



## Read with Pride, Episode 5, Matchmaker

### ***Transcript:***

00;00;09;24 - 00;00;18;02

Voiceover

[VOICEOVER] Hello and welcome to Read with Pride, a podcast focused on LGBTQIA+ literature brought to you by the Ocean County Library's Ocean Pride Committee.

00;00;18;27 - 00;00;23;17

Diane

[DIANE] Hi, I'm Diane, pronouns she/her. I work at the Toms River Branch and I'm on the Ocean Pride Committee.

00;00;24;04 - 00;00;44;07

Sam

[SAM] Hey there. I'm Sam, pronouns are they/them. I'm also on the Ocean Pride Committee. I work at the Berkeley Branch. Today, we'll be talking about Matchmaker, an adult graphic novel written by Cam Marshall. It's about two young adult friends, Mason and Kimmy, moving in together during the midst of the pandemic and dealing with the ramifications of that, like getting jobs and things like that.

00;00;44;22 - 00;00;49;04

Diane

[DIANE] All right, so let's get into it. What is your overall impression of the book?

00;00;50;04 - 00;01;18;11

Sam

[SAM] It definitely does feel like how it was originally written, it was originally like one comic released every week for about two years. And then later on, it was compiled into a book, and it definitely does feel like that in a good way with small bits and sort of like, what is it called? Slice of life, very. But then you get a slice of life during the pandemic, which is very neat to see.

00;01;19;03 - 00;01;57;23

Diane

[DIANE] Yeah, I can definitely feel the comic vibes because it kind of reminded me like of reading a Sunday comic. First off, it's black and white. But it also reminded me of just reading a Sunday comic if I was to have read it slowly over time. I read it in the complete format, but I still get that, "Oh, this is

where it would end.” My overall impression of the book, it was a cute book, but we are a very large age gap, you and I. So I felt like, wow, it had that manga kind of look like a younger look about it. But wow, 20 somethings are really different than I was 30 years ago when I was 20, you know? So that was my overall impression.

00;01;58;08 - 00;02;22;15

Sam

Yeah. The first time I first took a look at it, I was like, “This is under adult, really?” Like, because I guess comic books are definitely like, not comic books, but I guess graphic novels are definitely like, I don’t want to say stereotypes, but usually like seen as YA or J. Well, like it is nice to see an adult graphic novel, I guess to properly answer - impression, it's just a nice slice of life just about.

00;02;23;09 - 00;02;45;26

Diane

[DIANE] It was cute. No, no, it's okay. I think that when you read about Cam Marshall, the author, they're very inspired by the slice of life shows you manga, which they think is the best. So I definitely was like, Oh, this gives me big, like manga vibes. There's a manga Cat + Gamer that it really kind of reminds me of, that extreme emotions and that kind of thing.

00;02;46;02 - 00;02;47;00

Sam

[SAM] Like the facial expressions.

00;02;47;00 - 00;02;48;10

Diane

[DIANE] Yes, absolutely.

00;02;48;24 - 00;02;51;29

Sam

[SAM] Did you find any similarities between you and any of the characters?

00;02;52;07 - 00;03;26;08

Diane

[DIANE] When I read this, I'm trying to think the older sister of Mason, I don't remember their name, but during the journey, during the book, they came to a conclusion that, “Oh, I'm bisexual.” And I was like, oh, I'm sort of going through a thing of like, maybe I'm bisexual. So I felt connected to her character. I think also, like she was saying, like because of seeing her, the brother, the brother and the brother's trend of how strong they are, it helped her come to, like, understand her own sexuality. What about you?

00;03;26;11 - 00;03;59;23

Sam

[SAM] That's awesome. I think I definitely relate to Kimmy the most. Especially page 62 where they're like, I don't want to be one thing or the other. I just want to scare people. And it's like, yeah, that's great.

Not great, but just I definitely hear that to an extent. Like I don't want I think I definitely prefer to be gendered in a masculine way. Kind of like how Kimmy likes to be gendered in a more feminine way. Like a scene where they're talking to an older woman and it's like, you're not a girl, but you would rather be gendered as a girl. Like, I definitely feel that.

00;03;59;27 - 00;04;27;00

Diane

Okay, Yes. You know what's so interesting up until that scene, like I thought Kimmy was a girl, you know what I mean? Like, until they explained it more and explored it more. And I think that scene also made me think of my kid who they're non-binary and they say to me that they would love for people to not even know what their gender is. You know, when they walk into a room. So yeah, I get that. So then what was your favorite part of the book? Do you have any favorite parts?

