



Waves of YA, Episode 44, In Conversation with Tatiana Schlote-Bonne

Transcript:

00;00;09;05 - 00;01;31;02

Voiceover 1

[VOICEOVER 1] Do you have new or slightly used prom dresses in good condition? Or do you know someone who wants to give away your prom dress? The Ocean County Library invites you to donate your dresses during the 17th annual Prom Dress Collection. Donated dresses will be collected at all of the Ocean County Library branches until February 28th, and will be available for free for students in 8th through 12th grade starting in March in our Prom Dress Giveaways. Before you donate, please ensure that your dresses meet the following criteria: long or short styles from the last five years; gently used and clean dresses ready for attending prom; please don't donate dresses with rips, tears or stains, and please don't donate accessories like shoes or purses. For details, check out our website at theoceancountylibrary.org. Visit your local branch or call us at 732-349-6200. We thank you in advance for your donation.

00;01;31;05 - 00;01;42;28

Voiceover 2

[VOICEOVER 2] 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;01;43;00 - 00;01;55;08

Summer

[SUMMER] Alright, welcome to another episode of Waves of YA. Today we have a very special guest joining us. My name is Summer. I'm the librarian for teens at the Long Beach Island Branch.

00;01;55;10 - 00;01;59;05

Vince

[VINCE] My name is Vince and I'm the young adult librarian from the Manchester Branch.

00;01;59;07 - 00;02;06;10

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Hi, I'm Tatiana Schlote-Bonne and the author of *Such Lovely Skin*. And I'm so excited to be on this podcast with you guys.

00;02;06;12 - 00;02;09;28

Summer

[SUMMER] We are so excited to have you. And this is your debut novel, correct?

00;02;10;05 - 00;02;11;15

Tatiana

[TATIANA] It is, yes.

00;02;11;18 - 00;02;18;25

Summer

[SUMMER] That is so exciting. I'm not a writer myself, but I imagine it's a very exciting event. It just came out in September.

00;02;18;27 - 00;02;23;16

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Yeah. It's been a long, you know, grueling but very rewarding process.

00;02;23;18 - 00;02;30;26

Summer

[SUMMER] Could you give our listeners a brief introduction to the plot of your book? We're going to try to stay mostly spoiler free. That's our goal.

00;02;30;27 - 00;03;02;18

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Yeah, for sure. So short pitch, it's like the Ring, but with a video game instead of a tape. More in depth, it's about a Twitch streamer who is grieving the loss of her little sister, and she's blaming herself, and we know that she's guilty for it. And she starts playing this new indie horror game, and the game prompts her to tell the question, and she confesses to the game about how she killed her baby sister. And then a doppelganger manifest out of the game and starts haunting her and ruining her life.

00;03;02;20 - 00;03;08;27

Summer

[SUMMER] And it's so chilling. I haven't seen the Ring, but that always scared me. Vincent, would you like to ask a question?

00;03;08;29 - 00;03;15;07

Vince

[VINCE] Yeah, I would love that. What inspired the idea for this book, Tatiana?

00;03;15;10 - 00;04;10;22

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Yeah, probably it was either 2006 or 2007 horror movie Stay Alive where a bunch of college students play an evil video game. And if you die in the game, you die for real. That concept always stuck with me. It's just, like, so fun. And I'm a gamer, and I knew I wanted to write something that combined

horror and gaming, so it was probably the original concept was evil video game. And then from there, when I was in high school, I really struggled with reading because I was a big reader in middle school. And then I stopped reading in high school because, you know, I got a phone, got an Xbox. Suddenly my attention span, like, just didn't have room for books. And so when I started writing, I knew I wanted to write a book that would be quick and fast paced and grab a reader early and have like a compelling, hooky plot like evil video game. So really, just a combination of these elements were what set me on the path to writing Such Lovely Skin.

00;04;10;25 - 00;04;33;14

Summer

[SUMMER] That's really cool. I really like when different forms of storytelling media sync together. I just saw a book on my new books cart yesterday, which was called Goodbye Forever, I Guess, and it's a middle grade about people who meet in this online RPG world. And I thought that was very cool. And I'm not a gamer, but I thought that was such a cool melding of storytelling media.

00;04;33;16 - 00;04;34;24

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Yeah, that sounds awesome.

00;04;34;26 - 00;04;37;20

Summer

[SUMMER] Vince, are you a gamer by any chance?

