, my favorite thing I've read this year.

[01:15:25] It is so. It's so funny. It's so fun. It's the two heroines. I think they're in there in their 60s, 70s, 70s.

[01:15:34] Yeah. And relatively.

[01:15:38] And it is about them banding together to destroy the life of the terrible man. And it is hysterical. It is also like the sex scenes in that book are the most lovingly written, like just stab me in the heart. They're they're so loving and wonderful. I cried on an airplane in front of everyone. It's really, really good. So it's Mrs. Martin's Incomparable Adventure by Courtney Milan. It was the tree thing, wasn't it?

[01:16:06] It was the tree. There's a tree from. That wasn't where I cried nut that was good too.

[01:16:11] That got me the tree thing just got me. Oh, I got nuns before. Do the nuns do the nuns.

[01:16:16] I got nuns. Broken Vows by MJ Williamz and she's spelling Williams with a z at the end.

[01:16:22] It's about nuns fucking.

[01:16:24] Oh, you know that's really what's happening. [unintelligible] A lot of MJ Williamz she writes FF and a lot of her books are. It's like scenario but then boning. So it's like you know what you're getting. You know what I mean, you know, like the best possible way.

[01:16:36] So if you want to read about like nuns. Like nuns together. Nuns, nuns. Oh, that's interesting. Broken Vows by MJ Williamz. Check it out.

[01:16:44] Well, then I was gonna go. I was hopping on the, um, the historical train a little bit. This one's for Amanda Jean.

[01:16:52] And we got. You got a lot circled here, too. So we got we hit some of them when it comes to historical paranormal. Male, male and female, female. A little bit of suspense. Not a lot. We got Gail Carriger, not just her Parasol Protectorate series, but spinning off. Romancing the Inventor is a self-pub/indie situation and Romancing the Inventor I actually specifically are recommending audio if you listen to it. Emma Newman is the narrator and I fell out of my bed listening to that when she was like, stop with the dimples. [laughter]

[01:17:23] This story, my friend.

[01:17:29] So Romancing the Inventor. Also, her Poison or Protect. Very, very fun. But that one's male-female. But yes, it spins off of Parasol Protectorate series, but she gets the gloves come off and all sorts of things happen in fun ways. Also, a recommendation is Stacy Reid A Summer for Scandal. Oh, that's two different things. Two different things, Stacy Reid.

[01:17:55] She writes, Stacy Reid only writes like erotic historical. And like they're all similar-ish.

[01:17:59] Sorry. One I like I can't remember the title. It's on my head. I should've looked it up. Basically like one guy is like a Russian prince and he's like pretending to be like the horse guy at this manor. And then they like have sex in the rain. And then he's like to psych I'm a prince. Like all all her books are like they're is like really sexy and really hot, but like angsty in a good way, not angsty, like not angsty in a way that you're like, oh, angsty in a really good way. Some, like, mistaken identity is, some, like scandal. Like we like had sex by accident. Oh, my God. The kind of thing. Like how did it feel?

[01:18:31] Yeah, like I feel it. Oh, you know, we talk well we were so. Oh, I like all of Stacy Reid's book.

[01:18:38] That's why I just put her name. Just look her up. She's great. I've read like everything by her. It's she has a comforting rhythm. Like once you fall in you're like, oh, I can just get in bed with this book and read it and you'll enjoy it. So Stacy Reid, she's great.

[01:18:51] This is this might not be for that exact same reader, although also if you haven't read Zen Cho The True Queen, the follow up to the Sorceror to the Crown. Also recommend the audiobook for that one. Zen Cho, The True Queen. So this one is a historical not necessarily for you, but for someone in here that I can't. I lost the piece of paper. A Summer for Scandal by Lydia San Andres. So. Oh, my God. She's another one. She's another auto-buy. And she's not a super, super fast writer because she's got a lot of shit going on. And so whenever you like, have a chance to see one come

out, just like jump on that right away. So Summer for Scandal opens in 1910 at an island in the Spanish speaking Caribbean.

