

Librarians Telling Tales Podcast Transcript- Episode 10

Quick Look Booklist:

- **Section 1: Picture Books**

- *The New Kid Has Fleas* by Ame Dyckman
- *Wolfie the Bunny* by Ame Dyckman
- *Read the Book, Lemmings* by Ame Dyckman
- *Goodnight Already!* by Jory John
- *Interrupting Chicken* by David Ezra Stein
- *The Pigeon Needs a Bath* by Mo Willems
- *The Duckling Gets a Cookie!?* by Mo Willems
- *The Doghouse* by Jan Thomas
- *Can You Make a Scary Face?* by Jan Thomas
- *Pumpkin Trouble* by Jan Thomas
- *The Book with No Pictures* by B.J. Novak
- *Banana!* by Ed Vere
- *Moo!* by David LaRochelle
- *Dude!* by Aaron Reynolds
- *Elephant and Piggie* (series) by Mo Willems
- *Mr. Monkey* (series) by Jeff Mack
- *What about Worms?* by Ryan Higgins
- *See Me Run* by Paul Meisel
- *I See a Cat* by Paul Meisel
- *Snail Crossing* by Corey Tabor
- *Fox* (series) by Corey Tabor
- *Mel Fell* by Corey Tabor

- **Section 2: Middle Grade Books**

- *Bad Kitty* (series) by Nick Bruel
- *Bad Kitty School Daze* by Nick Bruel
- *The Chicken Squad* (series) by Doreen Cronin
- *Timmy Failure* (series) by Stephan Pastis
- *Frog and Toad* (series) by Arnold Lobel
- *Skunk and Badger* (series) by Amy Timberlake
- *Clementine* (series) by Sara Pennypacker
- *Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle* (series) by Betty MacDonald
- *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* (series) by Jeff Kinney
- *Captain Underpants* (series) by Dav Pilkey
- *The 13-Story Treehouse* by Andy Griffiths
- *Klawde* (series) by Johnny Marciano
- *Insignificant Events in the Life of a Cactus* by Dusti Bowling
- *Big Nate* (series) by Lincoln Peirce
- *Max and the Midnighters* (series) by Lincoln Peirce
- *The Hero's Guide to Saving Your Kingdom* by Christopher Healy

Graphic Novels

- *The Bad Guys* (series) by Aaron Blabey
- *Donut Feed the Squirrels* by Mika Song
- *Grumpy Unicorn* by Joey Spiotto

- *Cat Wad* (series) by Jim Benton
- *Sort of Super* by Eric Gapstur
- *Lunch Lady* (series) by Jarrett Krosoczka
- **Section 3: Nonfiction**
 - *Just Joking* (series) published by National Geographic Kids
 - *Joklopedia* by Weitzman, Blank, et. al.
 - *Pranklopedia* by Julie Winterbottom
 - *There's a Rat in My Soup: Could You Survive Medieval Food?* by Chana Stiefel
 - *Pluto Gets the Call* by Adam Rex
 - Author Shel Silverstein (poetry)
 - *Just Joking LOL* published by National Geographic Kids
 - *How to Negotiate Everything* by David Spellman
- **Section 4: Young Adult**
 - *Funny, You Don't Look Autistic: A Comedian's Guide to Life on the Spectrum* by Michael McCreary
 - *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* by Douglas Adams
 - *The Epic Crush of Genie Lo* by F.C. Lee
 - *When Life Gives You Demons* by Jennifer Honeybourn
 - *Prepped* by Bethany Mangle
 - *Tweet Cute* by Emma Lord
 - *Nothing Can Possibly Go Wrong* by Prudence Shen and Faith Erin Hicks
 - *Space, Battle, Lunchtime: Lights, Camera, Snacktion!* by Natalie Rice
- **Reader's Rave**
 - *Revenge of Magic* by James Riley

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.

(0:22) Music fades out

Amy:

In today's episode, we're going to introduce you to some outrageous characters and laugh out loud stories—books that will tickle your funny bone. Step aside, Ramona Quimby and Greg Hefley. Some fun, new characters have just moved into the neighborhood.