00;04;37;22 - 00;05;05;22

Vince

[VINCE] Yes I am, I am. I'm so glad that your book is a horror genre related book, Tatiana, because every October it's my favorite month and my birthday is on the 19th. So I'm super like into October. So I try to play at least one horror game every October. And like I played this game called Still Wakes the Deep. You can't fight anything. You just run and hide and... I was really fascinated by your book that way.

00;05;05;24 - 00;05;14;04

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Yeah, well, happy belated birthday. And that sounds awesome. Yeah, I like those strange - I don't think I've heard of that one, but I like the indie horror games, yeah.

00;05;14;07 - 00;05;40;12

Summer

[SUMMER] I always wish that I grew up playing video games because it's such a foreign world to me. I think I just don't have the intuition about it. I tried to play Kingdom Hearts on time with my then boyfriend, now husband, and my muscle control on the game controller was so bad. I didn't have the intuition for it and I was just like, I'm terrible at this. But it was fun. I'm jealous of people who are good at games.

00;05;40;12 - 00;05;44;27

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Right, there is some, like, innate skill with it that does take some developing. Yeah.

00;05;44;29 - 00;06;10;21

Vince

[VINCE] Yeah, but it's never too late, Summer. I mean, it's the the beauty about gaming. You can hop in and out whenever your schedule allows. And video games aren't always intense like that. There's something called cozy gaming where you chill out and do something like Stardew Valley or Cozy Grove. You literally sit in when it's raining outside. You're bundled up with blankets and you got candles lit and you have food with you and you're just chilling out.

00;06;10;23 - 00;06;41;24

Summer

[SUMMER] I played a little Animal Crossing before. I found that I kept getting distracted, but I'll give it another try. I've also always wanted to play the game Alice: Madness Returns, but it's only available on Xbox or PlayStation and I don't have that. My partner has a Switch. But that's all we have. So, next question. Tatiana, how long have you been writing? And can you tell us a little bit about your writing process for this book?

00;06;41;27 - 00;09;46;04

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Yeah, I've been writing for over ten years now, so I was always like, good at English papers in, like, high school. And that's probably the only thing I was good at and it inspired me to want to take creative writing classes in college, but that's actually how I ended up in Iowa. I grew up in California. I lived in Nevada for a couple of years, and then when I graduated high school, I Googled, like, best writing schools and Iowa was what came up. And so I moved here took creative writing classes and developed my craft a little bit, realized that I liked creepy and scary. And then I got into the MFA program, the nonfiction writing program here, which was amazing and gave me like three years just to really focus on my writing. So with this book, my process, well, I learned from writing a couple bad books first, that I really need to do a lot of pre-writing and outlining to like, know where I'm going and what the point of every scene is. Otherwise, I'll just, like, meander pointlessly for hundreds of pages, and it's very dreadful. And so yeah, I did all the important scaffolding work when it comes to writing a story. So like, what does my protagonist want? Well, like, Vivian wants to be this Twitch superstar. She wants to be loved. She wants to keep her secret about how she got her baby sister killed because she doesn't want anyone to hate her. So she's very attached to her image. And so I took that and, you know, figured out, well, how can the antagonist be compelling? And so I made sure that the doppelganger was, like specifically attacking her image and basically like using what she cares about against her just so we can have, you know, the most tension, like the most important parts of her character being weaponized against her and her friends and her family. And then from there, it's just a matter of keeping the plot going and making sure that there's enough creepy bits. And so I did a pretty extensive scene outline. Like, when are these certain horror beats happening? And I pretty closely followed the Ring movie, actually. Like, I watched it a couple times while I was outlining, and with the escalation of the haunting getting creepier and the stakes raising with how it's tormenting her, and then once I have my outline, I draft and I use the Most Dangerous Writing App to do that. So it's on a timer. And when you stop writing

under the timer, it deletes everything that you've written. And so I would say, you know, 5 to 10 minute timer to crank these scenes out. And then once I have this kind of just like word vomit, not readable, just like this happens and this happens, then this happens, like skeleton draft of the book. Then I can take that and really craft the scenes and like, dig into it. I think that having that skeleton draft helps me make sure that, like, I do have a story here and like, each scene has its purpose. It's moving the story forward in a compelling way. Yeah. So it's a lot of moving pieces.

00;09;46;06 - 00;09;48;16

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah. What is that app called? I'm curious.

00;09;48;19 - 00;09;50;03

Tatiana

[TATIANA] The Most Dangerous Writing App.