[01:19:28] The heroine is dumping the hero out of a boat and ruins his linen suit. She really should be home working to earn money to keep the family afloat because she's a highly successful, pseudonymous romance writer. But that horrible and yet handsome man in the linen suit has his own pseudonym and his own secret, which is that he is a snarky literary critic and struggling writer himself who reads all of her work so closely just to lambaste it, except he's her best reader and he secretly admires her and is basically memorize her books. She is a suffragette, sparks. For why it's so good. It's gold. It's so good.

[01:20:11] All of it that is close to being like, that's unforgivable.

[01:20:15] I know, right? The plot is awesome. The tropes are like super delicious and playful. The setting is fantastic. And the author manages to bounce all this with this really solid emotional arc and these great family relationships and tons of lady friends everywhere it is. It's just mwah. It's A Summer for Scandal Lydia San Andres. Oh, man, it's good.

[01:20:33] So good. Oh, while we're talking like fluffy historicals, it's short and it's kind of it's if you can do sad fluffy, then EE Ottoman, which Austin mentioned, also does The Craft of Love, which is this gorgeous romance between a trans silversmith and a quilt maker in like 19th century New York. And it's just it's it's so it's called The Craft of Love by EE Ottoman. And it's it's this wonderful story where the stakes are things like, well, I think I might like this person, do they like me back? And it's just it's so tender and thoughtful and careful. And somehow, like that tiny thread of conflict is just so riveting.

[01:21:21] I know we need to wrap it up, but I just have another one.

[01:21:24] This is another FF historical. And this is for those of you out there who prefer a little bit less steam in your romance. You like a little bit more. A little bit less steam. This is actually a romance comic. It's called Bingo Love by T Franklin. Oh, it's so good. So here is. Oh, good. It's on the table. You could buy this like right now. So here's the thing that I really. Do you have the jackpot edition back there? Damn it. Well, unfortunately doesn't have the jackpot edition, which is really what I'm excited about.

[01:21:52] So again, two black women, older, older heroines, they fall in love and they meet. They meet and fall in love at church bingo in 1963. But family and society keeps them apart. They each married dudes, they each have a family. They kind of leave the other one behind. 50 years later, they're both widowed and they meet again and they have their second chance at romance together. It is fantastic. So I was a Kickstarter backer of this like when they first first did it and then I just wanted more time with the characters. Like I felt like it didn't have the chance to really grow. And then she came out with a new edition, the jackpot edition, which not only extends the story, but includes 60 pages of new content, including a new. One from a story from Alyssa Cole and from Gail Simone, another one from Marguerite Bennett and Gaby Rivera. I'm sorry. That's amazing. And that one's

really gentle and really sweet and less on the steamy, but still high on the romance. Yeah. Isn't this fun?

[01:22:52] Isn't this the most fun thing ever? [laughter] It's so fun right?

[01:22:55] So we may do we have any any last ones from us or do we want to let the audience have some? [inaudible]

[01:23:01] This is for z librarian. z underscore librarian and I think it's a handle. Friends to lovers, historical, contemporary, slow burn, bonkers plot, road trip and written in science fiction says you like Alyssa Cole and Eva Lee's latest and Rebekah Weatherspoon Farms and Dogs, which those are great. Definitely avoid the big misunderstanding, grumpy hero and dim heroines. So we have a huge list for you. We went through some of them. We went through some of them, so we said those. We're going to talk about Mimi Grace Along for the Ride. Sharon Cullars Gold Mountain. And I would also add Filthy Lucre to that. It's a bit darker. I don't like. It's a bank robbing hero and the heroine who's kind of trapped in her house and it shouldn't work. And it's super good. A Week to be Wicked by Tessa Dare Ascension Jacqueline Koyanagi that's a sci-fi FF romance with multiple disabled characters. Also kind of a road trip. Also kind of a road trip in space. And it's it's brilliant. The Sword Dancer. The Sword Dancer, yes. Yeah. Jeannie Lin's The Sword Dancer. Anything Jeannie Lin. The Pursuit Of by Courtney Milan. That's her MM road trip, American Revolutionary romance, which is all about cheese as far as I'm concerned. Which is where. Like literal cheese. Which is worth just getting all of Hamilton's Battalion. The whole anthology. And then did we mention Rose Lerner already the Lively St Lemeston's books? Yeah. Rose Lerner has a small-town regency, Lively St. Lemeston super, super good characters across all classes, not just aristocrats. She's got serving characters. She's got Jewish con artist heroes, which are so great. And yes, His Until Midnight by Reese Ryan, who you is a name you should all know.

