

## Librarians Telling Tales Podcast Transcript- Episode 4

### Quick Look Booklist:

- **Section 1: Fantasy Picture Books**
  - *The Paper Bag Princess* by Robert Munsch
  - *The Wednesday Witch* by Ruth Chew
  - *Not Quite Narwhal* by Jessie Sima
  - *Dragons Love Tacos!* By Adam Rubin
  - *The Somethingosaur* by Tony Mitton
  - *Puss in Boots* by various authors
  - *Clever Jack Takes the Cake* by Candace Fleming
- **Section 2- Middle Grade Fantasy**
  - *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll
  - *The Neverending Story* by Michael Ende
  - *The Wizard of Oz* by Frank L. Baum
  - *Peter Pan* by J.M. Barrie
  - *The Girl Who Circumnavigated Fairyland in a Ship of Her Own Making* by Catherynne M. Valente
  - *Tuesdays at the Castle* by Jessica Day George
  - *The Magical Animal Adoption Agency* -Series by Kallie George
  - *The Magic Tree House* -Series by Mary Pope Osborne
  - *Dragon Masters* -Series by Tracey West
  - *Heroes in Training* -Series by Joan Holub & Tracy West
  - *Wildwood* by Colin Meloy
  - *Chronicles of Naria* -Series by C.S. Lewis
  - *Redwall* -Series by Brian Jacques
  - *Harry Potter* -Series by J.K. Rowling
  - *The Warrior Cats*- Series by Erin Hunter
  - *Serafina and the Black Cloak* -Series by Robert Beatty
  - *Hunted* by Megan Spooner
  - *The Unicorn Rescue Society* -Series by Adam Gidwitz
  - *Abhorsen* -Series by Garth Nix (Young Adult)
  - *Have Sword, Will Travel* Series by Garth Nix
  - *City of Bones* -Series by Cassandra Clare (Young Adult)
  - *Amari and the Night Brothers* by B. B. Alsten
  - *Percy Jackson* -Series by Rick Riordan
- **Section 3- Book Confessions & Upper Middle Grade & YA Fantasy**
  - *Percy Jackson* -Series by Rick Riordan
  - *Harry Potter* -Series by J.K. Rowling
  - *The Worst Witch* -Series by Jill Murphy
  - *Fable* and *Namesake* by Adrian Young
  - *The Gilded Ones* by Namina Forna
  - *The Mermaid, the Witch, and the Sea* by Maggie Tokuda-Hall
  - *The Hazlewood* and *The Night Country* by Melissa Albert
  - *The Keeper of the Lost Cities* -Series by Shannon Messenger
  - *The Spiderwick Chronicles* by Toni DiTerlizzi
  - *Lockwood & Co* – Series by Jonathan Stroud
  - Maggie Stiefvater books
    - *The Scorpio Races*
    - *The Wolves of Mercy Falls* -Series
    - *The Raven Cycle* -Series
    - *The Dreamer Trilogy*- Series
  - *Six Crimson Cranes* by Elizabeth Lim

- *The Hunger Games* -Series by Suzanne Collins
- *Victories Greater Than Death* by Charlie Jane Anders
- *Scythe* and *Arc of a Scythe* Series by Neal Shusterman
- *Skinjacker Trilogy* by Neal Shusterman
- *The Nevermoor Series* by Jessica Townsend
- Reader's Rave
  - *Trelian Series* by Michelle Knudsen
  - *Banana* by Ed Vere
  - *Okay for Now* by Gary D. Schmidt

**Transcript:**

**Musical Intro:** "Uplifting 2463" by Twisterium from pixabay.com  
*(Description) Upbeat, piano and percussion. Music fades and plays under.*

**Jennifer:**

Hey bookworms! Welcome to Librarians Telling Tales where we introduce you to all the things we love about libraries: books, people, and making connections. I'm Jennifer.

**Amy:**

I'm Amy.

**Blair:**

I'm Blair.

**Amy:**

In today's episode we'll chat about all things fantasy—the different types of fantasy tales, our favorite fantasy books and series, and suggestions for readers who are looking for fresh new adventures. We'll also share our BOOK CONFESSIONS—the books and series that we almost missed out on...

