



Waves of YA, Episode 42, Introducing YA Author Jamison Shea

Transcript:

00;00;13;25 - 00;00;24;12

Voiceover

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

00;00;24;14 - 00;00;35;07

Summer

[SUMMER] Hello, everybody. Welcome to our newest episode of Waves of YA. Today we have a very special guest for you. Why don't you introduce yourself, special guest?

00;00;35;10 - 00;00;45;22

Jamison

[JAMISON] Hello. My name is Jamison Shea. I'm the author of a YA dark fantasy horror called I Feed Her to the Beast and the Beast is Me.

00;00;45;24 - 00;00;54;22

Summer

[SUMMER] Awesome. We are so happy to have Jamison on the show today. My name is Summer and I am the librarian at the Long Beach Island Library.

00;00;54;25 - 00;00;58;05

Chris

[CHRIS] And I am Chris and I am the Island Heights branch manager.

00;00;58;12 - 00;01;08;00

Summer

[SUMMER] Awesome. So let's jump right into it. As Jamison said, their very first book. It was your debut novel, correct?

00;01;08;02 - 00;01;18;12

Jamison

[JAMISON] Yes. So I had written other things before, but I Feed Her to the Beast was the first one that's ready for other people to read and, like, go to print.

00;01;18;14 - 00;01;32;06

Summer

[SUMMER] Awesome. And that came out in August of 2023. And we're going to be talking to Jamison about that book as well as the sequel, which is coming out, if I'm correct, on this November 12th of this year.

00;01;32;08 - 00;01;32;26

Jamison

[JAMISON] That's correct.

00;01;32;27 - 00;01;43;17

Summer

[SUMMER] Awesome. Chris and I have both read I Feed Her to the Beast, which is why we are very excited about this. And we're very excited to talk to you about your upcoming book. Chris, would you like to ask the first question?

00;01;43;20 - 00;01;51;16

Chris

[CHRIS] Okay. Were you inspired by either version of the movie Suspiria when you were writing I Feed Her to the Beast and the Beast is Me?

00;01;51;19 - 00;02;50;12

Jamison

[JAMISON] A little bit. So I think that was kind of like the origin point where I was... I had watched the remake, and I was really annoyed because it ends with - I forgot her name - it ends with her being possessed, but like, it's not her power and she doesn't want to be possessed. And so, like, she has all of this power that can hold a person like an origami thing, and then she's miserable and I don't understand. And so I wanted to write a story where a main character, a woman, a girl gets power and is possessed and actually likes the power and likes doing bad things. I didn't intend for it to go back to ballet. It just so happens that the ballet has a lot of body horror, like fake doom, like there are so many gross body things about ballet that I didn't have to make up much.

00;02;50;14 - 00;02;58;09

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah, I'm a huge fan of both the original Suspiria and the new one, but it's so cool hearing your interpretation of the ending. I never really thought about it that way.

00;02;58;11 - 00;03;02;16

Jamison

[JAMISON] Yeah, also the visuals were amazing. So...

00;03;02;18 - 00;03;24;02

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah, for real, I was like, "Wow. Ballet and horror, I love it." I also recently watched the horror movie Abigail, which is about a little vampire girl ballerina, and again, horror ballet. They go hand in hand in some ways. Yeah. Our next question is, what inspired your idea for this story? You said Suspiria was part of it, but was there a greater inspiration?

00;03;24;05 - 00;04;24;28

Jamison

[JAMISON] Yeah, I was just inspired by just art and, like, artists. And there's always this idea that you have to suffer for your art. And I wanted to question if that's true and how much of that is true. When I was a teenager, I used to be really into classical music and orchestras and like my whole personality was orchestra. I played the flute and I wanted to be first chair. And so I work really, really, really hard to practice, to be first chair. And like, I was going up against girls who had private lessons and like really expensive flutes. And I was on a rental and had only done like public lessons, like group things. And so I was really trying my hardest. I would spend summers practicing so that I would be ready. And then my mom scheduled me to get my wisdom teeth out, like right before a playing. And so I popped the stitches so that I could put my mouth into position to play. And.

00;04;25;00 - 00;04;25;15

Summer

[SUMMER] Wow.

00;04;25;15 - 00;04;42;22

Jamison

[JAMISON] And so I did get first chair, but then my solo was given to second place, and so it wasn't even worth it in the end. But I wanted to take that energy from high school me and explore it in a more extreme situation.

