Libro.fm Podcast - Episode 27

Interview with S.A. Cosby

Craig Silva:

Hi, and welcome to the Libro.fm Podcast where we talk to authors, narrators, booksellers, and more.

I'm Craig.

Karen Farmer:

And I'm Karen.

During today's episode, we got to sit down with author S.A. Cosby, the multi award-winning author of four novels. Most recently, *All the Sinners Bleed*, which you have probably seen all over the place. This was a big one.

We had the honor of recording this live in person with Shawn, and I'm really glad that we did. He was such an incredibly warm person. He was hilarious. I think we were also just pretty mind blown by his answers and his wisdom by the end of this podcast, so really, really excited to share this one.

Craig Silva:

Yeah, so it was amazing. I had never read anything by Shawn, and after the interview I was like, "I need to read everything by Shawn." Like, what an amazing person.

We will keep our chatter to a minimum here so that we can get into the interview. If you like the chatter, there'll be plenty of it at the end of the interview.

Before we get started, I'll play a clip of Shawn's newest novel, *All the Sinners Bleed*, which is narrated by Adam Lazarre-White, who just as of a week ago at the time of recording, won the Audie Award for thriller/suspense. So congratulations to both Adam and Shawn.

Karen Farmer:

Yes.

Oh, so well deserved too. I love this audiobook.

Craig Silva:

Yes. So please be sure to subscribe to the podcast for future episodes. Or if you already subscribe, give us a little five star rating. It helps. And remember, you can use the code LIBROPODCAST to start a new membership, and you'll get two credits for your first month instead of just one.

Karen Farmer:
All right, Craig, let's roll the clip.

Adam Lazarre-White (Audiobook Narrator):
Two State police investigators were waiting for Titus when he got to the sheriff's office the next morning. Sergeant Adam Geary and Sergeant Ian Wright. They were accompanied by two state medical examiner vans, with three assistant medical examiners each.

"Good morning, Sheriff Crown," Geary said.

"Sorry we're meeting under these circumstances," Wright said. Titus nodded. Geary and Wright reminded him of the lead actors from Starsky and Hutch. Geary was blonde and blue-eyed while Wright had dark hair and deep brown eyes. They all shook hands as firmly as etiquette would allow.

"You secured the crime scene?" Geary asked.

"Secured, and posted a deputy there overnight," Titus said. The condescension was implicit, but Titus ignored it. Interdepartmental jockeying was par for the course in cases like this. He'd been on the other side of the divide when he was with the Bureau. He would put up with it, to a point, if it meant he was able to take advantage of the state police's forensic lab. He wanted to catch the Last Wolf. That was all that mattered. He didn't care if the state boys wanted to take credit. He wanted the Last Wolf's head on a spike, metaphorically speaking.

"Well, I'm sure your team did their best," Geary said. Titus let that one slide too.

"Let's head out."

Titus leaned against the hood of his SUV while the medical examiners and field techs took measurements and soil samples of the graves. He watched as they examined each yawning maw with meticulous precision. Geary walked over to him.

"How'd you find this place?"

"Spearman had a painting of the willow tree in his belongings. Me and my father and brother used to hunt on this property. I recognized the tree."

"Really?" Geary asked.

"Really. I killed my first buck about 200 yards to the west. Eight pointer," Titus said.

"How long ago was that?" Geary asked.

"I was 11. So 25 years ago."

"When was the last time you've been out here?" Geary asked. Titus faced him. Geary was interrogating him like he was a suspect. That was the thing about being a cop. Gradually you became suspicious of everyone. Eventually you'd cut the deck twice on your own wife.

Karen Farmer:

All right. We are here at the Texas Book Festival with author S.A. Cosby, the author of many novels, but most recently, *All the Sinners Bleed*.

It's so nice to meet you. Thank you for sitting down with us today.

S.A. Cosby:

Oh, thank you guys for having me. It's a pleasure to be here.

Craig Silva:

What do you like to be called, by the way?

S.A. Cosby:

Shawn's fine.

Craig Silva:

Shawn.

Karen Farmer:

Shawn, okay.

S.A. Cosby:

Yeah. S.A. is just for the books. Somebody accused me of doing that because I wanted people to think I was a woman, and that was not my thought process at all. I just wanted to stand out. I never thought I would get published, but I thought if I did, I was like, I think S.A. stands out on grocery store shelves.