00;04;27;01 - 00;04;30;09

Sam

[SAM] Oh, I got to think of mine. You want to share yours?

00;04;30;16 - 00;05;12;15

Diane

[DIANE] Oh, gosh. There were a few, like, favorite parts. It's interesting because I go to my favorite and my least favorite is the part where, again, Mason's sister, they went to dinner at her parents house. And so I was very proud of how the sister stood up for Mason. But then my least favorite is that the parents weren't supportive, is what it seemed. Or yeah, they weren't using the correct pronouns of Mason's friend, and they were asking like, "Oh, you have a girlfriend?" And Mason's like, "No, I told you, I'm not going to have a girlfriend. I was gay." So I've now switched the question because I went to like, "Oh, the next question's my least favorite." So I answered maybe both of those, my favorite and my least favorite.

00;05;12;20 - 00;05;28;23

Sam

[SAM] Gotcha. I think my favorite part is probably near the end, where they're all at that outdoor party. Like Mason's talking like Mason's on like, I think his proper date with his first boy, not his first boyfriend, but his first boyfriend in the book, and I think it's cute.

00;05;29;13 - 00;05;48;01

Diane

[DIANE] Oh, another scene that was cute because they have a lake near them because they more than living on the ocean. And then when Kimmy is with their partner, Marlowe, I think? Okay. Marlowe. There's a part where one of them is like, "Oh, every day with you is like a lake day." And I was like, "Oh, that's so sweet," you know?

00;05;49;15 - 00;06;16;01

Sam

[SAM] And then that sort of - you already answered the next one - but least favorite part of the book is, see, it's not that there are any parts of the book that I don't like. It's just I get very emotional when I get invested in the story. So if the characters are like feeling angry over the situation, then I'm angry and then I'm not having a good time. So it's usually like the parts where like Kimmy would have to deal with customer service. That one part where a customer is like "COVID isn't real," and it's like, oh, I had to deal with that.

00;06;16;04 - 00;06;49;07

Diane

[DIANE] That's right. Yes. Yeah, Well, right. Because in this book they really talked about COVID because we're supposed to be set in the pandemic. And there was some really customers that didn't agree with it or didn't believe in it. But then what was nice is when she, like, spoke to it with the older lady, I think it was Ethel, there was that scene where she spoke about it and then Ethel came back the next day with her mask on. So like, oh, okay, you're not only doing it for me, you're doing it for others. So communication and understanding. Did you find yourself rooting for these characters?

00;06;49;08 - 00;07;22;05

Sam

[SAM] Oh, definitely. It's nice to see them sort of go through the changes that they go through throughout the story, like Kimmy getting in a breakup with Cass, who they're with at the start of the book. And Cass is a side character, but I still see myself even rooting for Cass because after they break up like Cass transitioned and then they're still friends with Kimmy and the main characters. That's very realistic for like queer friendships where it's like, "Oh, we tried dating, okay." It just seems to happen a lot where it's all like the same friend group. What was the question?

00;07;22;15 - 00;07;24;06

Diane

[DIANE] Oh, your answer is great. If you're rooting for them.

00;07;24;07 - 00;07;31;12

Sam

[SAM] Oh, yeah, I love all of them. Even like when Marlowe gets a job as a barista, the girl, the kind of...

00;07;32;09 - 00;07;33;13

Diane

[DIANE] The party planner girl.

00;07;33;13 - 00;07;35;25

Sam

[SAM] Yeah, like, it's like, "Oh, yeah, we're trying to unionize." And it's like, "Yes, go!"

00;07;36;05 - 00;08;51;15

Diane

[DIANE] That's right. Yes, yeah, I think I agree. Like, I definitely was rooting for the characters. It was hard not to root for them. They were all very lovable. But I do agree, like when Kimmy was dating Cass and it was literally like they had never even met, but they were in a relationship, which does happen more often, you know? And definitely, I mean, my kids have become friends with people that they've never met because of the Internet. That's again, hard for me. I'm like, "What do you mean you're going to go across the country to visit this person that you never even met? Like, you don't even know them." And they're like, "Mom, I talk to them every day. I do know them." So that was I know Kimmy and Cass, but you're right that they were very supportive of each other. And they were a great, chosen family, is really what they were. So, you know, I definitely agree they were really a good cast of characters, and I do want to see more of them. I know that the book ended and I think it was a webcomic and it ended. But it would be really cool to see more and maybe they will. I did like in the book, I don't know if I'm skipping around, but how they would sort of what's it called? Break the fourth wall. And they would like talk to us and be like, oh, if we see this, how could we become the next - they were saying something about Netflix and they were like, "How can we be the next Heartstopper?" You know? It was cute when they would do that.

