



Waves of YA, Episode 48, Sunrise on the Reaping

Transcript:

00;00;04;22 - 00;00;19;07

Vince

[CASEY] Hello and welcome to waves of a podcast focused on YA literacy, brought to you by the Ocean County Library's Teen Literacy Workgroup. My name is Casey, and joining me today we have...

00;00;19;09 - 00;00;23;09

Vince

[VINCE] My name is Vince and I'm from Manchester.

00;00;23;12 - 00;00;26;08

Ryan

[RYAN] Hi, my name is Ryan. I'm from Toms River library.

00;00;26;11 - 00;00;47;00

Casey

[CASEY] And I am from the Lakewood Library. Today's episode will be focused on Sunrise on the Reaping by Suzanne Collins, the newest Hunger Games prequel book about Haymitch Abernathy's Hunger Games. The first question we have is what is your relationship with the series? When did you first start reading it and all that jazz?

00;00;47;02 - 00;01;29;13

Vince

[VINCE] I honestly didn't hear about The Hunger Games until I was in my freshman year of college and Montclair State University, which would have been 2010, 2011. I vaguely know what a battle royale is. There's this Japanese series called Battle Royale, but I only knew a little bit about it. I wasn't really hardcore into it, but everyone in the dorm that I was in was passing this book along. Or not even passing it. Just buying and reading it and talking about it. And I just wanted to be a part of it because I thought, like as a freshman, I gotta, you know, bond with my fellow college people. And as soon as I started reading it, I was - this was crazy. I couldn't believe it.

00;01;29;15 - 00;02;02;01

Ryan

[RYAN] Yeah. That's cool. For me, it actually was Staff Development Day. So this was like right before the first book came out and they were doing, like, a reader's advisory thing. The teen librarians at the time, and they're like, oh, if you like battle royale or if you like dystopian type fiction, there's this book called The Hunger Games. That was when the first one was out, and so it wasn't even a trilogy yet. It must have been 2007. And then once I finished that, I was like, oh my gosh, where is the next one? I gotta keep reading, so...

00;02;02;04 - 00;02;38;00

Casey

[CASEY] Yeah, I first read the series, I want to say in 2012, but don't quote me. And it was before the first movie came out. It took me a while to get into reading as a kid and a teenager. So at this point I was like kind of getting into it. But I remember the reason why I picked up this book is because my mother was horrified, came home talking about this book. "Oh my goodness, they have a book about kids killing each other. This is terrible!" And I was like, it sounds like I need to go read this book. [laughs] So that's how it started. How terrible is that? But it was worth it.

00;02;38;03 - 00;02;42;03

Vince

[VINCE] No, the the best decision in your life, I'd say.

00;02;42;05 - 00;02;52;22

Ryan

[RYAN] So now that we've got that out of the way, the start of the series, how did you guys feel about the news of the second prequel when this was announced? I think it was last year.

00;02;52;24 - 00;03;27;02

Vince

[VINCE] Honestly, I was just talking to Casey about this before. I read A Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes, and I just wasn't hooked on it the way I was with the original three. I don't know what it was about it, maybe because I just hate it Snow, like we all do. And I'm like, "Why do I care about this dude?" But I was just I was not feeling it. And then when I heard about this and it turns out, oh my gosh, we're going to be getting Haymitch's story. And yeah, it's never really clarified in the original trilogy. I think it's like a brief outline of like...

00;03;27;03 - 00;03;30;17

Ryan

[RYAN] Yeah, it was like a paragraph maybe, or something like that.

00;03;30;19 - 00;03;35;12

Vince

[VINCE] We know about the forcefield. We know about the, boomerang effect.

00;03;35;15 - 00;03;38;21

Ryan

[RYAN] It was the second Quarter Quell, I think was all we were given or something.