00;04;42;24 - 00;05;30;15

Summer

[SUMMER] I really like, like, how much rage is in the book and how much rage Laurence feels, which - side note, very funny side note - my manager at the library I work at, her name is Laurence. She was born in Paris and she studied ballet. And I was like, "Laurence, is this book about you?" It was just a very funny coincidence. Although, but I like how there's so much rage in the book, especially when it comes to what you brought up briefly about, going up against people who had a lot more opportunities and privilege than yourself at the time. And Laurence going through the systemic racism and classism of the ballet world in Paris in the book. I think that was really interesting to learn about, because I didn't really know anything about the inner workings of the ballet world. And it was very cool to see that.

00;05;30;18 - 00;05;50;03

Chris

[CHRIS] I also loved how angry she was. I was like, she absolutely should be that angry. And in my notes, when we were first talking about it during our horror podcast, I put in, like, "I support women's wrongs." Like, yes, take that deal. Like, get ahead because clearly playing fair isn't working. So stop playing fair.

00;05;50;06 - 00;05;52;16

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah. What's her best friend's name again?

00;05;52;18 - 00;05;53;21

Jamison

[JAMISON] Coralie.

00;05;53;23 - 00;06;02;12

Summer

[SUMMER] Coralie. So, mad at Coralie the whole time I was just, like, unkind things about Coralie reading it.

00;06;02;14 - 00;06;09;22

Chris

[CHRIS] How did you choose the title? And did the publisher push back about the length? Because it is a long title.

00;06;09;25 - 00;07;16;18

Jamison

[JAMISON] They did not. So I actually did not pick my title. It was, I did a mentorship author mentorship program called Pitch Wars. It doesn't exist anymore. And right before the showcase, at the very end of it, my mentor sent me a message and she's like, I hate your title. It was something else. I don't remember what it was, but she hated it. And I'm like, "Yeah, it's not very good." And so she threw out a bunch of them and one of them was, I Feed Her to the Beast and the Beast is Me. And I'm like, "That sounds amazing. It sounds familiar, but I don't know why." And then that, like, I think that day I had gone back to editing the end of the book, and I saw that like, oh, I wrote that. That's why it sounds familiar, because I wrote that. That was me. So I gave her all of this credit for the title because I completely forgot about it. But yeah. So she picked it. We thought it was really like attention grabbing and yeah, my publisher was like, "We love it." So when it came to the sequel, I had to find a title that was equally as long.

00;07;16;21 - 00;07;53;27

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah, it's, I Am the Dark that Answers When You Call, right? I love it. I think I discovered the book because I was looking for specifically - I really love horror books with monsters in them, like a creature feature, I call it. And I was having trouble finding one, and I was looking and that came up on a list of monster horror books and the title, immediately I was just like, "Oh, like I've never seen a title like that." And I think titles follow trends. Like, you see a lot of blank-of-blank-and-blank books, which is

great, but it was really eye-catching. It definitely drew me in. And then Chris said she had read it and I was like, "Oh my gosh, I have to read it too."

00;07;53;29 - 00;08;03;02

Jamison

[JAMISON] Yeah, I love the title, but sometimes having to say it repeatedly is quite... it gets exhausting.

00;08;03;02 - 00;08;07;27

Summer

[SUMMER] I'm sure. Do you ever abbreviate it? Like, what would it be like? IFHTTB?

00;08;07;29 - 00;08;19;02

Jamison

[JAMISON] I tried it very early into my book deal and I got sick of typing out that many letters. And so now I to shorten it to I Feed Her to the Beast or just Beast to make it easy. Yeah.

00;08;19;05 - 00;08;39;06

Summer

[SUMMER] I have a question as to whether the upcoming sequel will be set in Prague, because at the end of the first book, we get a little sneak peek of them being in Prague. And I'm very interested to see if we're going to see, because you got to see so much of Paris in I Feed Her to the Beast, and I'm interested in seeing if we're going to see anything in Prague?

00;08;39;08 - 00;09;22;03

Jamison

[JAMISON] I considered it when I was kind of plotting out the story. I did consider it, but Laure's whole life, her heart, her world is Paris. And so I thought instead I would explore different parts of Paris, since in book one she is very like, it's just the ballet and home and nowhere else. And so I wanted to play with other parts of Paris that maybe not as glamorous parts of Paris that we don't see as much, and then her trying to find her new place in the city, you know, she fights so hard to stay in Paris in the ballet. Then I just send her somewhere else. So...