**Music Transition:** "Ascending-marimba-notification" by Alexander from Orangefreesounds.com  
*(Description) Bright marimba scale.*

**(0:43) Section 1- Fantasy Picture Books**

**Blair:**

I will kick us off today because, honestly, I'm not going to fight you guys for who loves fantasy the most, but it might be me.

**Amy:**

Nope!

**Blair:**

(Laughing) Uhoh, we might have to fight about it then.

**Amy:**

Arm-wrestle!

**Blair:**

Arm-wrestle!

**Amy:**

Rock-paper-scissors!

**Blair:**

Oh no, pinky war!

**Everyone:**

(Laughing)

**Jennifer:**

I was going to say Blair is a really big YA fantasy reader for sure.

**Blair:**

Massive! That's pretty much all I read in YA. But I think it's interesting because one of the things we are going to be talking about is genres. Part of reason that fantasy is such a strong genre and crosses so many layers is because we're all raised with fairytales.

**Amy:**

Mhm!

**Blair:**

We're all raised with that concept of, you know, the knights and the dragons and the princesses and the kingdoms and unicorns and all that stuff. Whether we want to blame it on Disney or the Grimm Brothers- or them together, you know. It is hard to say, but fantasy is such a strong genre for readers, particularly for young readers. For me, the one I think I remember the most from growing up is *The Paper Bag Princess* by Robert Munsch. I LOVE *Paper Bag Princess*; I cannot undersell that. That is the strong girl book—she's taking care of herself; she's taking care of that dragon! That little boy knight is not going to help her, he made it very clear that it is up to her to solve her dragon situation and she *does*. I love that. Anybody else got a young kids book that they want to chime in on?

**Jennifer:**

I always loved the books about the witches. You know, Ruth Chew, is an old, old author, I think she passed away a while ago, but she wrote *The Wednesday Witch*, do you know that book?

**Amy:**

Mhm

**Jennifer:**

Really?!

**Amy:**

I think we just got, don't we some of those in our collection?

**Jennifer:**

I might have bought them because I love that book so much, I just love that little witch and her little vacuum. And she'd say: "Home James!" and the little vacuum would take her. So, I read books of that nature. I don't remember reading very many books about dragons when I was little, although I love fairytales.

**Amy:**

Mhm, I love fairytales too...yeah. One of my favorite newer ones is *Not Quite Narwhal...* (Jessie Sima)

**Blair:**

Yes!

**Amy:**

...about a little animal who is not quite sure if he is a unicorn or a narwhal, and maybe he can be both if he's, you know, above land or under water. He's so cute!

**Blair:**

I also think that *Dragons Love Tacos* (Adam Rubin) fits into that realm, because, you know: Dragons! And tacos and all the fun fantasy things.

**Jennifer:**

Mhm.

**Amy:**

Another for me is Tony Mitton's *The Somethingosaur*. I think I've read that to like every school group I've ever read a book to. I don't know, I just love it! It is this little guy left in the forest and his egg hatches and nobody knows if he is a dino or if he's something different, so he is the Somethingosaur until he goes on a quest, which is big about fantasy, right? The quest. And he tracks down his mom, and the ending is so cute, so sweet. Another awesome picture book.

**Blair:**

I think it is interesting too because, you know, we just came through Halloween, so we just had all the Halloween books, and those are all witches and ghouls and ghosts and zombies, and vampires and all of that stuff is just fantasy fodder, really. And it crosses that fantasy categories too, as we talk about that fantasy can be epic and high fantasy, or it can be low fantasy which is more along the lines of magical realism, or it can be horror which is when we get into the creatures and monsters and all that kind of stuff. Fantasy is so broad.

**Jennifer:**

I think, one kind of fantasy that I read a lot of to the kids is animal fantasy.

**Amy:**

I was just going to say just about every picture book that's got animal talking is fantasy because, I mean, I talk to my dogs, but they don't talk back...

**Jennifer:**

Right...

**Amy:**

Usually. (Laughs)

**Blair:**

That we can understand...

