**Podcast: Literaticast**

**Episode: 46: October is the New December, with Guest Bookseller Suzanna Hermans**

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[00:00:00] Literaticast theme music plays.

Jennifer: [00:00:05] Hello, and welcome to the Literaticast. I'm Jennifer Laughran, and I'm a senior agent at the Andrea Brown Literary Agency, where I rep kids’ books from picture books through Young Adult.

[00:00:14] We're going to be talking to a guest in a minute. But first I just wanted to say, listen, this pandemic time and run up to the election in the US has been tough. And I'm afraid we've got some more rough road ahead. I really hope you're taking it easy on yourself and indulging in self care, whatever that looks like to you. I don't know about you, but I find myself doom scrolling the internet a lot and reading news articles that make me feel like I'm losing my mind. And it's just stressful.

[00:00:41] And I know so many people, especially parents, are really struggling. The world is just incredibly stressful right now. Calming down, stepping away from the internet, going outside, reading a book, engaging in mindfulness practices, all of these are hundred times more important for your mental health and physical well being than getting sucked into a Twitter argument. You're going to be okay. You're allowed to take a break. I'm telling you all of this because I need to hear it myself, so maybe you do too.

[00:01:12] Today is a big one on the podcast. If you pay attention to indie booksellers on Twitter or elsewhere, you'll notice a lot of them are saying things like October is the new December. And please, please shop early for the holidays. We're going to get into more details later. But I just happen to have already heard the interview that has been recorded for this podcast. And so I know this part didn't exactly get said. So I wanted to call it out explicitly.

[00:01:39] Not to be alarmist, but some of your favorite bookstores may not make it out of this pandemic. Some bookstores won't make it to the end of the year. The holiday season is absolutely crucial for these small businesses that we care so much about. Not only is shopping early this year going to be better for you for many reasons that we're going to get into. But shopping early can possibly help save small bookstores.

[00:02:07] So to that end, and to talk a bit about how my local bookstore is weathering these strange times, I'm very pleased to welcome my friend Suzanna Hermans. She's the co owner and buyer for Oblong Books and Music in Rhinebeck, New York. Now, in the before times, I also worked at Oblong. I don't anymore except for to help out when they need help after hours, because I'm high risk and I can't be milling around strangers. But it's still the best bookstore in the Hudson Valley in my highly biased opinion. And Suzanna is an absolute genius when it comes to book recommendations.

[00:02:37] Let me see if I can get Suzanna on the line.

[00:02:41] Hi, Suzanna.

Suzanna: [00:02:42] Hi, Jenn.

Jennifer: [00:02:44] I'm so glad to hear from you. I'm glad we could take a little break from election related text banking and letter writing to catch up.

Suzanna: [00:02:51] Seriously.

Jennifer: [00:02:54] Please, everyone vote. That’s all I have to say about that.

[00:02:58] So first of all, pandemic check in. I know that this year has been a wild one from a bookstore perspective. Can you give us sort of a rundown on what the pandemic was like for the store? And what's happening at the store now?

Suzanna: [00:03:11] Sure, yeah, it's been… I mean, it's been such a crazy year for everybody as as we all know. But at the bookstore, it was really scary right in the beginning. We didn't know what was happening. All we knew is we had to close. We didn't know when we'd be able to open again. We didn't know if we'd be able to pay our staff. There was so much unknown. But… and for like over two months, we operated… We have two locations, we operated with a single person working in each store because that was all we were legally allowed to have on premises.

[00:03:43] So our brave and wonderful managers were helming their ships for a couple months all by themselves. And then at that point, we were able to start bringing folks back and then we eventually reopened. We were closed to the public for about four months. We reopened with limited hours in July. And we continued with sort of, we definitely have shorter hours now than we ever had before.

[00:04:12] But luckily, people are shopping. And I think when we were closed, we were also super lucky because we already had a website that was not bad. And I think a lot of bookstores did not have that. We knew how to ship. We knew how… we had label printers to print shipping labels. We had materials to pack. We had already done this. We had never done it on this level, because for quite a while we were only allowed to ship we couldn't even do curbside pickup. So we shipped thousands of packages out during the shutdown.

[00:04:49] And you know a lot of people discovered our website during that time and we have really seen our web sales be at a level that they never were before, even now that we're reopened, we’re seeing about 20% of our sales every week are coming through the website, which previous it would have been a negligible amount. Certainly less than 2%.

[00:05:14] So it certainly changed how we're doing business. But in a way that we can handle which is really cool.

Jennifer: [00:05:20] Has the day to day running of the store changed now that I mean, you're reopened, but it's not the same.

