

00:00.10

dina

Hello and welcome to can't let it is a podcast so I hope you are listening to it now I Hope you're listening to it and not trying to consume it in some other way. Don't eat it.

00:16.13

Tania

Ah.

00:16.54

Jen

Or do if you want.

00:19.12

dina

I Don't know I can't yeah I Absolutely cannot be telling people what to do listen I'm on my second artisanal root bear of the day. It's just fancier more expensive. It's got like.

00:20.29

Tania

And.

00:27.27

Jen

Who what makes it artisanal.

00:29.38

Tania

Delicious. Ah.

00:38.67

dina

You could root extract in it. Yeah for sure. Yeah.

00:41.88

Jen

It's made by umbaoppa.

00:42.50

Tania

Do we know is ah.

00:46.99

Jen

I just saw wonka so like Hugh Grant as a umalumpa is very like in here. Yeah, he does fart though. He farts like.

00:52.30

dina

Oh that's you're going to dream about that.

00:54.15

Tania

Oh do dear.

01:02.48

Jen

Like turns around and shows people his tiny butt and farts. It's quite charming. Ah.

01:04.18

dina

That is very unexpected all right? well.

01:10.88

Tania

I know it's four o'clock but I feel like even now is too early in the day for that? yeah.

01:17.60

dina

Yeah, ok.

01:23.92

Tania

Ah, Hugh Grant Faring as an umfoum for but awesome, but.

01:26.11

dina

Listen and that's the kind of podcast this is and that's why it's such a great podcast about Canadian literature and culture.

01:37.65

Tania

But yeah.

01:43.43

dina

I You know what though I went in the fridge and I was like oh I kind of wish I was just having like a regular beer and then I was like no, you can have one later. It's just so sunny and I bought

these um apricot beers I was like oh did they're so. Like fruity and this is gonna be like such a nice treaty but I was like no just get hopped up on sugar. Yeah yeah, but I am going to drink one of those apopers and it's going to be so fruity and nice and it's only.

02:06.51

Tania  
Fair.

02:15.21

Jen  
It's gonna be beautiful.

02:16.63

dina  
3% so I'm just ki it's like barely gonna do anything's nothing. It's just going to be like a little flavor sensations. Yeah.

02:21.00

Jen  
It's just gonna taste nice. It's just gonna taste nice.

02:27.14

Tania  
He.

02:30.42

Jen  
For the listeners Dina was kind of doing like the robot you were like popping and locking or something. Ah.

02:35.60

dina  
I Don't have good control.

02:41.27

Jen  
Ah, no, everyone's doing it. We should introduce our or we should introduce our guest because.

02:42.51

dina  
Yeah, yeah, we're all doing it and we oh yeah, yes, yes, we're very excited about our guest. Um, we have not introduced and we have just been recording.

02:44.88

Tania  
Um.

02:51.93

Tania  
Oh I forgot we were recording.

03:00.46

dina  
Um, me is this your fifth book.

03:03.80

Tania  
It can't be no fourth. Yeah.

03:08.00

dina  
Fourth. Ok so um, yeah, Tanya Dear Rosario is here who has written 4 books including the newly released dinner on monster island. Which is this incredible book of essays. Um that we read and we're going to talk about today in it. Yeah, it's absolutely it really? Yeah as the youth say slaves my students I refuse to use that term um and my students are like why and I'm like.

03:35.23

Jen  
Great, Ah, all.

03:40.95

dina  
Because that's not for me and I will not be using it and so then I started using phrases like things were that cat's pajamas I think so going really old school like that's so neat Anyway, so.

03:52.46

Tania  
It's.

03:54.37

Jen  
I say I say things like that's the bee's knees and like yeah and instead of swearing I say like sweet I say sweet Cracker sandwich like all the time. Ah yeah, yeah.

03:59.97

dina  
Yeah, bees knees that absolutely came up but it was it's yeah yeah, sweet cracker sandwich I've heard you say that sweet Georgia Brown just any name.

04:01.24

Tania

Ah.

04:08.36

Tania

Oh my God ah.

04:14.20

Jen

Yeah I'm starting I Want to try anyone that I've been thinking about because my dad used to say it used to say rats and I want to try out rats on a hot Tin roof I Want to say rats on a hot tune roof will that work as a square. Ah.

04:17.87

dina

No.

04:21.87

dina

Oh I love it. That's great I Think it's great I Love it. Absolutely I think it's beautiful. Yeah, it's really good.

04:27.60

Tania

Oh my God Ah, that's very audible image.

04:35.70

Jen

Yeah, that what? but I'd be worth a swear rats on a hot tin roof. Ah.

04:40.20

dina

Yeah, all the way. Also when I don't like people this isn't tame or anything but I've been saying Dick Hole I'm like oh that person such a dick hole. So that's.

04:56.35

Jen

Because the whole because the hole that's in a dick is not pleasant. There is you know okay can I just say though about dinner on Monster Island because we're still introducing our cat. Ah.

04:59.11

dina

But there's a lot going on there and I don't want to be involved What forget it Absolutely not? oh.

05:03.72

Tania

Ah.

05:12.95

Jen

Ah, beautiful cover which is very um, evocative of the topic or 1 of the topics which is horror and asian horror in particular with angry asian lady demons which is my favorite topic to talk about um and so like fabulous cover. You must be happy with it though. Yeah.

05:13.69

Tania

Ah, ah.

05:23.62

dina

Um, yeah, absolutely.

05:28.77

Tania

Oh I Love the cover. Yeah, um, yeah, it's beautiful like I like I was going to tell you that oh we have to delete this part was.

05:29.28

dina

Yeah, it's gorgeous.

05:40.22

Tania

So the name of the cover and I don't know the book with me and now I forget give me 2 seconds here we go yes so yeah I love the cover and it's done by a designer um named Olivia McGiff

05:45.12

dina

That's ok, we can all edit this part.

05:55.39

Jen

Um, well done Olivia but.

05:55.59

dina

Ah, it's really good. Thank you? Yeah, it's great. Um, ok well before we fully get into dinner on Monster Island let's talk about what's happening Jen what's happening with you. What's going on.

05:56.18

Tania

Yes, thank you Olivia.

06:07.24

Tania

Um, vividly.

06:12.60

Jen

Well I think since we last ah had a podcast episode out. Um, one of the books I edited and acquiredre dennison avenue finished its run on Canada reads which was very exciting for me because see like it's different because it's a book that I edited and not a book that I wrote. I allowed myself to be really angry on its behalf like cause if it was like my own book and like so people are criticizing it I'd be like yeah I'm kind of a trash writer that could be true right? Like you know you wouldn't you wouldn't like get angry. You just be like yeah maybe that's true, but because it's a book that I did it right? I was like yeah, that's not right. You guys suck. These are the worst criticisms I've ever heard and I like I like cried I like you yelled at the television I like my my kid was like I want to punch that person in the face like we were all like all up it art like it's anyway, it's fine. Didison avenue did not win but um.

06:51.19

Tania

Oh no.

06:51.76

dina

Um, all.

07:06.25

Jen

Ah, it's sold really well in sort of the aftertonmath of Canada reads. So I think people are revenge buying it like it's like a justice or tendance it avenue people literally email like the Ecw office called the office of like we are so upset and I want to order 12 copies to give to all my friends that we're like great.

07:13.31

Tania

Um, ah.

07:25.78

Jen

Course we'll take that we'll take the pity by ah.

07:26.23

dina

Um, that's great.

07:28.23

Tania

Ah, oh it's not a pity by it's I think it's a revenge by like you said.

07:31.42

dina

Yeah, it's the revenge by.

07:32.68

Jen

Yeah, it's a room edge bar. Yeah that's what going on and I and I felt like it was such a it was I don't know like it's such a nice thing for all these people to be reading a book that I really care about by you know Christina Wong and illustrations by den is it's a lovely book. It's just um I wish I did it. I wish I hadn't heard the things I heard about it. Ah, but it's fine I'm going to put it in the vault and lock it away like my therapist tells me to do it'll be fine. It'll be fine I don't know what's happening with you. Dina.

08:02.37

dina

I mean I have a lot of check going on but all I want to do is like think about promoting my new book and like all the silly stuff that I want to do to facilitate to like facilitate my silly book promotion.

08:15.90

Jen

Because that's fun.

08:17.50

Tania

Um.

08:22.17

dina

But I just don't really have the time to devote to it and I'm very not into it like I don't want to go to work I don't want to cook I Just don't like that. It's at the bottom of my list of things that I have to



do because it's like a little further down the line and I'm like no this is the only thing that matters. But obviously it's not.

08:33.67

Tania

Ah.