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

(0:38) Section 1- Funny Picture Books

Blair:

I heard a little birdie say that some people might have come prepared with jokes.

Amy:

Yes. Knock, knock.

Blair/Jennifer:

Who's there?

Amy:

Yacht.

Blair/Jennifer:

Yacht, who?

Amy:

Yacht to be able to recognize my voice by now.

Blair:

<laugh> Wow.

Jennifer:

I have one.

Blair:

Yes.

Jennifer:

I like to ask this to some of the school groups. I'll say, what is a ninja's favorite drink?

Blair:

Oh, what is a ninja's favorite drink?

Jennifer:

Well, they come up with a few that are funny. They say, often, fruit punch. But I say no, it's what-ta
<water>.

Blair:

<laugh> Awesome.

Jennifer:

It seems to go over well.

Amy:

Fruit punch. Clever.

Blair:

That is, that is good. Uh, hey guys, what does a librarian take when they go fishing?

Amy:

Books. <laugh>

Jennifer:

I know, I know! A bookworm.

Blair:

A bookworm. Yes! They take a bookworm with them when they go fishing!

Amy:

Or they take a book to read while their husband is fishing.

Blair:

There's, I mean, if you do fishing right, you have lots of spare time for reading.

Amy:

Yes.

Blair:

Or audio books, either one. I was having an interesting time thinking about funny books for this episode, mostly because I think my sense of humor doesn't always translate into young people's senses of humor, even though I love a good dad joke. They're adorable, but I didn't have a hard time coming up with picture books because there are so many just adorable, cute picture books. And I kind of ended up going with authors because I thought, oh, that's just the easiest way. So like my favorite funny author for kids books is Ame Dyckman. I mean, all of the funny things. She's got *The New Kid Has Fleas*, which is so cute. I love that one. *Wolfie the Bunny*, and then *Read the Book, Lemmings*. I mean, they're all so funny. Every single one of them is hilarious and they've got great illustrations and always a giggle. Always fun for read-alouds, too.

Amy:

Mm-hmm.

Jennifer:

I do have one by Jory John that I really like and that's *Goodnight Already!*

Amy:

Yes.

Jennifer:

Because I tend to find books that have a little bit of heart and that are funny are my favorites. And that character that's a little bit annoying, but lovable, like *Interrupting Chicken* (David Ezra Stein), you know, the little chicken that keeps interrupting the stories. But Jory John has a book called *Goodnight Already!* And this poor bear is trying to go to sleep. And his sweet neighbor, the duck, just keeps knocking on his door and asking him if he wants to read a book or play a game. And the bear says, "Goodnight already!" and it's just so clever. And it's all dialogue. And it's a wonderful read-aloud.

Amy:

I think, too, for me, I just realized after you said that, Blair, that authors are for picture books. Like that's more or less what I wrote down. Mo Willems, of course.

Blair:

Oh, always.

Amy:

My two favorite being *The Pigeon Needs a Bath* and *The Duckling Gets a Cookie!?*, like- not fair! But also, Jan Thomas. I know Jennifer also is a big fan of her works and *The Doghouse*. I mean, I have never had that book, not make the audience laugh. It is just so fun.

Jennifer:

Can You Make a Scary Face? (Jan Thomas)

Amy:

That one and *Pumpkin Trouble* (Jan Thomas).

Jennifer:

Mm-hmm. It's because they're interactive. It brings the reader and the listeners together in a really joyful kind of way. And those books, too, remind me of the way you read the story. For example, the book by Novak, *The Book Without Pictures* <*The Book with No Pictures*>—some kids asked me for it yesterday, and I think it's just such a plain book, but it's all in how you read it.

Blair/Amy:

Mm-hmm.

Jennifer:

And so some of those funny books are just in the way that reader expresses the story that makes it so funny.

Amy:

You know, that reminds me one of our coworkers here mentioned that she read *Banana!* (Ed Vere) with her granddaughter.

Jennifer:

Yes.