00;09;22;06 - 00;09;34;00

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah, I think she needed, like, a vacation from all. A lot happened. And I don't know anything about any parts of Paris. Can you tell us, like, what parts she's going to be in?

00;09;34;03 - 00;10;04;14

Jamison

[JAMISON] Yeah. So she goes around a little bit more, we see some of Palais de Justice. So, like, there's a giant fortress in the middle of Paris that has some historical significance from when the city was first founded. And it gets conquered. And then we also see more of Elysium and that world to learn more about the deals and the, gods that they're playing with, without much knowledge.

00;10;04;16 - 00;10;38;09

Chris

[CHRIS] Oh, I'm excited to see more about Elysium and like the gods, especially because we know about the other river and, like, Coralie had a deal which, like, finding out, like, my first instinct was not teeth and I was like, oh, I'm like, grave robbing? Trying to guess what it would be because I'm like, okay, so like probably bone and it had like everything but teeth and I was just like, I'm like you can't sacrifice, like, oh, she can't sacrifice a toe. She does ballet, but like, I don't know, maybe part of like a fingertip. And it was like teeth was worse. So much worse.

00;10;38;12 - 00;10;40;16

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah. Teeth is your hard no?

00;10;40;18 - 00;10;43;08

Chris

[CHRIS] Oh I didn't like it. I just immediately got upset.

00;10;43;10 - 00;10;45;14

Summer

[SUMMER] Don't forget that teeth are bone.

00;10;45;16 - 00;10;47;03

Chris

[CHRIS] I did too.

00;10;47;06 - 00;10;53;28

Jamison

[JAMISON] Yeah. Yeah. That was... I'm sorry. I don't have any excuses for that. It just seemed like a good idea.

00;10;54;01 - 00;10;57;19

Summer

[SUMMER] Like I wasn't skeeved out by the teeth.

00;10;57;21 - 00;11;03;22

Chris

[CHRIS] But she can, like, get implants, so I was like, why are you so mad, girl? Like, get some implants.

00;11;03;24 - 00;11;13;23

Summer

[SUMMER] Because Coralie is spoiled. Yeah, she was so mean. I was like, I was so mad at Coralie. I was like, I have no sympathy for you. I'm sorry.

00;11;13;26 - 00;11;27;15

Chris

[CHRIS] I read it twice, and, like, the second time knowing it was coming. I was just, like, inherently mad at her from the get go with, like, you're so much worse now, like, knowing where this goes. Like, you weren't good to begin with, but, like, now I was immediately like, "No, don't feel bad for you."

00;11;27;18 - 00;11;36;29

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah. I like all the subtle digs. Like even when Laurence is still, considers her a friend, she'll be like, oh, she did her ballet. She does a turn. It wasn't good.

00;11;37;01 - 00;11;38;05

Jamison

[JAMISON] Yeah.

00;11;38;07 - 00;11;41;13

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah, why is she so mad?

00;11;41;16 - 00;11;58;00

Chris

[CHRIS] But, like, I get, like, that attitude of, like, you're both competing for something and like, if they're your friend, like, you're competing for the same thing. It's like when you're the expert, like, both on that level of, like, we have had the same training, like, why are you that good? Like, why are you that better?

00;11;58;02 - 00;12;08;03

Chris

So like, especially when I've played sports my whole life. So I'm still like I'm like, yeah, no, I've had that attitude a couple times where I'm like, "That's not good. That's not how you do that."

00;12;08;05 - 00;12;32;13

Summer

[SUMMER] Well, I assume that her, it's almost like offensive because Coralie's been given every opportunity. She has so much money. She has privilege, she has status. She has the legacy of her mom. And it's almost offensive that she's not good. And Laurence knows she's better, but she's being cast aside because of her background and her skin color. And I'd be offended too. Coralie, be better.

00;12;32;15 - 00;13;06;21

Jamison

[JAMISON] But I will say as a little bit of a teaser because I did not realize how many like Coralie not apologists but fans that she had. I talked to a lot of people who think she's awful and they love Coralie anyway, which I respect. And so there is a little bit more to Coralie's backstory, a little bit more of Coralie. She's still dead. She's dead. But a little bit more of her. Something with her and Laure and their relationship in the sequel as well.