08:41.15

dina

But so that's just where my brain is at like I'm thinking about that it comes out in April. Um, yeah I know I know it's true, but um.

08:43.79

Tania

When is the book coming out. Yeah.

08:50.84

Jen

You have lots of fun things lined up already.

08:59.91

dina

Yeah I just want to spend some time just doing all the stuff I like to do which is planning weird things for my lunch and making them happen. Yeah.

09:11.23

Jen

Yeah, the problem like with like being a writer who in this country or at most places is that you don't have the like the means to take off time from actual day jobs to actually plan stuff like we don't I don't have like I couldn't take our six months to promote my book wouldn't that be nice who gets to who.

09:21.53

dina

Um, yeah, yeah, oh yeah I don't know somebody this is making me think of so on the weekend.

09:28.30

Tania

Oh wow.

09:30.40

Jen

To do that. But.

09:39.31

dina

Ah, Carli Baker had invited jen and me and our friend Daniel Lompelli former host of this podcast to talk to the sf you um writers studio about professional jealousy and we have an episode on about this that anyone can listen to it anytime but I feel like that's the the like. The trajectory that we're just going in again. It's like people take six months off to promote their book. I'm so jealous that like that's that yeah, that's the vibe.

10:08.66

Jen

Who are those people do we even know them.

10:10.66

Tania

Yeah I was I was gonna say who who.

10:14.80

dina

Um I would we can't possibly know them I I We can't possibly know them.

10:17.76

Jen

I Don't know them unless there people who just already do not have day jobs because they're rich.

10:21.31

Tania

Ah, ah, ah, ah yeah I was just gonna I was just gonna say that and say that's not really professional. Jealousy is that That's ah in Jealousy you have privilege. Yeah, which is fair.

10:33.00

dina

Um, yeah.

10:34.80

Jen

Yeah, that's just that's just we just hate the wealthy. That's all. Ah.

10:38.13

dina

Listen I mean in some ways a subtitle of dinner on Monster Island could be eat the rich like it does have that vibe running through it. Yeah, absolutely.

10:44.21

Tania  
Um.

10:46.40

Jen

Yeah, it could be like angry Asian lady demons eat the rich, but.

10:47.90

Tania

But I Ah oh I like that please leave that as the good reason Good reads description but Angation demon lady eats everyone. But.

10:57.20

dina

Yeah, yeah, that's going to be the good reads or yeah, that's all we need.

11:06.53

Tania

Like but we hope it's rich, but.

11:07.35

Jen

Um, yeah, just like in this indiscriminately just.

11:09.20

dina

Ah, yeah, it's like a like a like a hippo mouth that just opens and can put so much in that once I know it's beautiful, Beautiful Well speaking of.

11:14.95

Tania

Oh oh my god I love it I was just talking about hungry hungry hipless today.

11:25.17

Tania

Oh y'all have got me at the worst possible time. Nothing is happening with me at all it. It is yeah is just kind of like ah have the online launch for the book which was like Singapore time zone and then we have.

11:25.34

dina

What's happening with you.

11:33.18

dina

That's kind of nice though.

11:43.57

Tania

Ah, person in- person book at at Massey and then I was just I've just been continuously peopled out and just like catching up on yeah, catching up on emails. Um, um, yeah, anything more than like 3 people's like a wild po. It like a wild po sorry stay at home with my ghosts like I'm in like every introvert exactly.

12:10.86

dina

I Mean you have your ghosts. What more do you need? Yeah, they really are ok. Are you ready to dive in.

12:17.88

Tania

They are.

12:24.28

dina

I feel like ghosts is one of Jen's favorite topics. So I I think she's pretty excited.

12:27.50

Tania

Yay.

12:27.49

Jen

Yeah I'm like really excited. You know what I was thinking because um, you there's a holt. There's a paragraph in the book where you actually go through different types of like angry Asian lady demons from different from different places and I was like sweet I have I now have a comprehensive list.

12:40.89

Tania

Ah, essentially yeah, but.

12:47.18

Jen

Courtesy of tanya to is there I Love it.

12:49.00

Tania

Ah, my worst fear is like someone's reading that been a Gods talk.

12:57.60

Jen

No I found it So Good. It was so fascinating to me. Um I wanted to say that like the horror theme particularly is is so Good. It's very on point here and and there were so many things I was reading I'm like yes yes, that's right, Yes, That's right? Um, What do you think it says. About this is a big question. But what do you think it says about like Asian culture in particular and I would say Singapore and culture in particular that women are rarely angry or allowed to be angry in public but then basically turn into angry hungry demons on film or in books.

13:23.90

Tania

Ah.

13:29.53

dina

Since.

13:32.47

Jen

Yeah.

13:33.20

Tania

Yeah, um, like I'm not gonna I like I I don't think I can answer what it says about Asian culture because it's ah you know the region is really diverse. Um, but.

13:40.97

Jen

Exactly.

13:49.80

Tania

I would say that I think it not only reflects Historically what women's places what women a woman's place has been but Also. Think Horror creates a space in which people are comfortable seeing um women angry because it's so um, it's so it's the only space where I think you have to be a demon to be not called Shrii you have to be like you know what? I mean it's like.

14:08.80

Jen

Um, yeah.

14:19.67

Jen  
Yes.

14:26.40

Tania

I Always say like the thing that interests me the thing that interests me, you know, especially about women in horror particularly this these kinds of um, archetypes where um, a woman comes back for vengeance is that you know it's kinds of treads a thin line between.

14:44.58

Tania

Agency and oppression because on one hand, she's come back with a vengeance. She's come back to seek Justice and she's doing it on her own terms and she's an autonomous being but she's only allowed to be that when she's dead.

14:55.26

Jen  
Oh.

14:58.12

Tania

Um, and that is like the opposite of the opposite of like liberation right? So it's these two things that these 2 truths that are happening at 1 time and that's that's something I've always found interesting. Um, and I've completely straight away from the question.

15:09.30

Jen

No, it doesn't know it. You were perfect on the question I was like thinking about the you know like the chapter where you write about the ring. Ah the Japanese version of the ring. Well the original The only good one. Um because she's actually not allowed. The protagonist is actually not allowed to be who she wants to be to.

15:18.15

Tania

Um, yeah, like absolutely.

15:26.45

Tania

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

15:28.45

Jen

Ah, use her gifts the way she wants to right? so silenced essentially until she becomes the demon right? and she's out for vengeance and I and I and and that to me is like such a I mean makes it really sad. But also is really liberating and I mean you write about that in that chapter too. How liberating it liberating but in like obviously with a huge like caveat right? Yeah, you're dead and you were tortured to death. That's fine, but you know.

15:50.48

Tania

Kaffia. Yeah, yeah, yeah, it's ah yeah, it's really interesting like more and more like the more I think about that character and the more I think about that film I like I do think about. Kind of triing that line between you know, having agency and being a oppress but I more more I also think about what you have to do to escape ah, salako's curse which is past the video onto someone else and in some sense become a monster because you're passing it onto someone else.

16:19.20

Jen

Yeah.

16:25.59

Tania

And for me I think that's really interesting because then you you are becoming the very thing that you are trying to escape and I'm I'm just endless endlessly fascinated by that.

16:35.88

Jen

It's a very mother daughterughter ah thing in a way. Um, the I yeah that so that's why when I was reading that chapter I was like oh it's like mother daughterughter dynamics because you know you become the thing that again like you were saying that you've been trying to escape and if you have like a conflicted relationship with.

16:37.56

Tania

Oh but interesting.

16:48.41

Tania

Yeah.

16:53.59

Jen

Mother which is something you write about ah in the book. Ah then how do we? How do we not become that person or how do we actually live a life of you know, relative freedom and anyway yeah, it's not a question but.

16:55.84

Tania

Um.

17:03.38

Tania

Yeah, that's interesting. That's interesting. Sadako is all our mothers sadako mother of all.

17:15.74

Jen

If I go down. So if I go into my living room in the middle of the night. My mom's gonna be crawling out of my television set. It's gonna be great. Ah.

17:18.72

dina

Stop.

17:20.58

Tania

Oh and God I'll be there with the remote my Tv co ah.

17:26.70

dina

Yeah, just get a universal remote shut it off? Yeah, absolutely absolutely yeah, but.

17:29.76

Tania

Ah, ah, ah oh my god what a nightmare I she'll be crawling on my Tv going have you gone to church this week

17:30.24

Jen

Just unplug the fake math just unplug it. Yeah.

17:42.64

dina

Ah.

17:44.10

Tania

Oh yeah, exactly precisely.

17:45.42

Jen



Just like that sounding very pained by it. Yeah.

17:51.89

dina

Yeah, super put out by the whole situation that she has to do it. Um.