Suzanna: [00:05:27] It's not the same. It's feeling better every day. And I think we were very nervous to reopen, we were very stressed about it. But as soon as we did, we felt immediately better. Luckily, we are in an area of the country where people are taking things very seriously and wearing masks. For the most part, we don't have to remind people to wear their mask, wear it properly. And it was really nice to get back to being a bookseller, again, like a physical bookseller, talking to physical people. We had been away from that for so long that it almost was scary. But then immediately, when we started doing it, it felt very comforting.

[00:06:04] But the stores are open less hours, we have a very limited capacity. So it's a different shopping experience, I think. But I think that's just kind of the world we're gonna be living in for a long time. And folks, if folks aren't used to it by now, they certainly will be soon.

Jennifer: [00:06:24] Now, as a buyer, what about the buying? Are you thinking differently about what to bring in and quantities and things like that?

Suzanna: [00:06:30] Oh, my gosh, buying has been such a whirlwind this year. It was like, back in March, I just literally had to hit cancel on months and months of work of all this work I had done that was no longer relevant. So that was sort of emotionally intense. But then obviously reordering everything was a logistical challenge, but publishers have been really amazing through this whole process, I have to say.

[00:06:55] But looking ahead, when I had to do my buying for fall, I had to do that back in probably May. But it was before we were even open to the public again. So I was buying for fall not knowing if we were gonna be open to sell the books, which was so… it was a total crapshoot. It was really like throwing darts at a wall. So now that now that we're in fall, we're open, we're actually selling books, things are going okay. I'm actually finding myself revisiting those orders and like massively increasing quantities on some titles that I way under or under ordered on because I didn't know if I'd have customers to sell them to.

[00:07:33] But now I'm doing spring. Now I'm working on my winter and spring buying. And I don't want to say it's business as usual, because that seems too easy. But I'm being much more like my old buyer self. I'm taking chances on on the debuts. I'm bringing in those single copies, whereas previously, this year, I had not been doing that. So I'm hopeful for spring. Though, spring is such a quiet season anyway, who knows?

Jennifer: [00:08:03] I mean, I think it's just guessing. e're all just muddling along, aren’t we?

Suzanna: [00:08:06] Yeah.Yeah, absolutely.

Jennifer: [00:08:09] So Oblong, of course, has been well known, especially in recent years for doing great events. And now we can't have in person events. How has the switch to digital events been going?

Suzanna: [00:08:20] Oh, my gosh. So first of all, I just need to shout out to our events team, Helen and Leif, who have literally, completely taken events off my plate. I used to still oversee events. But once we switched to digital, I was just like, you guys, I don't want to have anything to do with this. I'm so tired and busy and burned out. Can you just take care of it? And they were like, Yeah, no problem. So all I get to do is look at their success, which is great.

[00:08:45] So we did about 160 events last year. So give a kind of an idea of how big events were to our store. And obviously, that completely changed this year. And I don't know how many we've had digitally so far, but a decent amount. I think this month, we have like six or seven, maybe. And they've been going pretty well actually. Not all of them are selling books, but neither did in person, frankly. But we've had several events that have had massive success and and people are really supporting and buying the book. So I think, I don't know that you can be better at predicting success of a virtual event than you did on an in person. I think it's just as big of a crapshoot, unfortunately. But they also feel easier to do. They feel like less work. I don't know if that's actually true, I should ask. But, so it’s like, oh this one if we didn't sell any books, that sucks, but it doesn't hurt the way it does when you're in a physical space, I guess.

Jennifer: [00:09:56] You don't have to find the table cloth.

Suzanna: [00:09:58] Right, like the author kind of can’t tell how many books we sold, because often they've done signed book plates or they've stopped by, and they've pre signed some stock, but they aren't actually physically there to see the sales coming in or not. So it kind of alleviates the emotional burden, I think, a little.

Jennifer: [00:10:17] Takes the pressure off.

Suzanna: [00:10:18] Yeah, yeah.

Jennifer: [00:10:19] And you don't move the furniture, so that's good.

Suzanna: [00:10:21] Oh, hallelujah. Yeah, I was like, do we ever had to do real physical events again? I don’t know. Just kidding. Just kidding. I can't wait. I can't wait.

Jennifer: [00:10:31] What have you learned from this time?

Suzanna: [00:10:34] Oh, my gosh, I think the thing that I'm coming away with most this year is how resilient we've been. And how resilient I feel like I have been through this whole thing. Like, if you had told me even three weeks ahead of the shutdown, that this was what I was going to go through this year, I would have said, that's impossible. I'm going to have a breakdown. I'm going to be in a corner crying for six months. And I didn’t do that. So, good job. Me and us.

[00:11:04] Yeah, I think just like the power of the human spirit and resilience is, is a real theme of my year. Yeah. And also I feel we've just been super fortunate. I mean, things could have gone quite differently for us, but knock on wood. We all are here, and we have jobs, and we have customers. So thank you.