00;13;06;23 - 00;13;09;24

Summer

[SUMMER] Oh, that's exciting.

00;13;09;26 - 00;13;18;08

Chris

[CHRIS] Your bio lists that you were a choreographer and a dancer. Did you want to be part of the Paris Ballet when you were younger or still do?

00;13;18;11 - 00;14;24;09

Jamison

[JAMISON] No, not at all. I wanted to be a ballerina when I was younger, but my mom did not want me to do ballet. It's not, I don't know, she didn't really perceive it as something that, like, black people do, like black people don't do ballet. We do jazz or we do tap dance or other kinds of more cultural. I guess, for us. But ballet was not part of our world, I guess. So I wanted to do ballet, but she wouldn't put me in ballet lessons. But I later got into like hip hop dancing. I did a little bit of K-pop. So modern, those kinds of styles of dance, which I started to do choreography for. And so I wanted to channel that kind of fun and experience of performing and like doing something physical in performing, but I had recently, at that point watched a documentary, about Misty Copeland and her life and her experience becoming a principal at American Ballet Theater. And so that really is what carried me in the ballet direction.

00;14;24;11 - 00;14;33;23

Summer

[SUMMER] Alright, cool, you see, because you seem to, the book seems to like, really delve into the world and the political nature of it. And where did you get that research from?

00;14;33;25 - 00;15;31;21

Jamison

[JAMISON] A lot of interviews and documentaries with ballerinas. I followed like half of the dancers at American Ballet Theater on Instagram, because a lot of them just post their day to day lives. They record videos of them like fooling around backstage or like breaking in their shoes. A lot of them just record videos of them breaking in their shoes. And so I started to learn a lot of the techniques that they use, the little tricks of like the dental floss, for example, those kinds of things from watching just like the daily lives of ballerinas. And then I also learned, that there is a International Day of Ballet, where several ballet companies around the world livestream their morning classes. So there's hours of live footage on YouTube of just morning practice. It was professional ballerinas, which was helpful.

00;15;31;24 - 00;16;16;20

Summer

[SUMMER] That's really cool. I always find that fascinating to the sort of like daily vlogs of people who are - live in this whole different world. I was curious, so in I Feed Her to the Beast, Laurence, she has her outer demons of the river and Acheron and all the stuff that's happening, the mystery of the murders. But she also has her inner demons of - as we talked about - racism and classism in the ballet world, her getting passed over for parts that she's more qualified for than some other dancers. And that's an arc

she goes through throughout the book. I was wondering what Laurence is going to learn from this new story, what she will be learning about herself or about others.

00;16;16;22 - 00;17;32;18

Jamison

[JAMISON] Yeah, I would say that book one was really trying to explore how far she would go to be loved, and how much of herself she was willing to sacrifice for acceptance. And this idea of love as a prima ballerina. And then in book two, the ballet is gone. And that was her whole identity. And so it more explores how do you rebuild yourself and find yourself and figure out who you are when that one thing that you were good at and that you made your whole life, is gone. I had inspired it by my, going away to college for the first time. So in high school, I was like, straight-A student. I was good at everything. I was, like, at the top of my world. And then I went away to college, and I didn't have my best friends around me. And I was in a new city in a new state, and I sucked at everything. And so that drop of, like, now you're in completely unfamiliar territory and you have to figure out who you are all over again. I think that was the bulk. That's really the main story is trying to define herself while she's still possessed because Acheron still there.

00;17;32;20 - 00;17;45;02

Summer

[SUMMER] It seems almost like a friendly possession, though. I felt it almost like they were coexisting. But I could have read that wrong. I was like, it's a friend. He's a friend. He's a friendly demon or eldritch god possessing her.

00;17;45;04 - 00;17;57;22

Jamison

It's you get to question in book two. You get to wonder if they're really friends and if it's just altruism for a grander something else.

00;17;57;24 - 00;18;03;29

Summer

[SUMMER] I think we're just learning more about me that I would be susceptible to be possessed, I guess. I need to be careful.

00;18;04;02 - 00;18;05;00

Jamison

[JAMISON] I would, too.