**Amy:**

(Laughing)

**Blair:**

I think they talk back!

**Amy:**

Because we believe! That's fantasy, right?! So.

**Blair:**

Exactly!

**Amy:**

So, yeah, absolutely.

**Jennifer:**

And that takes me to all the fairy tale books, like *Puss in Boots* (Various), those books that I've read to the kids. I just don't, I think now that I'm really putting my mind to it—fantasy is everywhere!

**Amy/Blair:**

Mhm!

**Jennifer:**

We really read a lot! All make-believe is all escapism for us.

**Blair:**

Absolutely. And then some of the fairytale stuff leads to the things that are what we call tropes when we're writing, right? You've got somebody's in trouble and somebody is being saved, you got quests, you got magical items—these are all the kind of the standard fare in fantasy land, that's how you know you're in a fantasy.

**Amy:**

Like 99% of the time—seriously—good triumphs over evil. Like that is the thing for fantasy generally.

**Blair:**

Absolutely.

**Jennifer:**

Oh, I just thought of one I love! I forgot about this, *Clever Jack Takes the Cake* by Candace Fleming. He is on a quest; he gets invited to the princess's birthday party, and he has nothing to give her. He's just this poor boy living in the forest, but he decides to make her a cake.

**Blair:**

Aw.

**Jennifer:**

...so he makes her this cake, but yeah, he has to go through the dark forest, and he meets a troll, and they all want a little bit of his cake, that's his passage to get to the princess. So, by the time he gets to the princess he doesn't have anything, but he tells her about his adventure and that's the best birthday present.

**Amy:**

Aw, that's cool.

**Blair:**

Nice!

**Jennifer:**

I love that book! Candace Fleming is awesome anyway.

**Amy:**

Mhm, agreed.

**Jennifer:**

But that's one of her really great picture books.

## (5:19) Section 2- Middle Grade Fantasy

**Blair:**

So what do we think when we move up in age to the middle grade? For me, middle grade is magic land. Middle grade is *Alice in Wonderland* and...och...*The Neverending Story*, Michael...End's? Ende? I'm not sure, it's German, but *The Neverending Story*, ooch, that is my absolute favorite from childhood. It is one of those...I don't know, they call them urban, they call them low fantasy, where they've got the mixture of the real world and the separate fantasy world at the same time. But if anybody has ever watched *The Neverending Story*—the book is better! And that is saying something, because that is one of the best movies from my childhood, but the book is *amazing*!

**Jennifer:**

You know, right now I'm actually reading *The Wizard of Oz* (Frank L. Baum), because one of my book clubs chose to read a classic, and I never had read *The Wizard of Oz*. But I love that she goes to the land of Oz and has her own quest on that yellow brick road. It's just so beautifully written and very different from the movie.

**Amy:**

Huh.

**Jennifer:**

...and I love reading it and spotting those differences. But I can see why kids in 1900 loved that story and why it is still a classic today because I found myself gobbling up the pages and enjoying it so...

**Amy:**

Mhm.

**Jennifer:**

...much. It is a wonderful fantasy. A fantasy I can wrap my mind around.

**Amy:**

I never read the *Wizard of Oz*, I may have to read this now.

**Jennifer:**

(Laughs)

**Blair:**

I think you should, it is really good, it is really fun.

**Jennifer:**

And it is not just one book, there is how many?

**Blair:**

I think...

**Amy:**

17?

**Blair:**

17...there is a massive...

**Amy:**

Some crazy number.

**Blair:**

...massive number, yeah, it's massive.

**Jennifer:**

There are really a lot of adventures, and maybe kids don't know that there is more than just the first book.

**Amy:**

I think we should have an episode where we sort of look at the movie versus the book for some of these classics, because when I read *Peter Pan* (J.M. Barrie), which is a fantasy, for sure, that story is not how it is portrayed in the Disney movies.

**Jennifer/Blair:**

Not at all.

**Amy:**

And I was so surprised by that because I had taken for granted that Disney represented that correctly, but...

**Blair:**

Meh...

**Amy:**

...story different, better, stranger.