00;03;38;27 - 00;04;07;23

Vince

[VINCE] Yeah, yeah, but it was just so fascinating. And Casey knows about this. And you know about this, Ryan. Haymitch is a mess. He's an alcoholic. You wonder what happened in this guy's life to make him just a hollow, empty, dead shell of a person. And then I'm like, oh, my gosh, this guy's lost. And I can't believe he has to coach Katniss and Peeta. And then we are getting the real behind the scenes.

00;04;07;26 - 00;04;47;25

Casey

[CASEY] I was so excited. Haymitch has been one of my - he was my favorite character off that. I was so excited. I was like, I need to know why he has such a bad substance problem. What happened? Because obviously the games are extremely traumatic for everyone that goes in. But what specifically had it to that degree? And it's so interesting to see that he is so against alcohol in his youth. We get that little bit in the book and then he can't handle it and he just turns to alcohol. But I was so excited. I love Haymitch, he's so sassy.

00;04;48;00 - 00;05;57;15

Vince

[RYAN] Yes, yeah, he's very sassy, which is funny. Yeah, for me, I think it was because when they did the announcement, I think it was at first I was like, oh, another prequel. And, you know, and a little bit of a spoiler for our next question, but same with Vince, I was like, I was not really feeling Songbirds and Snakes. It's good. It's not great. It's there. Whatever. And then it was announced and it was like, oh it's Haymitch. Okay. That made the interest go up way, way, way way more. And there was some trepidation because when they announced, I think they also announced they're going to do a movie adaptation as well. And I'm like, when it first came out, I was like, oh great. Another one. Okay, fine. But then I started getting excited about it and sort of reading more about it, and I was like, oh, okay. And then obviously now we've all read the book and we're all like, oh my gosh, this is amazing. I cannot wait to talk. And and, you know, eventually there'll be the movie of it. So to see it. But I think yeah, initially at first I was like, mmm, but then again announced that it was Haymitch. It was like, oh, okay, that's much better than the other prequel.

00;05;57;18 - 00;06;01;28

Vince

[VINCE] Do you both - do you have thoughts on the first prequel?

00;06;02;00 - 00;06;45;14

Casey

[CASEY] So - bad librarian - I didn't read the prequel, the first prequel But I... watched the movie, and that wasn't even until probably a couple of months ago. I just really had no interest, I think because I despise President Snow so aggressively that I was like, no, I cannot get behind this. So I watched the movie and I really liked it. I have the prequel book, Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes. I believe it is. I'm on

hold. I'm number three. It's coming soon, so I'm hoping I will enjoy. But based on what you guys just said, maybe not. I don't know.

00;06;45;16 - 00;08;02;11

Ryan

[RYAN] Well, for me, I think I want to say that came out 2020, right? Like right around COVID lockdown-ish because that's when, yeah, I listened to it on hoopla because, like, I had the app and I was like, all right, there's we're not obviously going back to work. There's not much going on. Oh look new Hunger Games book. Okay, what's it about. Oh it's about Snow. Okay. He's the bad guy. That could be kind of different. Interesting. Maybe so yeah I listen to it. And the narrator was just not great. He wasn't bad, he wasn't great. It was just like a middle of the road kind of narrator and I think that put me off of it. And then I struggled a lot with both centering it as snow as the main. And then Lucy Gray, also as a character, too, I had struggled with. Although what's funny now is having seen the movie just recently, the prequel movie, having come back to that, I'm like, oh, actually, she's a much better character. I still don't like Snow, but Lucy Gray is a much better, more fleshed out character. That movie portrayal, I think, and that might be an adaptation change, but that kind of does make it a little bit more interesting. If you go back to read the book versus in listening to it. What do you think, Vince?

00;08;02;13 - 00;08;47;01

Vince

[VINCE] Oh, man, I'm on board with both of you. Like you, I hate this guy. Like we hate this guy. And it's I kind of liken it to reading about the childhood of someone like Adolf Hitler. I mean, we know he's going to grow up and do terrible things to people that we love. And I'm just like, why do I care about you? You're just awful, but I guess the sole redeeming quality about that book, just like what Ryan said was Lucy Gray. And I think what's fascinating is that she's almost never talked about any of it. She's barely mentioned. And then as you're reading through it, you begin to realize, oh, man, was she, like, wiped from history? Are we, like, not allowed to know about this girl?