00;08;52;04 - 00;09;07;12

Sam

[SAM] When talking about rooting for the characters, there was this part in the near the end of the book where they flashback to when Kimmy and Mason meet, where it's like, "Hey, I think I'm gay and I like you." "Oh, I don't think I'm a man. I'm sorry, Mason." And it's like that's so cute.

00;09;07;13 - 00;09;53;04

Diane

[DIANE] It was. It was very sweet. And then they just become best friends. Yeah, and so like, I saw, like a I think, a TikTok yesterday about a person that transitioned, and it's like, what about if you transitioned with your best friend? Or like, I think they were in the teens and they were transitioning and then their best friend was still the best friend 15 years later after they transitioned and they showed the pictures as they went through their journey. And then I think they were officiating the best friend's wedding. Just that's what I think that a true friendship and true love is. And I don't even mean it could be platonic love, you know what I mean? Like, just it doesn't matter what your gender or your sexuality is like. If I'm your friend, I'm your friend, you know? You know.

00;09;53;23 - 00;09;58;19

Sam

[SAM] It was really nice to see. Which scene had stuck with you the most?

00;09;58;19 - 00;10;32;06

Diane

[DIANE] Okay. So I did take a bunch of screenshots, but I can't look at them right now because we're recording on my phone. So I like the one - it was a scene that Kimmy was saying that gender doesn't define them and sometimes it's very fluid and sometimes they feel more feminine, sometimes they feel more masculine. So that one stuck with me. Yeah, and then even just at the end, and I don't want to

spoil anything, but it was very like, yay, they're all just all there, like, they went to a concert and they were just all like their own cool buddy group. What about you?

00;10;33;02 - 00;11;10;05

Sam

[SAM] I think the part that stuck with me the most wasn't like a specific page. I haven't read the last of the book in a while, but it was the part where I think Kimmy got on a new type of meds and it was really messing with their personality. That part really stuck with me because it's like, oh man, like, I used to be really scared of getting on meds because, like, for some reason I thought it was gonna, like, change my whole personality. And, I don't know, just seeing, like, the character that we're so used to being as like, the wild, fun, chaotic one all of a sudden be, like, all quiet. It's like, oh no, something's happening.

00;11;10;15 - 00;11;55;10

Diane

[DIANE] Yeah, well, you're right. I do remember that scene. And they transitioned like when they spoke about that scene, they went from, I don't know, I felt like it was a new chapter and I didn't know what was happening at first. And then they explained it very quickly that like, oh, Kimmy's on new meds. And and so, yes. Kimmy went from this fun, excitable person to like a very stoic, very calm, but then they showed how like it just takes time. And it's important for people to see that in literature that like, okay, this is a normal thing and sometimes it takes time for meds to level off. And it's important to take your meds and to know that, oh, maybe it's time for a different dosage or a different medication. So I'm glad that literature does that. It puts it in there because it normalizes it. It's important to see.

00;11;55;11 - 00;12;16;17

Sam

[SAM] Yeah, exactly. Not to ramble about myself for a second, but when I first started Lexapro, like, it's definitely like as far as I know, like the most generic form of antidepressant. And I remember being like really scared about it. I know this is an adult comic, but I feel like reading something similar to this when I was younger definitely would have helped me get on antidepressants sooner. So I definitely agree with you on that.

00;12;17;04 - 00;12;39;13

Diane

[DIANE] Right. Yes. And I think there are white comics that touch on it, too. And this the thing is, with any literature, like even though it's rated like if it's in the adult section, like young adults can read it. That's the thing. You read to your level and yeah, it's out there for people to read it. So who do you think the audience, Cam Marshall, the author, had most in mind when writing this book?

00;12;40;00 - 00;13;00;27

Sam

[SAM] I'd assume people that are around the same age as the main characters that have recently lived through a similar experience with the pandemic. I'm assuming this must be something that's to be a comfort for people while going through the pandemic, as Cam Marshall did release these on a weekly basis. When did it start, 2021?

00;13;01;18 - 00;13;06;07

Diane

[DIANE] They start releasing them December 2021 is when it was posted online.