Jennifer: [00:11:25] Yes, it's a good thing.

Suzanna: [00:11:26] Yeah.

Jennifer: [00:11:28] So it's really hard to have a new book in this era, for obvious reasons.

Suzanna: [00:11:31] Oh, yes.

Jennifer: [00:11:32] I just feel for debut authors and stuff who are like sending their little book babies into the world?

Suzanna: [00:11:37] Oh, my gosh, and there's nothing you can do. I mean, not really.

Jennifer: [00:11:41] Right. But do you have advice for authors who are trying to launch their book amidst all this from a booksellers perspective?

Suzanna: [00:11:49] Yeah, from a booksellers perspective. So I think now is a better time, than even three or four months ago. Three or four months ago, I got an email from an author. I just literally did not have time to answer it. I didn't have any emotional or mental space to do anything except for trying not to let my business fail. Like that was it. I didn't have room for other people, which sucked. But it was just how it was. But now that we're sort of stabilizing, though, I will say we're going into holiday, which is like, not a great time to reach out to a store in general. But if you do this right away, I would say, just touch base with some bookstores.

[00:12:25] I got a really nice email today from an author that was telling me about their book that just got published. And I wasn't aware of it. It's from a small press. And it's not self published, it's from a small press that I'm not sure who they distribute, if they have a distribution, but you can get it at Ingram, you can get it at a full discount, that is what matters to me. And his email was so lovely and conversational. And it didn't ask anything of me. It was like, hey I just wanted to let you know that my book exists. Here's a paragraph about what it's about. Let me know if you need anything from me or want to carry it.

[00:12:59] And that's what I like. I need low pressure. I need, like, friendly light touch, low pressure. I get a little bit turned turned off if people are like you should carry my book. It's just feels a little heavy handed. So just something like friendly, light, that kind of acknowledges that everything sucks right now. And, hey, here's my thing. I think also just, if you are talking to a local bookstore, make sure you tell them you're local. We don't know where you live. So if you don't tell us that you live next door to the bookstore, I don't want to be a jerk for being for not knowing that. I don't have your home address. So just be super upfront about that. We love local authors. We want to know if you're local, but we also aren't psychic. So don't assume that we knew. But yeah, I say, you know, reach out. Reach out. Now is the time. And then pause and then try again in January.

Jennifer: [00:13:55] Yes. And that's… well, it's twofold. So two things, I have to say. First of all, I would also say if your mom lives locally, or if you have friends or you went to school here or something like that, that's another great thing. I have friends and family in the area that I will send to your store.

Suzanna: [00:14:15] Yes. Yes.

Jennifer: [00:14:16] I'm a Bard alumni and I don't live there anymore, but I have such fond memories of being in your neighborhood and whatever. Those are good things. But the other thing is, I feel like for everybody who has launched during this pandemic, it's going to be a long tail kind of situation. Like in the past and the before time, the buzz was right around your launch day and that's it. But now it's going to be this is months and months and years hustling. Which is worse in a sense because you don't see the immediate payoff maybe, but it's better in a way because nobody's going to be mad at you for keeping on talking about your book.

Suzanna: [00:14:55] Yeah.

Jennifer: [00:14:56] Please continue beating the drum, because there's so much other stuff going on. Even if you worry, like, Oh my gosh, I'm talking about this too much on social media or whatever. You're not. People are… People can't hear it enough because they won't notice it the first 10 times, I promise. Anyway…

Suzanna: [00:15:16] Yeah. And I'd also say like, if you have a paperback coming out in spring ‘21, you need to advocate for that paperback, because we all have… When we when we choose what to order in paperback, we look at sales track of the hardcover. And if there is no sales track for that hardcover, it's usually a skip. We do not order the paperback. There are exceptions, of course. But generally speaking, without sales track, you're kind of screwed. But so many books don't have sales track from spring ’20. So it's a great time to reach out to stores and be like, hey, my paperback is coming out, aka paperback is a lower price risk for us to carry. B, remind us, hey, I know you don't have a sales track. I know you didn't sell this in hardcover and that's because you were closed. Don't forget, it came out in March 2020. And I will immediately have sympathy for you. Tell us if you got fucked by the pandemic and we will… we did too, so we want to help each other. But yeah, definitely remind us for those paperbacks.

Jennifer: [00:16:21] Absolutely. Great advice. Now, the real reason you're here is I want to talk about books. And specifically books buying for the holiday season. I know listeners are gonna say, dudes, it isn't even Halloween yet. What are you doing? But there's some very good reasons to be treating October as the new December. You want to talk about that?