00;08;47;04 - 00;09;01;28

Casey

[CASEY] I think Snow did that on purpose. Like he was so... this girl broke my heart. No one is ever going to know she existed and how she beat the games or whatever. I think he was just so salty. He was like, "She never existed."

00;09;02;01 - 00;09;07;06

Ryan

[RYAN] Yeah. He was so hurt or broken up by that. He was just like, gone.

00;09;07;08 - 00;09;20;16

Vince

[VINCE] And that's so messed up because The Hunger Games is such a traumatic, terrible thing. And just to have everything you've done during it not even know about nobody knows about your trauma. Nobody knows about your pain. Nobody knows about the people you lost.

00:09;20;18 - 00:09;26;13

Casey

[CASEY] So what did we think of the book as a whole? Here come the spoilers, everybody.

00:09;26;13 - 00:09;28;27

Ryan

[RYAN] Spoiler warning, spoiler warning.

00:09;28;27 - 00:10;35;04

Vince

[VINCE] Spoiler warning. I think it was amazing. Like both of you, I think we explored when the podcast began. I think we were all in the same boat that this book is amazing. Not only does it really highlight more about Haymitch's character and what he's been through, but it actually shows how messed up propaganda is. All of the amazing things that Haymitch does, or all of the things his interactions with his allies and his people. They're omitted or they're changed up or the trauma that they experienced nobody knows about except them. And I think there's just something so hopeless about that. You're fighting this government, and this government is like this monolith, and you cannot win no matter what you do. You're an unsung hero and no one's going to know about your struggle. And I think that's what hit us the most about it. I think it's just that all of the amazing things that Haymitch does is not known about, except by him... That's insane.

00:10;35;07 - 00:12;37;04

Ryan

[RYAN] Yeah, I definitely agree. Yeah. There was definitely that theme of propaganda. And then all of the slogans, No Peace or something like that with the peacemakers, that sort of thing. So like, they're doing their own propaganda posters. But then amazingly and Haymitch, you know, they come up with, we're going to do our own posters for this. And on one hand, I wonder if they're so optimistic that they have to show this in the games, but not realizing that it's edited. And then we, the reader at the end, you know, when we see the edited versions and all those propaganda versions of it, we experienced that gut punch with Haymitch at the same time. But yeah, this again, like I said, it initially had some trepidation with it, but there's surpassed my expectations as like, this is probably one of the better prequels in terms of like prequels as a whole, but also like out of the two that we have for this series, I would say this is definitely the better one. Like, I would recommend this one over Songbirds and Snakes. Definitely. Just because. Yeah, yeah. And I think even though like we had said in the beginning, like we knew what happened to Haymitch, he went to the games. He was the only survivor. He was one of two from district 12. In terms of the champions victors. But we didn't know exactly what happened. We didn't know who the characters were in his games. We didn't know what the arena was like. We didn't know what his strategy was, all that stuff. So to, like, to find that stuff out and then to also have it as a prequel with other characters from the trilogy, they're much younger and stuff like that. I thought that was really good because it didn't feel like a cameo or anything like that. Like, oh, here's Effie Trinket, here's Beetee, you know, Mags and Meyers, all those characters. It's like, oh, no, they're just a part of this world. We're meeting them at this time, and then they're going to become more extended within the trilogy and stuff. So it was like, oh, okay, that I really liked.

