



## **Waves of YA, Episode 49, In Conversation with Lyndall Clipstone**

### ***Transcript:***

00;00;02;05 - 00;00;18;13

Voiceover

[VOICEOVER] Hello and welcome to Waves of YA podcast focused on young adult literacy. Brought to you by the Ocean County Library's Teen Literacy Workgroup.

00;00;18;15 - 00;00;28;08

Summer

[SUMMER] Hello everyone, and welcome to this episode of Waves of YA! Today we have a very special guest with us if you'd like to introduce yourself.

00;00;28;10 - 00;00;39;19

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] Hi. Thank you for having me. I'm Lyndall Clipstone, and I am the author of Lakesedge, Forestfall, Unholy Terrors, and the upcoming Tenderly, I Am Devoured.

00;00;39;21 - 00;00;45;22

Summer

[SUMMER] Wonderful, I am Summer. I am the librarian at the Long Beach Island branch of OCL.

00;00;45;24 - 00;00;50;01

Rachel

[RACHEL] My name's Rachel. I am at the Barnegat Branch for the Ocean County Library.

00;00;50;04 - 00;01;01;24

Summer

[SUMMER] And today, as you know, we are interviewing author Lyndall Clipstone, who has a brand new young adult novel coming out July 1st. Would you like to tell us a little bit about that book coming out?

00;01;01;26 - 00;01;28;29

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] Sure. So Tenderly, I Am Devoured is a standalone romantic folk horror, and it's about a girl who agrees to marry the god worshiped by her isolated coastal hometown in order to save her family

from financial ruin. But after her betrayal goes terribly wrong, the only way she can save herself is by working with her arrogant rival and his alluring older sister.

00;01;29;01 - 00;01;45;21

Summer

[SUMMER] That sounds great. I think we'll talk a little bit about your new novel, and then we can talk about your novels that are already out, because I'm sure we have lots of questions about both. So your newest novel, *Tenderly, I Am Devoured*. What was the inspiration for that?

00;01;45;24 - 00;02;43;07

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] So all my other books that I've written so far have been very gothic fantasy kind of based, and I really felt like doing something different this time. I wanted to move more towards something that felt a little bit more grounded in the real world, I guess, which is kind of a silly thing to say for a book where someone's marrying a god, but I wanted to sort of lean more into the horror aspect and play around with sort of dark academia, horror, romance, kind of mix. And one of the biggest inspirations was the movie *Midsommar*, because I really loved how it was a horror, but it was set in the summer and it was all sort of brightly lit and very floral, and I like the idea of trying to experiment with something like that in a book, which is why I like to call *Tenderly, I Am Devoured* a flower-threaded horror. So yeah, that was one of the big inspirations.

00;02;43;09 - 00;02;53;11

Summer

[SUMMER] That's beautiful. So when you say grounded in reality, is this book a fantasy that's set in the real world as opposed to a fantasy set in a fantasy world?

00;02;53;13 - 00;03;32;06

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] It's a second world setting that is very similar to our world. So basically the setting is a mix up of, I would say like fantasy, like England ish, and the setting I had in my head when I was writing it was Cornwall because of the coastal setting and the cliffs and that sort of thing, but I wanted to make it very much its own thing, rather than having to set it in a particular geographical location or a particular time. So it is not our world, but it's very similar to our world, I think.

00;03;32;08 - 00;03;39;03

Summer

[SUMMER] And you mentioned a little hint at two love interests in this book, I believe. Is that correct?

00;03;39;05 - 00;04;47;24

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] Yeah, so it's a polyamorous romance, which is so much fun to write. I always love to play around with doing such a broad range of romantic experiences in my books, because it's just something that I really enjoy as a writer. And I think when I was a teen reader, books that had diverse romantic representation in them all is very meaningful to me, especially books with queer rep so I think getting to

write a queer polyamorous romance was very important for so many reasons. So yeah, there's I guess the main character, Lark, is betrothed to a god, but the main romance is between her and the two siblings who are helping her. So there's Alastair, who was her first love has become her heartbreak, and now they are kind of having to reluctantly work together and Camille, his older sister, who was once her childhood friend but has been away from where they live and has now come back, so they're sort of reconnecting as adults.

00;04;48;01 - 00;04;53;16

Summer

[SUMMER] Wow. Is there sibling rivalry going on as well, or are they cool with it?