Suzanna: [00:16:42] Oh, my God. Oh my God. Yes. So, I have so many feelings about this. And we all kind of don't know how the holiday season is going to go. But A, I'll say if you were planning to walk into a store and shop during the month of December, A, you're not going to be able to get in the store because the store will be at capacity. And you will have to queue outside and you still might not get in. B, there's going to be supply chain issues. So when you walk into the store, if you finally get in, we might not have the books you want. Because the publisher is out of stock and the printers are all busy reprinting the Obama book, or UPS has stopped working or the post office isn't working. Like there's a lot of stuff that is fully outside of our control. So because of that, we are saying you have to shop early, you just have to do it. Just be done with your holiday shopping one month ahead of the holiday that you plan to celebrate.

[00:17:34] You will be so glad you did this. And it will help alleviate the burden on the retail stores. And this isn't just books. This like all your shopping. Just do it. Just do it right now. And you'll be so glad you did it.

[00:17:49] We're trying to be super clear on our website that we won't be able to provide the level of service and fulfillment that we normally would at the holidays. Holidays are already really bad and hard for us. But this year, so much of it is outside of our control that we just want to be super upfront that you need to order now. And if there's any new releases that you want to get between now and the end of the year, you should preorder them right now.

Jennifer: [00:18:13] 100%. So because we want to make sure all you listeners are armed with your must buy list as early as possible, it's time for our mega book recs.

Suzanna: [00:18:24] Whoo.

Jennifer: [00:18:26] Whoo. I’m going to be real with you. My leisure reading has taken a serious nosedive since the pandemic started. I am a maniac and I have not been able to read for pleasure that much. It's very sad. But I do have a lot of new client books that I want everyone to check out and some ideas for wonderful escapist reads. And I know, Suzanna, you always have the best book recommendations. So let's get into it.

[00:18:49] If you don't have your pen and paper handy, don't worry. I'll be linking to all these wonderful books in the show notes on my website. Let’s go.

So first of all, board books. I have one I'm going to talk about. It's called Mailduck by Erica Sirotich. This is a darling board book about a duck that delivers different shaped packages to all the animals in the neighborhood. There are flaps to lift and bright surprises inside. It's absolutely adorable. And plus let's give all the love to the Postal Service. Yay, mail!

[00:19:23] Suzanna your picks?

Suzanna: [00:19:25] Absolutely. My first board book pick is Whose Bones? An Animal Guessing Game by Gabrielle Balkan illustrated by Sam Brewster. This is for like ages three to five. It's like a little bit of a heady board book, I will say. It's from Phaidon. They tend to do very artsy, very smart board books. But I just think this is really sweet. It's a great intro to bones and anatomy. Has animals in it and Gabrielle has done a ton of stuff for older kids. This is her first foray into board and super cute.

[00:19:53] And then my second pick is a Little Owl’s Snow by Divya Srinivasan And I love the little owl books. There have been, I think two before this, and this one came out in hardcover a few years ago, but they've just made it into board. Little owl in the snow. Little Owl’s Snow, what do you need to know? It’s a cute owl, it’s snowing.

Jennifer: [00:20:16] Next up is picture books.

Suzanna: [00:20:18] Whoo.

Jennifer: [00:20:20] hoo. First of all, The Blue House by Phoebe Wahl. This gorgeous book came out a few months ago. I'm certain it got under the radar of a lot of people because it was right in the heart of the pandemic when everything was closed. So a lot of you might not have gotten the chance to see it. I think that that's going to be a running theme for almost all these books, actually.

[00:20:41] Anyway, The Blue House by Phoebe Wahl is about a kid and his dad who are navigating big changes. They have to move out of the little house they've always lived in. It's about changes and navigating those difficult emotions. But most of all, it's just beautiful. The illustrations are gorgeous. If you don't believe me, The Blue House also has five starred reviews.

Suzanna: [00:20:59] Dang.

Jennifer: [00:21:02] I know, it's a big deal. And then one that's coming up next month, I think November 10th, is Two Many Birds by Cindy Derby. It's hilarious, though very spare. The humor is really in the illustrations. There's this tree full of birds with one dictatorial megalomaniac bird trying to boss everybody else around, making arbitrary rules, yelling at them, and all the birds joined together, take action, and overthrow the narcissistic leader. I'm not saying it's timely, but you do the math. Anyway. It's adorable.

[00:21:34] Suzanna your pick?

Suzanna: [00:21:36] Absolutely. I am obsessed with Becoming a Good Creature by Sy Montgomery, illustrated by Rebecca Green. So Sy is one of my favorite humans on Earth. She is a naturalist. She has written extensively for adults and for older kids. She has won, like I don't know, she did she win the National National Award? Finalist. She's won a ton of awards for her work.

Jennifer: [00:21:58] She wrote that octopus book.