00:12;37;04 - 00:14;39;04

Casey

[CASEY] Yeah, I loved this book. But before I get into why I wanted to go back to a specific quote I just remembered about how, like, you know, the victors still have all these issues after everything that goes on. And I remember it, I want to say it was either Haymitch or Plutarch that say, "There are no victors, there's only survivors." And it's true, like the victors aren't victors, you know, especially when you look at the original series, what happened to, Finnick after when he won his games and he was forced to, we'll say accompany adults when he was 14 years old. There are no victors. And I don't think it ever processed for me while I was reading the books and even seeing the first few books, and then seeing the first three movies that the capital in my mind was, oh, there's playing everything live, you know, they don't edit anything. And then in this book, Miss Collins makes it very clear, oh yeah, they edit everything to look this way and this way, I was just like, mind blown. But, yes, I loved this book. Everything about it. I couldn't put it down. I finished it in less than a week. It made me cry. Not in a fun way, but that's okay. The Hunger Games will do that to you. And it was so nice to experience. Like you said, the older characters come back, but with their younger selves like it was very even though terrible things happen to all of them, it was very heartwarming and exciting. I was like, oh, that's Beetee. Oh my God, Mags, she's speaking. And just Beetee's storyline. I never had realized how awful it was for him. Again - spoiler - how his son died getting eaten alive by rabid squirrels. Holy moly. And then he had to basically deal with that, cause then you find out his wife is expecting another baby. It's just - [sighs] - but yes, I liked the book. [laughs]

00:14;39;06 - 00:15;11;18

Voiceover 1

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00:15;11;20 - 00:15;13;09

Casey

[CASEY] Ryan, do you want to do the next question?

00:15;13;15 - 00:15;20;22

Ryan

[RYAN] Yeah. So the next question, obviously, does it live up to the hype? So take it away, Vince.

00:15;20;25 - 00:17;07;04

Vince

[VINCE] Absolutely. Just like all of you, I am in the same boat and we are sailing in the same sea. This book exceeded all of our expectations and just something about it. Me and Casey were talking about this. She said, and I quote, "This is so much more visceral than the other one." And I completely agree with her that the violence was amplified, the relationships of loss were amplified, the stakes were so much higher. And I think what really got to me was just despite everything, despite all the like,

unfairness and disadvantages piled against them, there's a spirit of rebellion. Their feistiness almost never dampened until the very end. There's this quote I think where like, I think Maysilee is my favorite character. She's like hyping them up before they meet all the other tributes. And they're like, like it's like, "Hey, you know, we're loose cannons. We're renegades. No one messes with us." And they're like, "Yeah!" The newcomers, it's just like, that's why I think we all love this book. It's just not just Haymitch, but all of them are rebels in their own little ways. Some of them are just snuffed out before like anyone ever knows about it. And we only know about it because we read it. There's this one thing I love how Casey brought up a quote. I bookmarked my book. So this very quote, when they're all taken for the first time and they're put on the train and Haymitch says, oh, this is spoiler alert, spoiler, I'm sorry.

00;17;07;07 - 00;17;09;06

Ryan

[RYAN] Hit that spoiler button.

00;17;09;09 - 00;17;28;23

Vince

They're on the train and they're leaving, and Lenore Dove is sitting and she sees them pass by and she says, and she lets out this scream into the rain. It's raining. And like there was this time when, like, Plutarch and the others wanted to like, film their reactions and like, Haymitch was like, "That's enough. Stop it."

00;17;28;25 - 00;17;44;15

Vince

And Lenore Dove did not give in to that. And there was this quote that Haymitch says that she's denied Plutarch the chance to broadcast our farewell, "The moment our hearts shatter, it belongs to us." So that's all I have to say about that.

00;17;44;17 - 00;17;46;02

Casey

[CASEY] Mic drop.

00;17;46;05 - 00;17;48;08

Ryan

[RYAN] Yeah. Boom!

00;17;48;10 - 00;17;49;27

Vince

00;17;50;00 - 00;18;19;23

Casey

[CASEY] I agree. This was more than the hype. It was so good. I cannot wait for the movie to come out. I keep looking to see if they've done castings yet. But yeah, like, this book was just - it felt more high

stakes, gorier, more emotionally painful. It just blew my mind. Like I said, I couldn't put it down. It was so good and it was just great.