17:54.73

Jen

Um.

18:01.89

dina

I mean coming off with Jen was yeah, totally like in another way, it feels weird to be talking to about this particular book because Jen and I have also both written books.

18:04.63

Tania

So Horrific Sorry ah.

18:17.80

dina

Hers came out last year minus coming out that use like popular culture to examine our lives and the world and to like look at things. But I think it's also extremely fun because clearly we love it. It's like a literary tool. Um, and so it had me thinking because like Jen had entry points for her book and her.

18:20.60

Tania

And.

18:37.74

dina

Like each chapter and I had entry points for what I was writing so I'm just kind of wondering for you like what was the entry point for the book was it a particular essay or a piece of media and like how did how did you find. You like and know it was kind of Jelling. Um as a collection for you.

18:57.10

Tania

Um, um, the first essay I wrote is the last essay which was letter to my mother and I wrote that as an assignment. Um for my for an Mfa class and ah basically the prompts write a letter to someone. And my mother had died that same year. Um, and so that was instinctively that was um, where where I leaned anyway and I didn't really intend that to be part of a larger collection I think as I went through the program. Um i. I started realizing? Oh I was writing a lot about

adolescence and writing a lot about Singapore and that um and I found that people were interested in things that I thought I had not interested in things I had normalized essentially. Um, that I had actually put as like a side note or a throwaway joke like the tough club. Um, um, which is stands for the trim and fit club which was a hilarious, not so hilarious. Um, thing that happened in 90 s schools right? and I would just kind of mention it and then you know my classmates would be like please rewind. Can you say that again because that is wild and so I started thinking a lot more about things I had normalized I think at that age. Um.

20:20.55

Tania

And yeah I think that's where it's thought I wanted I decided I wanted to write a book that revolved around Singapore and growing up in Singapore which I think was a separate separate thing from the horror thing which is just the framing of the lens that I like to use just because I love horror.

20:37.30

dina

I Mean it's so in the the language of the book and the way that book is written. It's so obvious that you love it like that. This is such an important I don't know like very foundational kind of genre for you and.

20:49.64

Tania

Um.

20:54.32

Tania

Um.

20:56.91

dina

I Don't know I just I I think that really adds I mean this this book has a lot of depressing themes quote unquote like I'm using scare quotes but I think that really adds to the charm of of the whole collection.

21:08.65

Tania

Ah.

21:14.66

dina

Is like so much of it is about you being who you are and putting who you are on the page. Um, yeah, because your voice is like so clear in this collection. Um.

21:26.71

Jen  
Here.

21:29.33

Tania

Oh thanks So much. No one has ever no one has ever talked about the horror elements of my writing and used the word charm just like it's it's issue. The thing that makes me weird alike. Why are the horror elements in there. They're unnecessary.

21:32.42

dina  
Yeah.

21:39.79

dina

No, no way. No no, no, no, absolutely not not for us. No way. No.

21:40.70

Jen

No, we no not not not in our universe. It does not make you weird at all. No.

21:50.41

Tania  
Ah.

21:54.35

dina

So I Guess it's like I'm thinking about too like yeah, but like the language is like it's electric. The voice is electric. Things are like very sparking off the page I felt like ah as I was reading it and so I guess I'm kind of thinking about you know. Like how did it feel to put yourself on the page because like again I can really hear your voice.. There's this charm. There's this, you're very appealing. But.

22:17.26

Tania

Ah, yeah, just for this and as I do not know what face do you know, just made I don't know what the intention of that was yeah in a in a very ah dad joke kind.

22:22.40

dina

I Don't know either I Also awkwardly pointed Anyway, yeah it was yeah like I'm a huge dork is what it was. That's the that's the face.

22:38.50

Tania

Ah, yeah, um, oh sorry um I missed the goal like how did it feel to put myself on the page is that what you asked? Um, yeah I think.

22:45.93

dina

Um, yeah.

22:53.59

Tania

I think I watch a lot of the time I watch like a horror movie and that is it actually helps me articulate like feelings that maybe I wouldn't be able to articulate otherwise and talk about things I wouldn't be able to talk about otherwise. And I think that it's ah it is It would definitely was in this book a tool to get the voice on paper and I think for for all of Us. You know who write nonfiction and who write about ourselves that there is a kind of distinction between the voice that's on the page and the voice that's On. On this podcast I just feel I'm really really boring right now. But.

23:34.80

Jen

Now.

23:35.66

dina

Um, no.

23:37.70

Tania

I Feel like the horror element lens like a sense of um, at least the way I think about the characters and horror lens like a sense of like ah, empowerment or Bravado or um, ah.

23:55.26

Tania

Basically lends the issue a way to talk about it that that makes it easier for me.

23:59.16

Jen

I Think that makes sense. Yeah.

23:59.44

dina

Yeah, like totally because you like when you're using culture or media in some way, you're both identifying with it. But you are also putting yourself at a bit of a remove so it gives you like a little spot to kind of slip in right.

24:11.61

Tania

Um, and.

24:17.72

Tania

Absolutely yeah and I do feel like I process a lot of things like I process like um, a lot of like big emotions like watching things that that.

24:19.20

dina

Yeah.

24:31.70

Tania

I don't think I'd be able to do otherwise like anything that I've listed in the book except for maybe the exorcist I think most of the films that I've listened in the book I just feel like those are films like this like a moment of catharsis for me like this like crying which sounds weird. You don't do that during horror movies. But um, yeah I think. I I definitely think that that is the the ah delete delete delete my book is not working today. I.

25:02.94

Tania

But um I do think they lent something to the voice that would not be there otherwise.

25:07.73

Jen

So I think that like oh no.

25:08.43

dina

I Also oh sorry Jen No I was just going to say I Also think like I love because I think we're often used to cultural writing being about criticism in like the worst possible way and I feel like when people are.

25:19.28

Tania

Earth.

25:26.65

dina

Writing about culture and even if there is aspects of criticism in it if there's like like a reverence for it or like joy enjoyment of of whatever it is I think that contributes to and I think that now that I'm thinking about it I think a lot of that is what's coming through too.

25:28.63

Tania

Man.

25:36.68

Tania

And.

25:43.37

dina

Sorry Jen please continue.

25:43.47

Jen

Oh no I was just going to say like I think though like when we talk about horror and I don't know about you but it's really difficult for me to write about myself I hate it I don't like it I'd much rather be writing about demons right? like this is not something that I want to do and I think that there is.

25:45.40

Tania

Ah.

26:02.96

Jen

So much honesty in this book. But there's also like the snippets that you give us of you as de has said are really appealing like the image of you wearing your school uniform with the belt low and like yeah I like and I and I was like she's so cute I decide to.

26:14.66

Tania

Oh my God ah.

26:18.30

dina

Um, yeah, yeah, absolutely yeah yeah.

26:21.29

Jen

I Just want to give her a bag of wine gumps and hang out like.

26:26.53

Tania

Ah, ah my God Wine Gums haven't seen those in a long time shit Delicious! Oh my god.

26:30.48

dina

I bought 2 packs yesterday. Yeah, get some. You need some you deserve some they were on sale two for five I had to get them. No.

26:34.22

Jen

Delicious. Ah.

26:39.76

Jen

Um, so like I want they're delicious I'd like just what like I I don't know how anyone else feels about when they publish something that is memoir. Um, if they feel you know worried or whatever they feel I mean but.

26:53.26

Tania

Um, ah.

26:57.79

Jen

Certainly what you gave us of yourself and there's a lot of you but there's also like I felt like you were being really good about um, adhering to a set of boundaries like there were you didn't write about everything ah like I'm sure there's more that you did it but you did it write about and and I and I felt like.

26:59.42

Tania

And.

27:11.62

Tania

Um.

27:15.67

Jen

You were very much in control of that story So you know kudos to you but did you have to make a decision at some point this what is what I am going to write about and this is what I'm not.

27:27.18

Tania

Um, right? Um, yeah, a lot of my decision making with this book was perfect. Gods um to safety of the people I was writing about as well as um. Myself I think that was one layer. Um I Guess I don't really.

27:56.40

Tania

Sorry, what was the question again again I told you I'm so vibly I'm such a slow voal thinker.

28:00.43

Jen

Oh no, just like how you ah, don't worry about it's just like how did you was there a moment where you said this is what I will write about and this is what I won't.

28:01.17

dina

Um, it's okay.

28:10.70

Tania

Um, right.

28:15.44

Tania

I think a lot of my writing decisions come with editing the editing process. So a lot of it was is this making a lot of the stuff I took out ended up being about. Am I keeping this here because I enjoy writing it or because it serves the storytelling so there's a lot of stuff in there that I just really really enjoyed that I ended up taking out just because um, like i'm'm I'm a super slow everything I'm a super sore writer. It took me four and a half years to write this book which is very thin.