00;09;50;03 - 00;09;53;14

Summer

[SUMMER] Oh, okay. I thought you were just describing it.

00;09;53;16 - 00;09;55;12

Tatiana

[TATIANA] No, no, no, no, that's the title.

00;09;55;15 - 00;10;09;10

Summer

[SUMMER] That sounds scary. Oh my gosh. So when you say - I was just thinking - about how you say the doppelganger attacks her image, is there also like a focus on the, I guess, horror of like social media in the story?

00;10;09;13 - 00;10;49;23

Tatiana

[TATIANA] I think so. I guess, like, yeah, I think that that naturally comes about because she is a Twitch streamer and you know, yeah, there is the horror that like, she has this whole like persona that she creates that she's like this whole other person online. So she is almost like has created her own like doppelganger or like image that she projects. And so, you know, there's a scene where, like, her doppelganger is streaming and she's like, you know, trying to convince people that it's not her, but she's like, already pretends to be someone that she's not to, like, she is in this position where she's, like, fighting to prove who she really is. And, you know, there's like some creepy people on the internet. Yeah. So I think the horror of social media definitely comes out.

00;10;50;00 - 00;11;01;04

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah. I think the internet is in general just a very scary place. So I think that's the perfect metaphor. And horror. Horror can do so much to show us, I think what's really scary in the world.

00;11;01;07 - 00;11;12;20

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Yeah. I'm also like really scared of identity theft, which I think is like sort of what this book is about. Yeah. Yeah. And that definitely happens online.

00;11;12;23 - 00;11;39;02

Vince

[VINCE] Going back to what you mentioned about social media, both of you, I keep thanking my lucky stars that I didn't grow up in today's society because now, more so than ever, if you say something online, it's immortalized. You know, it's always going to be there. And I think of all the cringey stuff that I did, stuff that I cringe about, I'm like, oh, thank gosh I didn't post that on social media where everyone can see it. So like that's right. Very.

00;11;39;06 - 00;11;52;12

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Yeah, I do live in fear of, you know, because I played, you know, Neopets, Gaia Online, Club Penguin, I'm like, what if all those DMs from 15 years ago got published?

00;11;52;14 - 00;12;00;19

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah. Neopets. Wow. Remember Webkinz? I'm not sure.

00;12;00;22 - 00;12;09;25

Tatiana

[TATIANA] I'm not sure if I remember. I just remember Neopets and like, a couple others. Yeah, but there were a lot of interesting games back in the like mid-early 2000s.

00;12;09;26 - 00;12;11;17

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah.

00;12;11;20 - 00;12;18;12

Vince

[VINCE] Would you consider the protagonist to be an unreliable narrator, Tatiana?

00;12;18;15 - 00;13;33;24

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Not really. I didn't intentionally try to make her one. I think when you have a first person narrator, there naturally is some unreliability because, you know, she's telling the events in her very skewed perspective. And whenever, if you like, switch perspective between a character, they're going to remember. Everyone's gonna remember it differently. Everyone's going to tell it differently. So I think any unreliability she has is just like a natural part of being in like a first, close, first-person teenage perspective. I guess because when I think of unreliable narrators, I think of like, you know, like Yellow

Wallpaper or there's some other great short stories that I've taught in, like my literature class where, like, the protagonist is dead all along, but like, that reveal doesn't come till the end. Like it's very intentional, tricking the reader to have a point. I think perhaps there is, I wouldn't call it unreliability, but more so just withholding on Vivian's part with her not wanting to let the reader know how Riley really died, but I think that was moreso just like her not being able to think about what really happened. And, yeah, so maybe a little bit of unreliability there, but, yeah.

00;13;33;26 - 00;13;41;26

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah, I was just wondering because I know she's a compulsive liar, but is she honest in the narration? It's like hard to hard to tell I think sometimes, you know?

00;13;42;02 - 00;13;51;09

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Yeah, I think she's unreliable to a degree because she's a natural liar. But it wasn't like something that I set out intentionally to make her unreliable as a narrator.

00;13;51;11 - 00;14;11;14

Summer

[SUMMER] We discussed a little bit that content creation is a huge part of this novel. Given that she is a Twitch streamer, how would you describe the effect of occupations like this being a Twitch streamer or an influencer, and how our communities are influenced by these influencers and the pros and cons of that lifestyle?

