

Libro.fm Podcast - Episode 40

Interview with Huda Fahmy & Anna Hersh

Theme song:

Libro.fm podcast with Craig and Karen, supporting local bookstores, [inaudible 00:00:08] books and more, join the world of stories. As always, thank you for listening.

Kay Farmer:

Hello and welcome to the Libro.fm podcast where we talk to authors, narrators, booksellers, and more. I'm Karen.

Craig Silva:

And I'm Craig. On today's episode, we sat down with two different people, which is a little bit out of the ordinary for us, but very fun. We sat down with Huda Fahmy, who wrote Huda F Are You?, Huda F Cares?, and the newest, F Wants to Know?, coming out soon in 2025, which is very exciting. Absolutely loved her book that I read right before the interview and then had to ask a million questions about it. And then we also sat down with Anna Hersh, one of the owners of the Wild Rumpus Bookstore.

Kay Farmer:

This episode is so fun because we talk a lot about literature for young people. We talk about audiobooks, of course, their past experiences that led them to want to work in literature for young people, and they're both so fun and engaging. So you are in for a real treat.

Craig Silva:

Yes, I am dying to go to Minneapolis now, I want to go to this bookstore. As you'll learn in the episode, it's full of animals. And I'm not talking a shop cat, I'm talking a chinchilla and parrot. I need to get here, ASAP.

Kay Farmer:

Someone should write a children's book about this bookstore.

Craig Silva:

I think Anna should do it, honestly.

Kay Farmer:

I vote for that. Yes. All right.

Craig Silva:

Well, Anna, if you're listening, we will be awaiting an arc.

Kay Farmer:

Yes.

Craig Silva:

Well, without further ado, I will play a clip from Huda's book and we will roll the interview.

Book Clip:

My name is Huda F, and I just finished my freshman year of high school. Freedom. You know what that means? It's summer vacation, baby. That's right, summer vacation. All my friends are going on awesome trips. Have fun in Lebanon, Nabs, don't forget about me. Enjoy your summer. Definitely. Yep. Going to enjoy the heck out of it. Got so much to... And she's gone. All I've got to look forward to is AP work and an appointment with the optometrist. Is it sad that I've kind of been looking forward to this appointment for weeks? Yes, yes it is. Okay, now open wide, just like that, you're going to feel a puff of air. This is probably going to be the highlight of my summer. You've done this before? Only every year since I was three, but unlike every year since I was three, today I'm getting examined for contacts.

Speaker 2:

Oh, yeah.

Huda Fahmy:

I'm finally going to look normal.

Speaker 2:

Really? The glasses? That's the part of your wardrobe that's keeping you from looking normal?

Craig Silva:

Today we are here with Huda Fahmy, the creator of webcomic, Yes, I'm Hot in This, and author-illustrator of two graphic novels and another one on the way, which I got a little sneak peek of a minute ago. Super exciting. Thank you so much for making time for us today. For people who may not be familiar with you, can you give us a little bit about yourself and what brought you to the world of books?

Huda Fahmy:

Thank you so much for having me. I am a huge fan of Libro, so I was so stoked to get this invitation. I am an author and an illustrator. I started out by illustrating a webcomic that is called Yes, I'm Hot in This, and I still illustrate and post so you can find me wherever, all social media handles, Yes, I'm Hot in This. I've always wanted to be a writer. When I was five years old, my parents were like, "What do you want to do when you grow up?" And I was like, "I want to be a writer," and they were like, "That's not how you say doctor," and... They're like, "You're going to have to put that on the back burner, or you have to be really, really good if you want to be a writer," so that kind of shattered my dreams because you never know what you could say to a little kid that'll stick with them. And I thought, "Oh my God, they think I'm not good and I'll never be good and I'll never be good enough."

So I ended up majoring in English and teaching English because I thought that was the closest that I'll ever get to writing my own stories, teaching other kids how to write and how to tell their own stories. But that dream of being a writer never went away. But it was always like, I would get this writer's block where I would start a story and then never be able to finish it because, again, I was never going to be good enough. And then I started drawing comics, which felt a little easier because I was restricting myself to four to six panels. I could tell the joke in four to six panels so it felt like really something that I could do.

And I caught the eye of my agent, Kathleen Ortiz, who is wonderful, and she was the one who encouraged me to start writing for YA. And she's like, "Would you be interested in doing a graphic novel?" And I was like, "Absolutely I would." And really with her encouragement, my mother and my sister and my family, they're my biggest fans, and they were like, "You can do this." And so I think the biggest block for me was just you don't have to be perfect, and there are people who help you write and finish your story along the way. And that's how I just came to be. And I've been loving and seeing this dream manifest has been amazing, and I wish I could go back to five-year-old Huda and be like, "You can do it."

Kay Farmer:

Totally. Thank you for sharing that because I'm really obsessed with people's origin story, or superhero origin. And you mentioned that you taught English, I think in middle school and high school, I believe I read. And I was just curious what your takeaways from that experience looked like in terms of the work that you create today. What influence did it have on what you're making?

Huda Fahmy:

I think the biggest thing, and I kind of already mentioned it, but it was really just trying to be that voice for these kids. The one that would tell them that you can do this, that your stories are important, that whatever you have to say in whatever medium you want to say it should be heard, deserves to be heard. And hey, if I can help you figure out how to tell it, let me be the one to help you. So it's like, well, I was struggling with that. I was really hoping to help them and help them figure this out and be that voice of encouragement and motivation. And it really helps also figure out for myself, if I wanted to go back and remember the voice of what young readers would like, just go back to what it was like to teach and be around these kids and they're so much smarter than we really give them credit for and they're so much funnier than we give them credit for. So it was motivational for me as well, to do that.

Kay Farmer:

Yeah. Do you get a lot of opportunities to interact with the young readers who are enjoying your work? I'm just so curious what feedback you've heard from them because this is who this work is for.

Huda Fahmy:

Yeah, I know. I get to do a lot of author visits, and I go to schools and libraries and bookstores, and I get a lot of mail and fan art and fan mail. And kids, I just had a young girl email me, 10 years old, telling me how she gets her name mispronounced too and how she'll ask me for advice, and getting to engage with them and talk to them and encourage them that way, I don't even believe that this is my life. It's so much

fun. I love it. I love talking to readers. That's probably my favorite part about doing all this is talking to readers and hearing what they have to say and how they feel about it.

Craig Silva:

We have the same, Karen and I are always saying, "I can't believe this is our job," but in reverse, getting to talk to the authors.

Kay Farmer:

Getting to talk to you.