00;04;53;19 - 00;06;53;12

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] So that was the thing. I really wanted to write a romance that kind of emphasize this unconditionality of love, because Lark's overarching character arc is that she's been at this boarding school where she has a very, very clear vision of what she wants to do for the future. She wants to graduate and go into this really exclusive art curation program, but then at the start of Tenderly, I Am Devoured, she's been expelled. And so throughout the book, we find out what's happened to make her basically lose everything that she was working for. So she's kind of lost her dream, lost her hope for the future. She comes home, finds her family and broken, and she's sort of in this situation where she feels like she's really lost everything, doesn't feel worthy of love. She feels like a failure. And so I wanted to sort of have her fall into this romance where it really showed how even if we're flawed and make mistakes and fail, and not getting a future that we'd sort of hoped to work towards, we're still worthy of love. So there's a really fun scene in the book where she and Camille have this conversation, and Camille's talking about how their father had always tried to pit her and Alastair against each other and encouraged them to compete because he wanted them to sort of be kind of fighting to be the top sibling. And so she's like, we've never competed with each other because that was the only way of rebelling against our father to sort of, you know, we wouldn't let him make his enemies ourselves. So we're not jealous of each other for both caring for you. And I thought that was an interesting way to kind of subvert this idea of like a love triangle, which you often see in YA romances. So it was really fun to write.

00;06;53;15 - 00;07;39;20

Summer

[SUMMER] I completely agree about love triangles. I was always frustrated, especially when I was a teenager reading that it was like, don't get me into the whole Twilight thing. I'm very thorough in my opinions about that, but I have seen a little bit of a trend. I don't know if it's a trend, but in YA romance I've seen a couple novels that have polyamorous relationships in them, and I was wondering if it's going to be a new renaissance of YA, in a way, to see this new take on the romance. So she has a triangle only makes sense if everyone's triangle is three? If it was two - only if it's only two people liking one person, it would be an arrow.

00;07;39;22 - 00;07;49;04

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] That's why they call it love triangle, I guess, is more than an arrow, because it's usually two male love interests in love with a female love interest.

00;07;49;06 - 00;07;50;12

Summer

[SUMMER] And she has to pick one.

00;07;50;14 - 00;09;38;12

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] And she has to pick one. And I think that's fine. I think it can work. You can do really clever things but I think the best love triangles are where you really don't know who you want them to choose, like, both sides are just offering something so wonderful and it's you really feel the character being torn between the two. But I'm such a terrible decision maker in my own life that I don't think I can put myself through having to write a story where a character does that. So although that said, I suppose in my first trilogy, there was a little bit of a love triangle, but it was between a girl and a model and a god. So I suppose that that's kind of a little different. But yeah, in terms of a renaissance, I love that idea. I really hope so. I hope that we're heading towards this idea of more unique and interesting, going back into the days of, you know, like the early 2000s sort of way with these really interesting literary stories, I keep thinking about bones and all by Camille DeAngelis, such as one of my favorite books, which is about it was there was a movie adaptation recently, so people may know about it, but it was about teenage cannibals falling in love. And you just think, this is so cool. So yeah, I don't know. I feel like that has been a trend of romance being blended with other genres like horror or mystery or obviously fantasy for the big romantasy format that's happening. And I don't know, I think that really opens up the space for people to do really interesting things in their books.

00;09;38;14 - 00;09;49;08

Summer

[SUMMER] Definitely. The two I was thinking of with the poly relationships were Iron Widow and there's a book called This Fatal Kiss which is on my TBR.

00;09;49;15 - 00;10;47;18

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] Yeah, I really wanted to read This Fatal Kiss. Alisha, the author is actually Australian as well, so I yeah, she's written some I really, really loved her first book, which is like a sapphic enemies to lovers romance. I think the heroine's bisexual, but it's like a girl falling in love with a witch. It was really, really, really well done. She has such a beautiful way of writing. Yeah, I always think try to think about others In the Ravenous Dark by AdriAnne Strickland is another really good poly romance. She also writes asexual rep really, really well. And I know I have friends who that sort of rep in books is particularly important to them. And Strange Grace by Tessa Gratton is another. It's kind of like a queer platonic poly romance, and I love that book so much. It's really well done and a really interesting kind of take on a romance sort of dynamic.