Suzanna: [00:22:01] She did. Soul of an Octopus. And then last year, the year before, she had a grown up book called. So I'm sorry, what's called? How to be a Good Creature. Right? So such similar titles. So they've distilled that down to a picture book for small kids. And it's basically a quick glimpse into Sy’s life with animals. She has had incredible emotional connections with everything from pigs to octopuses. And each spread is sort of a story of her with this animal and like, what life lesson about how to be a better creature you can take from this animal. An it's gorgeous to boot.

Jennifer: [00:22:42] Nice. And I'll tell you what I learned from Soul of an Octopus, is that the plural of octopus is octopuses. Or octopods. But never octopi.

Suzanna: [00:22:53] Hmm.

Jennifer: [00:22:54] So I get the correct people. It's great.

Suzanna: Jennifer: [00:22:54] I love it. You love to correct people.

Jennifer: [00:22:58] Yes. I mean, in a nice way.

Suzanna: [00:23:00] Yes, of course, of course.

Jennifer: [00:23:00] Chapter book. You want to go first?

Suzanna: [00:23:04] Oh my god, I would love to. So I think it could be my favorite book of the year across adult and children's but it's Skunk and Badger, by Amy Timberlake. It has illustrations by Jon Klassen. And this book, I'm just absolutely obsessed with it. It's a great read aloud, I would say for ages five and up. And I think kids maybe seven, eight and up, could read it on their own.

[00:23:27] It is the story of Badger, who lives in a brownstone and all he wants to do all day is work on his rocks. He has very important rock work to do. And his mail is piling up. He keeps getting all these envelopes and he never opens them. And then one day, he gets a knock on the door and it's Skunk. Skunk has is there to come stay with Badger. What do you mean, you didn't know I was coming Badger? Didn’t you get the letter?

[00:23:54] And of course Badger realizes that he could have known very well that Skunk was on his way if only he taken a minute away from his important rock work to read his mail. Anyway, Skunk and Badger are very opposite personality types, who have to cohabitate. This book is a hoot and a half I would say it like it really kind of conjures that frog and toad relationship. But in a story that is larger. It has a lot more going on, it has a lot more text.

[00:24:22] And I'm told it's the first in a series so there is more to come. I just absolutely love it. I actually made my husband read it. And he also loves it. So I read this sort of at the height of the pandemic back in April, maybe. And I found it to be like the most healing, relaxing, calming book to read as an adult. So I would also super recommend it for grownups.

Jennifer: [00:24:45] Well first of all, I feel very called out by the letting the mail pile up. But also I should say this is also just a beautiful package. It's such a pretty gift for anyone. It's a gorgeous book.

Suzanna: [00:24:59] It is. If you take the jacket off, it's even prettier.

Jennifer: [00:25:02] What?

Suzanna: [00:25:03] It’s got secret art on the case. It's beautiful.

Jennifer: [00:25:07] So my chapter book picks. This is something I've talked about on the show before, but I just wanted to remind everyone, Kate Messner, and Dylan Meconis’s History Smashers series tells the real deal about famous parts of history that we've gotten, basically a load of bull hockey about in school. So for kids who like who was series, this is the next step. There's going to be more in the series next year, but right now, History Smashers: the Mayflower and History Smashers: Women's Right to Vote are out. I'm not gonna lie. I learned a lot from these books. Kids are gonna devour them. They're funny. They've got like, graphic novel elements. And they're bound to spark great conversations in both classrooms and at home.

Suzanna: [00:25:50] I love that. Kids nonfiction is where it's at.

Jennifer: [00:25:54] Like for real.

Suzanna: [00:25:55] specially like as a grownup who doesn't have enough time to read grown up nonfiction. Big fan. Big fan of kids nonfiction.

Jennifer: [00:26:02] So let me tell you, it has been a running joke in my house. I watch Jeopardy every day. And invariably, I know something absurd. Like, I'll be like Shackleton or whatever. Flu of 1919 or whatever. And people are like, why do you know that random answer? And it's always because I read a picture book about it. Or I read a chapter book about it. One of my clients wrote something about it. That's how I know radium, or whatever. Anyway, I love kids nonfiction, also.

[00:26:37] All right, on to middle grade.

Suzanna: [00:26:40] Woo! Middle grade.

Jennifer: [00:26:42] How about I do one. You do one. I do one. You do one.

Suzanna: [00:26:43] I love it.

Jennifer: [00:26:46] Okay, so my first one is Chirp by Kate Messner. Kate makes another appearance on this list. She had, I think, 12 books come out this year, no joke.

Suzanna: [00:26:54] She’s a champion.

