

Librarians Telling Tales Podcast Transcript- Episode 19

Quick Look Booklist:

- **Section 1: What We're Reading Right Now Pt.1**
 - *Fat Girl on A Plane* by Kelly DeVos
 - *Love and Gelato* by Jenna Evans Welch
 - *Instructions for Dancing* by Nicola Yoon
 - *Everything, Everything* by Nicola Yoon
 - *The Sun Is Also a Star* by Nicola Yoon
 - *Within These Wicked Walls* by Lauren Blackwood
 - *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte
 - MIDDLE GRADE
 - *In the Beautiful Country* by Jane Kuo
 - *Front Desk* by Kelly Yang
 - *Bounce Back* by Misako Rocks! (YA)
- **Section 2: What We're Reading Right Now Pt.2**
 - *The Bicycle Spy* by Yona McDonough (MG)
 - Author Alan Gratz
 - *A Boy at War* by Harry Mazer
 - *I Survived* series by Lauren Tarshis
 - *How I Became a Spy* by Deborah Hopkinson
 - *How to Be a Spy* by Daniel Nesquens
 - *Farts in the Wild, A Spotters Guide* by H.W. Smeldit
- **Section 3: What We're Reading Right Now Pt. 3**
 - *Wedgie and Gizmo* by Suzanne Selfors
 - *Klawde: Evil Alien Warlord Cat* series by Johnny Marciano
 - *Super Turbo* series by Edgar J. Powers
 - *Counting to Bananas* by Carrie Tillotson
 - *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* by Mac Barnett, illustrated by Jon Klassen
 - *The Capybaras* by Alfredo Soderquit
 - *Escargot* series by Daskha Slater
 - *Pizza: A Slice of History* by Greg Pizzoli
 - *Farmhouse* by Sophie Blackall
 - *Berry Song* by Michaela Goade
 - *Knight Owl* by Christopher Denise
 - *Ghostlight* by Kenneth Oppel
- **Section 4: What We're Reading Right Now Pt. 4**
 - *Spirit Animals* series by multiple authors
 - *Marina and the Kraken* by Lauren Magaziner
 - *Everything Sad Is Untrue* by Daniel Nayeri
 - *A Little Princess* by Frances Hodgson Burnett

Transcript:

Musical Intro: "Uplifting 2463" by Twisterium from pixabay.com
(Description) Upbeat, piano and percussion. Music fades and plays under.

Jennifer: Hey, bookworms! Welcome to Librarians Telling Tales, where we introduce you to all the things we love about libraries: books, people, and making connections. I'm Jennifer.

Amy: I'm Amy.

Blair: I'm Blair.

(0:23) Music fades out.

Amy: In today's episode, we're chatting about recent reads that we love, hate, and want more of.

Music Transition: "Ascending-marimba-notification" by Alexander from Orangefreesounds.com

(Description) Bright marimba scale.

(0:31) Section 1: What We're Reading Right Now Pt.1

Blair: Dun, dun, dun, dun, dun, dun.

Amy: Dun, dun!

Blair: We're all feeling mildly musical this morning. But I have been reading some goods and I've been reading some real things that I'm not a fan of. It's insta-love, I cannot get with the insta-love. It's driving me crazy. And all of these books that I'm picking up are insta-love books. Some of them I slogged through and some of them I don't. Just like, oh, I see someone and I'm magically in love with them because they're just so beautiful, for example.

Amy: Yes, please. Are you just randomly picking books or did you read a review that said it was awesome and then you realized, *No, it's not*.

Blair: No, no, I'm, I'm randomly picking books.

Amy: Okay.

Blair: And I just continually randomly pick those specific books, which makes me a little mad.

Amy: So, wait, are you then in a romance-y mood? Is that why you're picking romance-y books?

Blair: No, not, not really.

Amy: Okay. Because, I mean, Valentine's Day passed and we ate a ton of chocolate together. <laugh>

Blair: I am perfectly fine with being single. However...

Amy: I am happy married, but I also like my book boyfriends. <laugh>

Blair: I read adult fiction for that. I don't tend to think that YA romance is even that romantic most of the time.

Amy: That is the most valid point ever. You're right. I do not read teen romance for romance. <laugh>

Jennifer: The expectation as an adult reading those has to be pretty low. I mean, what are the odds of a high school romance living beyond the high school years? Honestly?