00;13;06;12 - 00;13;21;22

Sam

[SAM] Definitely like, oh, things still haven't gone back to normal, which they never really will. But, you know, things are still very chaotic and insane. Here's a cute comic about people being friends and falling in love.

00;13;22;16 - 00;14;20;03

Diane

[DIANE] Cam probably wrote it for the early twenties audience because the way it was also being released, it would be harder for me, a 50 year old to not that it would be hard to find it, but I probably wasn't looking for webcomics or something like that. But I do think at the end, it's good for anybody, any age that wants to read it, you know, have more information. It is an interesting look at the pandemic from a different perspective. This is a perspective of two young people that decided to move out during the pandemic and how they kept themselves safe and how they would have small interactions and keep their family and friends safe and then how they got COVID, you know, and that and they went through that, too. And so, yeah, I think because they wrote it during COVID, I'm sure it was probably even maybe sort of a therapeutic for Cam, the author, to do this, to sort of get things out and then to document what, you know, the world went through during those times. It's important.

00;14;20;14 - 00;14;36;15

Sam

[SAM] Yeah, definitely. I can see it as a comfort to people that could have been going through like similar experiences during the pandemic where it's like I remember seeing a lot of GoFundMes just cause like, things got expensive and we can't work right now. Like, ah.

00;14;37;01 - 00;15;21;28

Diane

[DIANE] Right, right. Well, that was interesting. Like it was the pandemic, but then they all had to try to work and Mason had a job that they were able to do remotely, but then Kimmy and Marlowe had to go out into the world and work. And that was where you got a little scarier if you're in the public sector or public work or customer service work, that you really have to be with customers and not everyone's going to have the same views and feelings about it. So I think it's for anyone to read, but it's probably like an early 20 audience. But I think also now like a few years later, not a tremendous amount later, but people can read it and be like, "Oh, that's right. That's what it was like." You know, so that's interesting too.

00;15;21;28 - 00;15;25;01

Sam

[SAM] What were the main themes of the books? How are those themes brought to life?

00;15;25;28 - 00;15;51;19

Diane

Oh, all right. So we talked about a lot of this, right? So I think though many of the main themes were like young adults just starting their journey. It was a lot about their finding employment, keeping employment, video games. We didn't even talk about their video game habits. That was a big part of it. Friendships, you know I think their gender and sexuality. Yeah, I think those were like the main themes and how were they?

00;15;51;26 - 00;15;53;07

Sam

[SAM] How were they brought to life?

00;15;53;07 - 00;16;04;07

Diane

[DIANE] I think well, because it's a graphic novel, you don't have to worry so much about the words bringing them to life. But the pictures help to bring them to life. So yeah, that's what I think. What do you think?

00;16;04;24 - 00;16;56;25

Sam

[SAM] I'd definitely say, like the main theme is that like the world feels like it's ending because it sort of is ending. But hey, at least you have your friends that make it worth it. I guess the main theme of the book is just about the power of love and friendship. The world is ending, but at least we have that sort of thing, like we will get through this. And I did like sort of talking about, you know, by the power of love and friendship. Later on when they meet Cass, just to bring back Cass because I really love Cass, just sort of what I said earlier, like just the realness of queer friendships where it's like, "Oh, we tried dating. Oh, Cass is poly and Kimmy isn't, okay, this isn't going to work, but that's okay." And cause just it ended on good terms. There was like one part where Cass was like, "A friendship retained while still respecting my boundaries." It's like, that's so good.

00;16;57;03 - 00;17;35;29

Diane

[DIANE] Yeah, well, it's so funny. And this is the romantic in me. I'm like, "Oh, maybe Cass and Mason will get together." Like, because I agree. Like, I'm like, oh, Cass seems great, you know? And then they got to be Cass. So again, I don't know, because I think the whole theme was also matchmaker. Like Kimmy was the matchmaker, you know, like that's the, was part of it was like matches were being made for everyone but Mason. And so I was like, maybe it's Cass, but Cass was a cute character, too, you know, like the drawing of Cass and, you know, the representation of I think he, right? He used the pronouns he or they? Either way, they were transitioning, right?

00;17;37;03 - 00;17;51;23

Sam



[SAM] Right with matchmaker and the dates that like Mason would go on that Kimmy would set up those were really cute and then sort of what I brought up earlier about the power of love and friendship, etc. Mason's boyfriend at the end, what was his name?