00;18;19;25 - 00;19;42;24

Ryan

[RYAN] Yeah. For me, yeah, it definitely lived up to the hype. I got this - when did it come out? It came out on Tuesday and I finished it by like Wednesday afternoon. So like yeah, I just literally could not put this down. I was so engrossed into it, just sucked into it because it is like Vince said, this one is very visceral. This one, like, Lenore's scream, the crying in the rain. It sounds very cheesy when you say it out loud, but it's so visceral. That level of hurt and anger and anguish and like unfairness. That's, like, I think one of the themes too, is like just how unfair and how the deck is stacked against these tributes and they mention that in the book. But it's just, man, these kids, you want them, you want them to survive. And unfortunately that's the thing too. And it's just that you know they're not. So how is this going to play out in that sense? And then I think too now, I'm actually really excited for the movie. I think that's what's going to be the most interesting thing to see is who they get casting in terms of the younger actors to play the characters that we already know from the other three movies. And then who is going to you feel like would best embody those characters that are so visceral on the page? That's what I'm curious about to see next. Did you guys listen to any of the audiobook a little bit or no?

00;19;42;26 - 00;19;44;25

Casey

[CASEY] No, I didn't, just read the book.

00;19;45;02 - 00;19;50;23

Vince

[VINCE] I'm just like Casey. I'm not into audio. I just read.

00;19;50;25 - 00;20;16;00

Ryan

[RYAN] Oh. It's okay. I was just curious if it was, like, a good narrator this time. I'm not shading on the audiobook. It's just I think that last one was just like... But then again, you know, like I said, compared to the other one, this is if I'm going to recommend this to a teen or an adult, I hear there's a new Hunger Games, like, yeah, start with this one first. If you're interested, go and do Songbirds and Snakes and then do that. Yeah.

00;20;16;02 - 00;20;51;26

Casey

[CASEY] I have a quick side question because that's just popped into my head. Haymitch was causing all of those problems and being super rebellious through all throughout the games, right? So President Snow could have just made a phone call and said to the game makers, hey, take this guy out, but he chose to instead make him suffer by going after his loved ones, which is awful. But do we think that maybe he went with that option instead of just silencing him because he feels for him? Because he was in love with the covey girl, and he images in love with the covey girl.

00;20;51;29 - 00;20;53;15

Casey

[CASEY] I will go up there.

00;20;53;22 - 00;21;18;10

Vince

[VINCE] That's... a good thing. I think he's just a twisted, sadistic person who wants to make Haymitch suffer in the most terrible way possible. But maybe he wanted to get back at Lucy Baird because she's from the same clan, and she's a little tinker to the girl he loves. I'm going to also take out your family line.

00;21;18;13 - 00;22;38;03

Ryan

[RYAN] Spoiler. Spoiler warning too. There you go. So there's that scene where they're in the library. President Snow and Haymitch and to your point, Vince, they talk about, oh, I used to be - I know about all your - the covey's ways and district twelve's and all those things. So I wonder if Snow has that hurt and resentment. And in a sense, he's never gotten past that. So he's still like this wounded 18 year old, even though at this point I think he's 40, 45, you know, a grown adult. So he's never gotten past that age, something like that. No. It's okay. I'm not like pinning down the timeline or anything, but yeah, he's never gotten past adolescent hurt of it. So he's lashing out. And the other thing too, I think, is that if he just said to the game makers, you know, just kill Haymitch right away, bang, bang, boom, I think that would be like a martyr type thing. You know, they could do it that way. But also, I think he really just wants to make this kid who's thumbed his nose at the Capitol, whether it's going to be broadcast or not, to suffer like, oh, you did this. What you did with Louella's body in front of us. Okay, well, I'm going to kill your whole family, you know, like I'm going to make an example of you to make you suffer.

00;22;38;10 - 00;23;07;01

Vince

[VINCE] I also think because he's the only survivor and everyone else is dead, the sum of everyone's deeds and actions, like he can't punish Amber. Amber is in the ground. So, like, in a way he's making them suffer, but he's also making every single thing tiny, big, small that the newcomers did, he's just putting it all on Haymitch's back. It's like you're going to bear the sins of your compatriots or something.