Craig Silva:

Yeah. Your web series, Yes, I'm Hot in This, does a great job of blending humor while addressing some pretty serious issues. I've seen you post about obviously growing up as a Muslim in America, but also politics and things that are going on right now. How do you balance keeping it lighthearted and funny, what you're sort of known for, you starting those little six panels that were jokes, you still have that same humor in your writing, how do you address that balance of serious topics with humor?

Huda Fahmy:

I know people can relate to this. It really is a defense mechanism for me. Coping through humor has always been just the way that I've dealt with really hard to deal with issues. I don't know how. I've always been drawn to humor and I've always been drawn to things that make me think about it, but through by laughing. And if you want people to just see where your point of view, the easiest way to get people on your side is to make them laugh.

And that's the easiest way, the fastest way to make somebody see what you're experiencing, what you're going through, is to break down that barrier because we always come across a wall when we're talking to people. There's always just that thing that we do, just it's really hard to, when you're first somebody. And as soon as they make you laugh, a little piece of that wall comes down, a little piece of it crumbles, and you feel like you can relate to them, and you feel almost like you owe, "Thank you for making me laugh today. You've really made me smile," and that means that we can kind of be friends a little bit.

So in that same vein, when I make people laugh with the comics, they break down that little barrier, that little wall of vulnerability, and they can connect and relate. I don't know how it happens, I'm glad it does. I really thought when I first created the comic series that I was doing something really niche for specifically girls and women who wear hijab. Hearing from all these people who really relate to just feeling like they're the outsider, I realize it is a really universal concept and feeling and we are unique in our own way, but in our uniqueness we really do connect. So I loved that, and it just happened to be through humor that we can connect.

Kay Farmer:

That's so beautiful. Thank you for sharing that. And you mentioned the word vulnerability and the theme of vulnerability, and also how that fits in with a journey of confidence is something that I really love the most about your work, the confidence to be yourself, to... The only phrase I can think of is get knocked down and get back up again, and I can't believe I'm quoting that song right now.

Craig Silva:

The first Chumbawamba reference on the podcast. Glad you could be here for it, Huda.

Kay Farmer:

We're in it now. I just wanted to know a little bit more about what that's looked like on your own journey, from hearing these things as a kid, this isn't a path that you're being encouraged to go down as a writer and creator, to doing the thing, to living this life that you're like, "I'm so excited it's mine." How have you maintained your confidence and taken care of yourself through the challenges?

Huda Fahmy:

It's funny because even though it was my parents who kind of knocked me down from that, and were like, "Don't. Let's find something else for you to do," they really are the ones that fostered that confidence. My mother specifically was always like, "You need to be proud of who you are. We have nothing to be ashamed of. We have nothing to hide. Go out there and live your life and do what you need to do and there's nothing that should stop us from living the way we want to live."

And so she really was, when I see her interacting and I see her just living her life as an example for my own, she herself is full of confidence. And I don't know how much of that was, now that I'm a mother, I don't know how much of that was really just her really putting on this mask because she's like, "I have to be the best person in front of my kids so that they know," because that's what I have to do. I'm terrified of really, as chatty as I am, I'm really an introvert and I'm terrified of interacting with people.

And it's like I have to really put this mask on to make sure that my kids see me as this person who is confident. So I took that from my mom and I watched her, and she experienced a lot of people really going after her in public and she would just literally just smile and wave, smile and wave at these horrible things that people would shout at her. And at the time I just was like, "Let's just go. Let's go, Mom. Let's get out of here. We don't want..." And she'd be like, "No, I could stand right here in this line. Why should I move? Why should I leave?" And so I aspired to that, so something I really wanted to be like.

And I think I still struggle with it, and I think that's normal. Just, it's a journey. There's no closure like we have in the movies, or not closure specifically, but there's no like, "Oh, it's been resolved." It's something that we experience and go through and struggle with daily. And one of the ways that I do that is just through my mother's example and my sister's examples and then writing them all down and this is what I should have said if I had a little more confidence today. That's my elevator wit in the comics.

Kay Farmer:

Do you have any advice for folks who are really interested in doing what you do and maybe they haven't found their confidence yet?

Huda Fahmy:

Yeah, I always, and I think to listen, I always tell readers or future illustrators or whoever asks this question, the biggest thing that was in my way is perfection, thinking I had to be perfect. I'm very type A, I'm very much like I got to be perfect in everything that I do. And a lot of times that's what stops us from trying and moving forward is like, "Oh no, I can't make a mistake," or, "Oh no, I need the highest quality equipment to write or draw or do what I have to do." And once I took that kind of like, "Okay, let's just

start. Let me just start." And I started drawing us with stick figures. If you go all the way down to my Instagram, you'd find that the art is, in my opinion, it's my art, and from my level to where I am now, it was terrible. Stick figures. It was circles and lines.

I just didn't even know what on earth I was doing, I just knew that I had a story I wanted to tell and maybe it wasn't as tight and as clean as it could have been, I've learned so much as I've grown. But I just started, I didn't have the best. I didn't even have... I think I used an old-timey scanner. For the young folks listening, scanner is a machine, that I would draw on. A piece of paper, they were made from trees, I made my [inaudible 00:14:20]. And I was scanning it, uploading it through scanner, uploading it into my computer, from my computer emailing. I literally was like, this is the slowest process.

And then I eventually would just figure it out how to streamline and my husband was like, "If you're going to commit to this, show yourself that you can do this for a few days or a week or whatever and then let's invest." And so once we were like, "Okay, we're doing this," and I started watching YouTube tutorials on how to get better at drawing, how to use a certain software, how to use Procreate or iPad or my iPad for Procreate, or it was Adobe that I started with, and the Wacom tablet.

So don't let perfection or the idea of perfection get in the way. I guess in conclusion, that was the biggest obstacle for me to overcome, and that's the best advice I could give is don't worry about perfection. Start. And also, the biggest after perfection is that confidence to share your work with other people. Because you've got these kids who are blow my mind, amazing artists and amazing storytellers. And they'll show me their work and I'll be like, "Oh my God, [inaudible 00:15:25] this, this is amazing."

And you're never too young to also query an agent. That's another thing. You have your work, Google is there, look up how to query an agent. That's how I did it, and you just figure it out. And it's really just getting past the point of, "I have to be perfect," and then finding that confidence to be able to share your work with other people. I don't know if your mic is going to pick up, but my call to prayer just went off, so let me go close it really quick.

Craig Silva:

Sure.