Amy:

And now whenever the granddaughter asks for a banana, she asks for it in one of the strange ways they read that story. Ba-na-na? So that too, it's a book with one word, but it's all about how you read that one word.

Jennifer:

Yes. I, I can add to that. David LaRochelle has a book called *Moo!* with exclamation point and it, the pictures really tell the story, but the one word is moo. Moo, moo, moo, moo, moo, moo, moo. And it's so clever, but it reminds me of *Banana!* a lot.

Amy:

That's awesome.

Jennifer:

So you all should try that book. I actually brought it with me. It's a wonderful book.

Blair:

Another one that I pulled that's similar that I've been reading to the school groups in preparation for summer reading is *Dude!* (Aaron Reynolds). It's so funny, 'cause it's a platypus and a beaver going surfing and everything is an exclamation of dude, even when they see the shark and then it's: "Dude!" And then the shark is sad because they're scared of him and says, O. "Dude." It's so cute. The whole book is dude. It was so fun.

Jennifer:

I think humor's an important element of story. So in picture books, we've read so many, but also in the reading level books, have you noticed that there are so many funny books...

Amy:

Mm-hmm. For sure.

Jennifer:

...in reading level?

Blair:

Well, I mean, more Mo Willems like *Elephant and Piggie* (series) are just massive hits and they're so funny. The word play. That's what I love.

Jennifer:

Jeff Mack's *Mr. Monkey* (series). They're hilarious. The things never go as planned for Mr. Monkey.

Amy:

Oh, and then of course Ryan Higgins has that *What about Worms?* that's part of the *Piggie and Elephant* <*Elephant and Piggie*> imprint.

Blair:

Mm-hmm.

Amy:

But oh, it's so cute. A tiger is afraid of worms? What!?

Jennifer:

There's also Paul Meisel.

Amy:

Mm-hmm.

Jennifer:

Because they're just so simple. *See the Dog Run* <*See Me Run*> or *See the Cat* <*I See a Cat*>...

Amy:

Mm-hmm.

Jennifer:

But it's the pictures that tell the story. And so it's so engaging and they're great beginning reads.

Blair:

Another author that I was gonna talk about was Corey Tabor. And he's got some, both places. So in picture books, it's all about *Snail Crossing*.

Amy:

Oh, I love that!

Blair:

Snail Crossing is like the funniest thing. His beginning reader is the *Fox* series. And so he's got all of these different, Fox goes on all these different adventures. And for me, it's the juxtaposition, right? Of the pictures versus the words, 'cause the words make it seem like it's a simple story and then the pictures tell you all of the crazy things that are happening. *Mel Fell*. I had a really interesting experience 'cause when I read *Mel Fell*, I'm reading all the separate voices and everything as the bird is falling and it seems to give it a lot of inflection. And then my mother, on a first dry read, picked it up to read it to my niece. And I was like, no, no you missed that joke.

Amy:

<laugh>

Blair:

I was like, but those are such great jokes. And it's like, oh it's because she hadn't read it before. So she didn't realize that there was a joke hidden in the illustration based upon the inflection. It's one of those things sometimes, as you know the adult in the room, we have to read it multiple times with the child to kind of understand how to read it. But I think on their own, especially in the beginning reader books, they're catching those jokes. They're catching that juxtaposition between the pictures and the words. And that's part of the fun too 'cause then it's like an in-joke. They feel like they're in on it.

Jennifer:

I think it's a really gifted author that can make an adult and a child laugh at the same time because he or she has hit those different levels of humor. It's brilliant.

Blair:

Mm-hmm. It is really fun.

Jennifer:

Mm-hmm.

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

(6:59) Section 2- Funny Middle Grade Reads

Blair:

I find that it's so easy in picture books that when we move up in age, the humor changes and it starts being less funny for me. Don't get me wrong. A good joke about bodily functions can be hilarious. They just want like the gross humor. They want the fart jokes and so we've got all kinds of different things that cater to that. But at certain level, it just feels repetitive, and it stops being funny to me as the adult. It doesn't stop being funny for them. They think the jokes are great. They just keep going and going. What do you guys think about some middle grade reads that toe that line and still maintain their humor for you?