Karen Farmer:

Yeah. I love it.

Craig Silva:

So you're kind of getting into it now with your name, but for listeners who may be unfamiliar with your work, could you please give us just a little introduction about yourself?

S.A. Cosby:

Yeah. So my name's Shawn, S.A. Cosby. I'm from Southeastern Virginia. I've been writing since I was seven, but professionally since I was about 25. My major publishing

debut was *Blacktop Wasteland*, published in 2020 by Flatiron Books, and that was followed in 2021 by *Razorblade Tears*. Both of them won a lot of awards.

Karen Farmer:

Yes.

S.A. Cosby:

I feel pretentious saying it, but it's also kind of cool.

Craig Silva:

Yeah, it's awesome.

Karen Farmer:

You got a boast about yourself. That's what this is for.

S.A. Cosby:

My most recent book was, like I said, *All the Sinners Bleed*, came out in June. Both that and *Razorblade Tears* were New York Times bestsellers. And almost all my work has been optioned for film or TV.

Craig Silva:

Nice.

Karen Farmer:

Awesome.

Craig Silva:

Congratulations.

S.A. Cosby:

Thank you.

Karen Farmer:

I've loved all of your previous novels. I haven't had a chance to read *All the Sinners Bleed* yet. I'm so excited. It is at the top of my pile.

For folks, like me, who haven't had a chance to read it yet, would you mind giving us a brief synopsis?

S.A. Cosby:

Yeah, sure.

So *All the Sinners Bleed* is the story of Titus Crown, former FBI agent who becomes the first Black sheriff in a small southern town called Chiron County. And on the one-year anniversary of his election, there's a shooting at the local high school. A teacher, a

beloved teacher, is killed by a former student. Former student is and then in turn killed by Titus's deputies. And as he investigates the crime, he finds out that the teacher, the student, and the third mystery person were involved in a series of serial ritualistic killings. And so the third serial killer is still out there, and it's somebody who's local to the community. So Titus is searching for that person, trying to solve the mystery, while also trying to deal with a far right organization that wants to hold a march in his town, and all the other minutiae that comes with being a sheriff in a small town.

Karen Farmer:

Well, thank you.

Craig Silva:

Sold.

Karen Farmer:

I have a long flight today and I'm like, I can't wait to crack it open.

Craig Silva:

I got to get to a grocery store quick.

So you mentioned that that book takes place in the South, and as I was sitting here in Texas, I was reflecting on how the South is so important to your writing. And I learned that you were born and raised in Virginia. And I was just wondering if you could share what growing up in the South has impacted your writing?

S.A. Cosby:

I think the South has this beautiful tradition of storytelling, both oral and written. I grew up in a very small town. It's 8,000 people. And I know all of them. I'm related to half of them, which made dating funny because you always come home and you tell your mom, "Oh, I met this new girl," "You met your cousin," "All right, all right, you sure?" But I think that sort of communal sense that exists in the South, that's sort of, I don't want to say tribalistic, but that sort of family tapestry that exists, even with people you're not related to, really shaped the way I look at writing and how I wanted my stories to be.

I also think being an African-American person in the South, there's this, I think, this idea in other parts of the country that if you're a Black person in the South, you're some sort of submissive step-and-fetch-it-type person. And nothing could be further from the truth. It takes, I think, an immense amount of will to be a person of color and live in, say, like I do, 45 minutes from the former capital of the Confederacy.

And so that sort of tradition of storytelling combined with some of that determination and will had an effect on my whole life, not just my writing. Or just the way I perceive life, the way I take in being a Southerner. I'm proud of being a Southerner. I don't run from it. I'm not ashamed of it. But to paraphrase James Baldwin, because I love the South, I reserve the right to criticize it. Because I know it can be better than what it is.

Karen Farmer:

Awesome.

I wanted to talk to you a little bit about genre. Your novels kind of get categorized in a few different ways, like crime, thriller, mystery. What genres do you most associate with and how did these become your area of focus?

S.A. Cosby:

I think for me, the genre question is so funny because there's this attitude, I think among some people that popular fiction is somehow a lesser form of art. I heard somebody say it's a cocktail party the other night. Popular fiction is popular because it's popular. And so I think you can tell a good story and have interesting characters or protagonists, antagonists, what have you, and still talk about larger issues. Existential malaise, you know about toxic masculinity, homophobia, racism, religious extremism, all these things that quote-unquote, "literary novels" are known for can be found in any crime novel you pick up. And so I don't feel constrained by a genre. I'm not ashamed of being called a crime writer or a thriller writer. I don't shirk from that because some of the greatest books I've ever read were crime novels. And so for me, it's really almost gratifying to be a part of that kind of tradition. You read a book like *Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoyevsky. It's literally in the title.