00;10;47;20 - 00;10;51;12

Summer

[SUMMER] Rachel, would you like to ask the next question about Tenderly, I Am Devoured?

00;10;51;14 - 00;10;56;25

Rachel

[RACHEL] Yeah. What are you most excited for people to experience in your new book?

00;10;56;28 - 00;11;46;15

Lyndall

[LYNDA]] I'm just really excited for everybody to enter the world and meet the characters and see how the story plays out. It's such a personal and meaningful book to me. A lot of it was inspired by experiences in my own life, particularly like my experiences in academia and experiences with friendship breakups as a teen. So I'm looking forward to readers hopefully feeling, I don't know, a scene or a sense of connection with the book, but also it's just been such a long sort of journey of the book, just belonging solely to me, and I feel like the characters have just lived in my head for so long that I'm really excited for them to get out in the world, and for everybody to sort of connect with them and engage with the story.

00;11;46;18 - 00;11;56;09

Summer

[SUMMER] It's really cool. You mentioned, to get back on academia, what was your background in academia and how does it transfer into the new novel?

00;11;56;11 - 00;13;38;23

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] So I was an English Lit student. I did a creative writing honors and then I did an English Lit PhD. But halfway through my father got really, really sick. And I kind of - that, and just academia not really suiting my personality and interests - I kind of had this big moment where, much like Lark in the book, I'd had this very, very clear vision of what I wanted. I was going to do a PhD. I was going to work in academia. I wanted to be an English lecturer. And then after about three years, I kind of realized this is not going to work out at all. I'm not suited for this. I'm not going to have a complete thesis in time. So I ended up withdrawing, but it was quite a difficult and emotional experience to have to say that I couldn't finish because I'd been so perfectionistic and driven up into that point, and really was used to sort of forcing myself through that. It actually took a lot of strength to be able to do the opposite, and just realized that I needed to step back rather than continue pushing myself. So, yeah, I think my experience of having a really clear vision of what I wanted and wanting to belong to this particular system and then having to walk away from it, was really emotionally difficult, and I'm really glad where I've ended up now as an author, but I really enjoyed being able to explore those emotions through writing Lark's experience in Devoured as well.

00;13;38;26 - 00;13;44;26

Summer

[SUMMER] That's wonderful. Would you like to merge into talking about some of your other books?

00;13;44;29 - 00;13;46;18

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] Yeah.

00;13;46;20 - 00;13;50;07

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah. I know Rachel especially has some questions about Lakesedge.

00;13;50;10 - 00;14;01;23

Rachel

[RACHEL] Yeah, I just finished reading Lakesedge, and I loved it. It was definitely unique from other YA books I've read recently, but that was good, I loved it. Five stars. It was really good.

00;14;01;29 - 00;14;03;28

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] I'm so glad you enjoyed it.

00;14;04;01 - 00;14;08;27

Rachel

[RACHEL] My first question is, what was your hardest scene to write in that book?

00;14;08;29 - 00;15;43;19

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] I think the part that I had the most difficulty with was the set up for the ending, which is probably hard to talk about without being a spoiler, but that was just all of these little moving pieces around. The basic premise of the book is that the main character, Violetta, falls in love with Rowan, who is a monstrous boy suffering from a curse, and she decides to make a bargain with the Lord of the Dead to try and save him. So when the book really gets to that pinch point where she has to try and make this spark and getting all of the bits to work on the bargain, how is she going to do it? How is it going to play out? What are the sort of rules around the magic involved? There was so many different endings and so many different versions and so many back and forth with my agent while I was trying to work out how to fit it all together and I really, really love how the scene ended up. But I do remember that being so many really stressful days of trying to sort of get it all to work and thinking, why did I decide to make a magic bug? And I think I've still got a piece of paper where, like, I've drawn out how the magic system worked and how the bargain was going to fit into it and all of that sort of thing. So it was a fun challenge. I love to try and challenge myself with something new and big every time I write a book, and that was definitely one of the hardest ones for Lakesedge.

00;15;43;21 - 00;16;00;22

Rachel

[RACHEL] That ending definitely like got me. It was definitely not how I thought it was - I'm trying to be spoiler free - it was definitely not how I thought it was going to end, but that's not a bad thing. But I haven't read book two yet, so now I have to read book two because I need to find out what happens now after you left it on a cliffhanger.