Amy:

Well, a few of mine for the middle grade area are actually books that have some illustrations in them although they are not considered graphic novels, like the *Bad Kitty* (Nick Bruel) books. Those to me are hilarious! *Bad Kitty* goes to school <*Bad Kitty School Daze*> and everyone thinks that *Bad Kitty* is the one doing the naughty things, but in fact, well every now and again, yes. You know, there are other characters that are involved in the hijinks. Or *The Chicken Squad* (Doreen Cronin). Those are ridiculous!

Blair:

Oh *Chicken Squad's* great!

Amy:

They're so funny. And *Timmy Failure* (Stephan Pastis). *Timmy Failure*, to me, is one of those books that I don't know, I laughed at the first one quite a bit, but I was surprised that the kids found it humorous. And they really did, actually. But it was kind of surprising to me 'cause it's really a dark humor in this kids book.

Blair:

I clearly need to read *Timmy Failure* then because I love dark humor.

Jennifer:

I think as the kids get older, humor is diversified. I...

Amy:

Mmm-hmm.

Jennifer:

We all find different things funny. So I wasn't the kid that gravitated towards potty humor books.

Amy:

I was.

All:

<laugh>

Jennifer:

I just like funny characters or, or odd couples like *Frog and Toad* (Arnold Lobel). I thought those were sweet, but funny. And so there's a new series out by Amy Timberlake called *Skunk and Badger* and Badger is a little grumpy and Skunk is really happy go lucky and Skunk moves in, becomes his new Badger's new roommate. And so it's just a funny mix of personalities, and I find it charming and cute. And so that's the kind of book that I gravitate towards.

Amy:

Or even like characters like *Clementine* (Sara Pennypacker), that's the kind of humor that's like not potty at all, but it's just so absurd. She helps her friend get something out of her hair and cuts the hair and then like her friend's hair is terrible. So then she chops her hair and it's just like, who does that? But I mean, kids. Really kids do it.

Blair:

Kids really do it.

Amy:

Yeah, they do.

Jennifer:

So there's realistic humor. And then there's also that magical fantasy kind of humor 'cause I think of *Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle* (Betty MacDonald) and I love *Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle* and how those kids would learn a lesson by something bizarre happening to them. Like if you were a tattletale, then a cloud would come over your head and there'd be a little tale speaking from it. And that's a parent going to *Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle*, saying: I need your help. And I think those are really cute, but definitely magical. They're classic and they're still checking out.

Blair:

That's a new one to me. That's what I was saying, I was struggling with books for this. Once we get out of picture books, I'm like, do I really find anything funny? Do I really find any of these funny? I kind of had to dig a little bit. Everybody's always reading *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* (Jeff Kinney). It's hilarious. They're reading *Captain Underpants* (Dav Pilkey) because it's hilarious and it's got all the poop jokes. So trying to find something for those readers who've maxed out, they've read all of it. There's what I found, which I actually really super enjoyed was *The 13-Story Treehouse*, Andy Griffiths. And I like it because it's kind of the tongue-in-cheek joke, right? So they're trying to write a book and instead of writing a book, they have all of these adventures and then they're like, oh, our adventures could make a book. Great. We just wrote a book! But it's a little bit, almost more high-brow because of the tongue-in-cheek humor. So it's not quite as blatantly hit you over the head as *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, but it's a good growing step, I think, growing up from those.

Jennifer:

So kids like to follow a series and that's a funny series and I just want to put out another one, which is *Klawde* (Johnny Marciano).

Blair:

Oh yes.

Jennifer:

I love *Klawde*. I'm not a cat fan by any stretch of the imagination, but I thought I'd try this series because first of all, I was attracted by the, the illustrations. So *Klawde* is a new series by Johnny Marciano, and this cat Klawde, he is an evil warlord cat, but he is such a naughty cat. He's been exiled from his planet and sent to Earth as punishment. So he's been an outcast and he meets a boy named Raj who moved from New York to Oregon, who also is feeling a bit like an outcast. And one day Raj opens the door and it's been raining outside—of course, it's Oregon—and there's this drenched cat who's miserable and very angry sitting on his porch step and they become a pair. And, of course, when Klawde starts speaking, Raj is quite shocked, but together they both are getting into a lot of trouble and Klawde is trying to use Raj initially to get back to his planet. And it's a wonderful, funny series and it's new. So, I love telling kids about it.