00;14;11;16 - 00;16;06;05

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Yeah, I mean, I don't do any Twitch streaming myself, and if I even, like entertain the idea, I'm immediately exhausted by it. I think it's very exhausting to be like an entertainer and like, public figure and to have, you know, your own, like, internet persona and like, have your real life and your internet life. And so I greatly admire the people who do it. And I do think it is like its own art form. I can see people rolling their eyes at me for saying that. Like, is someone reacting while playing a horror game really an artist? I think in a way, because it is a kind of acting like you are putting on a performance for your viewers and you're connecting to them. And I think it's a great way to expose games and like content that I wouldn't otherwise play. I actually, like, I don't really like horror games that much because they're so scary and they're, they're hard to play alone. And so like when you watch... you, like, get to be a part of this game that you wouldn't otherwise play or, like, maybe can't afford or like you don't have a PS5. And then I think the gaming community can be - I've learned that it's not always very positive. There is like definitely a toxic side to the gaming community. But overwhelmingly, I think the gaming community is a very positive place and these sort of platforms and gaming influencers can, like, really bring people together and like also expose just the way that like book talkers can expose indie games, gaming influencers can expose and like blow up indie games. Since I think it's just so important that people who do have those platforms and like, care about the art and games people are creating, like they're using their voices to get it into the hands of people who want to play those games, read those books.

00;16;06;08 - 00;16;35;22

Voiceover 3

[VOICEOVER 3] Are you looking for a blast from the past? Don't forget to tune into Wheeler Talk: the History of Ocean County, a podcast brought to you by me, the local history librarian. Episodes of Wheeler Talk are released monthly right here on OCL Sound Waves. Learn about the rich history of Ocean County with topics such as shipwrecks, historic storms, Ocean County's role in the Revolutionary War, tales of local hauntings, and much, much more.

00;16;35;24 - 00;17;12;17

Vince

[VINCE] You said something very interesting, Tatiana, about how streamers and influencers are pretty much entertainers. They're performing in front of a live audience. Almost always. You also feel like people in that position can also influence the community in such a positive way, especially if they, you know, try to put on their best self in front of the camera and they're genuine and they have integrity. Do you feel like that - you know how people have role models, maybe people don't have, you know, certain role models in their life and they can't really get that sort of positivity anywhere else.

00;17;12;19 - 00;17;56;02

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Right. Yeah. I mean, I think that could go both ways. There's probably someone who would be a terrible role model and influencer, but I think there are so many good ones. And yeah, I'm not a big streamer watcher, but I did do like a fair bit of research writing this, which involved watching Twitch and like watching streamers. And now I've like forgotten the names of quite a few that I watched, but I do remember thinking like, oh, I could have totally like, looked forward to this channel every day when I was a teenager and like, you know, feeling like this because, you know, you have like just like in the book, you have the chat going and everyone's talking and it feels like, you know, you're hanging out with friends, communally watching this video game be played.

00;17;56;04 - 00;18;49;16

Summer

[SUMMER] So I feel like in a sense, the book is like a very good illustration of the dichotomy of the internet and the social media we consume, where it can be a great way for communities to come together, and for you to find people that you might not have been able to connect with in your hometown. But then there's also the negative side of it, which is illustrated in the doppelganger with the idea that you brought up before of like, she sort of created the doppelganger because she puts on this online persona. And I think that's like, while there is such a positive aspect to the community space online, there's also this idea of influencers being like, well, that's not how people really are. That's something that you're putting on for the world. And what's the truth? It really shows that split, you know?

00;18;49;18 - 00;18;51;21

Vince

[VINCE] Right.

00;18;51;21 - 00;18;54;18

Summer

[SUMMER] Sorry, I'm getting really deep.

00;18;54;20 - 00;19;14;02

Vince

[VINCE] Well, we love that sometimes, we really do. I know you're not yourself a video game streamer, but you mentioned you are yourself a video game enthusiast. So do you have any favorite types of video games that you like to talk about, and why do you love them so much? Or why do you think they're such a positive form of art?