00;16;00;24 - 00;16;18;00

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] It was such a cliffhanger ending. I feel sort of sorry. But also it was really fun to write a cliffhanger ending. I think it's my only duality that I've ever written, so I sort of had to really take advantage of that by making everybody sort of stressed at the end.

00;16;18;02 - 00;16;26;15

Rachel

[RACHEL] So when you wrote the book, was the intention for there to be a second book or when you got to the end, were you like, oh, there needs to be a second book.

00;16;26;17 - 00;18;31;05

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] I'd sort of been thinking about it. So it went on submission as a standalone with series potential, which I think was usually how things were sort of pitched back then when I was working on that, and I had a few sort of calls with editors that didn't eventuate in offers where they had some feedback about, oh, I think I'd like the story to go deeper and I'd like to see more of this and more of that. Do you have any ideas about how you could expand that? And I remember saying to one of them ah, well, I maybe it would work better as a duology. And I was sort of like, no. And I was like, okay, well, perhaps this editor who was already reluctant to take on the book didn't want to hear from me. Like, what if you take two books? But it did end up selling it as a standalone, and it was originally written as a standalone, but when I sold the book, I sold it as a two book deal, and I'd kind of just, in my naivete, assumed that I would just come up with a second book for them. And I kept saying to my editor, do you want to see, like, my idea for a second book? Which that idea was what eventually became Unholy Terrors, which is my third book. But I asked her and she said, oh, we were actually thinking of making it into a duology. And as I was doing my first round of revisions with her at the time, the thought of having a whole second book to play out with all of these other ideas really just opened up so many things. So it allowed me to really deepen the relationship between Leta and the Lord Under, which I didn't really have room to play with in a single book. And that always sort of disappointed me a bit. I was like, I really wanted to add more of that, and I really wanted to show more of the world below, which is like the underworld in the book. And so, yeah, adding an extra book allowed me to do that. So it wasn't originally set up as a series, but I feel like it works so well that I'm glad that I got the opportunity to expand it.

00;18;31;07 - 00;18;45;18

Summer

[SUMMER] I was just going to say really quick that I love duologies. I think they have a really nice symmetry to them, you know? I mean, I love a trilogy too, but I just feel like there's a real nice open close to a duology, you know, there's no meandering.

00;18;45;20 - 00;19;13;07

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] And I think it works really well with Lakesedge and Forestfall because it's a story that's very much set up. You know, there's like the world above, the world below. There's the sort of the Lord

Under and then the Lady Above is kind of like the goddess figure. And so having this book where there's a lot of dualities and then having like the actual book be two books as well, it really thematically works so well.

00;19;13;10 - 00;19;23;28

Rachel

[RAHCEL] Yeah. So I was just going to say that the original intention for Lakesedge was to be a standalone, and if you left it at that ending, I think that's kind of cruel.

00;19;24;01 - 00;20;00;21

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] No, no, the, the cliffhanger ending was - I changed that when I knew that it was going to be a duology. Yeah. So I think I can't even remember. I mean, the original ending was always kind of the same, but it just took a lot longer to get there when I expanded it into a second book. So there was a lot about it that really didn't sort of fit into one volume. So I think I guess if it had been a standalone, it would have had a more obvious conclusion, but I don't think it would have felt as rich and satisfying.

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

Rachel

[RACHEL] I agree.

00;20;02;02 - 00;20;15;12

Summer

[SUMMER] So we have your duology and then Unholy Terrors, which is a standalone, is that correct? Is Tenderly, I Am Devoured intended to be a standalone or the start of the series or can you not tell us?

00;20;15;14 - 00;20;47;27

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] It's a standalone as well. I found after writing a duology that I much prefer writing standalones. That's sort of where my headspace is, I think, because I tend to lean more literary with my writing. I feel like the things I enjoy exploring in stories work a lot better in just a single volume. But I'll never say never. I mean, I might get an idea for a series one day in the future, but at the moment I'm really enjoying just having standalones and getting a chance to do something new with every book.

00;20;47;29 - 00;20;51;16

Summer

[SUMMER] Wonderful. Rachel, would you like to continue with Lakesedge?

00;20;51;19 - 00;21;15;25

Rachel

[RACHEL] Yeah, I was wondering because as I was reading, I mean, your characters in Lakesedge are very unique, but each have their own personality and they're just characters that I haven't found in, like any other romance novel or YA novel. So I just wanted to know how you approach developing all your characters, especially the Lord Under and Violetta.