Blair:

I've heard quite a few kids being like, oh, have you read this? I wanna read this. And I think it's all because you've been talking it up.

Jennifer:

Which is unusual for me to talk about a cat.

Amy:

I was gonna say, I can't believe a librarian is confessing to not liking cats. Like...

Jennifer:

Breaking the stereotype.

Amy:

...speaking of jokes.

Blair:

I didn't have a hard time with a couple standalones. *Insignificant Events in the Life of a Cactus* is so funny. That's by Dusti Bowling; we just read it for book club. And most of the kids said it was either their favorite or their second favorite book of the whole time that we had been reading. And the way she talks about herself, it rides that fine line, right? So when you have a character who has any kind of disability and then is making fun of things about themselves, then it rides that fine line. Like, is it really self-deprecating humor? Is it making fun of them or is it making fun with them? But what was so fun about this is that the character has no arms. She was born without them, but people will ask her what happened to her arms. And so she has this tendency to make up the wildest, most ridiculous stories. Oh, I lost them in a train accident. Oh, I lost them in a fire. Like she'll just come up with the most ridiculous

things in response to that question. And it's hilarious because it's totally something a kid would do who gets asked the same obnoxious question 12 million times in their lives—they'll start making a joke of it and turning into a joke. And it's a great moment in that book.

Amy:

Lincoln Peirce, *Big Nate*, of course, but then also the *Max and the Midknights* (Lincoln Peirce) series has text and then comic panels interspersed and the books are fun, but the audiobooks are amazing! When her uncle, who is a troubadour and he's terrible... when he sings, it is something that you'll never forget.

Jennifer:

Well, speaking of troubadours is another funny book, it's actually a trilogy, is *The Hero's Guide to Saving Your Kingdom* by Christopher Healy. I love that book. It mashes in all of your favorite fairy tales. And it's really about these princes who want the world to know they have names because the bards of the kingdom are singing these stories about the girls and calling them all prince charming, but they actually have names. So they want their stories known. So you're meeting Briar Rose, who isn't exactly nice girl. She's a little bit of a, well, let's just be honest. She's a brat in this story. And then Ella, Cinderella, who is quite the tomboy and quite athletic. I read this book out loud to my kids when they were little and I would read ahead and my kids would say: Mom, are you reading ahead? Because I'd start laughing. And they thought that was really not nice for mom to be reading ahead. But it's such a mash up of fairy tales and quite clever and cute.

Blair:

For me, it was graphic novels. That was like where I went when I started thinking about middle grade. I was thinking, oh, the graphic novels are so funny because of course *Bad Guys* (Aaron Blabey) is hilarious. Like everything on that page is funny, from the images and the juxtaposition and the text and all the fart jokes. I mean a piranha farting in a space suit saving the day, come on. But I just read those, just laughing the entire way through. Another one that is really cute, that Amy showed me when it came in, was *Donut Feed the Squirrels* (Mika Song) and it's so adorable. It's a slightly younger audience read on that one, but it is so funny. These squirrels are desperately trying to get donuts from this donut truck and all the different hijinks they use to try and get it is so funny.

Jennifer:

That reminds me of *Grumpy Unicorn* (Joey Spiotto). I thought Grumpy Unicorn is just adorable. He's grumpy, but he's so cute. And I think the kids have really enjoyed those graphic novels as well.

Amy:

And *Cat Wad* by Jim Benton. There are four so far in that series.