00;23;07;02 - 00;23;28;29

Ryan

[RYAN] Yeah, it's all your fault. And I think that sort of leads into his substance abuse issues later on. Obviously we see and then the death of - and again spoiler warning, sorry - and it's going to lead into our next question in a minute, but the death of Lenore too at the end. So, if Vince, you want to get to the next question.

00;23;29;01 - 00;23;35;20

Vince

[VINCE] Absolutely. Which character death for both of you hurt you the most?

00;23;35;23 - 00;23;59;01

Casey

[CASEY] Okay, so all of them were awful, right? But for me, it was Wellie. She was this poor little thing up in a tree, starving and dying of dehydration. Haymitch finally finds her. She comes down. She's scared. She's terrified. She's not doing good, he doesn't think she's going to make it. And then we think, okay, it's going to turn out, it's going to be fine.

00;23;59;03 - 00;24;01;27

Casey

And then I think, was it Silka?

00;24;02;00 - 00;24;03;08

Ryan

[RYAN] Yes. Silka, yeah.

00;24;03;08 - 00;24;28;06

Casey

[CASEY] One of the couriers, just decides to really choose violence, right? And just cut their head off, like, ow, that is not a quick death. That is painful and terrifying. And then poor Haymitch is over here doing something. He turns around and then the way they describe it, there was her body, and there was her head. It was unbelievable. And I think, Wellie, she was also 12, like she was young.

00;24;28;14 - 00;24;29;13

Ryan

[RYAN] She was young. Yeah.

00;24;29;20 - 00;24;42;25

Casey

[CASEY] And had a horrific death. I was tearing up throughout the entire book that I was ugly crying. I was like, that was unnecessary, Suzanne Collins. [laughs] So, that was it for me.

00;24;42;28 - 00;26;05;06

Ryan

[RYAN] Yeah, to Casey's point, yeah, almost all of these deaths are horrible, horrific. And again, and to the point we've been saying at the beginning is I think you just feel them more compared to the other ones. Again, Wellie's death was just horrible. Amber's death is, you know, it's, yeah, Casey just gave it like a full body shudder listening. It's horrible, like, it sounds like something - and I'm not going to try to spoil it too much - but it sounds like something out of a cartoon. But it's such a visceral - and I apologize if I get a little upset here - it's such like a visceral thing. And then I think they're all just kind of mean deaths, too. The one I think about the most, too, is in the beginning when, it's Woodbine, the boy who was supposed to go ahead of Haymitch in District 12, and he bolts, he panics, and they just kill him like that instantly. I mean, obviously this is a book that doesn't play around when it comes to character deaths, but it's like, no, no, no, everything is off the table now. We're doing anything and everything to show you how cruel and horrible the capital really is. At the height of what they're doing in terms of

propaganda, in terms of violence, in terms of death, none of these characters are safe. We are going to break your hearts, readers.

00;26;05;08 - 00;26;17;11

Casey

[CASEY] And the way that their chaperone Drusilla speaks to the like, the way that they speak to the kids. Oh, little piglets. I was like this lady needs to get whacked.

00;26;17;12 - 00;26;48;23

Ryan

[RYAN] Yeah, dehumanizing them. Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. Dehumanizing them. Just treating them like animals. That was one of the themes too. The Silas they had before Effie comes back, Magno? I hope I'm saying that right. What a jerk. He's such a jerk. He just clearly does not care. And he clearly is just like, whatever, this is beneath me, I don't care. I'm going to go do my stuff. And, I'll leave that vague for reasons. And then then go ahead. I'm going to I don't want to take over your time, Vince, go ahead.