00;21;15;27 - 00;24;43;12

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] The Lord Under is probably one of my favorites. No, I think Rowan's my favorite character or one of my favorite characters that I've ever written. He was just immense fun to write, but with the Lord Under, I think I really wanted to write a model figure interacting with a human and sort of seeing how the different world views lined up, because he's got this whole different level of ethics, because he's not a human, and she's approaching him with this very earnest, human based view of the world. And when they come together and she's sort of trying to negotiate with him, it's really interesting. I think seeing the conflicts in their personalities there, because I wanted to write a, I suppose, like a villain who was more than just a villain. So he is the antagonist, but he's not just there to be evil for no kind of reason. It's more his evilness just is in his fundamental nature. Like he's not deliberately trying to be malicious. He's just doing his thing. He's the Lord of the Dead. He operates on bargains. He's very, I don't know, I think it was fun writing him because of that and seeing how he has this connection to a human girl and the way that that then starts to become almost, a flaw for him because she's unsettling this immortality that he's built up for himself, this very strict worldview where he feels very secluded in it and it's very all or nothing. And then she comes in and completely unsettles everything for him. So I guess that's kind of a long winded way of saying that I really wanted to write a villain that felt complicated and interesting and at the time, I'd been reading The Grisha trilogy by Leigh Bardugo, and I suppose I had a lot of darkling feelings at the time, because he was such an interesting villain, and the complexity and the way that she'd written him as being sort of so sympathetic, while also clearly being an antagonist, was something that I loved the idea of exploring. And as a Violetta, I wanted to write a character who wasn't a chosen one. So she's kind of the one without magic. She's the older sister of the Chosen One, in a sense. Like her brother, Arrian is the one who has the magic that Rowan needs to help its cause, and she's kind of just coming along in a protective sort of role. And I remember there being like a really annoyed review of Lakesedge where someone said the whole book could have been better if Arrian is the main character and I'm like, well, that's kind of the point. The point is that she's not the chosen one. Like, there's so many books out there with the main character being the one who's got the power to do all of the things, and I thought it'd be really interesting to have a character from the start who really has no power except her own kind of force of will, and seeing what she does with that. It was really fun for me as a writer.

00;24;43;12 - 00;25;04;26

Summer

[SUMMER] I think it's really cool. I totally agree, I feel like as much as we love the chosen one stories, it is very interesting to see a character who is not. And I think, is it because we want to see ourselves as being special or being chosen, and seeing the characters who aren't is relatable in a way we're not ready to face? I don't know, I'm getting too philosophical about it.

00;25;05;00 - 00;25;38;08

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] I don't know actually. As a reader, I always enjoy that a little bit too, where the sort of underdog character, I suppose she's very flawed and she's very messy and she makes a lot of bad decisions. And I really love that because as a teenager, I too made a lot of bad decisions and was very

flawed and messy. So I felt quite emotional writing this book with such a human, flawed, very teenage girl mindset protagonist.

00;25;38;10 - 00;25;41;09

Summer

[SUMMER] I love an unhinged character.

00;25;41;11 - 00;26;03;15

Rachel

[RACHEL] Through the novel I was almost, I hate to say, like getting annoyed with Violetta, with how protective she was over Arrian. It's like if I had a nickel, like every time she said, I want to keep everyone safe, I'd be rich. I love that she was protective. It's just, oh my gosh, girlfriend, let your brother live his life. He wants to do this.

00;26;03;18 - 00;27;47;03

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] I know, and I think that's the thing. Like, it's intended to be not completely sympathetic. She is annoying and she is completely overprotective because she's in this world where she has so little control that she has clung to her brother and sort of throwing everything into protecting him, but in a way that it's kind of like, does he even want to be protected that much? I don't think he does. And I really enjoyed the scene where she's trying to encourage him to run away from, like, such a state. She's like, we have to leave, we have to go. And he's like, actually, no, I want to stay here. Because even though it's not safe, I feel like this is where I can finally be myself. And she has this sort of moment of like, oh, okay, I've tried to protect you, but maybe that's actually harmed you in another way. And there's also this really lovely moment where he gets really angry with her and he says, you do all these things to try and keep everyone safe, but what about you? What's going to happen to you? And I think her martyrdom and has self-sacrifice is very much a character flaw. I think it does come across as frustrating for the reader because it is a frustrating trait. I don't think it's meant to be set up as something positive. I think her big character arc is sort of learning to be less of a, I was going to say control freak. I'm not sure if she is controlling. They're less overprotective of everyone she loves, to sort of loosen her hold on things and trust that everything will be okay.