Blair: Yeah. So, for example, I recently DNF'd or did not finish *Fat Girl on A Plane* by Kelly DeVos. And I wanna be behind Kelly DeVos because I have loved multiple of her other books. But that particular book was just not my jam. It—the relationship in it was questionable and just a little bit creepy and just not my favorite. So, I stopped. And that one, I was just like, I'm reading it because it's this author and because it's like an interesting subject.

Jennifer: I just read a high school romance too, because it was a book club selection for the high school: *Love and Gelato* by Jenna Evans Welch. And that was hard for me. That was an insta-love, too. But throw in a trip to Italy...

Blair: That'll make it better, right?

Jennifer: ...and pasta.

Amy: Right.

Blair: Gelato will always make it better.

Jennifer: And it was just really hard for me to get through. But I did it for the book club, so I could speak to it. And, of course, the girls liked it. And Netflix, again, has a movie.

Blair: Of course, they do.

Jennifer: And so it wasn't my favorite, but it was sweet. And it didn't make you blush, but it was an "insta" and I probably would have not finished it if it hadn't been for the book club.

Blair: Yeah.

Amy: I actually just read *Instructions for Dancing* by Nicola Yoon.

Blair: Ooh.

Amy: And it did not have insta-love as I would define insta-love. I don't know how to describe the different tropes that were employed, but there was a magical book that when she saw people kiss, a couple, she would see their end. So whether they...

Blair: Oh...

Amy: ...broke up or whether they remained in love until their last breath or what have you, that led her to return the book to the dance studio where she met the guy who becomes her dance partner and then love interest. I enjoyed it. And I was sort of inspired to try to get Matt to do dance lessons with me, 'cause neither of us can dance and we don't dance well together at all. <laugh> We sway. <laugh> And we have kitchen dance parties, but like none of it is coordinated, right? It's just like random dance moves. And I thought that would be so cool. I don't know that we could do any of the actual dips and lifts and things because we're older and bigger. <laugh>. I think I would break him if he tried to lift me <laugh>. But those parts of the book were really sweet. And the, the older couple that owns that dance studio, oh it was so charming. That was the one I got a little weepy in that part. Like, she saw their end and it was the end to the last breath kind of thing. And oh, it was just lovely.

Jennifer: So does it end well?

Amy: Yes, it does end well.

Jennifer: Nicola Yoon for me is more of a realistic writer. I've loved her *Everything, Everything* and the Star...

Amy: *The Sun Is Also a Star*.

Jennifer: *The Sun Is Also a Star*...

Blair: *The Sun Is Also a Star*, yeah.

Jennifer: ...dealing with more current issues. And I really like the romance in those books. It felt realistic and believable. So I'm really curious about *Instructions for Dancing*.

Amy: Yeah. This felt believable. Her and X getting together did. And there's so much happening. Part of it is like her parents have just gotten divorced and she grew up with this love story and it was just beautiful. And then her dad wasn't the right guy in the relationship, but she has to come to peace with that and with having a split household. And this magical book, that was like a tiny bit of that, but that ability to see the future.

Jennifer: That threw me 'cause I just don't associate magic with Nicola Yoon.

Amy: I thought it was really enjoyable. Like, there's not a teen that I wouldn't feel comfortable recommending that story to.

Jennifer: Good to know.

Amy: Yeah.

Blair: The other one that I read that I actually had really high hopes for, because it's a Reese Witherspoon YA Club pick, was *Within These Wicked Walls* by Lauren Blackwood. It's a retelling of *Jane Eyre*. It's set in the Middle East slash Northern Africa. There's a lot of, you're in the desert, there's all of these interesting cultural things. But the house itself is very haunted, and she comes in as kind of a last-ditch effort to try and exorcise all of the demons and all the ghosts that are in the house. And I loved all of the haunting parts. I love all of the ghost story parts. I love how she interacts with the house, but the

relationship, it's just cringe. It's that insta attraction. And yet at the same time she's like fighting her instant attraction. But he's so attractive. I'm like, I just, I just want you to kill ghosts. Will you just go kill ghosts now? That's way more interesting than all the other stuff you're doing. So for me it did not work super well because I wanted ghost killing and I got romance-y, "I'm gonna save him" trope.