Blair:

And then there's one on our brand new shelf, which I was super psyched about. It is called *Sort of Super* by Eric Gaspar <Eric Gapstur>. And I'm hoping it's going to be a series 'cause it was so funny. This kid accidentally gets superpowers, but his dad tells him that he's too young to use them. And so he has to hide them, but he does a very, very bad job of hiding them. And his little sister is the brains of the family. She skipped a couple grades to end up in his class at school. And so she has become his sidekick to be the brains that he needs to use his superpowers effectively. And then there's aliens. I mean, come on, superhero kids trying to get things accomplished and messing up left and right and aliens. I mean, how can you go wrong?

Jennifer:

Sounds like a winner.

Amy:

Sounds cute, yeah. And a little sister to the rescue!

Blair:

Little sister to the rescue!

Jennifer:

To the rescue.

Amy:

I will butcher his last name, but *The Lunch Lady* series by Jarrett Krosoczka is also one of those ones I think is so funny. And I think it's just my weird humor, but it's kind of, to me, a Scooby Doo type mystery. There are kids and there are cafeteria ladies. One is the Lunch Lady and she uses 007 type devices, but they're cafeteria tools or even food. She has hamburger bun headphones. She uses a mixer for her propeller in the water. I mean, it's just like goofy stuff, but for whatever reason, it tickles my funny bone so much, those stories. And they're like little mysteries, but they're so goofy in how they're solved.

Blair:

It's really cute. It's not just you. The kids love that series.

Amy:

Oh yay. Good.

Blair:

Yeah.

Jennifer:

I don't think I'm very funny, honestly, because I don't read a lot of those books.

Amy:

I was thinking 'cause Blair and I were talking yesterday, I was thinking it's really for me about the mood that I'm in when I'm reading. Because Blair mentioned watching a movie the other day and like she's seen it before and it was funny, but watching, on the rewatch, it was like the jokes didn't hit the way they had the first time. And it's true. It's like whatever my mood is will determine how enjoyable something is. So sometimes a joke will hit just in the right spot at the right time. And other times a book will totally fall flat.

Jennifer:

Or sometimes there's just a moment in a book...

Blair/Amy:

Yes.

Jennifer:

...that puts a smile on my face where I think though that was such a clever line or a funny moment and I will smile, but I wouldn't say the whole book is funny. But there's moments that make me chuckle.

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

(16:43) Section 3- Nonfiction & YA

Blair:

I struggled with non-fiction. We have joke books. We have great joke books in our collection and so...

Amy:

Yes, we do. *Just Joking* (National Geographic Kids) in the title.

Blair:

And the *Jokelopedia* (Weitzman, Blank, et. al.), which has a lot of really funny things in it too.

Amy:

And the *Pranklopedia* (Julie Winterbottom).

Blair:

Yes, though I did just order us a dad jokes book 'cause I felt like we were really lacking in the bad puns of the dad jokes. But as far as other things, I really only came up with one that I had read recently that I thought was like drop dead funny. And it was *There's a Rat in My Soup: Could You Survive Medieval*

Food? by Chana Stiefel. And it was really, genuinely hilarious and disgusting when you go through and you see all of the things that people used to be just perfectly fine with consuming and you're like, oh gross. How could you ever put that in your body? And then you're just laughing at the ridiculousness of it. Yeah. That one was interesting.

Jennifer:

Well, that—it's funny, but also covers the gross factor as well. The kids love anything that's about gross.

Blair:

They love it.

Amy:

Mm-hmm.

Jennifer:

I had a few actually that I thought were pretty clever. One was when Pluto, no it's *Pluto Gets the Call* by Adam Rex.

Amy:

Oh, yes.

Jennifer:

Non-fiction book. And when Pluto thinks he's going to be invited to a big party and it's the scientists calling to tell him he's no longer a planet and he is so sad. And so then he takes the reader on an adventure, introducing them to the solar system and it's so clever and fun. And I just adore that book. Adam Rex is very clever.

Blair:

That's true. I forgot about that book.

Amy:

And then of course, I mean Shel Silverstein's poetry always does it...

Blair:

Oh, he's just the master.