Jennifer: [00:26:55] She's a champion, what can I say? So this one came out right at the start of all this, it got six starred reviews. If you missed it, it is a masterpiece, in my opinion. It's a mystery set on a cricket farm. It also has a lot to say about secrets and shame and growing up and being strong. It's a wonderful book. And as always, with Kate, she takes a story that can be really hard or upsetting. In this case, it's got Me Too elements. And she just does them in a perfectly age appropriate way that never feels heavy handed. It's just wonderful. Chirp.

Suzanna: [00:27:26] I love it.

Jennifer: [00:27:27] Suzanna?

Suzanna: [00:27:27] So one of the books I so enjoyed reading this summer, is Millionaires for the Month by Stacy McAnulty. It is just the most fun middle grade. It's about these two seventh graders who kind of like accidentally steal $20 from a billionaire. Like he drops it in a park. And they steal it, but they return it. And the billionaire is like, Oh, you want to talk about money? I'm gonna give you $5 million. But you have to spend it in 30 days.

Jennifer: [00:28:03] No problem. Go on.

Suzanna: [00:28:03] Right? Right. Of course, there are rules, there's things are not allowed. They can't give it away. There’s lots of things that they can't do. So these two boys are trying to figure out how to spend $5 million in 30 days. And it is so much fun. I had a blast reading it and I think it’s really… I think it'll be great for reluctant readers, too, because it's got such a easy hook.

Jennifer: [00:28:26] That is fun. I want to read that. Okay, my next pick is called Friend Me. Friend Me by Sheila Averbuch. So this is a debut novel I'm excited to tell you about. It comes out November 10. I believe you can order it now, it's from Scholastic. Friend Me is an absolutely gripping techno thriller. It's unputdownable. It's about this girl Roisin who's from Ireland. She's moved to Boston. She's being bullied at school. She’s really sad and miserable. So she finds comfort in her online friendship with this girl named Haley. They do memes, they're sending each other jokes. It's great. She really excited to meet somebody who's totally on her wavelength. But then something really scary… an accident happens to the bully. And Roisin starts to realize that maybe her friend Haley is not what she seems to be.

Suzanna: [00:29:20] Ooh.

Jennifer: [00:29:20] I cannot tell you what happens because they're spoilers. But when I say oh my God, you will race to the finish of this one. You can pre order it now. It's good for ages 10 and up.

Suzanna: [00:29:31] I love it. That sounds great.

Jennifer: [00:29:34] It's exciting.

Suzanna: [00:29:35] So my other middle grade is not your regular kind of chapter book-y middle grade. It comes out next month. It's called This is Your Time and it is written by Ruby Bridges. And if you don't immediately know who Ruby is, she was the little girl who at the age of six became the first Black student to integrate at an all-white Elementary School in New Orleans. Very famously, her experience was depicted by Norman Rockwell. She’s walking in front of a wall with a tomato thrown on it. And that's actually the cover of the book.

[00:30:08] So Ruby, you think of this thing as happening a really long time ago. But Ruby is only… can I do math? She was born in 1954. She's like, younger than my mom.

Jennifer: [00:30:22] Yeah, she’s in her—

Suzanna: [00:30:22] So…

Jennifer: [00:30:23] She's an adult, but not like an old one.

Suzanna: [00:30:25] No, no, no, she's like a contemporary. And her story is so amazing. This is sort of the first time she's told her story with an audience of children. And it's about… it’s a 64 page book. There's not a ton of text on each page. There's photos from her life. And it just sort of talks about what it was like to go through that experience, to be the only kid in your class because all of the white kids wouldn't go to school with you. Their parents said, no, they can't be in a classroom with this black girl. And the amazing relationship she had with her white teacher who, they had like a lifelong friendship.

[00:31:12] It's just a really wonderful and powerful book, and I'm super excited to get it into the hands of kids.

Jennifer: [00:31:18] Awesome. So now we're scaling up an age to young adult. My first pick is The Mermaid, the Witch, and the Sea by Maggie Tokuda-Hall. I know people have talked about this on the show before, including myself. But hey, maybe you're new listener, what the heck. The Mermaid, the Witch, and the Sea is a fantasy novel that has everything. Gender every. Girls kissing, mermaids with hallucinogenic blood, pirates. It's jam packed with amazing swashbuckling adventure and magic. If you're a fantasy fan, I think it's a must read. And it has just been announced. Yes, there will be a sequel.

Suzanna: [00:31:54] Nice.

Jennifer: [00:31:55] Yes. How about your pick.

Suzanna: [00:31:56] Sure. My pick is We are the Wildcats by Siobhan Vivian.

Jennifer: [00:32:02] Which I read, too. It’s amazing.