Karen Farmer:

I love that.

S.A. Cosby:

And so I feel like there are crime novels, I feel like I could stand up to those novels. You take something like *Splendor in the Grass*, which was written in the early part of the century. Now I would compare that to something like *Red Harvest* by Dashiell Hammett. I think Raymond Chandler did an incredible job of showing this sort of existential post-War LA. They didn't call it PTSD back then, but a lot of what Philip Marlowe was going through is PTSD. In a way, he has sort of this very cynical view of the world.

So again, I think crime fiction is the best genre to talk about things like that. You may read American Stained by Philip Roth, and you may not be someone who can relate to an Upper Northeast professor who's hiding a secret, but then you can read a crime novel and you understand pain, you understand the laws, you understand desperation. So those genre designations don't really have a lot of effect on me.

Karen Farmer:

Oh, thank you so much for that answer. I transparently stole that question from a panel I heard yesterday, and I was like, "That's such an interesting question." So Noah Hawley, if you're listening, I stole your question.

Craig Silva:

Speaking about genre, most of your novels are for adults with themes like crime, but you did write a middle grade book with Questlove, which became an instant New York Times bestseller. So congratulations.

S.A. Cosby:

Thanks very much.

Craig Silva:

The book is called *The Rhythm of Time*, and I'm curious, as a writer of crime and adult novels, what was the motivation for jumping into such a different genre?

S.A. Cosby:

Well, it's funny, they came to me, they were like, "Questlove's a fan. He likes your writing, he has this idea..." He's written a bunch of nonfiction books, and he has never written a fiction book. So it was like he has this idea and he feels like you and him sort of have a similar background. Even though he's from Philadelphia and I'm from Virginia, we both grew up really, for lack of a better word, geeky and nerdy, and had a lot of interest in a lot of different things. Although I like to say I was a nerd that could fight.

But it was funny, I got to meet him right before the pandemic. I got a meeting, we had sort of an adult play date to kind of get to know each other.

Karen Farmer:

Awesome.

S.A. Cosby:

And we really did have a lot in common. We were talking about movies we like and comic books and films, and of course, I'm a hip hop fan from way back. So to be sitting in the room with one of the founders of the roots was mind-blowing. But then once we got in the process of writing, he's such a creative dude and such a giving type of person in a collaboration. And so it was really cool working with him. He doesn't sleep though. He'll call you like, it's a time travel book.

At one point in the book, there's World 1 by planes flying over Philadelphia and modern time and stuff. And I remember he called me four o'clock in the morning and he was like, "Shawn, it's Amir." I was like, "Yeah, what's wrong?" He said, "I think we need more dinosaurs in the book." And I was like, "That couldn't have been an eight o'clock call?" But it was wonderful working with him and I really enjoyed it. We're working on a part two right now, so it's been fun. Like I said, he's just a great guy, so incredibly smart and in a laid back way.

So for me, it was funny though because for me it was a challenge because sometimes in a crime novel, if you get stuck, you just shoot somebody in the face.

Craig Silva:

That's not happening in this one. A dinosaur could maybe-

S.A. Cosby:

Yeah, nobody's getting shot in the face. But it also, it tested me like, okay, I couldn't just fall back on sort of those laurels in a way. I had to really be able to shape the story. Also, it was fun because my books have a little bit of humor, but it's almost like gallows humor where this, I was allowed to be more humorous and was able to write really funny scenes and interactions. So for me it was a great experience.

Craig Silva:

Yeah. What did the actual writing process look like? Did you guys have a shared Google Doc? Because it sounds like you were in two different places for most of it, so what did that look like? Yeah,

S.A. Cosby:

So basically he would give me an idea for a chapter and sort of sketch out the premise that he wanted. And then I would go and try to fill that sketch in and then give it back to him. And then he would make notes and make changes. And then we went back and forth like that for about a year. And then when we finished the completed document, we gave it to the editors. They came back with their notes again, like 50/50 collaboration. And so it was really cool. And he had really good insights.