00;17;52;28 - 00;17;54;15

Diane

[DIANE] The dark band guy.

00;17;54;17 - 00;17;56;09

Sam

[SAM] He was the barista.

00;17;56;09 - 00;17;58;11

Diane

[DIANE] I know. You know what?

00;17;58;22 - 00;18;15;21

Sam

[SAM] Bring me back to, like, the power of love and friendship with Adam, Mason's boyfriend by the end of the book - spoilers, sorry. Well, it's like he seems, like, you know, edgy, grumpy with the manga inspiration, kind of like [unintelligible]. I think that's how you pronounce it.

00;18;15;24 - 00;18;21;09

Diane

[DIANE] I don't know. You said it much more fluid than me. I'm like, I'm so choppy. So I think you did it right.

00;18;21;10 - 00;18;56;13

Sam

[SAM] Thank you. It's like, oh, you think he's angry, but he secretly cares. And then you learn about like, oh, what was it? I think his like dad and little brother are like, going through stuff right now because it's the global pandemic, right? Yeah, yeah. Everyone has sort of their own world to keep up right now, especially like right now. And just I guess the main theme is definitely like not just transitioning in like the queer sense, but also in the things are constantly changing, especially right now, but hey, at least we're changing together part.

00;18;56;13 - 00;19;29;14

Diane

[DIANE] Right, the other thing is when I think about again, I had a family that loved me and my kids were able to be whoever they wanted to be at my house. But there are some people that were, you know, early twenties and in households, and they had to maybe go back to the households if they were in college or something. And I think the pandemic was hard for - because not everyone has supportive families and not everyone has supportive households. So that's the other thing. Yeah, everyone's going

through their own stuff, so that's important to think about that. So do you think this is an honest depiction of early 20 year olds growing up during the pandemic?

00;19;30;02 - 00;20;00;11

Sam

[SAM] It's interesting because I'm 21. I was in my late teens, when the pandemic hit. I was still in high school. I'm not sure. I have a relative that was in his early twenties when the pandemic hit, and he was able to like, stay home with his parents and things like that. Then a situation where either you can't or you're in a situation where you can actually get out there - not get out there but like move out properly during the pandemic, it definitely seems accurate.

00;20;01;13 - 00;20;10;05

Diane

I mean, a slice of life. So it's - so I think that means just a piece of the puzzle, but not deeper complex.

00;20;10;05 - 00;20;21;22

Sam

[SAM] Oh, yeah. I feel like if it was going to be 100% realistic on what was happening during the pandemic, I feel like rent would have been like the like the villain, I guess.

00;20;22;25 - 00;21;13;20

Diane

[DIANE] Oh, you mean like, how are they paying their rent, is that what you mean? Because I agree. I think that in some respects it was really an honest depiction of 20 year olds hanging out, ordering McDonald's, playing video games. But then in some it's like, okay, but who's paying these bills? You know, but they definitely were talking about jobs. So they weren't not working. They were definitely working, but they weren't really like getting too deep into that part of it. I mean, again, I was not 20 when the pandemic hit, but my children were and they were able to stay home. But they definitely had interactions, virtual interactions. They have real friendships that they would try to see people like outside birthday parties and taking COVID tests before they went to any kind of function and masking up. So yeah, I think in those respects it was real.

00;21;13;20 - 00;21;41;00

Sam

[SAM] The pandemic in a sense is still going on. It sort of as like it mutates, it also sort of changes in the real world as, you know, like mask mandates aren't really mandated right now, but it's still like an option. And sort of with that, it still feels like people that were 20 somethings when the pandemic hit are still like growing with it. It sort of feels like when it hit, it kind of felt like a timeline split. Does that make sense?

00;21;41;00 - 00;22;18;09

Diane

I agree. Yeah, absolutely. I feel like 2020 was like 12 years ago, but yesterday. And it also feels like, we're in 2024 now, but these last four years, I'm like, we lost some years there. And I think Mason was like

even says in the thing that he like graduated college in 2020. So like all of those experiences or if you were in high school in 2020, like there were so many experiences that were either like, so drastically changed or you missed them or yeah, it's, it's a whole different world than it was in 2019 or even in January of 2020. You know, like it really is very different.

00;22;18;24 - 00;22;27;09

Sam

[SAM] Yeah, I see like videos where it's like, "Oh, hey, look, we have two weeks off" and then it like flashes to like the present and it's like, "Oh, we're still off for two weeks, I guess."