Kay Farmer:

While you do that, I'll give you a tangent. I have an old watch somewhere in a box that I can't locate that has an alarm set on it that goes off at 12:05 every day and that's my life now.

Huda Fahmy:

I have a stopwatch that goes off at 11:10 and I cannot figure out how we even set an alarm on a stopwatch.

Craig Silva:

I have a Timex that beeps once an hour and I can't turn it off. I know where it is. I just cannot figure out how to turn it off. It literally goes, "Beep on the hour," every hour, 24 hours a day. I've just shoved it in a drawer and I can lightly hear it. I think we've figured out there's a hole in the market for easy-to-use watches.

Kay Farmer:

I'm glad I'm not alone.

Huda Fahmy:

No, you're not. You're good.

Craig Silva:

Okay.

Huda Fahmy:

Where were we?

Craig Silva:

You were giving a really inspirational speech and then I was about to say, "God, I feel so inspired right now."

Huda Fahmy:

Okay, let's take it from the top.

Craig Silva:

You just mentioned drawing a whole ton, which is great. My next question is about your graphic novels and I saw that they are now full cast audiobooks and I am curious, the books were so successful and there're such a visual medium, right? Being a graphic novel, there's illustrations on every single page. How did you envision translating that type of such visual work into the audio format?

Huda Fahmy:

Iris, who was the producer, and Maureen who was the director, I give them 100% the credit for that. I just was super excited to be involved. The fact that they even asked me, that's been another dream of mine. It's like, "Be a voice on The Simpsons." And I was like, "Oh, please God, let it still be on air when I get old enough or whatever." It's still on air, but I'm never going to be on there. I don't know. But it's like, who knows? Maybe I will. But it's been a dream of mine to voice a character. So for me, just voicing my own character in her little shoulder conscience is a dream. That was amazing. I could not wait to do that.

And when I listened to the full cast, and also the cast was amazing, when I listened to the full cast and the whole production, they perfectly captured. I didn't even know what I had in my head. I was just like, "Oh, I hope it's good," and it was beyond what I even imagined the sound effects that they had, the pacing the way that they had just told the story in a way. And they would go through, they gave me the script and it was overlaid on top of my graphic novel and they would be like, "Okay, this might too hard to translate into audio, so is it okay if we cut this scene out? We just don't know how we would do it." And we would kind of talk it out and figure out ways to incorporate a joke if I really wanted it in there that they might have cut and we would just go back and forth. And we did that. And again, they did an amazing job editing and it was such a team effort.

I didn't know what to expect coming out except that I had also heard Pedro Martin's Mexikid, which they had also produced, which I was like, "Oh, this is so good. If mine is even a of how good this is, I'll be excited." And it blew me away, so good. I don't know if that answers the question, but that was kind of like [inaudible 00:19:05]-

Craig Silva:

It more than answers the question. I've never seen someone so excited to talk about an audiobook.

Huda Fahmy:

I love audiobooks.

Craig Silva:

It was blowing off of you how stoked you are.

Huda Fahmy:

I love audiobooks so much and I love that they were able to do this for graphic novels.

Craig Silva:

You kind of touched on it, but my follow-up was going to be like, what was it like to narrate yourself? I know it's like a fictional memoir, but it's you. So what was that like to narrate a younger you as your age now?

Huda Fahmy:

I grew up, I learned English from reading comics like Garfield, and the Far Side, and Calvin and Hobbes, and Bones, all that. And I grew up watching cartoons. That's how I learned to speak. And so in my heart, I feel like I have such a soft spot for animation and voice actors and just being able to display emotion through just voice alone. And som when I got to voice and narrate my character, I felt like, "This is the chance that I get to give back to this medium that gave me so much." And it was just such a fun experience to sit in a studio. Again, what is my life? It was so fun. It was so fun [inaudible 00:20:13]-

Craig Silva:

Next, stop The Simpsons.

Huda Fahmy:

I know, right? If you're listening, Matt Groening.

Craig Silva:

Sorry, Kay, one last thing before we move on to your last question, but we do this lightning round at the end of each episode where we ask sillier questions, and one of the ones I wrote but then got rid of was: I read somewhere that you learned English from Sunday comics and I was going to ask what your favorite comic was of all time, but I scrapped it. But given that you brought it up, now I'm curious.

Huda Fahmy:

Oh, it's Calvin and Hobbes, 100%. I own it in multiple, multiple volumes. I used to write, I majored in English and I would write essays on Calvin and Hobbes, on Bill Watterson, and just analyzing how he does what he does, and his life and the fact that he decided to step away from it all and how I thought that was perfect. And as much as I wish I could have seen a cartoon, I totally understand why he didn't want that. And I'm like, I don't know, he's done so much and I don't know if he knows it even. But he's done so much for so many illustrators and web comic artists who would also probably say, I've talked to so many and a lot of ours is Bill Watterson. Close second is Gary Larson from the Far Side. Just I feel like his sense of humor. The ability to capture a joke in one panel is genius. He's so smart. He's so good.

Kay Farmer:

Well, speaking of things that you love, we have a selfish question and we were wondering if you've read and enjoyed anything recent, or if you have a favorite book to recommend that you could share with us and our listeners.

Huda Fahmy:

Okay. A book that I read last year or the year when it came out is called As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow. And it is, I know my stuff is happy, it is a very sad story. It is a very trigger warning, there's a lot of ... It's a big triggering book. But that's one of my top. It's held that number one title for me for the last couple years that it's been just so emotional and good. But it is a war story, so it's a trigger if anybody ... I don't know, I'm trying to think. Literally all I can think about the books that I'm reading and that I've read already and I can't even pan to the giant pile next to me that I'm looking at.

Craig Silva:

You should just recommend your upcoming one. You might want to mention it.

Huda Fahmy:

My upcoming book is Who F Wants to Know? My upcoming book, Who the F Wants to Know. Sorry. Top recommendation, everyone. Thank you.

So have you guys read Who F Wants to Know? Of course you haven't. It comes out April 1st, April Fool's Day. I don't know why they did that, but yeah, it comes out April Fool's, April 1st and it's really great and I'm excited for everyone to read it. And it is not a spoiler because it's in the summary of what the book is about, but it is a divorce story. So yes, Huda loves her family and then her family gets broken. It's still funny, though.

Craig Silva:

Sounds hilarious.

Kay Farmer:

I hate fast forwarding so far in the future, but I'm like, I can't wait for April, though. That's awesome.

Well, before we let you go, as Craig mentioned, we love to do a slightly ridiculous lightning round with people that we interview. And so we have two sillier questions for you. And the first one I wanted to ask you, so I live in Ipsilani, Michigan, and I saw that you are from Dearborn, Michigan, originally.