00;19;14;05 - 00;21;05;08

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Yeah, well, right now I'm really into like co-op and multiplayer games because I play with my boyfriend and our friends, and honestly, sometimes we spend like more time together in games than in real life. But I don't think it's bad. I think it's good for us. And there's like a whole team building aspect. So one of the games that we play together, it's - me and my boyfriend, we live together, and we have a friend who lives an hour away. We play Seven Days to Die. And that game actually is mentioned in the book because I love it so much. And it's a zombie survival game, but it's also like Minecraft, where it's like a world building crafting simulator. So like, you build a house or you like renovate a broken down house and you know, you have to grow food and like, find food and you have to like, build your own weapons, like, and someone has to be a doctor and like each one of us has like, a role in our little survival community. And so I think it is just really a good way for us to, like, spend time together and like, delegate tasks. And, you know, my boyfriend and I, we have friends who we play Call of Duty with. There's other various co-op games, you know, like Baldur's Gate 3 we've played together. We've been playing a lot of Medieval Dynasty, Ark: Survival Evolved. Just a lot of those games we can play together. I think it's a great way to spend time with friends. And just like, so much more fun to play with someone else than alone. Although I do like playing a lot of games solo, I also have my own, like, Baldur's Gate 3 solo campaign. You know, like Skyrim, Fallout 4, New Vegas, Planet Zoo, the Sims. Love a lot of simulators, Civilization. Yeah, sorry. I'm just like naming every game I've ever played now, but yeah, like a wide range of games that I love. Yes.

00;21;05;11 - 00;21;08;12

Summer

[SUMMER] What was the one with the buildings you said?

00;21;08;19 - 00;21;10;03

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Seven Days to Die.

00;21;10;05 - 00;21;13;16

Summer

[SUMMER] Seven Days to Die. So zombies with crafting?

00;21;13;19 - 00;21;14;10

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Yes.

00;21;14;12 - 00;21;15;18

Summer

[SUMMER] I would be into that.

00;21;15;21 - 00;21;30;12

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Yeah. And it's nice. Well, I play on a mouse and keyboard. I think it is controller compatible because they did, like, release on Xbox, but it's pretty accessible and like not too hard to get into. Yeah. Pick up a rock, pick up a stick, make an ax. Bash a zombie. Yeah. It's great.

00;21;30;12 - 00;21;47;10

Summer

[SUMMER] I know that Minecraft is super popular with a lot of kids. I work a lot with kids, and Minecraft always comes up. And while I myself had never played Minecraft, I totally understand the appeal. Like it looks visually stimulating, like shapes and colors, lots of shapes and colors.

00;21;47;12 - 00;22;08;17

Vince

[VINCE] I also think that those types of games that you love, Tatiana and that you mentioned Summer, those resource management games, they are very educational because you have to take - you have to keep track of your resources and you need to know two sticks and four rocks make this specific tool. So not only is it a wonderful good time to have, but it probably stimulates your intelligence a lot.

00;22;08;17 - 00;22;32;13

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Yeah, and it's good for like working together. Someone has to focus on certain skills. It's also like prone to forming arguments, though, like... my boyfriend and I don't always log off happy with each other. And I think it's like a funny part of our relationship how serious we take the game. And also, I can be very competitive.

00;22;32;15 - 00;22;39;04

Summer

[SUMMER] Oh, yeah, but actually, that sounds very funny. Is Runescape considered a resource building game?

00;22;39;07 - 00;22;41;04

Vince

[VINCE] I believe so, yeah.

00;22;41;06 - 00;23;02;10

Summer

[SUMMER] My husband plays that a lot. He always will talk about like, I'm like, "Oh, what are you doing in your game?" And he's like, "Oh, I'm planting trees." Or, "I'm gathering ingredients for a potion." And there was one point where he was like, "Oh, there's a bunch of penguins. And the penguins are joining forces, they radicalized, the penguins are radicalized." And I was like, that makes no sense. I thought this was a medieval world. Like, yes, but there's penguins. Okay.

00;23;02;10 - 00;23;08;00

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Yeah. I didn't play Runescape but I think it's very similar in that aspect.

00;23;08;02 - 00;23;25;10

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah. So back to the book. You discussed your writing process and the inspirations. Is there anything that you personally would like readers to take away from this book? A message or an inspiration or just a thought?

00;23;25;13 - 00;24;24;04

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Yeah, I think it's ultimately like if we boil it down to its core about this, it's a story about self-forgiveness and self-acceptance. I definitely don't want it to come off as like an anti-tech, like, anti-gaming, anti-social media book. But I think it's important to still be able to distinguish yourself between like who you really are and who you are online. I think books always sound cheesy when you boil them down to their core concepts, but I think those were like the bigger ideas I was grappling with. And then I also just wanted readers to have fun reading it. And just like, remember that book can be fun because I think I needed that reminder when I wrote it, because I'd been in a eight-year reading slump, and so I didn't take myself too seriously when I wrote it. And I, like, try to keep it fun and fast paced and engaging.