[01:24:43] Reese Ryan is not new but new-ish. She just signed a deal with Harlequinn last year. Yeah. And her desires are so like light fun. His Until Midnight friends to lovers, date auction story. So like the ranching community in Texas, it's so good. So great.

[01:25:02] Yeah, that one's on my list, but I have not read it yet, but oh my God.

[01:25:06] I'm also going to tweet out that that Jeannie Lin one. The Sword Dancer in particular by Jeannie Lin. She's a sword dancer. This is in Tang Dynasty, China. She has only her whirlwind reflexes to trust. And then he is a thief catcher. So he's chasing her and then they're working together. And then there's a road trip. And then you're like, how is this HEA gonna happen? How are they going to get to their happily ever after? And it's oh they do it and it works. You're like, you can't do this. Do it. You can't do this. You're not going to be able to make it work.

[01:25:33] And they go, Oh, that's The Sword Dancer by Jeannie Lin. It's so good they bring down baddies and the corrupt justice system together. [laughter] Oh my god, it's so good.

[01:25:42] Ok. Oh, my God. So the time. We could do this forever. And also, if you happen to be going to Geek Girl Con next week, we're not doing this live in the same way. But some of us are going. Me and Olivia and Jasmine. And Robin Bradford, who is who's going to be better by then. And also [unintelligible] for those of you who are Twitter people are going to be doing a romance book recommendation panel at Geek Girl Con on Sunday.

[01:26:06] And this is has been a dream for a long time. I don't think we've had romance panels to Geek Girl Con before. So I'm really excited. So if you feel like coming, that's a plug for that as well. Anybody in your audience wanna? What time? Oh, Sunday at like one or something? I don't know. It's on the panel. It's about nerdy heroines. And it's also going to be all diverse romance. [inaudible] I forget. Oh, romance recs for every geeks heart. Yeah.

[01:26:33] Ok, here's what we should do. We should all stand up and mill around and talk about books with each other for the next five minutes. If you've got a 30 second rec to give to somebody, wave it in their general direction. Write it on the board in the other room. We have another panel at 3. And it's just. At 4 in this whirlwind thrills. Tell other people what you should read. Introduce yourself. Say what tropes you like, your team bed sharing, whatever it is.

[01:26:59] Thank you so much. OK. Can we just say a huge thank you and round of applause to every single person that's prepared this and who's here. [applause] You are all smazing. Thank you for making this dream come true.

[01:27:13] If we do not, so we'll we'll respond out with the hashtag with every single one of these recommendations and more. So if you told us your name or your handle. Let us know. You can even add more now. [inaudible] But it doesn't have to do. It's just to prepare for the next panel.

[01:27:30] The panel is called Love It. And the idea is that we're going to take suggestions of media books, TV, movies, romance related. That may have been, I don't know, got pooh-poohed on pretty easily by a lot of people or somebody people might not know about very much. And we're going to put those suggestions into a bucket. I'll take turns drawing them and we'll talk about one thing that we loved about it. The panelists reserve the right to pass on anything that they absolutely did not love. Thank you. But we're going to try to, in our culture of finding the negative, find some positive things about romance related media.

[01:28:14] So suggestions can be things like, oh, I don't know, you could put Twilight on a piece of paper or those horrible holiday movies from Hallmark or, you know, a trope that you think is overdone, maybe the Wallflower trope or what do they call Hollywood homely, which is where that makeover happens and the glasses come off and she's suddenly fabulous.

[01:28:38] So I have little pieces of paper I'mma walk around. If you have an idea of something you want to hear us redeem, please add it to the list.

[01:28:50] And I will I will leave them.

[01:28:53] There's a little bucket. I'll come back around. Awesome. Oh, you probably. No no no. The wait and nervousness wondering what we're gonna be okay with.