Huda Fahmy:

Yes!

Kay Farmer:

So right around the corner, as far as Michigan Goes.

Huda Fahmy:

Yes. I taught in Ann Arbor. That's where I taught my first teaching gig. Yes, very cool.

Kay Farmer:

We're from the same place. I wondered if you have a favorite Michigan memory or a Michigan hidden gem that you love the most?

Huda Fahmy:

There is a place where you can go kayaking and it's relatively affordable, it's like \$10 for an hour. Gallup Park. Do you know where Gallup Park is? It's like kind of-

Kay Farmer:

No.

Huda Fahmy:

It's in Ann Arbor. We used to go to Ann Arbor, it's right next to you.

Kay Farmer:

Oh my gosh. Okay. I'm so excited. I'm writing this down.

Huda Fahmy:

You can rent a canoe or you can rent a kayak or you can rent a tube and just yeah, go down this, go down the river. What's that river down there? That ... Gallup River? Or go to Gallup River. And it's so much fun, we'll be in our kayaks and we'll start humming the Lord of the Rings. You know what I'm talking? No? Have I nerded myself out?

Kay Farmer:

No, I'm with you. I'm with you, totally. Come on, you need to watch it.

Craig Silva:

I've seen that once. I know that you're a big fan of it. I've seen this around the internet, but I was hoping it wouldn't come up

Huda Fahmy:

Oh, God.

Craig Silva:

No, keep going.

Huda Fahmy:

And you're kayaking as you're going on this river and you're like by yourself and then you have your own soundtrack and it's Lord of the Rings and you pretend you're with Gandalf. [inaudible 00:25:11]-

Kay Farmer:

The adventure can begin at any moment.

Huda Fahmy:

"[inaudible 00:25:17], Frodo." You're just like ...

Kay Farmer:

When I'm not at work next week it's because I'm tubing down the Gallup River, so I'm just-

Craig Silva:

With Gandalf.

Huda Fahmy:

[inaudible 00:25:25].

Kay Farmer:

With Gandalf.

Craig Silva:

Yes.

Huda Fahmy:

No, it's fun. So that's probably, I don't know if it's hidden, but we would go there a lot and it was [inaudible 00:25:34]-

Craig Silva:

It seems pretty hidden. Kay, never even heard of it.

Kay Farmer:

Yeah, I didn't know.

Craig Silva:

That's a hidden gem if I ever heard one.

Kay Farmer:

I'm not very knowledgeable, but I can't wait.

Huda Fahmy:

Especially in the fall when the trees are changing color. It's one of my favorite things to do.

Craig Silva:

Just saying for us, so the next lightning round question is perfect. I love that in your book you said that your parents basically birthed a girl band, and I was curious if you and your sisters actually had a band, what genre would it be and what instrument would you play?

Huda Fahmy:

Oh my God, we don't actually listen to music. That's part of our ... If you read in the second, Who the F Cares? We don't actually listen to music. I think all we know are Disney pop songs, so that's probably what our band would be is just playing Disney covers or singing a cappella.

Craig Silva:

Perfect. I've heard your a cappella skills, they're pretty standout.

Huda Fahmy:

Oh, yeah. Like that one little clip.

Craig Silva:

So this band is hitting the charts.

Kay Farmer:

I'm going to throw in a last lightning round question. Will you be our friend? You're so amazing.

Huda Fahmy:

Oh man, I'd love to.

Kay Farmer:

This has been so fun.

Huda Fahmy:

I think I've embarrassed myself enough that, yeah, I think we solidified Team Craig, Kay, and Huda. Woo!

Craig Silva:

What would you have done if she said no?

Kay Farmer:

I would have cried.

Huda Fahmy:

Dragged me into a corner.

Kay Farmer:

I would've cried and laughed.

Craig Silva:

Yes, this call is over. Well, on that note, now that we're all friends, it's time to say goodbye. Thank you so much for your time.

Kay Farmer:

Thank you.

Craig Silva:

And as you can see, like we said, this 15 minute interview is going on 36 minutes, so we've stuck to the script of Kay and Craig interviews. Thank you so much for your time.

Huda Fahmy:

This was so fun. Thank you so much for having me.

Kay Farmer:

Oh my gosh. We will be cheering you on and we'll reach out to you in April too on April Fool's day to congratulate you [inaudible 00:27:16].

Huda Fahmy:

Thanks. Thank you.

Kay Farmer:

All right, so that concludes our awesome interview with Huda. But as we mentioned, we've got a second delight in store for you today. Next up we're going to roll our interview with Anna Hersh from the Wild Rumpus Bookstore in Minneapolis.

Hello, everyone. Today we are here with Anna Hersh, who according to their bio is the bookstore owner and the animal coordinator at Wild Rumpus Bookstore in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Thanks so much for joining us today, Anna.

Anna Hersh:

Thank you. I'm excited.

Kay Farmer:

For our listeners, we would love if you could share a little bit more about who you are and all of the things that you're up to in the world of books.

Anna Hersh:

Yeah. I am one of the new co-owners of Wild Rumpus, which is a primarily children's bookstore in Minneapolis. We do carry books for adults as well. We call it our tall section. But mostly books for YAS readers and younger. And our bookstore is unique because we have a whole bunch of animals in the store, so that is really special for kids, and we're a destination because everybody wants to come see the animals but also pick out some books as well.

Kay Farmer:

I love that. Okay, so for our listeners, before we started recording, Anna told us what the animals are. Do you mind sharing the list again?

Anna Hersh:

Yeah, we have two cats, two chinchillas, a cockatiel, a dove, a crested gecko, and about eight fish in our bathroom.

Kay Farmer:

That's so amazing. And is that related to the name of the bookstore? Like I'm thinking of a wild rumpus of animals?

Anna Hersh:

Yeah, so the bookstore name comes from Where the Wild Things Are when they say, "Let the wild rumpus begin." And then the theme of the bookstore was created from the book The Salamander Room, where a boy finds a little salamander and brings it inside and slowly through the book his room becomes more outdoors. So, when you first come in our front door, it's white walls and bookshelves. But as you go towards the back, our ceiling actually cracks open and there's an upside down canoe shell and birds across the ceiling and more plants as you go backwards. And that's where a bunch of our animals are too, so it's a very special place.

Kay Farmer:

That sounds magical. I am coming to Minneapolis as soon as possible.

Anna Hersh:

Yeah, come visit.