Amy: And it was mostly based on his appearance, not like character?

Blair: Yeah.

Amy: Oh. <laugh>

Blair: Yeah. Because, I mean, mild spoiler alert for anyone who's going to go read this book, he is personally possessed by the spirit that is in the house. So he is personally murdering his own staff.

Amy: Oh, wow.

Blair: And she's trying to save him.

Amy: This is a teen book?

Blair: He turns into a beast. Yeah. He turns into a beast and is eating them and then the house buries them in its walls.

Jennifer: And she's still attracted to him?

Blair: Yeah. Oh no. She's gonna save him.

Jennifer: You know what really concerns me about books like that is that it's a Reese pick. And I think a lot of readers are looking at those endorsements and they're not always the best selections. It's... makes me sad. I was gonna just say that I really like books that inspire me to learn more. Just like you were saying, you thought about dancing lessons. I just love reading books about different cultures, and I think I mentioned this is one of my goals. So, I recently read a book called *In the Beautiful Country* by Jane Kuo. It's a novel in verse, it's middle grade, and it's about a young girl who's from Taiwan, her mother's Taiwanese, but her dad is Chinese and he wasn't allowed to go back to his country. He was visiting Taiwan and then China shut its doors. So he had to stay in Taiwan. But they wanted to come to the beautiful country, which was America, to have a better life. And they put all their money into a restaurant. It reminded me a lot of Kelly Yang's *Front Desk*.

Blair: Oh yeah, yeah.

Jennifer: But it's written novel in verse. And it's just so lovely about the beautiful country, what is the beautiful country? And it just made me wanna learn more about Taiwan. It made me also think about what it's like to be an immigrant and seeing that experience through her eyes. So if you haven't read that book, it's a quick read. It's lovely. I would highly recommend it. It's inspiring.

Amy: It makes me wanna know, too, I don't know that I really learned much about China closing its borders to Taiwan. So when you say that, I'm like: Oh, interesting. I would want to know more about that as well.

Blair: I recently read a similar story. It's a graphic novel and it is called *Bounce Back* (Misako Rocks!). It is the first in, I think, a new fun, cute girly manga series out of Japan. But this girl moves from Japan with her family to the U.S. And in Japan she's been the star of her basketball team and her life revolves around basketball. And then she gets to the States and she is just suddenly enveloped in mean girl, high school difficulties. She just can't make headway. She wants to be on the basketball team, but they don't wanna have anything to do with her. And so she makes friends with kids who are a little bit more, you know, standout fun kids and has to kind of come to terms with the changes and all of those sorts of things. She does already know English when she moves, but of course she's got all the other cultural differences, and is her English really good enough? And all of those struggles, too. And trying to get back to the basketball that she loves. That's a great graphic novel. It was beautifully done as well.

Jennifer: What grade did you say that is?

Blair: I would have no hesitation recommending it to sixth grade and up because everything in there is appropriate content. But I think technically it's a teen manga.

Music Transition: "Ascending-marimba-notification" by Alexander from Orangefreesounds.com

(Description) Bright marimba scale.

(9:07) Section 2: What We're Reading Right Now Pt.2

Amy: One that I read recently I really felt to have value was *The Bicycle Spy* by Yona McDonough. And it's about a girl who is Jewish during World War II. And she and her family flee their home and get forged papers and they're impersonating a Christian family and they're in France. And this young man, his parents have a bakery and are part of the French resistance. And so they're baking letters, you know, coded messages into the bread. And they enlist him to help deliver some of these loaves of bread. And they give him some special like gingerbread that he uses to bribe the soldiers when they stop him because of the times that he's traveling, he really shouldn't be out on his bicycle alone. I think it was really well done. She goes to school, she's ridiculed for being new and then somebody finds a picture sewn into her little satchel pocket and it's her Jewish name 'cause she's, you know, got forged papers. And so, oh my gosh. It was just like this kid has bullied him for years and he finally stands up to the bully for her benefit. I mean it was just really sweet. It's for like, you know, third, fourth, fifth graders. For the age group, it leaves too much about World War II unspoken. Which I think is a disservice because having an adult's knowledge of World War II, I was appreciating a lot of things that were happening. I don't know that a third, fourth, or fifth grade reader would necessarily catch those things. And they are, I think, important to setting that stage for that time period. But I really enjoyed it, and I thought how interesting it is— baking messages in bread and you know, you did your cipher coding thing with your last book club...