28:38.45

Jen

Um, he.

28:51.93

Tania

It's like um and a lot of that is editing um and I need like in an ideal situation like I have at least a month between the first draft and then looking at it again or the first or second draft and looking at it again. So like a lot. Stuff comes out in that second draft like I just take it out or I rearrange it or it just goes into the trash forever. Um, yeah, and most my decisions revolved around safety and revolved around whether um, chunks of text are just there because they were necessary for



me to get to the other important texts. Or whether they're therefore a purpose. Yeah, oh absolutely yeah to think out loud. Yeah yeah.

29:28.98

Jen

I Think there's a lot of things that we write that are just for us to get to a certain spot. Yeah, the need to go? Yeah yeah, and like that's fine and it serves as purpose and it does a good job but then it's time. It's time to go. You know.

29:44.49

Tania

I almost feel like even now like and I feel this way about all all any any writing I've ever done I always like oh this could have been shorter this could that was not this power was not necessary but. It just goes on the editing goes on like the book. It's like 10 years old I'm still like you take this out like no yeah.

30:09.43

Jen

Um, one of the things like like I was really interested in is how you write about mental Health and sort of the intergenerational aspect of mental health and or things that are mental illnesses that are passed down So like I don't talk about this much Dina knows this about me.

30:15.85

Tania

Ah.

30:27.14

Jen

But I actually went to a a mental health retreat for seven days in Malaysia with 14 singaporeans I was the only person not from Singapore all the counseling staff were singaporean and it's a wild time we were at where at a villa in Malaysia. Yeah, it's wild I had to live with them.

30:35.89

Tania

Are ah and.

30:44.40

Jen

To live with them like like but I will say that the 2 things that they seem to be very very um, the the 2 worries that a lot of them had were about disappointing or defying their parents or both. Um, and also not performing well at their jobs. Those are the 2 things that seem to really be consuming them right and I was there for other reasons I'd you know, went through a divorce I was feeling a little insane like you know other other reasons and um at the end of the retreat we had to walk around and tell each other what we liked about each other.

30:59.64

Tania

Um.

31:03.84

Tania

False man.

31:09.61

Tania

And.

31:19.80

Jen

Which seems like a powder keg of bad things but they were very sweet but they all kept saying to me, you're so free. You don't care what other people think um, you'll say whatever you want and I say no I'm not It's Canadians are like this like like we're you know like it's it's you guys that are like. Like for us for me looking at them and and and their issues and I remember talking to is I'll stop talking in them and talking to 1 of them and like don't worry about your parents. You can just go do whatever you want. She's like no I can't you don't understand Jen and I realize I didn't understand and this is something that like in your book when you talk about leaving your your mother and you write about.

31:49.00

Tania

Interesting.

31:56.83

Jen

Um, sort of leaving your mother and leaving that sort of inherited dysfunction that she was giving to you and then you also write about like sort of pass down um mental illness. Um I had a lot of thoughts about sort of the systemic failures um of mental health but also.

32:01.14

Tania

A sister.

32:16.37

Jen

Sort of like intimate mental health story here. Um, and I was just curious like is it easier I mean I guess like how difficult because it all seemed to dovetail in that sort of 1 chapter where you're writing about that stuff and.

32:19.63

Tania  
Um, ah.

32:31.91

Jen

And I'm always curious how other writers write about like mental illness like because it's something that I think about quite a lot and if it's like a difficult thing or if it seems like something external or not well because you write a lot about like systemic stuff right? like in Singapore how so much.

32:37.30

Tania  
Ah.

32:44.78

Tania  
Um, oh what do you mean by external right.

32:50.43

Jen

What happens doesn't serve people with mental illness doesn't serve people who you know are different doesn't serve people who want something else. Yeah and but then you're also writing this very intimate mental health thing too.

32:56.90

Tania  
Right? Oh I see I see so how much of it is how much of it is um, genetic versus how much of how much of its culture is that.

33:09.51

Jen

Yeah, well I think you're writing that but I was just curious how that was finding that balance between writing about the systemic stuff and like the intimate stuff. Yeah.

33:17.51

Tania  
Oh I see Yeah um.

33:23.25

Tania

Yeah I mean just to respond to what what you said about the retreat. The first thing that comes to mind is there's a singaporean writer Mahita Vaz who wrote a memoir a good day to die. Um about her experience with ah suicidal ideation and mental health and I just want to shout how

she's just. Amazing and recently I attended a talk um that she gave and 1 thing she did mention was that a struggle for um, one struggle for Singapore people is really the first step in seeking help at all because of. The issue of not wanting to open up with the issue of face or the issue of um, you know these kinds of external issues. So I think it's really significant that you said that about you mentioned this when you talked about the retreat. Um I personally have no experience of seeking mental help ah or seeking help for mental health. Um, mental illness in Singapore just because I yeah I affordable um, access is essentially state access and I didn't want kind of any recording of anything. Of my life to be on record because I don't know what people do with that. Ah, and yeah, so most I've forgotten the question again. But oh my god.

34:48.25

Jen

Um, it doesn't matter. Yeah, it's just that like I do think that your your your discussion on mental Health here is so nuanced and lovely and I think it actually sheds a really.

34:55.17

Tania

Um.

34:59.74

Tania

Oh thank you.

35:04.75

Jen

Interesting light on a part of Singapore people don't know I mean obviously you're writing about how people don't know about the reclaimed land in the you know garden by the bay or you know in the Marina Bay Sands or whatever. But and that's like a physical thing but I actually think that like the way you write so delicately about mental health and how Singapore doesn't serve that either is actually more.

35:10.52

Tania

Are and.

35:24.51

Jen

For me Anyway, really more affecting. Yeah.

35:24.60

Tania

Right? Yeah yeah, like now now I to know whether this has to go on recorded also. But now I realize I don't really know which chapter you're talking about.

35:37.67

dina

Well I don't I think there I think it comes up multiple times though like because you have this thread about Obviously there's multiple threads that tie into suicide.

35:37.76

Jen

Um I don't get rid of me. Um, yeah in multiple chapters I think.

35:42.21

Tania

Ah, right.

35:56.81

dina

Specifically and like that particular and I feel like that particular thread. Um I don't know it's you. So and when I say delicately I mean like just perfectly like it's it's used so well. The places that it it comes up in each.

35:58.58

Tania

Um, ah.

36:13.67

dina

Essay but then also you know finding that note from your from your grandfather and so like knowing about your father knowing about your grandfather and just knowing you know what you've experienced as well and like what's within you.

36:18.51

Tania

Right? right.

36:19.24

Jen

He.

36:30.57

Tania

Right.

36:32.89

dina

Um, and also you know you're writing about that with all this framework around you of um, you know this? Yeah this place that you are living that has a lot of inequalities like you were just saying to like if you want to get something that's like state funded. That's Affordable. You're going to have to give a part of yourself away.

36:57.26

Tania

Um, yeah, yeah I think now that I'm trying to now that I'm thinking back on like the chapter about um Inigent Intergenerational. Um. Illness and trauma and um I think it was the chapter about the shining and doctor sleep I Think a lot of that came from when I eventually saw mental health care here and I realized there's just a whole bunch of questions I couldn't answer in the intake form because I know nothing about the history of mental health in my own.

37:12.11

Jen

Yes.

37:28.45

Tania

Um, family because a lot of that a lot of questions deal. Ah a substantial amount of questions deal with that. Um, and I think that's whether that's where um, that came from and I think it's ah it's not something there. There are a lot of aspects of mental health that you know. People have conversation about and I think this is one of those things that is just it's not really people who don't have access to their biological family for whatever reason. Um, it's this is another barrier kind of in um, when it comes to finding out what kind of help you need. Essentially um yeah I don't how did I find a balance between the external and the internal I think it's just the way like I have multiple tabs open on my computer. It's the same thing I'm tired of. Doing 1 thing and so I do the other task that I need to do to to take a break from that and when I'm tired from that then I do the other task that needs to be done. Um.

38:37.77

Tania

I think the process of writing those 2 those 2 separate things are also different like I write very instinctively when I'm writing about myself and then I leave a lot of blanks and I leave a lot of section blanks and I go do research later.

38:51.83

dina

Oh that's amazing because one of my questions was going to be about research because like exactly what we were just talking about you know, like mixing personal and pop culture. But then also there is so much research in this book and that also really stood out to me like.

38:57.64

Tania

Um, oh brilliant.

39:05.39

Tania  
Earth.

39:11.21

dina

You know you had all these facts about this t a f program this like weight loss program for children. Um, and then you had you know a lot of details about things like like a variety of laws in Singapore.