Kay Farmer:

So my first big question for you, we are obviously here at the beginning of September as we're talking, which means it is back to school time. And given that you are primarily a children's bookstore, I was curious how things change at the bookstore during this season and how you all prepare, get through it, what does that look like?

Anna Hersh:

So, we have had a back to school book display up for probably about a month-and-a-half, a month because people start asking about that, especially as younger kids are going to their first year of school or that sort of thing. So that has been up forever. And all sorts of titles about your first time at kindergarten, or what it's like being away from home.

Once kids do go back to school, we see a little bit of a nice kind of quiet lull in the store. Summer is very busy for us. Like I said, we're kind of a destination so we do get a lot of people from out of town, a lot of people who are just in visiting their family who lives locally, and everybody wants to bring out of town friends here. So it's been pretty busy, and now kids are officially back to school and it is just a little bit of a moment to catch our breath before holiday season starts.

Craig Silva:

I actually had a question about back to school and I feel like a lot of books that get assigned have been the same books for a long time. I have a school-aged child and they get assigned books that I got assigned in high school, books like *To Kill a Mockingbird*, or *Of Mice and Men*. With so much more diversity in publishing now, what changes have you noticed in reading lists or what books people are asking for in terms of school reading?

Anna Hersh:

So, definitely still a lot of those are happening, and especially a lot of ...

Anna Hersh:

I would say a lot of grandparents still want to come in and be like, "Oh, I want to buy them," I don't know, "Where the Red Fern Grows because it's a classic." And I'm like, "Oh, okay. Well, if you want to traumatize your child forever, go right ahead."

But I think we're really fortunate here in Minneapolis and St. Paul, where the teachers do really like to focus on trying some different things and different books and authors. And we have so many local authors here that they really like doing a lot of local authors.

There's also the, I think it's the Maud Hart Lovelace Book Awards, that's kind of a more localized thing. And as soon as that list is out, we sell tons and tons of those. And it's mostly middle school books, kind of eight to 12-ish years old, and teachers always want to stock the winners of those.

So I don't know if it's so much assigned reading in the class, but it is still... They really want to get their libraries filled with some award winners that are maybe not award winners from 50 years ago.

Kay Farmer:

So in talking about the curriculum and the teachers, I was curious, do they work with you all? Does your staff help with any of that curation? I mean, you all are the best resource. I can imagine for... what's out there and popular, and so I'm just curious what that relationship looks like.

Anna Hersh:

We do work with a lot of teachers and a lot of school media specialists. It's really great when they want to order through us because obviously supporting us is awesome, and we'll always take that.

And a lot of times they come with their own lists. They've already done some research and then they'll give us the list and then we say, "Yes, we can get this." "No, we can't get that."

We do have a discount for educators all the time, whether it's for their school or themselves or a gift. So it's kind of nice for the school to be able to work through us and get that discount.

But I would say a lot of teachers really, or at least the media specialists, really have an idea of what they're looking for. And it's more on us to fill that.

So every now and then we might get questions. We do have some teachers who have a budget and they come into the store and are like, "Okay, what are some really great new picture books?"

And we'll pull a pile and they'll look at them and decide what they want to buy. But for pretty big library orders, they have a game plan and we just... excuse me, just go from there.

Kay Farmer:

Awesome. And I was wondering, so you mentioned the Lovelace awards, I think that's what you said they were.

Anna Hersh:

Yeah, the Maud Hart Lovelace awards. Oh, gosh, and I cannot... And I want to say they happen in the spring. Honestly, time is so confusing and until those orders start coming in, I don't know when it's happening, but it's something that I think the kids and teachers kind of vote on as well.

But the kids come in with the whole list and they want to get every single book on that list. And sometimes it's a book that we hadn't even stocked, we didn't even think was going to be anything crazy. And then it'll win an award and suddenly we're like, "Oh man, we missed the boat on that one."

But it's usually things that we did grab. Our frontlist buyer, which is things that are not published yet, does a really good job of curating books for the store.

So a lot of times we have those, but then as soon as the winners are announced for the Maud Hart Lovelace or also even just the normal ALA awards like Newbery and Caldecott, I mean, you never have stocked enough of those ahead of time because you don't know what those are. And then they're announced and suddenly everybody's trying to get them. So it's always a little bit of a chaotic time when book awards are released.

But I don't know, it's cool because that one is the... Maud Hart Lovelace is a little more localized. And like I said, they do a really good job of having some authors that you might not have really heard of.

It's not always just the same famous authors who are churning out books all the time. So that one's really kind of cool once we see that come in and who the winners are and who the nominees are and all that.

Kay Farmer:

I love that. Oh my gosh, if I was a little kid, I would be the one coming in with the list like, "These, please."

Anna Hersh:

Yeah, yeah. Yeah, I mean, it's almost like any of these book awards, especially the ALA ones with Newbery and Caldecott, and the... Oh, I think the Printz Award is on there.

It's almost like book Oscars. Everybody's very excited about like, "Oh, what did you think was going to be the Newbery this year? And what did you think of the honorees?" So it's a little chaotic when it's happening, but it is fun to see what won.

Craig Silva:

And instead of a little statuette, you get a little gold sticker that helps you sell books.

Anna Hersh:

Exactly. A little gold sticker.

Craig Silva:

Yeah.

Anna Hersh:

Once the awards have been given, we usually print off something to stick inside the book, and we'll do a table display of those books so that people coming in can see what's been out there and what won and that sort of thing.

Kay Farmer:

Oh, that's so cool. That answered my... I was going to ask you a follow-up question about resources for people who are looking to expand their libraries and their knowledge of what's out there. So those are amazing recommendations.

Anna Hersh:

Yeah, yeah. I mean, any of the award winners are always really good. I mean, honestly, going to a local indie bookstore and asking people... That's the whole point of indie bookstores, is that we're here to... "We're here, we're reading, we're on the ground, we're in the community, we're listening to what you liked and actually giving you a normal response instead of a weird algorithm."

So yeah, if anybody wants to expand, go find your local Indian. Say, "Hey, help me pick out some cool new books for my 10-year-old." And they'll probably be like, "Oh yes, this is the best question I've gotten all day."

Craig Silva:

"That's part of my job."

Anna Hersh:

Yeah. Yeah, we love giving recommendations. That's a lot of fun.

Craig Silva:

That's awesome. I had a quick follow-up kind of logistical question just because I'm curious. You mentioned like, "Oh no, we missed the boat on that one," once something gets announced and you didn't order enough.

Anna Hersh:

Yeah.