Suzanna: [00:32:03] It's so good. It came out back in March. So it was right during the shutdown. But it was actually one of the few books we sold a lot of probably because that was the only book I was talking about in March. But it's the story of a girls’ field hockey team. And it's all told within 24 hours and has six different first person perspectives. And it's the relationship between these girls and each other but also and their coach. There's a lot of really like intense stuff in there. Nothing crazy dark. But when you when you look at a group that has a dynamic like a sports team, there's a lot to unpack. And I was not a sports kid. So I felt like I was I was watching a documentary. I was like, oh my God, this is amazing. Is this what it feels like to be part of a team? But I just loved it. Siobhan is a fantastic writer, and I think this is probably her best work yet.

Jennifer: [00:33:04] Yeah, and I have to agree. I am not a sporty kind of person. I know nothing. And I did not feel lost or weird or anything. It's great. My next pick along the lines of contemporary YA, Deepfake by Sarah Darer Littman. It came out yesterday… it came out this week. I don't know what day it is, but it came out very recently. Sarah Darer Littman writes these amazing contemporary realistic YA books that just seem ripped from the headlines. And they're scary because they could absolutely be real. This one is no exception. It is about some popular kids and somebody accuses one of them of cheating on the SATs. And they have proof, they have a video. But computers are now capable of making video and audio recordings that literally sound exactly like real people. So what happens if somebody says you did something bad and they have video proof but you know it was not you? What do you do?

[00:34:05] Deepfake is chilling, it's totally compelling. And it's creepy as heck.

[00:34:13] Anyway, now we're gonna do a bonus round. So this could be a book in any any category of books. So it could be picture books through grownup books, I guess, but probably mostly kids books. Okay. Because we're still in October. Let's do Halloween-specific.

Suzanna: [00:34:27] Yes.

Jennifer: [00:34:28] So my pick is Vampires of Blinsh by Daniel Pinkwater and Aaron Renier. This is a guided tour through the vampire-infested Old Town of Blinsh Pinksylvania. It's funny, particularly if you read it in the voice of an old-timey newsreel announcer but more than just funny the illustrations are absolutely wall to wall bonkers. There's so much fun detail packed into every square inch. It's a total delight. What's your pick?

Suzanna: [00:34:52] Oh my gosh. So my pic it's not. I kind of cheated a little bit. It's not, I wouldn't say it's scary, but it is about ghosts.

Jennifer: [00:35:01] I’d say it's eerie.

Suzanna: [00:35:03] It’s eerie. Absolutely. Yeah. It's Tigers, Not Daughters by Samantha Mabry. She is one of my favorites. Her book All the Wind in the World is an all time favorite of mine. And this is an amazing novel that has the story of three sisters who are all in different stages of grief after losing their oldest sister before the book begins. And the thing that's going on in this book is that the oldest sister is still haunting their house. It’s pretty great. I mean, I love Samantha Mabry’s work and it's a little bit highbrow but that's fine. And I would definitely, if you're a grown up reader who doesn't read a lot of YA, check it out. I would, I could totally… she's one of these authors, I could fully sneak into my adult fiction section and have no one notice.

Jennifer: [00:35:53] So yes, we should actually, because this could be in any category we should say what category they were. So Vampires of Blinsh is obviously a picture book and Tigers, Not Daughters is YA, right?

Suzanna: [00:36:03] Yep.

Jennifer: [00:36:03] Technically, YA with crossover appeal.

Suzanna: [00:36:07] Yes.

Jennifer: [00:36:08] Okay, because of the upcoming election, let's do something US democracy-specific. I'll go first, The Next President by Kate Messner and Adam Rex. It’s a picture book. It’s history told in a different kind of way. So the book itself is a timeline of sorts in which we can see that at any given moment in American history, there is a president of the United States. But there are also probably five or so people alive in the country that will be president that don't know it yet. Some of them might be shucking corn or in the school play or in the marching band. Some of them are in law school or they’re senators, but they're out there and they don't even know what the future will hold for them.

[00:36:45] Which means that one of them right now, could be you. It's quite inspiring.

Suzanna: [00:36:49] I love that idea. What a genius.

Jennifer: [00:36:53] It's brilliant.

Suzanna: [00:36:53] I love it.

Jennifer: [00:36:54] And the pictures are amazing. Here's the thing, though. So some right wing pastor with a huge following made a video about this book.

Suzanna: [00:37:00] No…

Jennifer: [00:37:01] And in the video, he lied about it and said that Trump was not included, but he is, actually, just the same as all the other presidents. So that led this guy's followers to start harassing the author and illustrator sending really horrifying letters to them and including also their agent in some cases.

Suzanna: [00:37:23] No, oh Jenn.

Jennifer: [00:37:23] And go on a one star review spree which is still ongoing. So anyway, if you liked The Next President, please write a nice review of it on the internet and drown out the haters. Thank you.

Suzanna: [00:37:34] Ugh, I’m sorry. That sucks.