00;27;47;05 - 00;28;03;20

Summer

[SUMMER] So was there anything that you actually - this could go for either book - anything that was initially meant to be in the final edit of the book that had to be edited out, that you for any reason either if you wish that it stayed or there was a good reason for it?

00;28;03;23 - 00;29;01;22

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] Yeah. So in Tenderly, I Am Devoured, this is such a small thing, but Camille, the female of interest, she was originally going to be like a frustrated pianist where she'd really wanted to have, like, a career as a musician, and it hadn't worked out. There was this really lovely scene where they were all sort of sitting at a piano together, sort of playing. She was playing, and her brother was sort of joining in,

and, Lark was sitting between them. And it absolutely serve no purpose to the book whatsoever. And it just didn't work in terms of the pacing, like I was trying to really create the sense of winding up of tension and impending doom and having them all sit down and play the piano together didn't really fit, so I had to cut that. But it was such a fun, just cozy, hanging out in the library playing the piano and sort of seeing that. I feel very fond about it, even though it didn't make it into the final version of the book.

00;29;01;24 - 00;29;03;10

Summer

[SUMMER] An alternate reality where that happened.

00;29;03;17 - 00;29;10;10

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] Yeah, maybe I could feel like the bonus material for like a future paperback or something.

00;29;10;12 - 00;29;11;18

Summer

[SUMMER] That's awesome.

00;29;11;20 - 00;29;22;26

Rachel

[RACHEL] Can you talk to us a little bit about what research you conducted for, let's say, any of your books, anyone you want to talk about? And did you uncover anything surprising or fascinating?

00;29;22;28 - 00;31;12;21

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] Really I think for me, a lot of my research is in consuming other media. So reading other books, watching films, that sort of thing, more than I suppose, really researching anything, I don't know. I'm not really like a big one of those authors who really, really gets into research, although I always sort of look at people who do and feel kind of a little bit like, oh, that would be so fun to really love doing that. I think probably the most interesting thing that I did for Tenderly, I Am Devoured was I invented a language. So there is a in-world kind of literature canon, which is very loosely based on the classic literature, like in Latin and things like that. But because it wasn't grounded in the real world, I couldn't have them speaking Latin because it didn't make any sense. So I invented a language called Panish, which is kind of like a mix between Latin and Cornish, I suppose. It's like fake Latin that they use in wild and Alastair, his favorite book is this book that's written in Panish. So he's kind of like this nerdy dark academia boy walking around with this book in a dead language, which is supposed to be, I guess, an expression of how he closed himself off from the world so much that he doesn't even want to read anything that's from the modern era. But yeah, putting that together, it was only a few phrases, but that was a really fun process of choosing the words and choosing the phrases and thinking about how a pretend dead language would operate in their world.

00;31;12;24 - 00;31;26;29

Summer

[SUMMER] That is really cool. I'm just getting more and more excited to read Tenderly, I Am Devoured. You said you consume a lot of other media while you are in the process of writing your book. Do you have any young adult book recommendations that you can recommend to our listeners?

00;31;27;02 - 00;33;55;15

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] Yes, I have a few that I really, really adore. Wintersong by Jae-Jones, which was one of the first gothic books that I read, and one of the first books that really encouraged me to write the sort of stories that I wanted to write. Strange Grace by Tessa Gratton, which I think I already mentioned. That's this really, really cool, it's kind of like, Lakesedge vibes a bit where it's like a girl, the edge of a forest, and there's a weird monster, and she has to sort of do things to save the village. But it's very unique and beautifully written. And then there's House of Thorns by Isabel Strychacz, which is a contemporary kind of horror fantasy with huge Mike Flanagan vibes. So if you ever liked The Haunting of Hill House, you would absolutely love this book. It's so beautifully written. It's so clever. She does really, really interesting things with narrative timelines, which was one of the things that I read that inspired me to try playing with the dual timelines in Tenderly, I Am Devoured. And Bones and All by Camille DeAngelis, which is, I think I mentioned that already as well. It's about teenage cannibals on a road trip, which I really love. I think it was just a very interesting story in so many ways. I'm vegetarian, and so I really love things that interrogate like the ethics of eating. I think from memory through veganism or something might have been one of the inspirations for the author. So I'm knowing, like I'm reading that in the acknowledgments and knowing that that was the lens she looked at it through. I thought that was really interesting too. And the final book is Deep in Providence by Riss M. Neilson, which is a beautifully written contemporary fantasy about four girls who are dealing with grief and growing up and all of these sort of things. And it's set in Providence, Rhode Island. So I think anyone who lives there would probably really, really enjoy reading it. But I, living on the other side of the world, also really enjoyed reading it. Riss is just a beautiful writer. She's very talented and it's really, really clever. Beautiful story.