Craig Silva:

Is there a mad dash and you just can't get the books in because they only printed X amount? And... Yeah.

Anna Hersh:

Fully, completely, yes. Especially, the Newbery and Caldecott, they are... I mean, honestly... So the award ceremony happens pretty early in the morning, and I usually watch part of it and I'm jotting-

Craig Silva:

You're sitting on your computer.

Anna Hersh:

... down titles and authors and then I can't order until I get into the store to order. So it is a very like, "Oh no, the warehouse only has this many, and the publisher only has this many."

And yeah, every bookstore and every librarian is trying to get those all of a sudden. Sometimes by the time you get your order in, they are already back ordered and you just have to wait until they can arrive.

Craig Silva:

And deal with everyone coming in, being like, "Do you have X book?" And you're like, "No."

Anna Hersh:

Yes! Yeah. Oh, so often. So I mean, it's kind of the same thing for the consumer too. They will call and I'm like, "I'm sorry, it's already reprinting. We can't get more, we've already sold out of ours."

Craig Silva:

"Did you know that you could listen to the audiobook right now though?"

Anna Hersh:

Yeah, right. And honestly, we have said that about things. Things that are reprinting and are going to be hard for us to get for a while, we very much say, "Hey, you know what you could get immediately? The audiobook."

Kay Farmer:

Yep.

Anna Hersh:

So yes, we've definitely given that recommendation.

Craig Silva:

So talking about the store a little bit more outside of the logistical stocking issues, you guys do a ton of story time, story hours and all of that. I saw all sorts of really creative ones too.

I was looking at, I think your Instagram or something, and there's pajama story time and creative story time. So one, tell us about your story times and then two, I'm really curious how you go about selecting the books for your story time.

Anna Hersh:

Well, we have a really great events' lead who is just the perfect person for that job: is outgoing, is really organized, is really good at making the authors that we have come in feel special and loved.

So we do have story times that are author release ones. A lot of times it'll be a picture book or something, and those are just... We work with the author's publicist and that sort of thing. But our personal non-author events, every Tuesday at 10:30, we have a story time.

We say it's geared towards five and younger, but anyone who wants to be read to can come and they'll read a couple stories and they'll sing some songs. And it is hugely popular. If you want to be close where you can see, you should get here before 10:30. And we also don't have a very big space for that. Our store is really small, so-

Craig Silva:

It's too full of animals.

Anna Hersh:

Yeah. It can get a little crazy. But our events person and another one of our staff, they are the ones who lead the weekly story time and they just pick what they want to pick--things that would be fun to read aloud to kids, a lot of times things that they can do fun voices with.

And then for the pajama story time, that's something we had been doing sporadically before Covid, and so we decided to bring it back. And we've done it twice now. It's been really popular and it's like a slightly more mellow story time. Maybe our songs aren't going to be as crazy.

And that's been really fun because the staff who leads story time also dresses up in pajamas. And I have these weird house shoes under my desk in the basement that are unicorns, so she'll wear my unicorn house shoes.

The creative story time, we just did one just to see how it would go, and it was wildly successful. It was kind of the brainchild of our normal events lead. And another one of our staff who is immensely creative, and they had worked at kind of a day camp doing crafts. So they were like, "What would it look like to do this?" So we were like, "Let's give it a shot."

And we bought some supplies and a red twinkle, which is about a little fairy, and then made fairy wands and it was free for people to come in. There were a lot of parents making wands as well, not just little kids. I'm pretty sure all the staff working also made wands.

I specifically went up on the floor to also make a wand, even though I wasn't working on the floor that day, because it was just fun and a way to get people in the store. And the kids were very focused. I've never seen such focus involving sequins and glue and ribbons. They were really-

Craig Silva:

Wand making is serious business.

Anna Hersh:

Oh, yeah. Yeah, it was really serious, and they were super excited. So we're hoping to do stuff like that in the future. We just have to think about what days to do it.

It is a lot of setup and a lot of sequins. So doing it on a day where we are super busy with foot traffic, doesn't really work to set up tables and that sort of thing, but we definitely want to do more of that in the future.

Kay Farmer:

Your store sounds so special. I want to experience all of these things. When you said it's really for anyone who wants to be read to, I'm like, "Can I come by?"

Anna Hersh:

Oh, yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's-

Craig Silva:

Can we make a wand and hold a cat, please?

Anna Hersh:

Yes, though I wish it was closer to me or I would show you my wand right now because I'm very, very proud of it. I went with a single color scheme and I think it turned out really well.

So yeah, I don't know, all of our staff we're really just kind of kids at heart and obviously we are running a business and we have to think about that sort of stuff. But who doesn't want to talk about really fun books or make a fairy wand or have a fun little dance party? These are... I don't know.

Honestly, it's just I'm surprised that this is my job all the time. Is this really how it is? And yeah, it's not all sunshine and roses, but it's a very special place and I think it's a really unique store and that's why it's been around for so long, and then that's why it's been so successful.

Craig Silva:

Oh, that's amazing. I'm grabbing my unicorn slippers and heading there soon.

Anna Hersh:

Yeah. Okay.

Craig Silva:

Get the sequins ready.

Anna Hersh:

Yes. Everyone made fun of me for my unicorn slippers, but now they use them for the-

Craig Silva:

The communal slippers.

Anna Hersh:

I'm like, "Okay, well, there's a reason I have things like this. They're important."

Kay Farmer:

Well, we have one last serious question for you before some sillier questions. I was wondering if you had any books, can be any age range, but anything that's top of mind for you right now that you want to recommend to us or our listeners or anyone out there?

Anna Hersh:

Yeah. Actually, one of the first things that came to mind I listened to as an audiobook and it was fabulous, so I'm going to go with that. We are so fortunate to have a local author who just loves the store.

She lives close to the store, she loves the store, she brings her family to the store. Her name is Anne Ursu, and she is a dear friend of ours and also one of our cats is obsessed with her. So a dear friend of our cat, Eartha Kitt as well.

Her most recent book is called Not Quite a Ghost, and it's sort of a middle school take on The Yellow Wallpaper, the classic that was kind of spooky. So it is a little bit spooky. It's a little bit about undiagnosed medical issues that people are having to live with and are being brushed off.

And the audiobook narration was terrifying. I mean, obviously for middle schoolers, but as someone who really loves reading horror, I was very impressed and certainly...

I told the staff, "Don't just recommend this to any old middle schooler who wants something kind of spooky." It is a little spooky. And she's done a whole bunch of other books and they're all set in Minnesota, which is very cool.