Blair: Yeah.

Amy: Like, the ideas of how these messages are shared to protect others. It was, you know, that part was really cool.

Jennifer: That sounds like a book I would like. Well it reminds me of a book I wanted to share with you for Alan Gratz readers. It's a readalike. Harry Mazer's *A Boy at War*. Have you read that?

Amy: Yes, actually. And just recently because a boy came in looking for books and his mom was challenging him to read beyond *I Survived* [series] (Lauren Tarshis). And I showed him a couple different things and he ended up not taking any of them. And they ended up taking an *I Survived*. He held firm to his desire. <laugh> But as a result it was so thin that I was like, oh I could totally read this in 45 minutes. And so I did. That was very well done.

Jennifer: I agree. And it's short.

Amy: It's very short, and it's older.

Jennifer: It is. It's deceiving. And it's very appropriate. But the boy is older and he's living in Hawaii. His dad is in the Navy at the time that Pearl Harbor is attacked.

Blair: Oh wow.

Jennifer: And it doesn't hold back on what happened, but it's not gratuitous enough that you couldn't hand it to a young reader. And I realized that is the first of a trilogy.

Amy: Oh, I didn't know that.

Jennifer: And I, so I ordered the other two.

Blair: Very cool.

Jennifer: But I thought, okay, Alan Gratz, *I Survived* kiddos, you guys have to try Harry Mazer. This is a new series that we should be promoting.

Amy: How recently did you read this book?

Jennifer: Last month.

Amy: Okay, 'cause I was thinking like, I wonder if we read it like right on top of each other because I literally just last week I read that book.

Jennifer: I read it before you.

Amy: Yeah.

Jennifer: I did.

Amy: Interesting. Cause I was actually struggling for this young man to find books that had a lot of action in the vein of *I Survived*.

Jennifer: There are so many kids that want World War II books, young kids. And I thought, Woohoo, another book that we can actually recommend that would be appropriate and fulfill their interest.

Blair: *How I Became a Spy* by Deborah Hopkinson, which is what we did for the last book club, definitely has a lot of action in it, too. Really liked the exploration of it being set in London during the war where all the raids are happening and aircraft are flying over, bombs are falling. And it's very, you know, it's intense in some places, but it's still really interesting also for any of those kids who like the spy stuff.

Amy: Yeah.

Jennifer: How nicely this segues into this book! <laugh>

Jennifer: This is actually a nonfiction that I so enjoyed a lot for the illustrations, but it's really a quick read. It's called *How to Be a Spy* by Daniel Nesquens. And the illustrations are by Oyemathias and it's delightful. It's about the techniques of being a spy and some of the famous spies and they define what the dead drop is and...

Amy: What is that?

Jennifer: Oh, no, I'm gonna have to look it up.

Amy: Oh, the book looks cool inside.

Jennifer: It is such a cool...

Amy: How did you turn right to that page?

Jennifer: I don't know.

Blair: Magic.

Amy: Guys, she opens the book to the page that says Dead Drop...

Jennifer: I did.

Amy: ...without a bookmark.

Jennifer: It's when spies used a dead letter box or you pass somebody in a park, you give them the look, they know that you just dropped something off by the bench. But it identifies different techniques of spies. But it's so fun. It's a quick read. Illustrations are wonderful, famous spies through time, and spy techniques. So I would recommend this book since we're talking about spies.

Amy: Well, on the new nonfiction tip, although I will say it's loosely nonfiction, I have a book to share and listeners, you will get a treat. It's called *Farts in the Wild, A Spotters Guide*. And the author of this book is H.M. [H.W.] Smeldit. <laugh> Because you know, him who smelt, dealt it. Um, so anyway, it talks about different animals. And I do think that parts of it are humorized more than factual. But there are some things that feel, you know, potentially legit. So, for example, the monkey, the odor of the monkey fart: "Fruity, nutty and fragrantly farty. The frequency: "Continuously when maximum swinging speed is reached." <laugh> And then it gives a description of the monkeys themselves and their farts. "And some fartologists believe this impressive ability results from monkeys trying to keep ahead of their own farts." And that's why they swing so fast. And then you touch the number seven to hear the monkey's fart. Here you go, friends. <fart noises> <laugh>. And yes, that is a book you can check out at the library.