00;33;55;17 - 00;34;07;24

Summer

[SUMMER] That's awesome. Thank you for sharing. I'm going to recommend a book to you now if you've read it already, stop me because I literally just finished reading it like this week. It is called The Coven Tendency by Zoe Hana Mikuta.

00;34;07;27 - 00;34;11;10

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] I haven't but I've heard of it.

00;34;11;12 - 00;35;46;13

Summer

[SUMMER] It is crazy. I'm still thinking, like the ending was so - it wasn't where I thought it was going at all. And again, it's not set in our world. It doesn't go very deep into the world building because it's not about the exterior world. It's about the interior world of this, these witches who in this universe, the witches are theorized to have been born with magic due to nature revolting against colonization, sort of like industrialization has made nature grow inside people, and this magic sort of makes them go insane.

So when they're young, there's these three families of witches that live in this sort of estate that people can pay to visit, almost like an experience. And then the front of their houses are one way mirrors, so you can look in, but they can't look out. So it's almost like a zoo. And their magic is taken away when they're children, so the effects are a little less. They haven't gone fully insane yet, but a lot of them do have some issues that they get into. And the parents are slowly deteriorating, and they are aware that one day they will be killed and their children will take their place as what's called spectacles, and they perform these gruesome, magical spectacles for a profit that people can come to see. And it's very graphic. There's a lot of trigger warnings, but you seem to be okay with graphic horror.

00:35:46;15 - 00:36:04;20

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] Yeah. That sounds amazing. I'm definitely really brought up. I love books like that. That's the thing I'm always searching for, especially in YA books that really do something different and push in terms of being more mature or like graphic content or just interesting storylines. I love finding books like that.

00:36:04;22 - 00:36:17;04

Summer

[SUMMER] And there are dual timelines as well, which sort of is a little - first I was a little confused, but then I got together and again, the ending. I'm still like, what happened? Excuse me, what? So that's my recommendation to you.

00:36:17;11 - 00:36:21;00

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] Cool. Yeah, I'm definitely going to look that one up. That sounds amazing.

00:36:21;02 - 00:36:25;19

Summer

[SUMMER] In your books, do you hide any Easter eggs that people can find?

00:36:25;21 - 00:37:23;17

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] So in Tenderly, I Am Devoured, there is an epilogue scene that connects to a short story that I wrote, which is in this anthology called The Crawling Moon by Neon Hemlock. So I wrote a short story in the called Cryptophasia, which is an adult dark academia short story about a young man who is a curator of artworks. And he goes to the house of a painter who he was researching and is interviewing his children about the artist's work. And there's a little Easter egg to that in the end of Tenderly, I Am Devoured so that's sort of set in the same universe. So that was a lot of fun. I think it probably amuses me, and maybe like no one else, but I really, really had fun with that. And I think it would be cool if anyone sort of reads both of them and can make the connection.

00:37:23;19 - 00:37:28;15

Summer

[SUMMER] I'm sure someone will, because, have you ever read the author Laini Taylor?

00;37;28;17 - 00;37;29;22

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] Yes.

00;37;29;25 - 00;37;40;00

Summer

[SUMMER] In her duology, *Strange the Dreamer*. At the very end, there's like one sentence, but my brain was like, Because it connects to another series of hers, so I'm sure someone will see it.

00;37;40;04 - 00;37;52;08

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] Well, yeah, hopefully, I thought was kind of what I wanted to do. I think just this little - it added this little extra layer of meaning. I'm just like, oh, and that's sort of what a fun way to kind of connect the two. So yeah, that's my little Easter egg for them.