[01:29:02] So we'll give everybody a few minutes to like create a few of their. So we'll kind of it'll be a free for all. I will just read out the thing and you just jump in whatever you feel like you feel like or something that you want to say about it to redeem it.

[01:29:19] Whatever. All right. Let's do the thing. Walk around and grab your thing.

[01:29:25] If you don't love it already, you can say this is not my forte. [laugh] All right. [inaudible] So this is why I don't write.

[01:29:35] So we begin.

[01:29:39] And if you have something at any point, feel free to, like, come up and drop it in the bucket.

[01:29:42] There's no penalty points for coming up with something midway through. OK, oh. Oh, this is a good one. I like this trope. Best friend's sister or brother is off limits. [laughter]

[01:29:58] No pressure, Piper. No pressure.

[01:30:01] Well, it happens to be a favorite trope of mine because between me and my partner, I'm the best friend's sister. [laughter]

[01:30:08] So that's a special place in my heart, because every time we get together for family holidays, there's this funny look on my brother's face. That to me is priceless. But it's very selfish. [laughter]

[01:30:21] I will go with I'm an only child, so I don't get the dynamic. And it's like studying. It's like studying something through a looking glass. I kind of get it, but I mostly don't. It's delightful. Just that, I think it's it's just super cute to see any family members suddenly become feeling vulnerable and want to protect their brother or sister.

[01:30:41] And their intentions are good, even though they should probably not be meddling in their siblings romance. It is a really good chance to respect someone's agency.

[01:30:49] All right. Interesting. Yeah. It gives the opportunity.

[01:30:51] It creates an opportunity in terms of like the brother or the sister, the person, the sibling, the sibling who's saying off limits.

[01:31:00] Don't. Don't go after my sibling. It's an opportunity for them to step back and not take away someone else's agency.

[01:31:08] Oh, yes. Yes. Yeah.

[01:31:10] Especially in a sibling dynamic right where you want, especially with like an older sibling like me, because already there's like bossiness there.

[01:31:17] So you can kind of say like, no, I'm done. Me and your best friend are.

[01:31:22] Yeah, my little brother didn't have a choice. I'm twelve years older than him and I out mass him by 50 pounds. So. [laughter]

[01:31:26] So he wasn't taking any agency away from me. [laughter]

[01:31:32] All right.

[01:31:33] So our next one is historicals and it's kidnapped heroine.


[01:31:39] I like to refer to this as tied to the train tracks, but we can call it kidnapped heroine as well. Who wants to go first? Does anybody? Is there a lovable thing?

[01:31:51] I'll go. I think that. Well, obviously, the clear answer here is like, yeah. That gets abused as a trope because it takes away women's agency. What I like about it is that frequently you read or see iterations of it where the kidnapped heroine actually uses other attributes to outsmart the kidnapper, whether she's manipulating them, whether she's secretly breaking free, whether she can just whip ass like it doesn't matter what it is, so long as there's a subversion of that. I'm completely game for. And also, honestly, as someone who grew up reading just traditional 70s, 80s, 90s harlequins, like there is a secret deep, dark place in my heart that's like, yep, would read that.

[01:32:32] Probably. [laughter] The only thing I would add to along with that is it's a great time to also show a heroine's competency as if she gets her way on her own. Another way, good point is it can add a really interesting note when done well. A really interesting note of clarity for whoever the person is on the other side who suddenly feels deep fear on the behalf of the heroine safety, and suddenly they have this clarity of like their feelings towards them and then they're running off. And I think that moment is just really cool. So we're talking about like a reverse Stockholm syndrome. No. Like I meant like, so. What, you know, the the the hero or heroine on the other side who's who's personally who is. Oh, I'm sorry. Who's kidnapped and then suddenly they're off to their rescue and they suddenly in that moment, they're like, you know, we just had this big fight, but now we're gonna. I need to go rescue them. And they had they suddenly understand their feelings in a way that they did not know the moment before that fear happened.

[01:33:27] Oh, yeah, that. [unintelligible]

[01:33:33] [music] [piano] This podcast was presented by the Seattle Public Library and Foundation



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