39:21.12

Tania  
Um.

39:27.84

Jen  
Oh.

39:30.14

Tania  
Ah.

39:30.20

dina

And you know and when they were implemented or not and all and then also references to essays by academics that you are also using to help like Parse some of the media you know that you're that you're exploring. Yeah, it's like all of the worlds of things you you are an academic you are.

39:34.88

Tania  
Man.

39:44.19

Tania  
Oh ah.

39:48.81

dina

You know you taught for years. You who are a culture writer. You are a writer you are all these things and so they're all like colliding in the book in this really like beautiful way. So yeah I was really curious about your research process like if.

39:56.17

Tania

The.

40:06.97

dina

It's to help support what you want to write or not or if like the research is also giving you more to to you know to explore.

40:07.15

Tania

Oh I see.

40:16.80

Tania

Right.

40:18.38

Jen

I'm just gonna give you time to think my dog's trying to get in here because she hears us one second

40:22.21

dina

Okay, yeah, go get her I knew she'd come in.

40:28.64

Tania

Ah, did you say her name was Rosie is that also Rosie in the picture behind oh my god hi.

40:31.33

dina

Yeah, that's Rosie too. That's a like a a drawing of Rosie there. She is hi Rosie oh my god she knows what's going on in here something good.

40:39.64

Jen

She's here. But she's been clawing at the door for like 20 minutes and so click please continue with your thoughts.

40:42.84

Tania

Oh my god.



40:50.31

Tania

Ah, um, yeah to be honest I think that's all just my short attention span like it's It's not honest, honest to God like I think I like I so. I think almost except for maybe the last one. All the essays are like written in sections and that really is because of my needs to dot to something else and um.

41:17.79

Tania

Usually if I usually start with myself and then I come to a point where I think it'd be interesting to have a fact about x y or z in it and then I move to research and then I come back and I think it just feeds each other till it comes to a natural stop. Either that or it feeds each other endlessly and then I'm like this is 7000 words and it's probably boring and then I edit it but is it. Absolutely yeah.

41:44.25

dina

Ah, that is like what such a writerly problem or you're just like look at all this research that I'm doing and then you're like wait a second.

41:53.96

Tania

And sometimes I'm like oh I'm social I can connect those 5 different. Absolutely not connect to topics and then I can't and then they're gone.

42:01.40

dina

So ah.

42:02.91

Jen

Like you think you can like you have like 17 things in your head and you're like it's all going to come together and then it just doesn't but.

42:09.60

Tania

Yeah, yeah, sometimes you get that false feeling of like it's happening and so but it's not. It's just just not sometimes that feeling is true but 80% of the time is not. It's lie, but right it's ah.

42:22.00

dina

Wow! Very relatable. Yeah, yeah, absolutely well like even if we just go back To. You're talking about the like the intergenerational trauma shining doctor sleep like so many things get filtered

through that too. And those all do connect I Also really liked the choices you made in kind of parallels with that the thinking about like intergenerational mental health and having the the like descriptions of.

42:41.46

Tania

Ah, and ah.

42:53.36

Tania

Um, ah.

42:59.48

dina

Having texts that described both like the shining but also doctor sleep and like showing those side by side like I don't know that was such a good visual illustration to um.

43:05.21

Tania

Um, yeah.

43:11.69

Tania

Oh my God Thank you so much for saying that because like originally when I was writing about it I was just writing about that. Um for myself and it had been I had been using screen captures from the film. So I like I really came to like a.

43:23.54

Jen

E.

43:29.51

Tania

Problem and I was like oh my god how do I do this um without having to pay for images or without using images at all because I think it would be weird for me I feel like it would have been weird to have like one essay that had images. But yeah, thank. God for Microsoft word and columns and also like every time I talk about doctor sleep I feel like I have to say Mike Flanagan if you are out there I love you talk to me. Okay.

43:56.89

dina

Wait should I be tagging Mike Flanagan when I post this listen. Do you want me to be tagging the ghost of Stanley Kubrick but false I'm just kidding I'm just kidding I don't have access to him I don't have access to him.

44:02.22

Tania

Um, please read my books. No.

44:12.16

Jen

I mean you know what I just edited a book that writes about Mike Flanagan also so you're like the second yeah the monster in the mirror by kjllo magic mental illness and the stories we tell coming out in August September soon

44:14.76

dina

Um.

44:17.53

dina

What.

44:21.68

Tania

Oh my god.

44:24.19

dina

Um, oh very cool, very cool. But yeah I Also now want my flanagan to read your book.

44:31.85

Tania

My I want to novelize midnight mass if you are out there please hear me I'll write you a sample I love you so much. Okay I'm done.

44:37.68

dina

Um.

44:41.34

dina

Ah, that's wonderful. Yeah, that's really wonderful. No I love it I Think it's great.

44:44.29

Jen

I don't I actually don't know anything about him is he cool. Do we know like I don't know anything about him personally I only know his work. Okay, that's kind of nice it 6 Yeah.

44:47.55

Tania

Oh my God No oh I I Only know his work. Also, it's enough. It's enough for me. But.

44:58.84

dina

But isn't that good for once to just be like yeah this person is like an artist who is good at their art and this is what they do and that's what we can appreciate them for how nice.

45:01.89

Jen

Yeah.

45:06.48

Jen

Yeah, like I like personally I have no idea what he looks like what he's into what like where he lives no idea zero not a clue.

45:07.60

Tania

Ah, whoops. Yeah oh my god.

45:11.20

dina

No, not a clue, not a clue.

45:15.37

Tania

I I know that he often films in Vancouver yep midnight mass midnight mass was filmed in Vancouver I believe I believe actually I believe most of his series have been filmed in Vancouver I keep missing it.

45:19.88

dina

We got to get this book to him.

45:28.25

Jen

We got to get to somebody in the moot who works in the movie industry.

45:29.53

dina

We we need to know we got to get him into one of the local bookstores.

45:37.76

Jen

I might the wheels are turning in my head I like know people who work in films Surely we know someone who knows him. But.

45:43.30

dina

We got to make this happen now. This is the kit This is this is the connection that beats to be made just.

45:50.70

Tania

Oh my God I'm dead I'm already a ghost I'm living my book. Thank you I'm dead just thinking about it.

45:58.47

dina

Ok wait. This question is not about Mike Fla but this because of doctors sleep. Yes I have a question though now for both of you since you're real phantom heads um, do you have a.

46:03.47

Tania

Ah I can't even remember how he came up Oh doctor sleep.

46:13.30

Tania

I.

46:17.22

dina

Favorite ghost of like culture.

46:20.66

Jen

Oh yeah, there's a ghost from Hong Kong I I write about her in my novel that I'm currently writing and she walks on a train track I can't I don't know which train track it is exactly.

46:27.32

dina

Here. Okay.

46:38.41

Jen

But she walks on the train tracks and she's always walking away from you. So All you she wears a hat and she has long black hair. They all have long black hair. Anyway, she's walking away from you and eventually what happens is she turns around because she either hears you or she says says you're behind her. But when she turns around the the front of her head is exactly the same as the back of her head so she has no face. Yeah yeah, and then you're dead and then you're dead. She's gonna kill you. So like that's ah, creepy.

46:59.41

Tania

Um I Love it.

47:00.25

dina

Wow is the end for you? Yeah yeah.

47:08.58

Tania

That's amazing. Sorry I'm still thinking about that.

47:16.33

dina

It's very cool when Jen first told me about this and said it was going to be in her her novel I was like I was like I'm already excited and scared.

47:22.42

Jen

She's a recurring character in my new novel. Yeah, she did She has reasons. Okay, ah yeah.

47:25.58

Tania

Oh My God I can't Wait. Ah. Yeah, Absolutely they all do.

47:33.51

dina

Ok, it's also weird because in my novel there also is a ghost but it's not going to be done for like years but the ghost there is like very sarcastic.

47:45.33

Jen

Are you are you talking about the hot Springs ghost the hairs and hot Springs goes oh different. Okay.

47:50.11

dina

No different ghost in a different book. Um, that no, that's like this ghost is a period ghost like 1940 s and she always has a purse in her on her arm and is always smoking.

48:00.43

Jen

Um, oh.

48:07.16

Jen

She sounds delightful. Ah.

48:08.00

dina

Yeah I Really like her. Yeah I Really like her. She's cool. Yeah.

48:10.81

Tania

That's amazing.

48:16.83

Tania

That I don't know why. But when you said that that reminded me of I don't know whether either of you have heard of Hopavila Um, it is it is This is so random but it is a dispuete. Ah, it's a no longer functioning small theme park.

48:23.75

dina

Um, no.