Jennifer: It hasn't actually been checked out yet by the public, has it?

Amy: Nope. It has had limited interactions with human.

Jennifer: I think it's going to be a big hit once we launch it.

Amy: It's gonna cause a real stink <laugh>

Jennifer: And it's gonna be lasting.

Amy: <laugh> Well played!

Blair: Just cracking ourselves up in here.

Music Transition: "Ascending-marimba-notification" by Alexander from Orangefreesounds.com

(Description) Bright marimba scale.

(14:54) Section 3: What We're Reading Right Now Pt.3

Amy: I am late to the game on *Wedgie and Gizmo* by Suzanne Selfors. And I don't know if you guys have read those, but they came up in search I was doing, and I thought, well that sounds pretty darn cute. Oh my gosh. Hilarious. So you're in the perspective of the animals. This Corgi, he wears a cape, he runs circles in front of the door and, and that creates a force field that activates the human to open the door. <laugh> But you know, from like a human standpoint, it's like: Dog, get away from the door! <laugh> And then the Guinea pig is Gizmo. And he is an evil genius and he is plotting bad things because he's being forced to live in a Barbie house and he is not happy. And so he's got some evil ideas, but oh my gosh, reading that from this animal's perspectives was so funny. And there's I think four or five in that series. Fast, easy reads. I remember when one of our families was looking for funny books for a while and you had given them *Klawde (Klawde: Evil Alien Warlord Cat* by Johnny Marciano) and they got really into that. This is younger than *Klawde*, for sure, but some of the same vibes, just animal ridiculousness.

Jennifer: That reminds me of *Super Turbo* (series by Edgar J. Powers)...

Amy: The graphic novels? Yes.

Jennifer: Yes. I think it's such a fun premise that these classroom pets, once the lights are turned off and everyone's out of the school building, they turn into superheroes. And they go from classroom to classroom, and they have these great adventures.

Blair: A similarly veined funny picture book that has recently come in that I just absolutely adored is called *Counting to Bananas* by Carrie Tillotson. And it is a mostly rhyming fruit book. That's the subtitle on it. The banana, the whole time, is waiting for its rhyme.

Amy: Oh.

Blair: And it keeps interrupting with other things. So every time the banana thinks it's gonna be him, it's something else. And all of a sudden, it's animals. The banana fighting with the narrator and then the narrator keeps throwing in random animals until all of a sudden at the end, the banana's having to run for its life.

Amy: Does the banana ever get its rhyme?

Blair: No.

Amy: Oh!

Jennifer: <laugh>. Because what rhymes with banana?

Amy: Banana-rama.

Blair: Because lots of things that eat bananas rhyme with different things.

Jennifer: Oh, this sounds so interesting. You've hooked me.

Amy: Oh yes, I agree.

Blair: It's so cute for a counting picture book. Simple counting in the beginning and then you start doing multiples. So then you get bigger numbers towards the end until you're getting to 100. And at that point he's like, "It's fine. I'm out. It doesn't have to be a banana book. You don't have to count to me anymore!"

Amy: <laugh>

Jennifer: Do you have this currently?

Blair: I just handed it to someone.

Jennifer: That's okay.

Blair: Yesterday. But it is super cute.

Jennifer: Well, we're speaking of rhyming, we should talk about *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*, the new retelling by Mac Barnett and Jon Klassen, 'cause that troll does some rhyming.

Amy: He does some fabulously off rhyming. <laugh>

Jennifer: I love that book. I did not know how much I was gonna love that book. Especially as a read aloud. Oh, it lends itself to such fun voices and clip clop, clip clop. The kids were enthralled when I read it to the first class.

Amy: <laugh> I believe it.

Jennifer: I was enthralled. I love this book!

Amy: I loved it too. Yeah. I'm so glad you chose to read it that day when we switched. Remember, I made you read parts of it...

Blair: You did. It was adorable.

Amy: And I was reading it to kids at the desk and I was like, you've gotta see this part. And then he eats his ear wax. <laugh>

Jennifer: And his belly button goop.

Amy: It was like, this is so funny. It's right up my alley.