**Jennifer:**

That's like Dorothy's shoes are silver, but Hollywood made them red. And why?

**Blair:**

It was because of colorization.

**Jennifer:**

Ah, I wondered.

**Blair:**

So, they tried silver shoes, but they didn't read well on the color test, and so now ruby slippers are the iconic instead of the silver.

**Jennifer:**

But the gingham dress is correct, she does wear a blue and white gingham dress.

**Blair:**

It's true!

**Jennifer:**

You know another book that reminded me of the *Wizard of Oz* that I've read that I loved was *The Girl Who Circumnavigated Fairyland in a Ship of Her Own Making*. That is a really long title, it is by Catherynne Valente, but I love the whole concept. Kind of like Dorothy, where a little girl named September is living in Omaha, Nebraska, and she is doing the dishes and the green wind comes to her window and says: "We need your help!" and they need to take her to this Fairyland so she can retrieve this magical item from this wicked marquess. And it is such a great story—so it follows a similar trope...

**Blair:**

Mhm!

**Jennifer:**

...but it is taking you out of your ordinary, dull life making, you the hero of your story, and putting you on this epic quest.

**Blair:**

Yes. Do you have anything else in middle-grade land?

**Amy:**

Oh yes!

**Blair:**

Whatcha got?

**Amy:**

Jessica Day George *Tuesdays at the Castle* and then every other day of the week as well, those are so fun! The castle reshapes itself and invents new rooms depending on how it can help the family. It's so special! Kallie George's...I don't know the series...the first book is called *Clover's Luck*...my bookclub read that a couple of years back.

**Jennifer:**

It's the *Magical Animal Adoption Agency*...or something like that.

**Amy:**

Yep, the *Magical Animal Adoption Agency*! Of course...*Magic Tree House*!

**Blair:**

Oh yeah.

**Amy:**

...by Mary Pope Osborne. Can't forget those guys traveling through time to awesome historical moments and then having adventures before being zipped back home, just in the nick of time. And...Oh! *Dragon Masters*!

**Jennifer:**

Of course.

**Blair:**

Yes!

**Amy:**

*Dragon Masters*... *Heroes in Training* series. I think everybody wants to know how the Greek gods grew up, like what happened and how they became who they are. We all want to interpret that story for them, I guess, so Joan Holub and her co-writers have done so. There's like 15 books in that series too!

**Blair:**

Mhm.

**Jennifer:**

Maybe a lesser-known series is Colin Meloy's *Wildwood* series for kids who love *Narnia*. Have either of you read that series?

**Blair:**

Agh! I haven't, but *Narnia*, of course, you brought up *Narnia*!

**Jennifer:**

Oh right, right...

**Amy:**

I forgot about *Narnia*; that's not even on my list!

**Blair:**

Yeah.

**Jennifer:**

*Wildwood* is...is this girl named Prue discovers that just outside of her playground in these woods that she is told not to enter, there's this whole other world! And her brother gets kidnapped by a murder of crows, and they go into this forest, and she's been told not go, but she takes her best friend, and they go, and they discover there is this whole other land--and it's a great story! So she meets all these characters, it is just like *Narnia*.

**Blair:**

Oh, that's super fun!

**Jennifer:**

And there are three books, and they are beautiful and well-written and lovely illustrations.

**Blair:**

Another fantasy series that I love in the middle grade range is *Redwall*. The *Redwall* series is sooo good, by Brian Jacques. I grew up reading all of those, and they are medieval, more of a high fantasy, and all of your characters are animals. So, it kind of fits a couple different boxes for young readers who are already reading and loving animal series but wanna try something a little bit different. Epic high fantasy!

**Amy:**

(Singing) Nobody's has talked about *Harry*...

**Jennifer:**

I think we've avoided the classic ones.

**Blair:**

Well, it's because *Harry Potter* (J.K. Rowling) is something I was going to bring up in my confessions...

**Amy:**

That's why I haven't talked about the *Warrior Cats*...(Erin Hunter)

**Jennifer:**

I haven't either!