Part of the book is based around the main character's love of old school hip hop. And so he had a lot of insights about that. There's a scene in the book where the roots are referenced, and it was like he gave me something from their life that actually happened. So we were able to use that in the book. And so it was really cool. Like I said, he had really good ideas. It was his idea initially, I kind of just came along to help.

Craig Silva:

Really? That's awesome.

Karen Farmer:

One question that I am so excited to ask you even more so now. So you mentioned you've been writing since you were seven, and I'm always so curious, what were these seminal moments you had where you're like, "This is what I want to do. I'm a writer." How did this start at age seven?

S.A. Cosby:

All right. So my mother used to tell stories. God rest her soul. She's passed on. But she used to tell the story that when I was four or five, she would read me bedtime stories, fairy tales, and that I would complain about the story is not making sense. So I was picking at plot holes at five or six, so the *Three Little Pigs*, and they built their first house out of straw and the second house out of sticks. And my mom said that, I said, "Why didn't they just build all their houses out of bricks in the first place?" And so she

encouraged me to write my own story. She's like, then you can do anything you want. You can make it make sense.

And so a couple years later, I wrote this terrible story about these space fairing gnomes that landed in a spaceship in our backyard, in our magnolia tree.,But the spaceship was only four feet long. And I gave it to my mother. It's a terrible story, but I remember her reading it and she kept looking at me and reading it. And then she's like, "So you wrote this all by yourself? Nobody helped you?" I was like, "Yeah." "You sure?" I was like, "No, I did it all by myself." And it was like this look on her face has been this high that I've been chasing the rest of my life because I love seeing somebody read my book and really enjoy it. I don't care... I shouldn't say I don't care, but the money's good. But let's not delving in around my fantasy.

But for me, when a reader comes up to me and they tell me, "I really liked your book," or, "I love your work," is like I'm seven years old again, and I could see that on their face and it means the world to me.

Karen Farmer:

Thank you so much. I like cry a lot-

Craig Silva:

Are you going to cry on the podcast again?

Karen Farmer:

... on the podcast. I'm like, "There it's there."

Craig Silva:

As you were telling your story, I looked over and I was like, "Oh no." So that was a beautiful story. Thank you. Our next segment for this podcast, we call Lightning Round, we fire off just a couple of sillier questions that you don't really need to think about. So with that to Karen...

Karen Farmer:

Well, my first one was, what was your dream job as a kid? Was there ever anything else on the docket other than writer?

S.A. Cosby:

I wanted to be a private investigator.

Karen Farmer:

That makes sense.

S.A. Cosby:

Because I read mystery stories and I grew up reading *Encyclopedia Brown*. I'm really deep myself. I grew up reading Encyclopedia Brown-

Karen Farmer:

I love *Encyclopedia Brown*.

S.A. Cosby:

The Three Investigators and Nancy Drew and Hardy Boys and all that. To the point that when I was 15, I had my friend who was really a great artist. If you're out there, Scott O'Hara, thank you. But he drew me a badge and I was trying to be Encyclopedia Brown. I was trying to hire myself at the kids in school to solve the mystery of what happened to their math book, when really they threw it away themselves and they didn't want to take math.

And so I learned very early on that if you're the detective and you find out stuff, people don't like that. So you figure out that, oh no, you're the one that got rid of your gym socks. So people hate that. But that was my thing. Even going toward senior year in high school, I still was thinking about maybe doing a private investigator course or something. We had a career day at our school and they brought a private investigator, not for me, it was like one of the people. We're in a small town, so he came from the next city over, and me and another student got to do a ride along with him. It was the most boring shit. I'm sorry. The most boring stuff I've ever, it was just hours and hours of sitting in the car and him complaining about his back. And following this dude that was supposed to have a bad back too, and he was like, I know he doesn't have a bad back because I know how mine is. And I was like, we got back to the school and I'm like, I think I'm just going to write. I don't think I'm going to be a private eye.

Craig Silva:

That sounds like the right move, I think.

S.A. Cosby:

Yeah.

Karen Farmer:

That is the best story.

Craig Silva:

Your little fake badge. So next silly question, go-to movie snack besides popcorn.

S.A. Cosby:

Oh, Raisinets.

Craig Silva:

Nice.

Karen Farmer:

Perfect.