Jennifer: And even the audio, which we listened to a bit of, I think it won an Odyssey honor award...

Amy: And it was read by Mac Barnett.

Blair: I didn't know that part. Now I wanna go listen to this audio. That sounds fun. The art in that book reminds me of another newer picture book as well, which is *The Capybaras* by Alfredo Soderguit. The capybaras have decided that they don't like where they live. They think the chicken coop looks really comfortable, but the chickens don't want them in the chicken coop. And so there's a sort of battle, but then a really cute resolution. And it's so funny and it's so hilarious and I am waiting for the right school group to share it with because it's a little bit reliant on illustrations and paying attention to detail. And so I feel like kindergarten might miss it in a big group, but the second, third graders'll probably get it. Beautiful art in that, too. And who knows what a capybara is? How many capybara books do we really have?

Amy: You know, that animal has come up in another picture book that I read and I can't remember which one it was, but I had to go on Google and have them tell me how to say the word because that's not an animal that I am super familiar with. When you're gonna read it aloud, you're like, I better say this correctly because someone's hearing me. <laugh>

Jennifer: Well, speaking of cute picture books, I had a patron actually recommend to me a book called *Escargot* by Daskha Slater. And it's about a little snail from France and you get a chance to speak a lot of French words like "ooo, la, la" and "magnifique." But it's about this little snail who is kind of sad that snails are not the animal everyone picks as their favorite animal, but he wants to race you to the end of the book to get to the salad. It's just so adorable. Such cute illustrations. Then I went and ordered one for our library and then every other book *Escargot*, this little character. I was really enchanted by the book. I love when patrons recommended books to me as well.

Amy: Well that reminds me of *Pizza: A Slice of History* by Greg Pizzoli. *Pizzoli*. Oh my gosh. That book, to me, was so fun to share with school groups. I think that's another one of those books that blends fact and fiction a little bit. And I don't actually care if it's not factual in the least, 'cause we have it in the picture book area. But also it's just so fun. So even if the first pizza wasn't made in X country by Y person, that's okay. But it was so fun to read parts of it and then to have reactions to the different kinds of pizzas that different countries enjoy.

Jennifer: I enjoyed that book. It made me want to have some pizza after I read it. And one other book that I thought would get a Caldecott- the *Farmhouse* by Sophie Blackall. I love that book. I love the premise of it where the author-illustrator bought a piece property and found this old house on her

property and inside it was like a family had lived there, but then they just left. And there were remnants of ledgers and journals and clothing. And she took bits and pieces of that and constructed a story and then used them as a collage to make the illustrations. And I thought the book was just beautiful. It spoke to my love of family history and families. I was actually surprised, but I really thought that one was going to be recognized.

Blair: Now that does remind me of one that did end up with an Honor— *Berry Song* (Michaela Goade).

Amy: Michaela Goade.

Jennifer: She's an indigenous author.

Blair: She is.

Amy: Oh goodness.

Blair: It is. It is Michaela Goade.

Amy: I thought so.

Blair: Your memory for names is phenomenal.

Jennifer: Yes.

Amy: Thank you.

Blair: And not only is it a gorgeous story of foraging and finding all of these berries in the wild, it's a great interaction between a child and a grandmother. And the illustrations are phenomenal.

Jennifer: I think we all read that book. It was lovely. I thought it was deserving of that award.

Amy: And *Knight Owl* (Christopher Denise).

Jennifer: I'm gonna buy my own copy of that book.

Amy: So charming. <laugh>

Jennifer: I found myself recommending that a lot. And I've gotta stop because it's not available.

Amy: So many <laugh>, so many of the newer really cool ones are like, yeah. Just like *How I Became a Spy*. I had to talk to the kiddo about that, but it was checked out.

Blair: And we don't have very many copies in the system.

Amy: No, there's just one, I think, in the system.