**Jennifer:**

Do you want to try a speed round with middle grade, and then can you label what sub-genre of fantasy it is?

**Blair:**

Ohohoho!

**Amy:**

Oh, dang, that would require some thinking on my part! (Laughing)

**Blair:**

So... I will start because I am willing to be the guineapig. Okay! So... *Serafina and the Black Cloak* is the Serafina Series by Robert Beatty and that would be...animal fantasy.

**Jennifer:**

*Hunted* by Megan Spooner and that would be fairytale retelling.

**Amy:**

Adam Gidwitz does the *The Unicorn Rescue Society* among others, but I have honestly no idea what sub-genre except, like "fantastical creatures."

**Blair:**

Yeah, and/or mystery.

**Amy:**

Yes, that's true, those evil brothers, right?

**Blair:**

Yup. Let's see... Oh! Garth Nix, all of Garth Nix's because I'm a huge fan, but he has a whole bunch in like different categories, so as far as low fantasy goes, we have the *Abhorsen* series, which is set in dual worlds—it's set in a magical world and in a real world. And then you got ones like *Have Sword, Will Travel*, which is epic high fantasy for middle grade about these two kids that go on a quest given to them by a talking sword.

**Jennifer:**

Well, there is *City of Bones* by Cassandra Clare, and I call that urban fantasy.

**Blair:**

It is.

**Amy:**

So far just one book in the series, but *Amari and the Night Brothers* by B. B. Alsten, and that is...I don't know...magical realism, with a touch of boarding school, with a touch of "who really is the bad guy?"

**Blair:**

Oh, nice...secret bad guys.

**Amy:**

It's like where you think you know, but then it ends on a cliff hanger, so you don't know that you knew.

**Blair:**

Hahaha! (evil laugh)

**Amy:**

Or maybe you didn't know at all. *Percy Jackson!*

**Jennifer and Blair:**

Oh yes!

**Blair:**

So, that was kind of a short speed round, but I feel like it might be time for us to move into older ages and particularly, also, I don't think we are going to be able to escape it without talking about our secret confessions along the way.

### **(12:00) Section 3- Book Confessions of Upper Middle Grade & YA Fantasy**

**Blair:**

I can start, where I can say, that since you said *Percy Jackson*, I did not read any of that series until we did our...

**Amy:**

Our trivia game-

**Blair:**

Quiz trivia game. And then I read all five of them. I have this thing, where if one person tells me something is good, or two people tell me something is good, I'm like, "Cool, I'll check it out!" If everyone and their brother is like (scary voice), "This series is amazing- you need to read it!" my brain shuts down and I say, "No I don't, you can't make me!" And that...

**Amy:**

Mhm.

**Blair:**

Basically, was my experience with *Percy Jackson*. And the elusive *Harry Potter*. Which took me a VERY long time to read. But I also blame the fact that the first book is, (pained voice) not very good. People can fight me...

**Jennifer:**

We're going to fight...

**Amy:**

(Laughing underneath)

**Blair:**

The first book is not very good

**Jennifer:**

I LOVE the first book.

**Amy:**

(Laughing) Listeners, you didn't see this, but Jennifer leaned in and said, "I will fight!"



**All:**

(Laughing)

**Jennifer:**

The very first line of that very first book I think is just beautifully, wonderfully written, and it sucked me in. Because I was not going to read *Harry Potter*. Because I'm like you, if everybody's reading it, UHHHH, it's probably not as good.

**Amy:**

It can't live up to the hype, yeah.

**Jennifer:**

But when your little neighbor boy brings you his dog-eared copy and says, "You gotta read it!" I did, and I was won over.

**Blair:**

It took me a very boring, snowy winter, and it was my third attempt before I got through it. After the first book I was in, because I felt like I enjoyed the writing. But, I will also say that I was mildly offended, because I felt like she was copying *The Worst Witch* series, which I feel is better for that age range as a written series about a witch girl in school. And we now have that series here thanks to some donations from patrons. But anybody who has read *Harry Potter* and is interested, I would like to challenge you to read *The Worst Witch* series.