00;37;52;11 - 00;38;05;04

Summer

[SUMMER] And lastly, we asked what books you read during your research, for lack of a better word, do you have anything else? It could be books. It could be movies. Authors that inspire you in your writing.

00;38;05;07 - 00;40;22;18

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] Yeah. So I feel like a lot of the authors that are inspiring me lately are probably not YA authors. I've been reading a lot out of my genre just because that helps my headspace as far as when I'm working on YA, but my all time favorite author, which probably will surprise no one is Donna Tartt, particularly the *Secret History*, I read it at such a pivotal moment in my life, and there's so many things about that book that's just been such a constant source of inspiration. I really, really love Emma Cline, especially the *Girls*, and she just writes young women so beautifully and really captures that kind of burgeoning queerness. Like, my favorite story is by her, the *Girls* does it really well, and she's also got a short story in her collection, *Daddy*, about like a girl who's clearly kind of got a crush on her best friend and is processing the feelings. And there's just something really, really beautiful and brutal about the way she writes girlhood that I love. And Roshani Chokshi, especially *Last Tale of the Flower Bride*. I just absolutely adore her prose. She writes these beautiful, lush Angela Carter kind of style fairy tales and I love all of her work. But *Last Tale of the Flower Bride*, I think, really just had so many elements that appealed to me. I loved the unreliable narrator, and again, that's like another book that's got dual timelines and it was just this very Grimm's Fairy Tale kind of magical horror. I don't know, so many different things that I loved. And my last favorite author that I can think of at the moment is Mona Awad who wrote *Bunny*. And my favorite book by her is actually *Rouge*, which is wellness horror, which is a genre that I really, really enjoy strangely enough. Like, I'm not sure why. There's just something about wellness horror that I really - I'm loving this. Yeah, but I don't know. I loved *Bunny* a lot. I'm so excited for the prequel/sequel that's coming out in September. That's going to be so good.

00;40;22;20 - 00;40;26;20

Summer

[SUMMER] I think on her Instagram, she said it's both a prequel and a sequel that's upcoming.

00;40;26;20 - 00;41;14;02

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] Now, I know that whatever it is, it's going to be amazing because I just adore her writing so much. But Rouge was just so weird and so beautiful, and I have this really touching mother-daughter relationship and this search for belonging and this idea of this girl growing up in the shadow of like, a really, really overbearing, beautiful mother trying to sort of come into herself. And it's also got like this weird demon that looks like Tom Cruise. I love it, and it's just she's so wild and wacky. I love her book so much. She seems to manage to straddle this line between like, very, very artistic, pretty arthouse kind of things, but also like hilariously strange and funny. So yeah, that's another book that I really, really adore.

00;41;14;04 - 00;41;33;13

Summer

[SUMMER] You, like, we have a very similar taste in books, you and I. I also love Mona Awad. I haven't read Rouge yet, but I loved Bunny and All's Well. I also love Donna Tartt. Secret History is one of the books I've read at least like four times. Me and my best friend from high school have a deep connection to the Secret History we share with each other.

00;41;33;15 - 00;41;58;03

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] I love that so much. I know it's so very readable and I just it's such a comfort read, which is so funny when you think about it's such a stressful story, but there's just something about dipping back in and out of the book, and sometimes I'll sort of start rereading it. I won't finish or I'll pick it up and read certain sections, but I think there's something about that book that there's a lot of people out there who've just really connected with it at a particular time.

00;41;58;05 - 00;42;06;14

Summer

[SUMMER] Lyndall, is there anything further you'd like to talk about, questions you'd like to ask us or personal epiphanies?

00;42;06;17 - 00;42;32;27

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] [laughs] No, just thank you for having me. This is really fun to chat. I have so much fun talking about my books and I'm excited to chat with you guys at the library. And yeah, I'm really excited for Tenderly, I Am Devoured to be out in the world on July 1st, and for everybody to get to meet the characters and enter the world and enjoy my weird, made-up, fake Latin that I made for it.

00;42;33;00 - 00;42;48;09

Summer

[SUMMER] And we're very excited for the book to come out and for everybody listening, by the time this podcast is out, the book will be out and you can get it at the library or at your local bookstore. And yes, we are very excited. Thank you, Lyndall so much for joining us.

00;42;48;11 - 00;42;52;16

Lyndall

[LYNDALL] Thank you for having me.

00;42;52;18 - 00;43;07;27

Voiceover

[VOICEOVER] 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!