00;18;05;02 - 00;18;16;11

Chris

[CHRIS] I'm wondering, like, is there going to be, like, kind of like that venom thing? Where, like, it's like we see her interacting a little bit through, like through the shadow responses, but are we going to start getting like the Venom voice?

00;18;16;13 - 00;18;52;02

Jamison

[JAMISON] Yes. So I had never seen Venom until after I had written the first draft, and my editor kept making jokes about venom in the comments, and I didn't understand what she was saying. So I went to watch the movie in between rounds because, yeah, she would post GIFs and like images of Eddie arguing with venom, and I'm like, I don't get this. So I had to go do some research. And then after that, I did play up a little bit more of their dialog so that it really does feel like she's arguing with her inner demons.

00;18;52;05 - 00;19;01;03

Chris

[CHRIS] Oh, it's gonna be so exciting. Like, I love Venom. I can't wait for the third movie to come out, so like, oh, I love it when they start arguing with, like, the thing possessing them.

00;19;01;06 - 00;19;10;21

Summer

[SUMMER] I've only seen the first Venom, but I liked it a lot. Have you seen that meme that's like, "What would you like for lunch?" And Venom is like, "The souls of the innocent." And then he's like, "I'll have a bagel."

00;19;10;23 - 00;19;11;22

Chris

[CHRIS] Yeah.

00;19;11;25 - 00;19;22;20

Jamison

[JAMISON] I was trying to channel that in the second book, so it's a little bit more humorous. I mean, it's still dark because she's in a dark place, but there is some levity in their exchanges.

00;19;22;22 - 00;19;30;16

Summer

[SUMMER] That's awesome. And I feel like I know this, but I'd forgotten. Is this going to be the final book in this world? Or is it going to be... okay, it's a duology.

00;19;30;18 - 00;19;34;23

Jamison

[JAMISON] Yes, it's a duology. So Laure's story ends with this book.

00;19;34;25 - 00;19;41;04

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah, I love a duology. I feel like duologies just have a nice symmetry to them. Like I Hunt the Flame.

00;19;41;07 - 00;19;45;22

Jamison

[JAMISON] Oh yeah. We Hunt the Flame. Hafsah Faizal.

00;19;45;22 - 00;19;53;08

Summer

[SUMMER] Yes, and I need to read her new book. A Tempest of Tea. I'm so excited to read it. I'm, like, saving it for a rainy day. And I don't know why I'm doing that.

00;19;53;10 - 00;20;16;20

Jamison

[JAMISON] I get you. Yeah, I considered originally it was supposed to be a standalone, but then I had some kind of ideas to, like round it out. It was just going to be like, very open ended ending. And then I figured that we should give it a full closure moment with the sequel. And so, yeah, I think people will like it. I like it.

00;20;16;20 - 00;20;20;03

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah, very exciting. I like the cover. She's like screaming.

00;20;20;09 - 00;20;24;05

Jamison

[JAMISON] Yeah. She gets angrier. If it was - if you didn't know it was possible.

00;20;24;08 - 00;20;25;19

Summer

[SUMMER] Yes.

00;20;25;21 - 00;20;43;13

Chris

[CHRIS] The first one, like, she looks like she's drowning and like throughout it felt like she was drowning in, like, the ballet and like, all of, like, the drama and like the politics of it, and then like the screaming, like, oh, we are no longer drowning. We are clawing out of the drowning and like, angry about it.

00;20;43;15 - 00;20;48;11

Jamison

[JAMISON] Yeah, I think the cover really does fit the story and, like, her art.

00;20;48;13 - 00;21;02;11

Summer

[SUMMER] Drowning in blood, I think I saw it on a list of books that was like the list was called, like books with blood on the cover. I was like, interesting way to sort your books.

00;21;02;13 - 00;21;31;19

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00;21;31;21 - 00;21;45;01

Summer

[SUMMER] So Chris talked about how the teeth thing really skeeved her out. I was wondering, is there anything in books or movies and horror that scares the pants off of you, or like, grosses you out on a visceral level?