Amy:

...knocks it outta the park for, for sure. But I have to say that joke that I shared, "Knock, knock. Who's there? Yacht. Ya ought to know my voice by now." It is from one of the National Geographic Kids *Just Joking* books and it's *Just Joking LOL L-O-L*, and there are some really silly jokes in this book like that are just hilarious. And the pictures to accompany them are pretty darn awesome too. Like the cover has a horse laughing.

Blair:

I mean, how do you beat that?

Amy:

I mean, seriously, like look at this. The horse is like legit cracking up. Sorry. It's so funny.

Blair:

That is super fun.

Jennifer:

I have another funny one to share. I came across this book years ago and I have a son who loves to negotiate. He's been negotiating since he was really little. And so, I came upon this book called *How to Negotiate Everything* (David Spellman), and it's quite clever. It talks about being rational, and when you're overreaching, and how to be aggressive in your pursuit of something that you want. And I read it out loud to a few school groups, but it reminded me totally of my son because he would say things even in high school, he'd say, "If I fill up the car four times—I have a punch card—on the fifth one, will you fill it up for me for free?" And I'd say...

Amy:

Wow!

Jennifer:

Very clever, Jake. He's just always been a negotiator. And so this book was about this little kid, I think of him as a little Jake, learning how to negotiate and it's super fun. It's been checking out quite consistently.

Amy:

Wait, but what was your answer to his question of four punch card and then did you buy that fifth tank?

Jennifer:

I said: Of course, because...

Amy:

Yes! Go, Jake!

Jennifer:

...I, I can see, I can see Jake coming a mile away. He's just such a smooth operator. But this book is very sweet and it gives some really good advice to coming up with a plan and working through what you really want and how to talk to people. He initially wants an elephant for a pet, but he learned that that's overreaching and he needs to settle for something maybe a little less...

Blair:

Than an elephant, yeah.

Jennifer:

...than an elephant.

Blair:

Yeah. Probably even a horse is probably too big. Yeah.

Jennifer:

Yeah. It's a charming book about a very important skill, life skill. So you ready to talk YA?

Blair:

I found one in YA that was a memoir that was pretty humorous. It was, it's a comedian's memoir and it is *Funny, You Don't Look Autistic: A Comedian's Guide to Life on the Spectrum* by Michael McCreary. Again, it goes back to that fine line. Like, you know, he's writing it about himself so these are clearly approved jokes. We can laugh at them, but there's always that moment that I feel like, am I allowed to laugh at this? Is this, is this okay to find funny? And I'm like, well, he's a comedian, first off. He's a standup comedian. Also it's a memoir. He wrote it. So yes, you can 100% laugh at those jokes.

Amy:

Did he write it as an adult or while he was...

Blair:

Yes, he wrote it as an adult, yeah. But it's definitely about, like, his growing up. So it is a YA memoir. So what other maybe fiction YA did you ladies come up with?

Amy:

One of mine is actually a book that I read as a teenager, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (Douglas Adams). And it's just absurd. And Marvin, that computer that is just like, "I don't know. Am I making you feel sad?" Every time he asks questions like that, I was just cracking up.

Jennifer:

We read it in our book club a few years ago. And it was one of our Battle of the Books books...

Amy:

Really?

Jennifer:

...about four or five years ago. Yeah.

Amy:

What was the feedback?

Jennifer:

They liked it. Parts of it were so funny that you were willing to overlook some of the more scientific pieces that didn't really make sense. You suspend disbelief and go, okay, I'm here for the ride and it seems to be embraced. And I've just read another book recently. It's called *The Epic Crush of Genie Lo* by F.C. Lee. It's about demons and mythology. It's about a girl named Genie who doesn't really know a lot about her culture and she discovers that she has great power. She meets the Monkey King and he tells her: You have great powers and we're supposed to be a team. And he trains her to be a demon fighter. And she's fighting all these demons that are coming back to Earth. There's one moment in the book where she's just disbelieving him about who she is and he says: Well, haven't you ever heard of me? I am the great Monkey King. And there's this moment where there's a breeze coming through, dramatic moment, and she looks at this young man and says: I have no idea who you're talking about.