S.A. Cosby:

I love Raisinets because also I think for me, you get more for your money for Raisinets. Popcorn now is like $15. It's half kernels and all of them are not popped and it's like I pay $8 for Raisinets because the whole box is full.

Craig Silva:

It's all full of Raisinets.

S.A. Cosby:

Yes, exactly. There's no filler.

Karen Farmer:

That's a good shout. Totally. Okay, our next section for you as we're wrapping up here, we do something called Instagram Story Time, where we go into your social media.

S.A. Cosby:

Oh, God.

Karen Farmer:

We find something that we would like to ask you about. And I think Craig has that selected.

Craig Silva:

Yes. I wasn't sure if I wanted to use this picture. We typically choose kind of quirky, kind of funny Instagrams, but I saw this beautiful photo of you and your mom and you sort of touched on this already. And the very first part of it says, guess what mama? And then you list a bunch of accomplishments and it was just such a beautiful sentiment and I would love for you to talk a little bit about that.

S.A. Cosby:

So that picture, the one I think you're thinking about is my mom's sitting down and I'm leaning over her. Yeah, I'm leaning over to kiss her. And it's at church. It was at our church function and I still had hair then, which is great. And a friend of mine found that picture in their pictures. Somebody had took that picture of us back in the day when you didn't have it on your phone and you had to go get your pictures developed and hopefully you didn't do nothing untoward, so it wasn't like that movie, but somebody sent that to me and it sort of crystallized for me where I'd come from and where I'd gone. We grew up really poor in the south, lived in a mobile home. You might can't tell from there, but my mom has spinal stenosis, so she's in a wheelchair.

And so a long time we really struggled financially and also emotionally, it was really hard for her. Her and my dad separated and it was just a lot going on and I remember being just so poor that I couldn't afford Nikes and all the kids would pick on you and all that kind of stuff. And I went to work at a pig farm at a slaughterhouse so I could earn money from the summer into the fall to just get one decent pair of Nikes. And so seeing that

picture, it was like the day that person sent it to me was the day after I got on the Obama list for *Razorblade Tears*. And it just sort of like it crystallized everything that's going on and if you go back and you tell that 17-year-old kid, the places that words and books, his words would take him, he wouldn't believe it. And I'm so incredibly grateful for what writing has done for me and what has taken and nothing for my family. My mom passed away in 2021, but she lived long enough to see some of this start to happen.

Craig Silva:

I wanted to ask, but I was scared too.

S.A. Cosby:

No, no, no. She lived long enough to see some of this happen and I feel like she was really proud of me. She still was my mom though. She was always... Even one of times, so she was in the hospital and my book was on the *Today Show*. Harlan Coben had picked it as one of his summer reads or whatever. And I remember coming to see her and then she's like, "I saw your thing on the TV today". I was like, "Oh yeah, yeah". And then she was like, "You didn't quit your job yet though, did you?" I said, "Yeah, I quit".

Craig Silva:

No mom, I'm still at the pig farm.

S.A. Cosby:

Yeah, exactly. She was like, "Oh man, just make sure you're saving your money". And I'm like, "It's fine, it's going to be alright". It was funny. I'll tell you one more story about her.

So my first book is dedicated to my father. It's *Blacktop Wasteland*. It's a lot about fathers and sons and toxic masculinity, and also sort of redemption and reclaiming of that relationship, which me and my father have done. And so I dedicated that to him. And then my next book, *Razorblade Tears*, I dedicated to my mom and I went to the hospital and I showed it to her and I'm like, "Look, I dedicated this to you". She looked at it, paused for a second, was like, "You should have dedicated the first book to me too, your dad didn't get you a word processor". And that's sort of how she was. But I feel like she was really proud of me and I feel like I'm just so incredibly honored that people like my books and my work.

I think if you want a hot take, I think you can learn structurally and technically how to write. You can learn, you can get an MFA, you can go to college, go to classes. I think you have to be born a storyteller. It has to be in you. And all my life, that's all I've ever wanted to do is tell stories. My mom used to say, birds got to sing, bee's got to sting, and you got to write.

Karen Farmer:

I love that. I will say I do want to read the Gnomes and Space story.

S.A. Cosby:

Oh, man. That's locked in a box somewhere.

Karen Farmer:

Well, before we let you go, we would like to beg you for book recommendations. What are you currently reading? What have you enjoyed lately?