00;21;45;04 - 00;22;44;04

Jamison

[JAMISON] Grosses me out? Not really in terms of gore or body horror or things that gross me out, not really. I grew up watching horror movies since I was really young, so like, I just, I love it. The grosser, the better. I even have - you can't see it - it's that little red thing there. But in the movie, Evil Dead Rise, there's a moment with a cheese grater. And when I saw it for the first time, I saw the cheese grater and I'm like, "Please pick it up and use it." And so when they did, I actually screamed in the theater because it was just so gratifying. So I don't get grossed out by things, but in terms of things that scare me, aliens, alien abductions, alien movies, those are the to me, I don't, I don't know. I had watched Signs when I was younger and now just alien movies, like, alien abduction movies terrify me.

00;22;44;06 - 00;22;47;24

Summer

[SUMMER] So what about Alien with Sigourney Weaver? Just Alien.

00;22;47;27 - 00;23;02;28

Jamison

[JAMISON] Yeah, that sounds awful. That one, I think, really does get my heart pumping, because she is trapped in the middle of nowhere in space with something that wants to possess her body, basically. Awful. I mean, in a good way.

00;23;03;05 - 00;23;05;29

Summer

[SUMMER] Isn't the movie Nope about aliens?

00;23;06;02 - 00;23;07;01

Jamison

[JAMISON] Yes. Yes.

00;23;07;01 - 00;23;40;21

Summer

[SUMMER] Okay. I didn't grow up watching horror movies. I was always what I call a halloweenie. I was always very easily scared. Like, I couldn't read Goosebumps, but I always loved spooky stuff like vampires and everything. And now that I'm an adult, I like can watch the stuff that used to scare me. But the only movies that I've like super scared me recently are Us by Jordan Peele. The doppelganger thing. I was walking to my bathroom at night and I was like, I'm going to see myself in the corner staring at me. And recently I watched the original Conjuring, and that really scared me. That one has some good jump scares in it.

00;23;40;24 - 00;23;46;19

Jamison

[JAMISON] Yeah, the Conjuring has the best jump scares. I am with you there.

00;23;46;22 - 00;23;51;24

Summer

[SUMMER] Chris, do you want to ask the next one? I feel like I co-opted the questions.

00;23;51;26 - 00;23;55;29

Chris

[CHRIS] Are there any future writing projects that you can share with us?

00;23;56;01 - 00;24;40;18

Jamison

[JAMISON] Yeah. So after I Am the Dark, I just finished editing my next book, which will be a standalone called Roar of the Lambs, and it is kind of like Donnie Darko or like a Final Destination kind of story, where there's a psychic who sees herself dying and then a subsequent apocalypse. And so it's like her trying to prevent her death in like an apocalypse. But I thought it would be fun to make her a compulsive liar, like she never tells the truth. And so she is psychic and her visions are accurate, but no one believes her because she never tells the truth. I think it'll be - it's a riot. It's fun for me.

00;24;40;20 - 00;25;08;05

Chris

[CHRIS] Yeah, that sounds awesome. I really liked Donnie Darko. Like, I think I was, like, early high school when it came out. It's like me and all my friends are like, super, super into, like, Donnie Darko. It was like our version of, like, we're all really way too into this. Especially because, like, Donnie Darko had that website where you could, like, find clues on the website too. So yeah, now I'm excited because I was like, what is like the current Donnie Darko of like, the weird, like, edgy thing?

00;25;08;08 - 00;25;11;21

Summer

[SUMMER] I am in love with Lisa Frankenstein.

00;25;11;24 - 00;25;13;13

Jamison

[JAMISON] Yeah. Maybe Lisa Frankenstein.

00;25;13;13 - 00;25;29;17

Summer

[SUMMER] Because it's camp. I was into Donnie Darko peripherally because my younger sibling got really into it while I was still living at home as a teenager. So I would just, like, see clips of it going on. But yeah, I don't think I was - I was probably a baby when Donnie Darko came out.

00;25;29;20 - 00;25;36;20

Jamison

[JAMISON] Yeah. I discovered it in high school. I could never go back. Changed me fundamentally.

00;25;36;22 - 00;25;45;21

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah, it seems like it's similar to the - what's that book series called, John Dies at the End? Similar, like, kind of messes with your head type of vibes.

00;25;45;23 - 00;25;47;28

Jamison

[JAMISON] It does. It's very trippy.

00;25;48;00 - 00;26;04;19

Summer

[SUMMER] I also had an additional question I wanted to ask. I wanted to know, Jamison, what you are reading right now or if you have any recommendations for our listeners? YA books or horror books that either inspire you or that you are just loving right now?