And she's always so happy to come in and sign things and is just so humble and sweet and wonderful. So I will always recommend her books, but especially the audiobook of Not Quite a Ghost was really good.

... especially the audiobook of Not Quite a Ghost was really good.

Craig Silva:

The cover is scary too, honestly, though.

Anna Hersh:

Oh, yeah.

Craig Silva:

I'm looking at it right now.

Anna Hersh:

Yeah, it's a great cover.

Craig Silva:

This shadow on the wallpaper. I'm like, "Uh."

Anna Hersh:

Oh, yeah, it is a fantastic cover. And we actually did an event with her and another local author who... Oh my God, I'm so bad at names and things right now. Jacqueline West. There we go. She lives about an hour, hour and a half from here. She came in and they were in conversation about the book when it was released and it was a very cool event. And yeah, I did, I asked her, I was like, "When are you going to write horror for adults? When is that going to... Can you make that jump? Because you are really good at this."

Kay Farmer:

Yep. Yep.

Anna Hersh:

Yeah, that's a huge recommendation.

Craig Silva:

Well, thank you for the recommendations. We end every episode with a lightning round where we ask some sillier questions.

Anna Hersh:

Oh no.

Craig Silva:

No, it's not an, "Oh no." They're easy, I assure you.

Anna Hersh:

Okay. I'm not doing great with memory recall today, so-

Craig Silva:

They're all name questions actually.

Kay Farmer:

Oh, no. These are please be careful. They all involve proper nouns at the end. No. All right. This is what I've been dying to ask somebody. What's something that you've changed your mind about recently?

Anna Hersh:

Oh.

Craig Silva:

That was my reaction too, Anna. I saw that she wrote this I was like, I thought these were supposed to be silly. That's a big question.

Anna Hersh:

Yeah. How is that a silly question.

Kay Farmer:

No, it can be a silly thing. I thought I hated the flavor of cherry until recently and now I'm like, you know what? It's all right.

Anna Hersh:

Actually. Okay. It's really funny that you say that. For a very long time I have not liked grapes. I didn't like them. I want to because they seem like a perfect snacking food and they look delicious. And I like grape flavored things, but I didn't like grapes. And very recently I've decided that I love grapes.

Kay Farmer:

That's awesome.

Anna Hersh:

I'm glad that you mentioned the cherry because I was like, oh my gosh, what deep-rooted emotional thing [inaudible 00:50:03] say on this podcast? But yeah, now I like grapes and I brought grapes to work the other day. I'm sharing them with my co-workers.

Craig Silva:

Nice.

Anna Hersh:

Suddenly I like them. I don't know what happened.

Craig Silva:

I had a horrible grape experience once where I thought I bought grapes, but I bought cotton candy grapes, which I don't know why those exist.

Anna Hersh:

No, those are bad. I tried those when I was in my era of trying to learn to like grapes. No, those are gross.

Craig Silva:

Most disgusting thing I've ever.

Anna Hersh:

I just want them to be cotton candy. Cotton candy isn't supposed to be wet.

Craig Silva:

Kay, I can tell from your face that you've never heard of cotton candy grapes.

Anna Hersh:

No. Don't. They're gross.

Craig Silva:

They are exactly what they sound like. They look like a grape. They taste like cotton candy and they're disgusting.

Kay Farmer:

Weird.

Anna Hersh:

They mess with your head in a really terrible way because I love cotton candy, but I want it to be cotton candy. I don't want it to be a juicy grape.

Craig Silva:

Squishy candy.

Anna Hersh:

Yeah. I thought I would like it, but good. I don't like it at all.

Kay Farmer:

I'm so glad you warned me. I didn't know this was a thing.

Anna Hersh:

Yeah. I mean, I guess try it your own risk.

Craig Silva:

This episode brought to you by cotton candy grapes.

Anna Hersh:

Yeah. Sorry, cotton candy grapes, but not a fan.

Craig Silva:

Our next question is, I hear that one of your shop cats like stroller time and I want to know what stroller time is.

Anna Hersh:

Oh, well they both do actually. So we have two cats right now. Booker T. Just turned 12 in August. Booker T. Jones. And our other cat, Eartha Kitt, turned five in March I think. And they are both huge fans of the little baskets under strollers. So if someone brings a stroller in the store, which is often, and they leave said stroller unattended, sometimes the cats will go in the strollers. Which is fine. Most people think it's charming and wonderful. But we have actually had the cats exit the store in strollers before.

Craig Silva:

That was going to be my next question.

Anna Hersh:

Yeah, both of them have left. This was before I was here. Well one of them I was here. I heard that Booker left in a stroller and the family was fortunately just wandering around the neighborhood. We have a really fun shoppable neighborhood and apparently 20 minutes later they came back and they said, "I think we have your cat in the stroller."

Craig Silva:

Oh my god.

Anna Hersh:

So that was kind of interesting. And then Eartha when he was younger, also left in a stroller but did not stay in the stroller. So we got a call from another shop down the street that was like, "I think we have your cat."

Craig Silva:

Oh my god. This sounds like a children's book by the way.

Anna Hersh:

Oh yeah, it pretty much is.

Craig Silva:

Cat leaves, it makes escape in the stroller and goes on an adventure.

Anna Hersh:

I'm going to write that. That's going to be great.

Craig Silva:

You should write it.

Kay Farmer:

You should. That is my favorite fun fact ever. So before we started recording, my final question for you. We talked about how you used to work with exotic animals and I saw in your bio that you have, and I quote, cared for everything from chimpanzees to anteaters. This is amazing to me. I would love to know what your favorite, question mark, or most interesting animal to care for was.

Anna Hersh:

I didn't even think you guys would have bio and social media. This is very impressive.

Craig Silva:

We have a whole dossier on you actually.

Anna Hersh:

I mean you might have to send that over to me and I can just use it as my resume way on down the road. Probably my most favorite to work with was orangutans. I absolutely adore them. They are very, very smart. Very big. They don't look as big when you visit a zoo and they're kind of way over there. They are huge. But just so full of personality and so brilliant and interactive. And obviously just with any exotic animal, they are exotics, they're not pets, please nobody go try to get a pet primate. But yeah, when I was a kid I always kind of wanted to work with the animals and kind of thought I would be a vet and then realized that I don't like needles. So that didn't work.

And then found out, yeah, zoos and sanctuaries need people to just be there and clean and take care of the animals. So I have worked at a couple sanctuaries mostly with primates and then I did some internships with large cats and bears and the anteaters was an internship that was, they're very strange animals. So that was really interesting. Not very exciting, just interesting.