00;24;24;07 - 00;24;42;12

Summer

[SUMMER] I think that's great. I think that's a great way to dive into books like this, especially when parts of it take place, like you said, like in the Twitch stream, in the chat room. So the pacing is very good in that aspect. It reminds me a little bit of, have you ever heard of the novel Catfishing on CatNet?

00;24;42;14 - 00;24;43;17

Tatiana

[TATIANA] No.

00;24;43;19 - 00;25;40;14

Summer

[SUMMER] That's another YA, but that kind of like you said, it's not anti-tech, it's not pro-tech. It's sort of just about people and our relationship with technology and it's about this girl. She's part of this online

social chatroom called CatNet, which mainly focus on people sharing cute animal pictures. And the moderator of the chat room is an AI who loves cat pictures. And so it's not a bad robot book. It's a good robot book. And the robot is, like, really invested in the lives of these teens. And the robot loves cat pictures. So the robots are really just there for the cat pictures. And it's very cute. And the AI robot becomes, like involved in a bigger story in the protagonist's life. So I kind of matched it to your book in the sense that it's about our relationship with technology, but it's not necessarily a positive or a negative viewpoint.

00;25;40;16 - 00;25;44;15

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Yeah, I just looked this up. I hadn't heard of it before, but it looks really good. I'll definitely have to read it.

00;25;44;21 - 00;25;51;05

Summer

[SUMMER] It's very cute. And like you said, it's fast paced and there's a sequel, which I haven't read, but I enjoyed it.

00;25;51;07 - 00;26;02;26

Vince

[VINCE] Are there any books that you would like to recommend to our listeners? Books that inspired you, or books that really touched you when you were, you know, younger? Maybe that you think everyone should give a try?

00;26;02;29 - 00;26;27;14

Tatiana

[TATIANA] When I was younger, I can't remember books that I read when I was... I mean, I read all the like books that everyone was reading in middle school. Yes. Sorry, I just went on a tangent, but your question made me remember what I was reading. Goosebumps. Stephen King, Dean Koontz. Maybe not everyone was reading that. That was just me.

00;26;27;16 - 00;26;32;26

Summer

[SUMMER] What is Dean Koontz like? Isn't he, like, a... what is he like? I can't remember.

00;26;32;28 - 00;27;54;02

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Dean Koontz, the one that I remember I read a couple of his, but the one that stuck with me was The Watchers, which was about some guy and his very smart Golden Retriever Labrador that was lab engineered, that had like, human intelligence. And then there was like an alligator chimpanzee monster wreaking havoc on the world. And these two had to, like, fight the monster. Anyway, recently the books that have stuck with me the most, The September House by Chris Orlando. I love any horror that's kind of meta and funny, and so for that reason, I love Grady Hendrix. I love T. Kingfisher, I really like horror that plays with the genre and that is a little self-aware, and that doesn't take itself too

seriously. So I also love - I know I'm just like listing adult books, but for YA I really love Liselle Sambury. Delicious Monsters was great. And then Diana Urban's books were really influential on Such Lovely Skin, especially These Deadly Games, I think it's called. And Kelsea Yu you also just wrote - I mean it came out a few months ago - but It's Only a Game, published by Bloomsbury Way. That's another fantastic gaming YA thriller.

00;27;54;05 - 00;27;54;29

Vince

[VINCE] Awesome.

00;27;55;02 - 00;28;01;21

Summer

[SUMMER] That's awesome. I had a bonus question that I just thought of, which was how did you come up with the name for this book?

00;28;01;23 - 00;28;25;09

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Yeah, so I just picked various lines from the book and then sent them to my publisher to see which one would stick, and we liked this one, and we liked it for reasons beyond just sounding creepy, but like it's a line from the game. And then there's probably something about, you know, skin and like, the doppelganger stealing people's skin.

00;28;25;13 - 00;28;34;22

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah, because I was always wondering, like, does the line in the book come first or does the title come first? And like, do they like a chicken or the egg thing, you know?

00;28;34;24 - 00;28;41;24

Tatiana

[TATIANA] In this case, for my books, it's definitely the line in the book comes first and then I take a line and make it the title. Yeah.