48:33.32

Tania

Um, in Singapore um, and it's most famous. It was to take you through chinese mythology and one of the famous rides rides you through the stages of hell and all the things that happened to you the different stages of hell and this was like.

48:45.79

Jen

Um, no.

48:52.90

Tania

Um, this space was an excursion primary school kids would take at least once in that private school life. Yes, ah absolutely yeah, but anyway sorry bring back to what you said which was like you know there's still all these like kind of some of the statues are still there.

48:58.52

dina

Um, wait did you go in like as a field trip. Oh Wow. So.

49:06.17

dina

That's amazing.

49:11.42

Tania

And of mythological figures and they're all a lot of them are like in graceful poses and I'm just think when you said the Handbag I Just remember like I had I had a student who went to the disused hoa villa and intervened with those statues and so like she would hang Handbags. So like. Put some glasses on and took photos and it was the funniest thing I've ever seen asks? Yes, that is that is true.

49:30.79

dina

Ah, ok, that's really incredible. Oh my God Yes, same spirit as the Penguin person the energy of the Penguin Yeah I don't know. Do you want to quickly like just give the listeners like describe to them.

49:34.28

Jen

That's the same spirit as your Penguin person by the way in your book.

49:49.29

dina

About this Penguin situation.

49:49.65

Tania

Okay, this so I recently learned that the person who the person who um, did it is out about it. So I'll mention I'll mention that name. Ah this is visual and performing artists Mala Bendini from Singapore and basically what they did was.

50:01.30

dina

Um, oh ok.

50:09.47

Tania



Dress in the so something very similar to the flight attendant uniform for Singapore airlines um, and the Singapore Airlines uniform is really iconic in Singapore because the um the airline. Was known especially in the 80 s and 90 s for what was called the Singapore girl basically the objectifying of women flight attendance. Um for the airline and the tagline was singapore girl. You're a great way to fly so this this artist put on that uniform and um.

50:48.39

Tania

I don't know how I can't remember how I described it but a whole a penguin moss but it goes over your whole head. So it's a 3 dimensional penguin moss and just kind of like was see like somebody took photos of them like walking in public housing. Um.

51:06.60

Tania

At the corner storell like looking into the ice cream box just doing random things in like a big penguin head and and like the sa uncleobier which is what we call? Um, which is the traditional way that's used to create that was model that the uniform was modeled after so like this one my favorite one besides. The one I wrote about in the book is the penguin flag the like putting the national pretending to put the national flag um on the external corridor of public housing but 1 of my favorite photos is never the hoer center eating bar from me like I don't even know like practically how that would work. Do. You have to and like put the chopstic that into your beak. Love it's yeah so funny like I will never forget those images. We love you Marlo.

51:46.78

dina

Yeah, it's like that's what I'm picturing that there's like some kind of flap in the beat that goes in yes now in honestly, it's so incredible.

52:01.47

Jen

Ah, also can I just say I've been in a mascot costumes before sampore is hot that person that person must have been hated. There is all I say a whole head.

52:05.65

Tania

Singapore is hot as shit yeahp Yeah long sleeve uniform Good feeding good fitting kabaa and ah yeah, the whole head covered from shoulders up.

52:10.23

dina

Um, absolutely.

52:18.50

dina

See with people don't think it's hard to be an artist budget it but it is you got to be in a hot costume for your art. Just yeah.

52:23.45

Tania

But it absolutely is ah absolutely. But yeah, yeah, oh my God I think.

52:28.44

Jen

And like in like ° with like 80% humidity come on.

52:35.45

dina

Just like dripping sweat.

52:40.40

Tania

And marte station. Also though one the train station I think it's like worth telling listeners. This was happening during a period of time when um, the national library was considering pulping the book tango makes 3 which is about um the true story of 2 male penguins who fostered a fostered ah an egg. And um, people some people I guess thought it was part of the homosexual agenda so there was a whole a whole thing about it and that's when um penguin in the kabaya emerged.

53:13.62

dina

It really is also the sweetest book like if you've never looked at and tango makes 3 It's so cute. Um that book. Also it's so mild and that book has been banned many many times and I think it comes up a lot even in North America like it's been.

53:14.59

Jen

It is cute. That's very cute.

53:19.23

Tania

Um, it is so mild.

53:27.94

Tania

Nay.

53:27.99

Jen

Um, yeah.

53:29.18

dina

It's been banned here might have been burned I don't know. But yeah and tangle makes 3 the gay penguin story is so controversial everybody. It's very difficult for some people to handle it. Yeah, it's very bonkers.

53:37.32

Tania

Ah, are wild.

53:46.47

Jen

It's fine. It's not fine. It's not fine at all I was gonna ask you a little bit because I actually think this book is kind of like an obituary for Singapore not like it not like a tribute but like an obituary does that make sense. But.

53:49.28

dina

It's fine. It's not fine.

54:00.84

Tania

Oh interesting. That's a long obituary. It's.

54:09.84

dina

I mean.

54:10.52

Jen

That's fine. Some people some some people or things have done a lot of bad shit and they need a long bit too.

54:17.00

Tania

Yeah I feel like I'm concerned about answering this question.

54:23.47

dina

Um, ok I'm goodness.

54:23.62

Jen

Okay, okay, okay wait I can I can pivot because you actually do write about this and this is really funny to me you write about crazy rich Asians which is like I don't know but like I have a very conflicted relationship with a lot of people do um but do you do you actually think your book is surprising people like in the west.

54:32.82

Tania

Ah.

54:41.10

Jen

Who only know about the shiny things about Singapore you know.

54:44.71

Tania

Oh surprising? Um I don't know it's I'm sorry I'm just so in love with Jen's dog I can't think I am lost in her eyes.

54:53.72

dina

Yeah Rosie is making very cute appearances. Yeah.

54:57.98

Jen

You just saw her in full belly. Yeah.

55:00.58

Tania

Yeah, that is like I am so disarmed right now.

55:09.70

Tania

So Easily seduced by dogs. Um I don't think it's surprise I don't think it would surprise anyone who just has a general understanding about where wealth How wealth is accumulated. Um, regardless of where they stay just kind of wealth disparity I think the idea and how wealth disparity works is the same across geography a lot of the time. Um, yeah, maybe the specifics are surprising people.

55:28.91

Jen

Um.

55:44.95

Tania

But I feel like if the issue. No if the issue of like oh shiny things come out of terrible circumstances is surprising people. It's a very particular kind of person. It's surprising and it's probably someone has not had to think about it.

55:56.96

Jen

Yeah, no I think you're right about that and I think that like I think with any yeah with any wealth. There's going to be a cost. Ah yeah and I was particularly I was actually really moved by your writing about migrant workers the different kinds of microworkers and so.

56:05.37

Tania

And.

56:11.16

Tania

Yes.

56:14.79

Jen

Which are um and particularly about like there was like a public space where they would take their day off or have or go on their days off and then they and then it was empty and everyone's like ha is this what it took to get people like it was covid I guess that yeah and I was like come on. They only had like 1 place to go like.

56:19.99

Tania

Oh.

56:27.29

Tania

Um, yeah, yeah, yeah, no I mean it was that it wasn't that they only had 1 place to go but that was that was ah um, you know they're just spots that end up.

56:33.28

Jen

Yeah.

56:40.22

Jen

Um, sure. Yeah.

56:41.13

Tania

A lot of people end up ah liking to go to so that that was just one of the spots and it was just like it's just land. It's it was honestly like a small, not even a park. It was just like a land with grass and trees and you're not using it for anything. What is the big fucking problem. Yeah.

56:53.90

dina

Um, yeah, well and then yeah it goes a little further because there is the stuff about covered for the most part especially in that essay is about like the world praising. Singapore for some aspects of their their covered mitigation plan and then the migrant workers of course being the ones who are are subjected to the virus first in greater numbers being locked.

57:11.77

Tania

Um, um, yeah, yeah.

57:27.52

dina

All together with a door that cloat locks from the outside like essentially imprisoned when they are sick. It's like yeah anyway, yeah, that whole that whole section was yeah, extremely moving I was like man we love to fail people all the time.

57:31.56

Tania

May.

57:38.34

Tania

Um, ah, fail people. Ah yeah I mean it's ah really, what struck me was um.

57:46.87

dina

Yeah.

57:54.76

Tania

I mean not everyone was locked inside with the door I think that was one incident ah that I mentioned 1 is enough but I think like what is a lot of people don't really think about is then the working conditions of Microsofts prior to covid.

57:57.99

dina

1 is enough.

57:59.46

Jen

Ah, yes, true.

58:14.55

Tania

Ah, largely what led to that problem like Micro have already been living that way. Um you know and like that kind of setup for living is it's made is made to be a disaster for community when it comes to chemical distance exactly and.