But yeah, orangutans are probably my favorites. And I worked very closely with chimps for a while and same thing, all primates are just brilliant. They're so shockingly intelligent. So you can probably believe that I stock a lot of books about primates and Jane Goodall and that kind of stuff because I love talking about it. Yeah, I would say all the primates in general were very, very interesting to work with. But the orangutans, I really like them a lot. They're really fun. And chimps are very dramatic and emotional and orangutans are a little more mellow. So I think that's why I like them better.

Craig Silva:

Sounds like a perfect bookstore shop pet.

Anna Hersh:

No. Oh my god, I can't even imagine. No, absolutely not. We have enough cleaning to do. No exotic animals as pets, it is too much. I never would've thought that this would come up on this podcast about book stuff that I'd be talking my primate stuff.

Kay Farmer:

Surprise.

Anna Hersh:

But I didn't know we were going to have a fun question round, so this is great.

Kay Farmer:

You're so cool, Anna. Thank you for sharing that. That's awesome.

Anna Hersh:

I also am going to put that on my resume later that everyone said I was so cool.

Kay Farmer:

Definitely. Please do. You can quote me.

Anna Hersh:

Okay, wonderful.

Craig Silva:

Well thank you so much for your time. It sounds like you have so much going on at the store, so glad you could find some time to sit with us today.

Anna Hersh:

Oh, happy to do it. This was super fun and not nearly as scary as I thought it was going to be.

Kay Farmer:

Good.

Craig Silva:

Well thank you for listening to both those interviews. We hope you enjoyed them. As we end every episode, Karen, what are you listening to?

Kay Farmer:

Oh my gosh. I have just completed two excellent books that I would like to tell you about.

Craig Silva:

Go on.

Kay Farmer:

Okay, so the first one that I read, I think I've mentioned to you in passing, this is a Blake Crouch book that from what I've seen, I think this actually came out a while ago, but is being re-released shortly. It is called Run. And boy did it give me some nightmares. The premise of this book is that suddenly in the United States, a large percentage of the population just becomes murderous and starts going after-

Craig Silva:

Oh, no.

Kay Farmer:

... the others essentially, and no one really knows why. But we're in a very apocalyptic sort of survival situation. The story focuses on one family, a husband and wife and their two kids that are trying to get to safety of any sort and all of the things that happen to them along the way. It is very fast-paced. Trigger warnings. It is violent. It is very scary. But very page and so the reviews are interesting. Some people, not their cup of tea. Other people love this book. I think it's a little polarizing.

Craig Silva:

Where do you fall on that spectrum? I assume since you're recommending it, you liked it but.

Kay Farmer:

I really enjoyed it until flash forward a week later and I had the most horrible nightmare I've ever had in my life. But I mean that's a sign of an impactful read I suppose.

Craig Silva:

Yes.

Kay Farmer:

So the other one I wanted to mention, so I randomly came across this one at the library. This is a mystery series called the Detective Colleen Hayes Series by Max Tomlinson and something I love, they are set in San Francisco in the '70s. So the first one is called Vanishing in the Hate, and it's about a kind of independent private investigator, named Colleen Hayes, who is brought into a cold case to try to solve it. And I super enjoyed it. I have already-

Craig Silva:

Any nightmares?

Kay Farmer:

None so far. Not a one.

Craig Silva:

So far.

Kay Farmer:

Give it a week and I'll let you know. But I've already requested the second one from the library. I think there are five or six in the series. And so I'm just going down the detective alley now. I'm really enjoying it.

Craig Silva:

Nice.

Kay Farmer:

Yeah.

Craig Silva:

I want to read both those books, especially the first one.

Kay Farmer:

Let me know how it goes for you.

Craig Silva:

It's spooky season. I need a little nightmare action.

Kay Farmer:

That'll definitely do it.

Craig Silva:

Perfect. Perfect.

Kay Farmer:

What have you been reading and enjoying?

Craig Silva:

Oh, this is where I become the biggest nerd on the podcast.

Kay Farmer:

Oh, excellent.

Craig Silva:

Which is saying a lot. So about maybe a little bit more than a month ago, I was on the TikTok and had a random chess TikTok come up in my feed. I'm not never played chess, not into chess, I don't know anything about chess. For whatever reason it popped into my feed and now I am obsessed with chess. I don't know what happened. I bought a set. I play online. I've watched documentaries and now I am reading a book.

Kay Farmer:

I am so here for this. Tell us everything.

Craig Silva:

So I am far down the chess rabbit hole. I am reading Endgame by Frank Brady, which is the Bobby Fischer's Remarkable Rise and Fall from America's Brightest Prodigy to the Edge of Madness. And it's exactly that. It starts when he is young and how he grew up and how he got into chess and how he became basically a massive prodigy, which at the time in America was like not really a thing. America was not like a chess powerhouse at the time. So for Bobby Fischer to come out and just destroy was a very big deal. And then it goes into how he gets older and he goes into paranoia and mental illness struggles. There's a lot of political stuff going on in terms of the Soviet Union and America, people were seeing this as the US versus the Soviet Union in these chess games. As someone very into politics who's recently into chess, this is a very, very interesting read.

Kay Farmer:

That sounds fantastic. Are you going to watch the Queen's Gambit on Netflix?

Craig Silva:

Already seen it.

Kay Farmer:

Okay, great.

Craig Silva:

Before my chess fascination. Just fascinated with that show was amazing. It was so good. But yes, I recommend the Magnus Carlsen documentary too. There's a-

Kay Farmer:

I've seen that.

Craig Silva:

You saw that?

Kay Farmer:

Yeah.

Craig Silva:

That's interesting. I didn't know you were into chess. Tell me everything.

Kay Farmer:

I feel like I'm about to be now.

Craig Silva:

Yeah. That guy is so interesting.

Kay Farmer:

I know, that documentary was fantastic.

Craig Silva:

Very good.

Kay Farmer:

Well folks, if anyone wants to take-

Craig Silva:

If anyone wants to play chess with us.

Kay Farmer:

If anyone wants to take Craig on in chess, please reach out to podcast@Libro.fm and he'll be delighted to play with you.

Craig Silva:

Find me on Chess.com.

Kay Farmer:

All right, so lots of recommendations to check out between the folks we talk to today and the random things Craig and I are reading. If you have time and you would like to rate and review or subscribe to the podcast, we would really appreciate it. And just a reminder, if you haven't signed up for Libra FM membership yet, you can use the promo code switch and you will get three audiobooks for your first month instead of just one.

Craig Silva:

And as always, thank you for listening.