00;26;04;21 - 00;26;48;05

Jamison

[JAMISON] Yeah. So I'm currently reading, it's an older book, I think it came out in 2010, 2011 called Slice of Cherry by Dia Reeves and it is about a pair of sisters in Texas who go on a serial killing spree. It's so unhinged. I'm not done with it yet, but just chapter one was unhinged, and it just gets weirder and weirder and it's very gory. It's very violent. But the relationship of the sisters is the core part of the story, even as they are magical serial killer twins in Texas. Yeah.

00;26;48;07 - 00;26;56;11

Summer

[SUMMER] You just made my day. I read that when I was, I don't know, probably like 13, 14 years old. And, like, I'd never heard anyone else talk about that book in my life.

00;26;56;14 - 00;27;08;13

Jamison

[JAMISON] I think they're doing a reissue of it. I got asked to blurb it, so the publisher asked me to blurb it. I think they're reissuing it, and I had never heard of it. But yeah, I am loving it so much right now.

00;27;08;15 - 00;27;26;00

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah, it is so like weird girl fiction. It's... and she has another book, I think, called Bleeding Violet, which I never read, and I want to. It's, like, on my TBR. And again, I said I was a halloweenie, but for books it was different. Like, I could be scary books and that was fine. It was movies I couldn't watch. But I'm so excited because I've never heard anyone else talk about that book.

00;27;26;07 - 00;28;11;17

Jamison

[JAMISON] That book is absolutely trippy. Another book that I love, it's called My Heart Is a Chainsaw by Stephen Graham Jones, and that one is about a teenage girl who is obsessed with horror movies, and that is kind of how she connects with people. She tries to make a relationship by telling you horror movie facts, and then she thinks that her own kind of horror movie situation is happening in her hometown, and she tries really hard to prepare this new girl in school that she thinks is the final girl. So they team up together to survive this horror movie situation in their small town. Very good.

00;28;11;19 - 00;28;14;21

Summer

[SUMMER] It's on my TBR. I want to read that book.

00;28;14;24 - 00;28;24;15

Jamison

[JAMISON] A horror movie, like a horror movie, horror book has never made me cry the way My Heart Is a Chainsaw did. It is so full of heart. I love it.

00;28;24;18 - 00;28;29;17

Summer

[SUMMER] That's so awesome. Are there any more or is that your top two right now?

00;28;29;19 - 00;29;12;04

Jamison

[JAMISON] I think that's my top two. You know what? I'll add a third. That's the Spirit Bares Its Teeth by Andrew Joseph White. So the Spirit Bares Its Teeth is about a trans boy who wants to be a surgeon in Victorian London type era. He wants to be a surgeon. But obviously this is a society where trans people don't exist. So he gets sent to a, kind of like an asylum that is supposed to convert him into a cis girl. And as he's resisting this, he kind of teams up with the girls at this asylum to fight back. Also amazing. So well-written, so full of heart. So, yeah.

00;29;12;06 - 00;29;16;06

Summer

That's awesome. Is that by the same person who wrote Hell Followed with Us?

00;29;16;06 - 00;29;16;29

Jamison

[JAMISON] Yes.

00;29;16;29 - 00;29;19;08

Summer

[SUMMER] You really like, liked Hell Followed with Us didn't you, Chris?

00;29;19;11 - 00;29;42;22

Chris

[CHRIS] It was so, so good. And, like, I thought the symbolism was like sledgehammer-y, but I was like, don't care. Like so good at, like the detail and like the immersion and like body horror. Like and again the pulling out teeth that were always like panics. It's because I have like, recurring nightmares about my teeth falling out. So I just immediately am like, "Nope, can't handle the teeth stuff." But like...

00;29;42;24 - 00;29;48;18

Jamison

[JAMISON] In that case, I have another recommendation related to teeth falling out.

00;29;48;21 - 00;29;49;24

Chris

[CHRIS] Go for it.

00;29;49;27 - 00;30;46;22

Jamison

[JAMISON] This one is a novella by Kealan Patrick Burke. It's called Sour Candy. It is kind of like a psychological, demonic kind of horror where this guy goes into Walmart because he just wants some candy or something, and he sees this kid by himself. And the kid is like, "I don't know where my mom is. Can you help me?" And then the kid starts to twist reality. And so it starts with just like a good Samaritan trying to help a lost child, but then the child somehow becomes his child and it takes him home. And then everyone around him is like, "Yeah, that's your son. Of course." And then the child is holding him hostage and won't let him eat anything but sour candy. And his teeth start to fall out, and he's like losing his mind. And we as readers know that that's not his kid because we've been with him this whole time. But he starts to be manipulated and like losing his mind.