Blair/Amy:

<Laughter>

Jennifer:

It's just funny. And I'm really enjoying it. And I find it a little bit absurd too, kind of along the lines of *Hitchhiker <Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy>*. But it's, it's a really clever, funny book, how she's gonna learn to fight these demons that have come to Earth.

Blair:

Conveniently, one that I read that was funny is also about demons. It's called *When Life Gives You Demons* by Jennifer Honeybourn. It's a pretty new one too, but she's basically, she is an exorcist. Demons are real. Her, her family are all exorcists but her mother has disappeared. And so it's just all of the hijinks that she gets into. The demons are funny and her very wry sense of humor. So for me in YA, what makes it is the extraordinarily dry, sarcastic wry sense of humor? The books may not be like LOL funny, but they are dry and they have those good moments of just, like, straight sarcasm. The burns, man. These girls in these books have such good burns. Another one that was really fun is *Prepped* by Bethany Mangle about a girl who's trying to escape her like super duper prepper community. And she's paired up with this guy who her parents intend upon her to marry from within her prepper community so that they will be prepared for the end of the world together. And she hates him and she talks negatively about him the whole time and just, oh, the burns. Oh, they're so funny.

Amy:

Along that line then, not so dark maybe, cause you know, *Tweet Cute* by Emma Lord. It's just all about the back and forth of the two main characters, boy and girl, who have competing family businesses until they realize that something more serious is happening, but their back and forth like Twitter war is hilarious. They just keep raising the stakes. And like some of the things they say are so snarky and fun and there is, of course, a romance there and there's some family drama and it's just, it's a lot of fun.

Jennifer:

I've been wanting to read that book. It's come recommended to me by some teens. So I know that I should read that.

Amy:

Yes, any time a teen recommends anything, we should totally jump on it.

Jennifer:

I have a fun graphic novel. It's been on the shelf for a while. It's been on the shelf since 2013, so I know it's enjoyed and circulated. It's called *What Could Possibly Go Wrong? <Nothing Can Possibly Go Wrong>* by the dynamic team of Prudence Shen and Faith Erin Hicks. So you have this, the classic high school cliques of the robotics team, your nerds, and the cheerleaders and your jocks and both the cheerleaders and the robotics team need funds. The cheerleaders need to buy new uniforms for a tournament. And the robotics team needs some funding for a competition. And because the principal is very wise, she said: Well, you're gonna have to work it out together. And so they decide to team up and create this little robot so they can win a competition that will give them enough money so they both can

get what they want. So it's a breakdown of stereotypes and some funny misunderstandings. It's just a, it's a riot and the pictures, because it's Faith Erin Hicks, are wonderful.

Blair:

A YA graphic that I loved that I just like laughed out loud the whole time was *Space, Battle, Lunchtime: Lights, Camera, Snacktion!*, and it's by Natalie Rice. And you have to say it that way—come on! And it's like, this girl is a baker and she gets basically kidnapped by an alien who takes her onto this like super competitive alien cooking show. She's representing planet Earth on this super competitive alien cooking show. She has no idea what any of these ingredients are and she's over here like “I made a cupcake” while all these aliens are making completely crazy things.

(25:49) Music Transition: “Ascending-marimba-notification” by Alexander from Orangefreesounds.com
(Description) *Bright marimba scale.*

Jennifer:

We hope this episode inspires you to check out some of the hilarious characters that are just waiting to spend time with you.

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 Reader's Rave.

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

Riley:

Hi, my name is Riley, I am eleven years old. The book I love is *Revenge of Magic* (James Riley). I love this story because I thought it was a really good book.

Kade:

My name is Kade.

Mom:

How old are you?

Kade:

Four.

Mom:

What's a book you love, and why?

Kade:

A Baby Book

Mom:

And why do you love The Baby Book?

Kade:

'Cause it gives me joy.

Blair:

Do you want to be a 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 our next episode where we talk about outdoor adventure books from summer camps to vast expeditions into the unknown, all those fun things we like to do when we're not in school.

(26:13) 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, and 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: (26:45)