S.A. Cosby:

So my favorite books that I've read in the past year are *Ozark Dogs* by Eli Cranor. *Everybody Knows* by Jordan Harper, which I think is probably my favorite book of the year. To give a quick shout out to Jordan Harper, Jordan Harper, if you don't know him he's a crime writer, he wrote a book called *She Rides Shotgun*. He works in Hollywood. He's been a screenwriter and a producer for years. I think he's probably the best American crime writer working today. Nobody thinks about writing the way Jordan does. So, *Everybody Knows* was his novel, sort of a modern Hollywood corruption, sort of like a Chinatown look at Hollywood and the entertainment industry. So that was really good. I'll give you two more. *Beware The Woman* by Megan Abbott, a really great novel. And I think probably the last book that I just finished on the plane was *Lowdown Road* by Scott Von Doviak. Really great 1970s crime novel. I was telling somebody, it's the novelization of the movie Burt Reynolds never made. And so it's really good.

Karen Farmer:

Thank you so much. I cannot wait.

Craig Silva:

That's it. We made it. Thank you so much for your time and telling your stories and it was really amazing to meet you.

S.A. Cosby:

Oh gosh. Thank you guys for having me. It was a pleasure being here.

Karen Farmer:

Thanks for listening everyone. We hope you enjoyed the interview. I highly recommend grabbing a copy of *All the Sinners Bleed*. I've read everything that Shawn has written transparently, and I think *All the Sinners Bleed* is my favorite. I grabbed it the day we interviewed him and couldn't put it down. So 10 out of 10, go check it out.

Craig Silva:

I'm so looking forward to it. I actually haven't read it yet. I'm dying to.

Karen Farmer:

You're going to love it.

Craig Silva:

I think that's good. I won't name names, but I haven't loved the last few books that I've read.

Karen Farmer:

Oh, I'm sorry.

Craig Silva:

It happens. It's okay. It all goes towards the count at the end of the year. So I've heard this book from you and other people will be like, it's amazing. Go get it. So it feels like a sure bet. And I actually have the physical copy at the house, so maybe this will be my next book.

Karen Farmer:

I think it should be. So I'm really sorry to hear you haven't been having a great reading streak, but is there anything that you've been reading that you do want to recommend?

Craig Silva:

Yeah, I read, I was in the mood for, as you would say, a little, what's your favorite term? Flippy, happy book.

Karen Farmer:

Happy little flippy book.

Craig Silva:

Yeah, something like that. And I-

Karen Farmer:

The Bob Ross of books or something.

Craig Silva:

Exactly. I hadn't read a thriller in quite a while. Just like a page turner or who done it. Is it this person is that person? So I judged a book by its cover. I was looking for a thriller book and picked up Mary Kubica's new book, *She's Not Sorry*. Mary previously wrote *Local Woman Missing*, which I think I read that too, but it was years ago, so don't quote me on that. But I liked this book a lot. It was exactly what I was looking for. It was one of those very page turner. Every chapter ends on a cliffhanger. You read it in a day type of book. Super, super good. It's basically about an ICU nurse who finds out about a patient. There's a patient who apparently jumped off a bridge but she didn't die and suddenly starts to find out things about how she was up to no good. And it's one of those books where you're like the entire time you're like, oh, I bet it's the dad. Oh, maybe it's the brother. Oh, actually, maybe it's the boyfriend.

Dad. Oh, maybe it's the brother. Oh, actually maybe it's the boyfriend. Everyone seems guilty.

Karen Farmer:
So a thriller?

Craig Silva:
Yeah, it's almost like a thriller. Yeah. So it totally scratched the itch I was looking for.

Karen Farmer:
Nice.

Craig Silva:
And I won't say too much about it, obviously, because I don't want to spoil anything, but it's fun if you're in the mood for a medical thriller, and she's divorced from her husband and the husband, oh, it could be the husband.

Karen Farmer:
It's always the husband.

Craig Silva:
Exactly. She's got a teenage daughter, so there's drama there and there's flashbacks, and it's great. If that's the book you're looking for, it's there.

Karen Farmer:
Awesome.

Craig Silva:
Yeah. I know you love a thriller. I think you should pick it up.

Karen Farmer:
Thank you so much. I totally will. So I'm going to tell you what I've been reading. I just read a thriller too, and it was called *The It Girl* by Ruth Ware, who is, I would say inarguably, a queen of the thriller genre and the mystery genre. I really enjoyed it. It's got all of the aspects that you were describing, but also it's a campus novel, which we love.