00;22;27;09 - 00;22;30;28

Diane

[DIANE] Yeah, it all happened really quickly.

00;22;30;28 - 00;22;33;28

Sam

[SAM] Have you, or would you want to read another book by this author?

00;22;34;14 - 00;22;41;04

Diane

[DIANE] So I was looking, I don't see another book by the author. I think they might have some other things.

00;22;41;04 - 00;22;54;21

Sam

[SAM] I think they're coming out with one soon. I think it's like on either part of it or it's completely out on Cam's Patreon. Ethernet Girl or something along those lines.

00;22;55;02 - 00;23;18;14

Diane

[DIANE] Let's see, oh, yes, yes, yes, I did see that. So I have not read anything else, but I would. I definitely would. Oh yes, Yeah, they have a comic shop, so Ethernet Cable Girlfriend. Oh they have a few different ones when you look on there. And I believe all their things are free. Oh no, not free. Okay. You're right. \$2.50 to buy that.

00;23;18;26 - 00;24;03;08

Sam

[SAM] Yeah. It looks like the different like chapters. I'm not sure if Cam's going to do the thing where it's like, here's all the chapters of Matchmaker, and then it's going to be made into a book, or if it's going to stay digital. And there also seems to be Flying Saucer Video. I'm not sure if it's a... I don't think that's a... the first 21 pages of... a smaller comic project. Okay. So they have been doing other comic projects, but it doesn't look like anything that's officially released. But I would still definitely read their other releases, whether they're like official release through like a book or if it's just - not if it's just - online comics are still very important, but I would read either of those.

00;24;03;08 - 00;24;20;28

Diane

[DIANE] Right. Well, and so the way I read it and I don't know how you read it, but I read it on Hoopla Digital, so we have it in the library on Hoopla Digital, and that's how I was able to read it. You can read it on - I read it on my phone, but then I also read it on my computer, depending on where I was at. So you would read other books by.

00;24;20;28 - 00;24;21;28

Sam

[SAM] Yeah, would you?

00;24;21;28 - 00;24;31;23

Diane

[DIANE] I would. I would, yeah. It was fun. It was a cute like I said, I really was like, oh, it was a cute read. All right, so five quick thoughts. So the first one would you recommend this book to someone on the street?

00;24;32;08 - 00;24;36;02

Sam

[SAM] Someone on the street as in me at work or just like in general?

00;24;36;03 - 00;24;37;13

Diane

[DIANE] In general, would you recommend the book?

00;24;38;25 - 00;25;07;20

Sam

[SAM] If a friend were to ask me, like for books about this topic, I definitely would recommend it. Or just in general, like, hey, I'm looking for an easy read or - not an easy read - but it's like, hey, I'm not too much of a reader, but I want to get into it. And I think graphic novels are a really good way of not a transition period or getting someone into reading, because definitely there are people that like solely read graphic novels, which I get. The pictures are cool. But it definitely is like a good place to go.

00;25;08;09 - 00;25;54;01

Diane

[DIANE] I think every book has a reader. You've got to find the reader like you need to know. That's why when we're at the desk, we ask people like a little more information so we can try and narrow in and see like what their style is. I also recently had somebody that was upstairs looking for comic books. They were looking for like Calvin and Hobbes or Garfield because he said to me, he's like, you know, ADHD and comic books really go well together. And I think it's true because you need that extra stimulation. You need the like, you can read it, you put it down. So yeah, I think that's kind of the same thing. Okay. So I think that ADHD and just we are always bombarded with things. Sometimes I feel like a graphic

novel is a better way to read. So yeah, I would definitely recommend it. All right. So let's see, the next one is, if you could give this book a different title, what would it be?

00;25;54;24 - 00;26;02;27

Sam

[SAM] I feel you would be some sort of pun on pandemic. Like are any of the characters pan?

00;26;03;24 - 00;26;06;15

Diane

[DIANE] Um, they didn't say that, but...

00;26;07;07 - 00;26;19;12

Sam

[SAM] That would be funny. Maybe like, hmm, something like, I wouldn't say it's a love guide, but like, love life during the pandemic or something along those lines.

00;26;19;12 - 00;26;24;22

Diane

[DIANE] What about what you kept saying, like love and friendship? Like, you know, like, I think that's a good title for it.

00;26;24;22 - 00;26;25;10

Sam

[SAM] The power of love and friendship.