**Amy:**

Is that Julie Murphy? (Jill Murphy)

**Blair:**

It is, yeah. And it predates *Harry Potter*, so you can't say that she stole from J.K. Rowling, you can only say it went the other way around. Borrowed, *borrowed*, Shakespeare, borrowed.

**Jennifer & Amy:**

(chuckles)

**Jennifer:**

Borrowed, that's right. So, do you want to talk about confessions of *Warriors*?

**Amy:**

Yes, the *Warriors* by Erin Hunter! (laughs)

**Jennifer:**

Yes, mutual confession.

**Blair:**

I haven't even read it yet.

**Amy:**

(Gasps) Blair!

**Jennifer:**

You are in for a treat! What do you want to say about it, Amy?

**Amy:**

I taught for years in Houston, Texas and I had this student who was a huge *Warrior Cats* fan and he would quote things to me and tell me stuff, and I just "Okay," you know, I was just not into the idea at all. I had them in my classroom collection, what have you. Oh, then it was, when was it, 6 months ago, one of our patrons came by and couldn't stop talking about it, little Heidi, and said, "You have to read this! You have to read this!" And so, I did, and it was so good! I really enjoyed Rusty, Kitty Pet, Fire Paw, Fire Heart, all the name changes that he has, the whole warrior code, that whole ethics thing. I don't know, I thought it was so fun that I have since read the three books in his little bit of the series of like thousands of books in that series. So...what's your piece?

**Jennifer:**

Well, I've only read the first one, but I was blown away because I was expecting something really simple, and quite frankly, trite, but the writing was really good. And I felt really guilty for not reading it for ten years. I've avoided this book, and we've had book parties here for the *Warrior Cats*...

**Amy:**

Oh really?! In the past?

**Jennifer:**

Yeah. Not ones that I have led, because I *always* read the books for the book parties that I'm leading...

**Amy:**

Sure.

**Jennifer:**

...that I'm leading, but I was thinking: "What are these kids getting into?" and they come back over and over and over again for these books, so I have to confess that they were really well done. I like them.

**Blair:**

I will eventually read them, I just don't have time, there's too many books, particularly in YA. So I was putting together the list of books and I couldn't help myself. I was sitting up in the Teen Zone working with the kids, and I'm like, there's too many things! For example, I will just read 4 titles, no, 5 titles, let's just go with this, *Fable* and *Namesake* by Adrian Young, which is a really awesome new high-fantasy series; we've got *The Gilded Ones* (Namina Forna), which was a great audio book...

**Amy:**

Mhm!

**Blair:**

...I know Amy listened to the audiobook too. *The Mermaid, the Witch, and the Sea* by Maggie Tokuda-Hall—I love that book, that one was super fun! Ehm, the *Hazlewood* and *The Night Country* by Melissa Albert! Oooh, I love those books! Those are a fun mix of not only fairytale and sort of retellings, but also low-fantasy, that's a really fun genre bender, I like that one too. And I mean, that's just in the last couple of months, there's not enough time!

**Amy:**

Hm. Agree.

**Blair:**

What've you got?

**Amy:**

Well, mine are not necessarily YA, they are tween-teen, but I have to say this, because we will get so much grief from some of our specific patrons, but *The Keeper of the Lost Cities* series (Shannon Messenger), yes, I have to say that one, because if I don't I feel like we'll hear about it later, because...

**Blair:**

Oh yeah.

**Amy:**

I admit it, I'm only on book three, and I only read book one because of a certain someone in our library.

**Jennifer:**

Yes... (laughs)

**Blair:**

(chuckles)

**Amy:**

But, she sells it, big time, and she's a good salesperson, and so I read it, and I'm working my way through, and they are fun, but they are some long books. So yes, that one, and then *The Spiderwick Chronicles* (Toni DiTerlizzi).

**Blair:**

Yes!

**Amy:**

Little creepy, little fun...

**Blair:**

That's a good horror blend genre.

**Jennifer:**

Speaking of dark fantasy, I can't not plug Johnathan Stroud's...

**Amy:**

Oh yes!

**Jennifer:**

Erhm. *Lockwood & Co.*

**Blair:**

Mhm.