Blair: Because it's a little bit older. I mean, it's from what, the early two thousands? I mean, that's what's terrible is older now is the early two thousands. And then I know that you and I have had conversations about Kenneth Oppel and how he is sometimes more successful than others, but I just finished his new book, *Ghostlight*, which I'm gonna recommend. I think you should read it. I think it'd be a great contender for your book club because it is set in Canada. It is slightly older characters. It's all the content. Everything in it is totally middle grade appropriate, but your characters are 16 and they are working summer jobs and independent. It opens in the past and it centers around a lighthouse where the lighthouse is in place to kill ghosts, particularly malevolent ghosts. In the opening scene, a malevolent ghost starts trying to attack and unfortunately he succeeds. And then you pop into the rest of the story, which is in the current time. And the lighthouse keeper's daughter is a ghost who is trying to interact with the living and keep that ghost from coming back and taking over. So there's tons of really interesting history. They're going throughout different areas on their island and learning about all these different places. It's very cool. It's action packed. A little bit of scary stuff in there.

Jennifer: Well, it's moved to my list because a patron who might be listening to this podcast actually recommended that book to me and I thought two recommendations of this book in a short period of time. I am definitely going to give it a read.

Music Transition: "Ascending-marimba-notification" by Alexander from
Orangefreesounds.com

(Description) Bright marimba scale.

(23:21) Section 4: What We're Reading Right Now Pt.4

Blair: What do we think? We got one more from each of us that you just can't not talk about?

Amy: Yes. I wanna throw one out there. It is *Spirit Animal-light* (*Spirit Animals* series, multiple authors). It is called *Marina and the Kraken*. It's the first book in the new *Mythics* series by Lauren Magaziner. On a certain day, all of the kids receive a connected animal that becomes their familiar, but these five girls, no animals come and connect. And as it turns out, they are connecting to mythological beasts.

Blair: Ooh.

Amy: So Marina connects to the Kraken and there's this whole adventure on the sea and the kids have to come together. Now that people know that the mythical creatures do exist, they want to capture them. I'm looking forward to the next books in the series. It's friendship, it's fast paced. It's mostly sweet in tone. And so I think it's like *Spirit Animals-light* for the younger crowd.

Jennifer: I think you both know when a book really is meaningful to me, I talk about it a lot, probably overly so and so I have to bring it to the table. *Everything Sad Is Untrue* by Daniel Nayeri. I love that book so much. I just feel emotional about it because it's a beautiful story. It's actually autobiographical, even though it's considered fiction because he was actually asked by his editor when he was writing his autobiography to turn it into a middle grade book. It's this young boy who is fleeing from Iran with his mother. I'm not really sure why at the time, and it's his memories, which we learn as we're reading are not always true. He is the storyteller, and he talks about Scheherazade and the 1,001 Arabian Nights, like he is Scheherazade and the reader is the king. And he blends his life with the myths and legends of Persia. And it's about him coming to Oklahoma, the culture shock, the bullying, like trying to learn English and just coming to learn about his own humanity and other people's humanity. It is a deep story. There are layers to this book. I would read it again and again, and I was pleasantly surprised that the kids liked it. We really had a lot to discuss. It was beautiful. I'm so glad I read it.

Blair: So mine is a reread, but I have to say it, I just reread *A Little Princess* by Frances Hodgson Burnett because I was looking at it for Family Book Club. I decided it was not broad enough of appeal because it is very much a girl book, but oh my gosh, it's beautiful. It's so beautiful. It's so well done. It holds up so well. And for anyone who loves those immersive worlds, it's just gorgeous. The language is gorgeous. Everything in it is so pretty. It was so nice to read.

Jennifer: Yay you for bringing us back to a classic.

Blair: Yay, classics! <laugh>

Jennifer: We hope this episode reminds you that every book has its reader and every reader has their books.

Music Transition: "Ascending-marimba-notification" by Alexander from Orangefreesounds.com

(Description) Bright marimba scale.

Amy: Thank you for joining us today on Librarians Telling Tales. For a full list of the books shared in this episode, check the link in our podcast bio.

Blair: Don't forget to subscribe to catch our next episode where we chat about early childhood literacy with a special guest.

(26:11) Musical Outro: "Uplifting 2463" by Twisterium from pixabay.com

(Description) Upbeat, piano and percussion. Music fades in and plays under.

Jennifer: This podcast is supported by the Arizona State Library, Archives, and Public Records, a division of the Secretary of State with federal funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. We would also like to thank the City of Prescott, Friends of the Prescott Public Library, and all our fabulous coworkers at Prescott Public Library.

Amy: Be sure to like and subscribe to Librarians Telling Tales. And until next time, we'll see you in the library.

Total Runtime (26:40)