00;26;25;24 - 00;26;33;12

Diane

[DIANE] The power of love and friendship. I love that. The power of love and friendship. And what emotions did you feel when reading this book?

00;26;33;29 - 00;26;43;05

Sam

[SAM] Like I said before, when I'm into a book, I'm feeling the feelings that the main characters are feeling. I'm definitely, like, sensitive in that sort of way. Wait, what was the question?

00;26;43;29 - 00;26;47;11

Diane

[DIANE] You were answering it. What emotions did you feel when reading this book?

00;26;48;24 - 00;26;58;23

Sam

[SAM] I was basically feeling whatever Kimmy was feeling, like those customer service scenes where it's like COVID isn't real. And it's like, "You... you... man!"

00;26;59;18 - 00;27;22;03

Diane

[DIANE] Yeah. And there were some points I felt all the feelings, you know, but there were some I was laughing out loud. I don't remember the scene, but I was like, this is funny. Like, there were some really funny scenes. And I think that, like, life is hard and the pandemic is hard and it's important to have humor, you know? What format did you consume the book, print, digital, audio, and do you think your reaction would have been different if you read it in a different way?

00;27;22;14 - 00;27;33;00

Sam

[SAM] Um, I'm thinking if I were to have read it as it was coming out on the week by week basis, I'm not entirely sure how my reaction would have been.

00;27;33;03 - 00;27;35;23

Diane

[DIANE] Yeah, like, well, first off, what format did you read it?

00;27;35;23 - 00;27;38;13

Sam

[SAM] Oh yeah. I read it on Hoopla.

00;27;38;13 - 00;27;41;11

Diane

[DIANE] So yeah, do you think your reaction would have been different if you read it in a different way?

00;27;41;27 - 00;28;22;06

Sam

[SAM] We don't have a physical book, unfortunately. I'm not the kind of person to like doodle in books or like have little notes in the books as I'm reading along. I kind of just read it and then I text my friends about it if I like the book, that sort of thing. So I feel like if I were to have read it physically, it wouldn't have changed that much. It is neat to think about how it would have changed if you did originally read it as they were coming out on a week by week basis, I would have felt more emotionally in it as like it's released in 2021 when the pandemic was newer. What was happening to me in 2021, because that's the way you got to think.

00;28;22;06 - 00;28;24;00

Diane

[DIANE] You were living through the pandemic, you know?

00;28;24;18 - 00;28;31;12

Sam

[SAM] I think it would have felt like probably more escapist where it's like, yeah, I want to live in a silly little apartment with my silly little friends.

00;28;31;12 - 00;29;19;16

Diane

[DIANE] Yeah, yeah, that's a good point. I mean, again, I also consumed it in digital from Hoopla. Do I think I would have been different if you read it in a different way? I kind of wish I had the physical because when I read a graphic novel, most of my books lately are consumed by audio. Like if you listen to this podcast you like, I love the audio because I'm a multitasker and I like to be doing like other things, which is why I like a graphic novel because you've got the extra stimuli of seeing, but I also like the idea of holding it and swiping my screen or clicking the button to move it along. I don't love that as much, although when I was reading it on my phone that I would sometimes take screenshots to remember, like my favorite scenes or things like that. Last question is, if you pick a theme song for this book, what would it be?

00;29;20;03 - 00;29;28;15

Sam

[SAM] There was that one song they were listening to when they were at the lake. I forget the name of the song, but I know it was by Grouplove.

00;29;28;29 - 00;29;37;16

Diane

[DIANE] Yeah. Do you know the song? Hold on, hang on. Because I took a screenshot of that one because, like, I'm like, I got to look up that song. Let me see if I can find it.

00;29;38;06 - 00;29;51;29

Sam

[SAM] Because I do like it when books or pieces of media have songs that are happening in universe, at least for me, when I consume like a piece of media, I kind of like to create based off of it. I like to create a little playlist.

00;29;52;12 - 00;29;58;18

Diane

[DIANE] Yes, I agree. Okay. Here's the, oh, Stolen Heart by Sweet Love. That's what they say.

00;29;58;18 - 00;30;00;01

Sam

[SAM] Oh Sweet Love. I thought it was Grouplove.

00;30;00;01 - 00;30;01;15

Diane

[DIANE] Stolen Heart by Sweet Love.

00;30;01;25 - 00;30;14;26

Sam

[SAM] I only know one song by Grouplove, Tongue Tied, I feel like that song could also serve as like a good one. Like the lyrics are like, "Take me to your best friend's house going around this roundabout," kind of just like hanging out and existing together.