58:15.18

dina

Um, yeah.

58:27.82

dina

Yeah, like it's by design. Yeah.

58:33.66

Tania

It's um, it's a tiny tiny country like it's hard to describe like I always tell people here that a thousand literally a thousand singaporeans can fit into one Bc right? and yet there's still more people in Singapore.

58:44.94

Jen

Has.

58:51.41

Tania

So density is a huge. Is it like human density is a huge thing so it's like if you're if you're not taking care of 1 part of the population. You're not taking care of anybody right? and just yeah, it's just it was wild to me the whole the whole situation where this was happening to Micronoca is and then.

59:00.99

dina

Um, yeah.

59:10.49

Tania

A lot of international students Singapore and international students came back and were housed in like hotels like 1 person a room. Um yeah was just and observing it from afar like everything is

placed like I think when everything's on the internet you're not in it and you're just watching from afar is just.

59:14.87

dina

Oh yeah, that contrast was.

59:29.20

Tania

There's just a little bit of extra clarity that is just the disparities horrendous.

59:33.60

dina

Well an end to when most people are like in their homes Only you know like our brains were. We're also processing things so differently with like us I think a certain type of clarity because we just like didn't have other.

59:39.53

Tania

A a.

59:50.75

dina

Concerns to mess them up in a way I don't know I know that there were periods of time where I definitely felt that way and also to like the wages that these people are being paid and and yeah again, just going back to your like stellar research skills.

59:52.79

Tania

Um, yeah.

59:59.10

Tania

Um, yeah.

01:00:01.99

Jen

You know.

01:00:09.68

dina

But also the way it's integrated. Um, yeah because you're a skilled writer. You're not just giving us like weird info dumps like things are are coming in this? No oh my God Absolutely not.



01:00:12.55

Tania

Um, yeah, oh oh my God Thank you? That's like the biggest relief I'm just like oh my God This is like.

01:00:22.25

Jen

Ah.

01:00:27.46

dina

No yeah I mean I Yeah no everything was like everything was so connected to either like narrative or emotion or you know looking at the bigger picture or.

01:00:27.65

Tania

Ah, huge info dump section I Hope not yeah okay, great. Thanks.

01:00:30.78

Jen

It didn't feel like a bulleted list on buzzfeed. It was fine. It was really good.

01:00:40.60

Tania

Ah.

01:00:41.31

Tania

Oh my God yeah.

01:00:45.67

dina

Or the media that you were talking about. So yeah, no, nothing felt like that.

01:00:47.91

Tania

Thank you I feel like I walk around with this fear where it's like heartfelt memoir Now let's move into bullet points things I know are connected but you don't.

01:00:55.68

Jen

Are.

01:00:57.25

dina

But I get it though. Ok here's here's a question. Do you think that's poet brain because sometimes I wonder about that too like because I've write prose and poetry as well and sometimes I'm like oh do I Just want to put things in a list because that's like.

01:01:04.44

Tania

Oh what do you? we.

01:01:15.89

dina

A poet thing to do.

01:01:16.17

Tania

I Definitely think poet the poet brain part the poet brain part of my brain is also the part of my brain That's like this is too long this. How can I make this half it size.

01:01:24.66

dina

Oh absolutely. Absolutely.

01:01:25.90

Jen

Um, yeah, that is a hundred percent poet frame. Yeah.

01:01:32.60

dina

Yeah, yeah, it would be really fun if there was some kind of program where you looked at your poem and then it was like a little old style lawnmower and that's how you could just like get rid of the words just be like junior that would make me so happy. It's not satisfying enough to just like.

01:01:35.42

Tania

Um, yeah.

01:01:46.99

Tania

Ah, oh my god.

01:01:51.52

dina

Highlight and delete that's not I need a more satisfying experience.

01:01:56.14

Tania

I think there was an exercise and I hope I'm not blaspheming her by getting it wrong. But I was in Sharita Warner's class and you know she is a brilliant educator and a brilliant poet and there was 1 thing she made us do which was um am I getting this right? like.

01:02:07.56

dina

Um, yeah, yes.

01:02:14.54

Tania

God I'm sorry shredder I'm making this up but like draw a line find a path between the words in the poem and draw a line down in between and then just like get rid of everything on either the left or the right I think that feels similarly satisfying to your lonow idea.

01:02:30.52

dina

Um, that even as you described it I felt extremely satisfied like I was picturing it. It made me really happy.

01:02:38.36

Jen

Can you do that in prose though in prose can you do that? Just are we gonna try right now. Did I for the listeners Tonya but actually just picked up a pop copy of her book and was gonna draw a line through it but but.

01:02:40.34

Tania

Yeah Quake quake. Ah.

01:02:44.31

dina

Um, that's a great question I don't know. Um.

01:02:52.81

dina

Um, yeah, yeah, um, last week I um visited 2 of Rob Taylor's classes at the university of the Fraser Valley his fiction and poetry and in one of the classes. The fiction class they had read.

01:02:56.46

Tania

Ah, what I've been wanting to do for three months

01:03:11.39

dina

Each class had read like some of both of my work which was honestly incredible like having students read your work and they getting chuckgged about it. It's it never gets old. It's always the best you leave feeling so incredible. Um.

01:03:25.89

dina

But someone was asking me about prose poems and I always feel like to me that's the kind of thing where I maybe could do that because of the structure. Um, but also everyone's like well what do you mean? like how come it isn't a story like as I said it's not.

01:03:37.80

Jen

Um, yeah, you could.

01:03:37.49

Tania

Ah.

01:03:44.84

dina

Like I'm just kind of being the worst but then I also was like I don't know I was like I don't know man sometimes he's got to go on vibes like there's craft and sometimes vibes is craft and you just got to go with it.

01:03:57.63

Tania

2

01:03:58.50

Jen

I Don't think so I don't know just students want to hear that.

01:04:00.80

dina

No, they absolutely don't and their faces and then I had to win them back over by talking about something else because I that was not okay, just like vibes but whatever. Okay are you trying this right now. Are you looking.

01:04:08.77

Tania

Um.

01:04:15.13

Tania

No I was gonna ask you do do I do either? Oh I Just can't not look at that dog. Do either you have like I also feel like was that a red collar because I just feel.

01:04:27.68

Jen

Um, yeah, she's got a red stripy collar. Oh um.

01:04:31.56

Tania

Like it's almost matching with your lipstick and it's such a beautiful like everything is like gray scale almost in your back black white and gray scale then there's you and Rosie and that pop of color makes my day. Oh lady and red.

01:04:34.75

dina

Um, it's true. It is beautiful.

01:04:44.30

Jen

She always wears red just if you're wondering she looks She looks nice and red. Ah.

01:04:44.18

dina

Yeah, um.

01:04:47.79

dina

Mr. Hanson with me. Yeah, let's rerecord christberg. What about Rosie.

01:04:50.16

Tania

Rosy and red. Ah.

01:04:56.54

Jen

She she's into it. She's into it. Sorry tell you you were saying about. Um you had a question or.

01:05:01.40

Tania

Ah sorry I was just still thinking about dancing with Rosie I was going to I was going to ask whether either if you have like definitions or what a prose poem is either or both.

01:05:02.98

dina

Um, this is.

01:05:14.90

Jen

Um, if I had to say it's It's for me, it's something too short and too weird to be a story like a short story. Um, and that like because you know when you're writing like actual fiction like either story length or book length. You're always being asked to.

01:05:29.81

Tania

Ah.

01:05:31.47

Jen

Expand or you're being asked to set the scene or you're being asked to like write some dialogue or you know all of these elements that come to play in like a larger fiction work or often do not always, but for me a prose poem is something that where I actually is a topic or a theme or whatever that I don't think needs any of that shit. So yeah, that's what I would say.

01:05:39.89

Tania

Ah.

01:05:48.83

Tania

Um, right.

01:05:50.75

Jen

So process of elimination sometimes. But um, yeah, you have an idea that doesn't suit any of those things but you do know? yeah.

01:05:58.69

dina

That's interesting. Yeah I mean I feel like I think they can be somewhat interchangeable to me depending on how much narrative is in there. So I think.

01:06:11.29

Tania

Oh.

01:06:15.89

dina

Sometimes a prose poem truly has the classic beginning middle and an end but I also like I also write short stories I also do write some flash fiction. So like. All of these things are different but I don't know I feel like prose poetry and flash fiction are just really close and you can call it. Whatever you want based on the needs of why you are writing it and I think that's fine like. If you want to publish a collection of flash. You know like what am I going to tell Lydia Davis that all her stories are prose poems. Absolutely not listen if you think I don't want to get into a weird conversation with Lydia Davis I absolutely do I love her? Um, but yeah like amy.