00;30;46;25 - 00;31;03;05

Summer

[SUMMER] Oh that's crazy. Oh my gosh, it's... I'm actually currently reading a book. It's not technically YA, but I think that it would be fine. Like I, a transitional book, I call it, like, it could be read by either adult or teenager. It's called, Someone You Can Build a Nest in.

00;31;03;08 - 00;31;04;28

Jamison

[JAMISON] I've heard of it.

00;31;05;01 - 00;32;35;13

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah. It's this creature and her name is Shesheshen, and she's this shapeshifting monster who lives - it's like a fantasy world. It's like an undisclosed time period fantasy world. And she's this shapeshifting monster. She can consume people, but also objects and sort of build a body out of them. And there's all these legends about her kind in this area, and they call her a wyrm. Like, W-Y-R-M, like, the Wyrms of Underlook and she meets this girl named Homily, and she is like, first, she's like, "Should I eat her?" And then she's like, "But I kind of like her. Like, maybe I should eat her, but also, maybe I shouldn't." And then she's like, "Maybe I should actually, like, build a family with her and, like, lay my eggs in her." And then Homily is from a family of monster hunters that are trying to find her, but she's disguised herself as a person. She could look like a person, but she also is constantly, like, she has a bear trap hidden in her chest that she can, like, spring on people. She can, like, take in sticks and like, weapons and just hide them inside her flesh. She has a pet bear named Blueberry. It's just very good so far. I wouldn't call it scary, but there's definitely a lot of gore in it. It's more like a very gory romance. But also, it's not explicitly said at this point, but it's also has asexual representation in it as well, which I think is cool. So that's my body horror recommendation.

00:32:35:14 - 00:32:50:04

Chris

[CHRIS] That one was so good. Like I read it over the summer and it was like, oh, the teeth is like less upsetting when it's like living in a thing of jello because nothing's attached to anything but like still. Like, sometimes just floating around in there.

00:32:50:05 - 00:32:54:13

Summer

[SUMMER] She's just a puddle of stuff and then she can like make herself and do whatever she wants.

00:32:54:15 - 00:33:03:04

Chris

[CHRIS] Yeah. And the descriptions for like, what she's using to like, create a human shape was so cool. And like, you're like, "Oh yeah, that just makes sense for, like, your ribcage."

00:33:03:06 - 00:33:06:08

Jamison

[JAMISON] I am bumping that up to my TBR.

00:33:06:11 - 00:33:23:18

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah, I think at one point they're like, "Oh, we must capture the beast's heart." And she's overhearing it and she's like, "I don't have a heart. I don't have organs. What are you talking about?" All right, well, Jamison, was there anything you'd like to say regarding your upcoming book release or anything else? Anything that pops into your head?

00:33:23:20 - 00:33:26:04

Jamison

[JAMISON] My head is empty. No.

00;33;26;07 - 00;33;28;05

Summer

[SUMMER] I can relate.

00;33;28;07 - 00;33;44;26

Jamison

[JAMISON] If you like horrible, horrible girls doing horrible things. I Feed Her to the Beast and I Am the Dark will be out in the world soon. And then also, yeah, Roar of the Lambs is yet another girl making bad choices.

00;33;44;29 - 00;34;05;08

Summer

[SUMMER] You love to see it. Once again, this has been Jamison Shea visiting us via the internet at the Ocean County Library. Their newest book, I Am the Dark that Answers When You Call, will be out November 12th. Buy it, but also come and get it from the library. We will definitely have copies of it.

00;34;05;10 - 00;34;07;16

Jamison

[JAMISON] Yes, I love libraries.

00;34;07;19 - 00;34;13;25

Summer

[SUMMER] All the libraries. But that is all for now and we hope to see you soon. Bye.

00;34;13;28 - 00;34;15;01

Jamison

[JAMISON] Bye.

00;34;15;04 - 00;34;19;06

Chris

[CHRIS] Bye.

00;34;19;08 - 00;34;34;03

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!