Craig Silva:
Love a campus novel.

Karen Farmer:

A group of friends in college, a murder occurs and years later we're trying to untangle if the murder was actually solved back then or if the killer is still at large, and I loved it. So highly recommended. The other one I wanted to tell you about is super different, and I think it's going to be one of my favorite books of the year. It's called *Sociopath*, a memoir by a woman named Patric Gagne. This book is not out yet. It comes out in April. I didn't realize this. I was recommending it on my other podcast and learned from my dear friend that she went to go buy it at her bookstore, and it was not out yet, so look for it in April. Craig is raising his hand. Do you have a question?

Craig Silva:

You were like mentioning that this book was not out yet, it made me remember that the book I recommended is also not out yet.

Karen Farmer:

Oh, okay, good.

Craig Silva:

Sorry. It also comes out, I think it's like April 2nd, so, sorry.

Karen Farmer:

Yeah. Well, April is going to be a big month for folks and by the time this podcast is released, you're almost there. You're almost there. It's so close. It'll be right around the corner. Springtime reads. So *Sociopath: A Memoir* is nonfiction. Patric Gagne, the author, is a sociopath. She has a PhD in this topic, and she is writing about her life from the time she was a small child, first realizing that the way she interacted with people made them uncomfortable, that there was something different about her all the way up to her life now as a wife and a mother, a woman with a PhD. It's so good.

Craig Silva:

It sounds amazing. I'm watching you talk about it, and I'm literally like googling to be like, "When does this come out? How can I get a NetGalley?"

Karen Farmer:

Well, for our bookseller listeners, it is in ALC right now, I believe. So you can access that through the Libro.fm app. I wanted to read you... I was reading so much about this book after I read it to try to just learn more about the author and the topic and one of the first reviews I came across says, "A memoir on the misunderstood mental disorder of sociopathy, written by a sociopath who has a PhD in clinical psychology. Yes."

Craig Silva:

That's amazing... I love it.

Karen Farmer:

Yeah, highly, highly recommend.

Craig Silva:

Love it. Karen, should we announce the big news about Independent Bookstore Week?

Karen Farmer:

Yes, we should. I'm so excited that we get to do this. I didn't know. I didn't know if we were going to talk about it or not.

Craig Silva:

Well, lay it on us.

Karen Farmer:

Independent Bookstore Day is this year on April 27th, so get ready. It is the greatest day of the year. For those of us in the book world, it is our Super Bowl. There is nothing better than Independent Bookstore Day. And so, Craig and I thought what would be more fun than to do a podcast spectacular or a podcast extravaganza? The name is still...

Craig Silva:

Podcast Palooza.

Karen Farmer:

We're workshopping it.

Craig Silva:

Yes, we're shopping ideas around.

Karen Farmer:

But we have just had the great fortune to talk to so many authors lately in person at Winter Institute. I think we still have a couple of episodes in the can when we were in Austin, and in order to get you excited about IBD and all of these amazing books that are coming out in 2024, we are going to release an episode a day, the week of IBD, leading up to the big event. So you are going to get so much content. You're going to hear about so many books from some very, very cool authors.

Craig Silva:

You're not going to tease any? I like it.

Karen Farmer:

Are you going to tease any? I feel like I've said too much.

Craig Silva:
You said too much.

Karen Farmer:
I don't want to steal all the thunder.

Craig Silva:
Okay. Okay, okay. Okay. I will not tease any, but if you follow @librofm on Instagram, we will tease it there.

Karen Farmer:
We will.

Craig Silva:
We'll post who we will be talking to and, like Karen said, an episode a day for the entire week leading up to Independent Bookstore Day.

Karen Farmer:
Yeah, it's going to be so good. We cannot wait for you to join us and...

Craig Silva:
It's going to be so good, says the person that doesn't have to edit all of these episodes in the next three weeks.

Karen Farmer:
I'm sorry. I will DoorDash you lots of coffee.

Craig Silva:
Perfect. Iced americanos to my dome, please.

Karen Farmer:
All right folks, well, that does it for today. Thank you so much for joining us. We can't wait to share all of these exciting episodes with you soon. Once Craig gets done frantically editing them, and if you have any ideas or questions or feedback, you can always find us at podcast@libro.fm.

Craig Silva:
And as always, thank you for listening.