01:06:56.28

Jen

I Want you to tell Lydia Japa stuff.

01:07:05.32

Jen

I just still like that. Oh no I was just gonna say as a heads up I have to make dinner in like 10 minutes yeah although she sorry.

01:07:08.89

dina

Yeah.

01:07:13.37

dina

Ok, well, we'll start to we'll start to wrap up um, hi Rosie she's probably hungry. Also I know but you got to pla put it in the dish. Um.

01:07:15.71

Tania

Oh hi Rosie.

01:07:23.29

Jen

I Don't cook her dinner. Ah yes, true.

01:07:29.40

Tania

Um, ah also she doesn't know that.

01:07:31.45

dina

Okay, Jen yeah, it's true. She doesn't know absolutely she's like oh this um gen do you have your emotion corner prepared. Ok so.

01:07:33.16

Jen

She thinks the assembly is cooking. Yeah.

01:07:41.94

Jen

Um I do I Do do you want to set a timer.

01:07:45.64

Tania

Was an emotion corner.

01:07:49.93

dina

Um, jen gets to be emotional for 1 minute ok yeah I'm going to time you and your time starts now.

01:07:58.50

Jen

1 second. Okay, it's been a really busy few months to me with many wonderful things which included like being on the jury for the carol shields fiction prize for women and and was really wonderful because I got to do that with former guests in front of the podcast Eden Robinson who we love. Um. But I have realized over this period of time when I was doing a lot of work with other people which I usually don't do is that there's like a segment of canlet that will always resist change and some of those people have a lot of power and influence some of them don't but I haven't actually considered them in a while. They're kind of a a you know portion of the peanut gallery I don't think about. But recently I was sort of confronted with it and it made me really sad to think that like all of this work that I feel like we've been doing to make this industry like more equitable and inclusive and welcoming for some people has been for nothing doesn't matter to them or in fact, they're actually actively trying to resist it. But. I had to remember that it's not for nothing because the evidence is there in the books being published in the way that we're being edited or promoted in the conversations that I know that I have with my friends and like my colleagues and just because a few racists get to air their shitty opinions in public just to be provocative doesn't mean that our work isn't meaningful. And it just means that we're actually just waiting for all the races to die and stop.

01:09:16.57

dina

And no I mean listen I let you go a bit over time because it felt right. It felt right? Okay I'm ready. Oh.

01:09:23.53

Jen



It it felt good. Ah so Dina now gets to do a rage minute. Okay wait. Let me get my timer timer. Okay I only ever use a timer for this exact purpose. Okay go.

01:09:36.00

dina

So ok so it's been sunny for four days but now it's going to go back to not being sunny and like cool cool I know it's got a rain and I also know Jane sibri said it can't rain all the time because that was on the crow soundtrack. And also there are a lot of crows out there being their best crow selves and where was I oh yeah I could use more sun. My apartment is so messy and I guess that's my fault it means I have to clean it which is a very upsetting fact. It is a bad fact I don't like it. Do you ever think about. How you'll never be able to retire. Yeah that fucking sucks. Um satin is a fabric seems to be popular again. Militarism being tired and not being able to take a nap male managers people who are jerks to baristas my friends.

01:10:21.30

Tania

Oh.

01:10:30.21

dina

Head's dying Oppenheimer one to many Oscars wait is that a minute. Ok great. So are just.

01:10:38.54

Jen

Ah, yeah, oh it is now.

01:10:46.68

dina

Some of the things I'm mad about.

01:10:48.59

Jen

We've taught we've actually talked about Oppenheimer likes 3 episodes in a row now just said don't see it.

01:10:50.22

dina

I Know we have to we we have to have a no oppenheimer talk now moving forward.

01:10:50.83

Tania

Oh really I haven't seen it.

01:10:58.22

Tania

I think 10 seconds why do you hate Oppenheimer.

01:11:01.90

dina

I don't even know that I hate it as up I saw the first hour and I was like I can't keep this up I don't have I don't have this kind of stamina.

01:11:04.59

Jen

Um, ah I I did you even see it I saw it. Oh.

01:11:05.73

Tania

I Did a.

01:11:13.65

Jen

It's three and a half hours long it's so long.

01:11:17.87

dina

And it's just like so many men talking and looking at each other and like having really meaningful looking faces I don't know it just wasn't for me. It was a lot of acting which I guess is great but I did it wasn't for me.

01:11:29.78

Jen

The but the best part of it is like the 30 seconds that Albert Einstein is in it. That's about it all he did was feed the birds. Um.

01:11:34.35

dina

I did also even felt like that was weird like if you had just shown me a movie where Albert Einstein was feeding birds you know I'd be on board I do love.

01:11:40.98

Tania

Ah, ah.

01:11:47.72

Jen

Yeah, he seemed cool. Ah.

01:11:49.19

Tania

I can't I can't get past three and a half hours

01:11:52.19

dina

Birds. No, it's too. There's no demons and there's like so much time in boardrooms and courtrooms and offices. It's very brown like not in a.

01:11:54.41

Jen

Nots too long and there's and there's no demons. It's It's just men that's.

01:11:56.84

Tania

Um I can't get Blas mystery in our house.

01:12:11.34

Jen

Know in like a in like a woollying queedy way.

01:12:11.89

dina

Beautiful way in like a we're going to draw. Yeah like we're actually like a deaning color like yeah, that was my vibe I don't know people who like Oppenheimer I don't want to hear about it.

01:12:21.20

Tania

It's three and a half hours of draining color from the world. Essentially.

01:12:28.41

Jen

No.

01:12:31.55

dina

Um, Jens yeah, we've already talked the story. We can't talk about this tell the story anymore we're done talking about Oppenheimer our Oppenheimer Podcast is over. We never finish it if you want to watch a movie that takes place in a courtroom please watch anatomy of a fall instead. Because that movie has a woman in it and she's good. She's very good. She's very good. It also has a super cute dog. So listen. Yeah I'm just going to say it right now. This dog is incredible.

01:12:52.87

Tania

Oh It's come to This hasn't it. But. Oh sold.

01:13:08.35

dina

His real name is messy but in the movie his name is Snoop which is such a cute name for a dog  
a Snoop Snoopy adorable

01:13:11.50

Tania

Oh my god.

01:13:13.37

Jen

Oh I ah Rosie has a friend named Snoopy. Oh she hated him at first because she doesn't like anybody and then he realized that her main trigger is direct eye contact. So then he started to approach her sideways. Like like this because he was really yeah, true and he was so determined to get her to like him. So now she actually doesn't mind him because he listened to her boundaries. Ah he literally sidesteps to her.

01:13:34.63

dina

Um.

01:13:42.67

dina

Um I Love this. It's It's such a beautiful. That's a beautiful story.

01:13:44.45

Tania

This is the best story.

01:13:50.80

Jen

Like without looking at her like ah yeah, it's funny. Yeah.

01:13:50.57

dina

It's I love it. That's incredible and you know what? yeah this love story is how we're going to end the podcast except for we have 1 more question t does anyone ever call you tdr.

01:13:53.93

Tania

This is a love story for the ages. Ah.

01:14:06.30

Tania

Ah, you you do now I guess.

01:14:07.30

dina

Great.

01:14:13.00

dina

Because I have 3 initials I like when other people have 3 initials is that cool. Yeah, you can be  
yes great. We're doing we're doing great um what can't you with.

01:14:14.76

Jen

Same. She's ddb I'm Jsl you can be td here.

01:14:19.43

Tania

Cool I am Tdr for today. But.

01:14:27.25

Tania

I Know you asked me this question in advance and I could not come up with an answer because  
honestly, it's one of those situations where we're at a point in time where what can I with like  
honestly I just I can't with everything I can't with.

01:14:37.29

dina

How do you choose? yeah.

01:14:45.76

Tania

Racism with the Xenophobia the classicism the Queer Transphobia the fucking genocide I can't  
with everything come with the world.

01:14:50.63

dina

Um, yeah, yeah, that's absolutely fair. And yeah, we got Snoopy and Rosie that's beautiful also  
listeners.

01:14:58.39

Jen

The only thing we can with this is Snoopy and Rosie that's that's it

01:15:02.70

Tania

Yes, all.

01:15:09.56

dina

We can with this incredible book. Um, please read dinner on Monster Island It is out Now you can get it from your local bookstore. You can get it from the library you can. Apparently there's an audio book. There's so many ways for you to enjoy this Book. Which is what we want you to do? Thank you so much for yeah, Thank you for being on the podcast. This was a great episode. It was super wonderful and now we must say Goodbye Goodbye Goodbye bye.

01:15:30.76

Tania

Thank you.