**Jennifer:**

The first book is *The Screaming Staircase* and it is supernatural teens that are operatives in London and they capture ghosts, they go and clear ghosts out of people's homes, and it is sooo wonderfully written. Have you read those?

**Blair:**

I haven't read those. They're on my list.

**Jennifer:**

Ah.

**Blair:**

There is too many things to read!

**Jennifer:**

There are, and I usually don't read more than one or two in a series, but I read *every* book, but that's a dark fantasy and very supernatural.

**Amy:**

I love their friendships in that series. Okay, somebody we have to say, because Jennifer hooked me up with this author awhile back when I first started at the library: Maggie Stiefvater.

**Blair:**

Oh my gosh, yes!

**Amy:**

And we mentioned her in the last episode because of November cakes and *Scorpio Races*, but she's got sooo much and they are sooo good! Anything by her I will read. I don't always love it, but her name is enough that I will read the book.

**Jennifer:**

Are you talking about her most recent books or are you going back to her werewolf series?

**Amy:**

I will be honest, I haven't read it, I read the first in that...*Linger*...whatever-it-was-series, but I didn't care for it, so I didn't get into Stiefvater's series there, but everything since then, I have been just reading up...

**Blair:**

*The Raven Boys*...

**Jennifer:**

Oooh!

**Blair:**

...you and I have had those conversations...

**Amy:**

Yes, we have!

**Blair:**

...of how amazing *The Raven Boys* series is, and now *The Dreamers* series, which I am just getting into. I just did the first one, uauch! Love them so much!

**Amy:**

So good.

**Blair:**

I agree.

**Jennifer:**

That's right, *The Raven Boys*, the narration in the audiobook is so good.

**Blair:**

They are! Those are some fantastic audiobooks!

**Jennifer:**

Mhm.

**Blair:**

I feel like fantasy lends itself well to fantastic audiobooks. And I will say, *Harry Potter's* audiobooks—I am there for those, they are phenomenal audiobooks.

**Amy:**

One teen fantasy I just recently read, it is in the December newsletter, it was *Six Crimson Cranes* (Elizabeth Lim), I can't wait for book two!

**Blair:**

I have to read it!

**Amy:**

It is so fascinating, there is all these different tales that come together from this one story, and you think you know what's happening, like two-thirds of the way into the story, you *know* you know what's happening, and then it ends in

such a way that you are like: "I didn't know anything! Wait? What? Where is the story going?" and now you have to wait...

**Jennifer:**

Is she a debut author?

**Blair:**

No, she's not a debut author. This is a new series.

**Jennifer:**

Oh, what's her name?

**Amy:**

Elizabeth Lim.

**Blair:**

That is on my list, I really want to read that. You got to it first!

**Amy:**

I did, and there is an audio for it as well.

**Blair:**

That might be what I have to do.

**Amy:**

And be transported to another world while you're driving down the 69! (laughs)

**Blair:**

That, that's my preference- to audiobook.

**Amy:**

You know, one of the books I almost missed out on was the *Hunger Games*.

**Jennifer:**

Oh, really?

**Amy:**

Yep. I had it in my classroom library when I taught eight grade. And I read the first part of it when they're out in the woods hunting and stuff, and I was like, "This is so boring..." And I put it down and a kid picked it up and then he came back and he said, "You have to finish this book it's so good!" And then I, you know, "Nah, I don't know..." He said, "Just get to page 65!" So ever since that's been my slogan, "If you're going to read *Hunger Games* just get to page 65 before you give up because it is so good." Once you get past all that early- how Katniss' life really is before the games... It's a slow start though.

**Blair:**

And that leads to dystopian is still, very frequently part of fantasy. Sci-fi and fantasy can blend all the time. *Victories Greater Than Death* (Charlie Jane Anders) is a really good sci-fi that I just did. And I would definitely qualify that as a fantasy. There's elements that we're used to in the trope of; she's growing up on Earth, but she knows that she is destined, that she is actually this super alien captain who's going to go back into outer space and save the world.

**Amy:**

Is it space opera? What is it?