00;26;48;23 - 00;28;02;16

Vince

[VICNE] Honestly, I'm glad you both brought up Drusilla, because my favorite character and the character death that hit me the most was probably Maysilee. Because in the original trilogy, we know about her because of the Mockingjay pin, and we know she worked with Haymitch. But like I said, this propaganda thing blocked that all out, so we didn't really know the depth of their relationship and the fact that he viewed her as a sister. You remember that thing you said in Amber, "Yeah, I'll be your sister." It's like, "Good night, sis." It's so, she starts off the meanest girl in town, and I think that's what we love about her. Because she gives Priscilla her business. She slaps her back. And the whole time I'm watching her rebellion after rebellion. That's why Heyman's rebelled. But everyone else rebelled in their own little ways, too. If Maysilee survived, she had a lot to answer for. And the whole time I'm reading about her, like all of us, and then cheering her on when she goes boss mode. I keep thinking of that. This is going to sound silly, but that Doja Cat song "Paint the Town Red" and I don't know if you know about it. I'm not going to sing like the explicit lyrics, but there's this thing, like...

00;28;02;18 - 00;28;04;07

Casey

[CASEY] Good idea.

00;28;04;10 - 00;28;20;13

Vince

[VINCE] "You're bad little B, she's a rebel." Like... the whole time she was just giving everyone, insulting them, insulting their jewelry, insulting their clothing. Then I'm like, man, she has no chill and she has no reason to have chill.

00;28;20;15 - 00;28;21;20

Ryan

[RYAN] Exactly.

00;28;21;22 - 00;28;24;04

Casey

[CASEY] She has some sick burns on Drusilla.

00;28;24;07 - 00;28;25;08

Vince

[VINCE] Yes.

00;28;25;10 - 00;28;26;22

Ryan

[RYAN] Well deserved though. Well deserved.

00;28;26;24 - 00;28;28;07

Casey

[CASEY] Yes. Well deserved.

00;28;28;09 - 00;29;10;11

Vince

[VINCE] I think it's the fact that in the original trilogy it made it seem like they just said goodbye and went on their ways, but in the book, they're thinking about separating. And then she says, "I'm going to go back for the potatoes and then we'll talk about this." So they didn't really abandon each other. They were just at a crossroads. Five, four of them left and they're like, I don't know what to do. And she's like his a rival in rebellion. She's like his rival in trouble. I think that one hit me the most. But I'll end this question to all of you since we're on the topic and I'll let you both speak. How did we feel about Lenore?

00;29;10;13 - 00;30;10;10

Casey

[CASEY] So now again, I watched the movie for Ballard of Songbirds and Snakes. I didn't read the book, so I found Lucy Gray a little bit irritating. And therefore, I feel like that oozed with her into my feelings for Lenore. They made it obvious she was keeping secrets from Haymitch. And I'm just like Haymitch, my sweet little baby bird. Like, be good to him. What are you doing? So I think that's why I wasn't exact. Like, obviously, I was upset for Haymitch when she passed, but I don't know, I just I wasn't really interested in her as a character. Like, I get why she was important to the story, especially like, Haymitch's and all that jazz, but I just I was like, like, I don't know you covey girls, I don't know, maybe I'm a little bit too much like President Snow. I don't know. So that's how I feel about that.

00;30;10;12 - 00;32;08;05

Ryan

[RYAN] Yeah. To your point, yeah, I was a little not great with Lenore. I definitely liked her better than Lucy Gray, I would say. I felt and maybe this is probably outside of the deaths in terms of things I don't like about the book, I do wish it was a little bit longer just so we could sort of be in District 12 a little bit more. So we do a little more like character development of Lenore, some of the other townspeople that we see, you know, who eventually, you know, like some of them turn out to be like Katniss's mom and