00;30;15;04 - 00;30;41;02

Diane

[DIANE] Oh, that's neat. I didn't have a theme song in coming into this question, but since you kept saying about the power of love and friendship, it made me think of Huey Lewis and the News, Power of Love. Now I'm older than you. This song was used in Back to the Future, the first one. So the song is like, "it doesn't take money, doesn't take fame, don't need a credit card to ride this trade."

00;30;41;02 - 00;30;41;27

Diane

[SAM] Oh, that's nice.

00;30;41;27 - 00;30;44;26

Diane

[DIANE] But it's like, "By the power of love." Anyway...

00;30;44;26 - 00;30;50;18

Sam

[SAM] I love that because they take public transit a lot. They live in the city. It fits, it fits!

00;30;50;18 - 00;31;09;09

Diane

[DIANE] But I think you know, the power of love. Like I love that you kept saying that the power of love and friendship because yeah, that like got them through, you know, and I think many times in the LGBTQIA community with chosen families, it's the power of love and friendship. You know, it's that what gets you through.

00;31;09;09 - 00;31;18;23

Sam

[SAM] Definitely. To ramble on that for a second, tying it back to what we talked about sort of at the start with... I'll make this real quick...

00;31;18;25 - 00;31;22;13

Diane

[DIANE] Don't - We got time, we got time. You're not going to talk for 9 minutes.

00;31;22;13 - 00;31;55;17

Sam

[SAM] Yeah, I'll try. I'll try my best. When we talked about with like online friends, definitely like during the pandemic I have - I'm still in this group chat. One friend that's from Pennsylvania, so not too far from here, one friend that's from Canada and then one from the UK. And we would get online and talk to



each other every day on like voice chat when like doing chores and stuff like that, and this was definitely like near the start of the pandemic of, "Oh, hey, the world's ending. Anyway you want to play video games?" It definitely like - I feel that like so much.

00;31;55;18 - 00;32;45;03

Diane

[DIANE] Well, I think there's so many different online formats. Like, I mean, you know, there's Skype, there's Zoom, but then there's Discord, that I don't even really know about. But I know, like my kids use that a lot to use, like, and they continue their D&D campaigns in there, you know, so there are so many ways to stay connected. And it's important for people to do that, you know, because like, it's important for mental health to keep your connections. So, yeah, that's cool. And I think you can sometimes be more open and honest with people that you've not that you've never met. But if you find them in a community and then you just have similar interests and it's yeah, it's, it's a little easier to be than, you know, so, cool. All right. So thank you for chatting. No, it was a good pick and that's it. Any other thoughts?

00;32;45;26 - 00;33;02;22

Sam

[SAM] One book - I haven't read this book yet - it's about adult friendships and it seems to be graphic novel-based. Um, what's the name of the book, Mimosa? Yeah. Mimosa. A novel by Archie. I cannot pronounce that last name.

00;33;03;11 - 00;33;04;22

Diane

[DIANE] Oh, Bongiovanni.

00;33;05;04 - 00;33;05;15

Sam

[SAM] Thank you so much.

00;33;05;15 - 00;33;11;24

Diane

[DIANE] Bongiovanni. What a good last name. Wait, hold on. I think we might have talked about this author once before. What's this supposed to be about?

00;33;12;07 - 00;33;22;02

Sam

[SAM] I think it's just from what I know, it's primarily just about the different main characters and the things that they're going through in adulthood. While still maintaining like, queer friendships and relationships.

00;33;22;14 - 00;33;30;23

Diane

[DIANE] So it's a good one to look into. Archie Bongiovanni is a comic artist and illustrator, focuses on making work that's gay and good.

00;33;31;04 - 00;33;31;15

Sam

[SAM] Amazing.

00;33;31;20 - 00;33;33;09

Diane

[DIANE] Sounds great about that. Amazing.

00;33;33;09 - 00;33;53;03

Sam

[SAM] So if you like this one, this is one that I definitely would recommend. And Cam Marshall's other work, as far as I know, Cam has a Tumblr and an official website where they post their other work and Patreon if you're interested in like sponsoring them and all that good stuff.

00;33;53;14 - 00;33;56;17

Diane

[DIANE] Great, cool. Well, thank you very much, Sam.

00;33;56;17 - 00;33;57;03

Sam

[SAM] This was fun.

00;33;58;14 - 00;34;17;25

Voiceover

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