**Blair:**

It is! It's space opera!

**Amy:**

(Singing) Whoa-hoho

**Jennifer:**

I was thinking of Neal Shusterman

**Amy:**

Oh yes.

**Jennifer:**

He has some great books. I loved *Scythe*. It was kind of science fiction/fantasy, maybe a little bit more. But he has the *Skinjacker Trilogy* and those kids that are in limbo. I forgot the first book, what's that called?

**Amy:**

Ever...

**Jennifer:**

*Everlost!* We read it for book club. The kids really liked it. So, I have read my share of fantasy.

**Amy:**

Honestly, you really have!

**Blair:**

You really have!

**Jennifer:**

(Laughing)

**Amy:**

Because you've turned me on to a number of authors. Seriously, just in random telling me things through the years. And what your book club reads I'm just like, "I wonder why they picked that book, I'm going to read that one too." They're so fun! *The Nevermoor Series* (Jessica Townsend)! I read that because of your book club.

**Jennifer:**

Yes!

**Amy:**

And I love those!

**Jennifer:**

Yes.

**Blair:**

So, I think, the moral of the story is that fantasy is really big. And we might have to have another fantasy episode at some point in the future because there's just no way around it, fantasy is everywhere.

**Jennifer:**

We hope this episode inspires you to try a fantasy book if you've never read one before and to give our fantasy readers some fresh new titles to read.

## **(20:58) Readers Rave**

**Amy:**

Now we're going to hear from you, our readers and listeners. This is a fun segment where you tell us some of your favorite books- this is Readers Rave.

**Music Transition:** "Ascending-marimba-notification" by Alexander from OrangeFreesounds.com

(Description) Bright marimba scale.

**Ruby:**

Hi! My name's Ruby, I'm nine. Have you read Harry Potter more times than you can count? I recommend you try the *Trelian Series* by Michelle Knudsen. It's three books about magic and dragons. There's a girl who raises a secret pet dragon, and they have a special connection where if the dragon feels something, the girl feels it too. There's also a boy whose power is to be able to tell what spell someone's about to cast. That was really cool. Anyway, if you love Harry Potter and want to try something new, check out the *Trelian Series*.

**Martha:**

Hi! My name's Martha, and I'm old enough to be a grandmother. And my three-year-old granddaughter and I love *Banana* by Ed Vere. It is such a fun read-aloud as two monkeys go through this whole range of emotions while they quibble over, and then share a banana. My granddaughter loves guessing about what the monkeys are feeling and repeating the refrain with gusto. The book has crept its way into our family too. Now, when anybody asks for a banana in our house it's always with my granddaughter's expression, "BA-NA-NA!"

**Isabelle:**

Hi, I'm Isabelle. I'm twelve years old and I just finished reading *Okay for Now* by Gary D. Schmidt. It is a cute, heartwarming book about a boy who just moved to a new town and is finding his way, and who turns to drawing birds. And I thought it was a really cool book, and I really liked the illustrations of the birds and their plate numbers from the official book.

**Blair:**

Do you want to be part of Reader's Rave? Call us at **928-777-1490** and leave a message with your first name, your age, a book you love, and what you love about it. We can't wait to hear from you!

**Jennifer:**

Thank you for joining us today on Librarians Telling Tales. For a full list of the books shared in this episode, check the link in our podcast bio.

**Amy:**

Don't forget to subscribe to catch our next episode in mid-January where we'll be joined by some young book lovers to chat about books worth making time for. We'll also share ways to fit reading into your everyday life.

**(23:17) Musical Outro:** "Uplifting 2463" by Twisterium from pixabay.com

*(Description) Upbeat, piano and percussion. Music fades in and plays under.*

**Blair:**

This Podcast is supported by the Arizona State Library, Archives & Public Records, a division of the Secretary of State, with federal funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. We would also like to thank the City of Prescott, Friends of the Prescott Public Library, and all our fabulous coworkers at Prescott Public Library.

**Jennifer:**

Be sure to like and subscribe to Librarians Telling Tales- and until next time, we'll see you in the library.

**Total Run Time (23:49)**