dad and things like that, which is cool, but they're only there for a couple of pages and it's like, oh, okay. And then I would have liked a little more development for some of the other tributes as well, because, again, spoiler warning, most of them die in like the first batch of The Hunger Games within, like the first ten minutes or something like that. So it's like, okay, I guess we're not going to figure out what these other newcomers are like where these other characters were. And I'm not against Haymitch having a relationship that affects him so deeply and so painfully that he can't talk about it. And then it does add another layer of like we were talking about before, that it's his fault that she had passed, you know, that she was she was murdered. But, it adds to that level and adds to his issues and his substance abuse and all those things. But I do kind of wish what we got with the character was a little bit stronger in terms of development and some kind of character, rather than she's just, oh, she's keeping secrets. She's a covey girl. She can sing, she can dance, you know, like, okay, a little more, please. Like if we're comparing them to Katniss and Peeta and Gale and characters like that, then I felt like those characters are way more developed. I mean, I like some of their characteristics, but at least have a better understanding of who they are versus who these two are, if that makes sense.

00;32;08;05 - 00;32;12;04

Casey

[CASEY] Yeah. No, I 100% agree. What about you, Vince?

00;32;12;07 - 00;32;54;00

Vince

[VINCE] I completely agree with you both, especially with what Ryan said. I won't spoil anything but how it is Haymitch's fault and it's something so innocent. See, anyone could have made that mistake because how can you know that sort of thing would happen? It's her favorite gumdrops and the fact that she saved the gum drops that he gave her in the first place, and she's like, this just adds to it, and it's too late. She already swallowed one. And the fact that it was right after she was released, they're just reunited. They don't have any time together. Like, Snow, you are the most psychotic person who ever lived. Who would ever do that to someone? Like a kid.

00;32;54;02 - 00;33;27;02

Ryan

[RYAN] Yeah. And I think that gets to his point. The kind of thing he wants to do to people who wrong him is to make them suffer. Like you said, that's her favorite food. That was right after she got released. I think she thought Haymitch's brother gave it or like, had kept it for her because he had the gumdrops from the beginning of the reaping and stuff. And to do that and that sense of like, it's going to be personal, it's going to be horrible, and you're going to have to live with it. And that's the worst thing you can do. Go ahead.

00;33;27;02 - 00;33;59;25

Casey

[CASEY] Yeah. And Snow, everything is personal for him. Like, I, I just feel like his hatred, it all comes from his hatred for the districts. Because if you go back to Ballad of Songbirds, he lost his father because of the districts. They lost their home, lost his family. He had all of these problems and stuff. And then

Lucy Gray broke his heart into a million pieces. So it just seems like he's holding the world's longest grudge in the worst possible way.

00;33;59;28 - 00;34;15;01

Vince

[VINCE] Yeah, yeah. And it even, like, devolves into, like how Haymitch says no matter what he does, the Snow or the Capital is not going to let him love anyone. He just like pushes everything out of his place.

00;34;15;01 - 00;34;17;00

Casey

[CASEY] Snow always lands on top.

00;34;17;01 - 00;34;23;19

Vince

[VINCE] Oh my gosh. Snow always lands on top.

00;34;23;22 - 00;34;41;01

Casey

[CASEY] All right. So thank you all for listening and listening to us for Wave of YA. We hope you enjoyed this episode about the new Hunger Games prequel book Sunrise on the Reaping. Hopefully you will come borrow a copy from the library. That's all for now. We'll see you next time. Bye!

00;34;41;03 - 00;34;42;26

Ryan

[RYAN] Bye!

00;34;42;28 - 00;34;48;15

Vince

[VINCE] Bye!

00;34;48;17 - 00;35;12;01

Voiceover 2

[VOICEOVER 2] Thanks for joining us today. Be sure to check out the Ocean County Library's website for more podcasts and events. All titles mentioned in today's episode can be found through the Ocean County Library. Free with your library card. Until next time, happy reading!

00;35;12;03 - 00;35;42;09

Voiceover 3

[VOICEOVER 3] Hello, adventurers! If you enjoyed this content, please take a look at the Ocean County Library's new podcast called Forge Your Imagination: A Guide to Immersive World Building. This new podcast is dedicated to helping creative individuals design their own expert crafted worlds for books, games, Dungeons and Dragons, and more. Tune in on the first Wednesday morning of every month to learn more. Thanks for listening and safe travels, adventures.