00;28;41;25 - 00;28;49;20

Summer

[SUMMER] Oh yeah. Because on the cover, like the skin is melting. So it's kind of very, very creepy in that aspect too.

00;28;49;23 - 00;28;51;00

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Right, right.

00;28;51;02 - 00;29;00;10

Vince

[VINCE] As soon as Summer told me about your book and I looked it up and I thought of the thing I'm like, oh my gosh, this is probably something that that doppelganger says to her to like taunt her or something.

00;29;00;16 - 00;29;04;18

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Yeah. Yeah. You got it.

00;29;04;21 - 00;29;17;24

Summer

[SUMMER] But it also sounded like a creepy thing a stranger would say to you and you're like, "Okay. Please don't say that to me ever again." Do we have any final questions for Tatiana?

00;29;17;26 - 00;29;22;27

Vince

[VINCE] I was going to ask what kind of streamers you drew inspiration from? So I could check them out myself.

00;29;22;27 - 00;29;25;00

Summer

[SUMMER] Totally.

00;29;25;02 - 00;29;27;09

Vince

[VINCE] You know any that you'd like to recommend?

00;29;27;11 - 00;29;36;10

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Now I can't remember. The only one whose name that I remember is PewDiePie, and I think he's been canceled, so...

00;29;36;13 - 00;29;38;12

Summer

[SUMMER] I'm not really in that world. I don't know.

00;29;38;14 - 00;30;05;02

Tatiana

[TATIANA] So maybe not, but I really like just watching women who play Call of Duty and stream it. I should really do that because the things that I hear are absurd. But if you do this, like, on TikTok, look up like "women playing Warzone." It's great. And women are very good. I mean, I don't think it matters what gender you are playing that game, but, people in that game think it does.

00;30;05;04 - 00;30;24;14

Summer

[SUMMER] Yeah. I assume that's a very cathartic way to get your frustration out. Like there's, a place near my house, it's a business, it's just called a Rage Room. And I guess you pay to go in and smash stuff, get your anger out if you're having a bad day. And I assume playing a Call of Duty-like game would have a similar effect.

00:30:24;16 - 00:30:26;22

Tatiana

[TATIANA] It does sound very similar, yeah.

00:30:26;24 - 00:31:04;23

Vince

[VINCE] I know one of my favorite streamers. Her name is Marzzzy, it's M-A-R-Z-Z-Y, and the reason why I watch her and certain other streamers, like you said, Tatiana, is because I don't have like a PC and this game is only on PC and I want to see what they're playing. But it's also because I like watching people's reaction to scary moments in games, like you said. I like them when something pops up, their reaction and she mainly plays like the first-person horror games like Amnesia and Alien Isolation and everything and Little Nightmares. So I'm like, whenever there's a new horror game, I always try to tune in. I'm like, "Is she playing this? I want to see if she freaks out."

00:31:04;25 - 00:31:19;00

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Yeah, yeah... that's basically also why I watch. I've been told to watch Markiplier, I haven't, but yes, I think he's another horror streamer. And you said that was Marzzzy. I'll have to also...

00:31:19;03 - 00:31:30;27

Vince

[VINCE] Do you think you'll eventually be a streamer as well? And, like, write on the side and stream on the side and be like the ultimate writer-gamer?

00:31:30;29 - 00:31:45;20

Tatiana

[TATIANA] No, I just don't think I have the personality or like, commitment to want to do that. I think it takes like a certain amount of being, you know, extroverted and like willing to do that sort of performance. And I just like, I don't. That's just not for me.

00:31:45;23 - 00:32:17;28

Summer

[SUMMER] Well that's good. You can stick to writing books and then we get to read your books. Alright, thank you so much for joining us, Tatiana. This was so fun. It was great to hear all of your inspiration for the book and about what you hope people get out of the book. If anyone listening would like to read Tatiana's book, you may purchase it or you could get it from your local library. We have several copies at the Ocean County Library which you can access. And without further ado, thanks for listening. Bye.

00:32:18;00 - 00:32:18;17

Vince

[VINCE] Bye.

00;32;18;23 - 00;32;23;11

Tatiana

[TATIANA] Thank you.

00;32;23;13 - 00;32;45;22

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;32;45;25 - 00;33;16;03

Voiceover 4

[VOICEOVER 4] 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 expertly crafted worlds for books, games, Dungeons & Dragons, and more. Tune in on the first Wednesday morning of every month to learn more. Thanks for listening and safe travels, adventures.