Jennifer: [00:37:35] What is your US democracy specific book?

Suzanna: [00:37:39] My democracy book is Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You by Jason Reynolds and Ibram Kendi. This is a book that since I got to read it, way the heck back in, I think, January, I have not been able to shut up about this book. It is the most important book I've read in the last five years easily. It takes Ibram Kendi’s adult book Stamped From the Beginning and totally remixes it for a teen reader. It strips it down to make it very accessible. Jason Reynolds basically took Ibram’s text and just rewrote it in his own words, he started with a blank page. And you know, Jason is an incredible voice and a writer.

[00:38:26] This book freaked me out because of growing up in the US and the Northeast. I thought I had received history lessons from my teachers that were accurate. I thought, you know, yep. Okay. I know about racism. I know about the Civil War. I know about the Civil Rights Movement. Great.

[00:38:48] It turns out that everything I learned was tainted by white supremacy. Of course. I mean, it sounds obvious, but when you are like reading specific facts that it's like, this is what you learned in school. But here's how it really went down. It's really enlightening. And this is a book that I recommend for every single American, ages 12 to 112, if you're still reading. And I think that this is probably the most important book that came out this year.

Jennifer: [00:39:22] Amazing. It's a great book. We have recommended it before, but it can't be said enough. So on kind of a similar note, we'll do social justice, anti-racism. So my pick is a picture book. It's called A Place Inside of Me by Zetta Elliott. The subtitle of this book is A Poem to Heal the Heart. And it is. Zetta Elliott's poetry is really special with illustrations by Noa Denmon that are beautiful. It's a picture book about a Black boy whose neighborhood is reeling from police brutality and protests. It's really about navigating huge emotions. It's really extremely powerful.

[00:40:02] Suzanna, what is your pick?

Suzanna: [00:40:04] My pick is Black heroes of the Wild West by James Otis Smith. This book, again, more uncovering of history that was whitewashed. This book depicts the true stories of three different Black cowboys three, or? I think it’s four. No three. And I as a white woman, but I think also just in general, when you when you picture a cowboy, you tend to picture a white man. And as James Otis Smith explains in this book, the reason that you do that is because there was very little photography back then. And the most depictions of cowboys were done by artists and paintings, and the artists tended to only depict the white cowboys.

[00:40:56] But in in reality, cowboys were extremely diverse. There were lots of Black and Latinx cowboys. But we don't ever know about it. We also think of like the Western films, and it was very enlightening to me to read these stories and realize that there are… if these are stories I didn't know about how many more stories are out there that I was totally unaware of. So it's it’s a short graphic novel. I should say, it's a graphic novel. It's 60 pages long. And, I think again, perfect for reluctant readers because it's so slim, but you get so much out of it. It's super entertaining. Also, one of the cowboys is a woman, which is pretty rad. And I just loved it. I learned so much.

Jennifer: [00:41:41] Awesome. So now LGBTQIA interest. I already had a very queer book in the YA section but here's another one that I wanted to talk about. Rick by Alex Gino. So many of you have likely read Melissa’s Story and George, which came out a few years ago and it was extremely popular. Well, Rick follows another kid in Melissa's class. Rick was kind of a jerk in Melissa’s Story. His best friend Jeff was truly a bully and Rick just went along with it. He also goes along with his dad’s jokes, even when they make them uncomfortable. In fact, Rick just kind of goes along with everything. But in this story, he has to figure out what he wants to do apart from the expectations of others. And what he wants to do is join the rainbow spectrum club at school and make new friends and forge his own identity. You do not have to read George to read Rick. It totally stands alone. It's great. It's funny. It's insightful. And so first time I've read about the ace spectrum in particular, in a middle grade. I'm not saying there are not other books that explore asexuality but I don't know them. So anyway, that's my pick. Rick by Alex Gino.

Suzanna: [00:42:51] Cool. My pick is a graphic novel for YA. It is Heartstopper by Alice Oseman, their Volume One is out now and then Volume Two comes out next month. This is just the sweetest romance. It's the story of a boy who meets another boy. They become friends. They fall in love. That's kind of it. That's the story. And it is just the sweetest romance. I loved it. And it's really nice to see a queer relationship depicted without a whole lot of trauma. I feel like it's very light and fun and sweet. And that's what it is. And it's great. I loved it.

Jennifer: [00:43:43] Yay. So how about something Hanukkah or Christmas? Winter holiday specific. My pick is Hanukkah Bear by Eric Kimmel in board book. So this is an adorable classic story about a little old lady with bad eyesight who thinks she's entertaining her rabbi. But actually, it's a bear. A large, fluffy, hungry bear. This one was reillustrated a few years ago and this year it's available for the first time in a cute little chunky board book edition.

[00:44:12] Warning: it will make you won't latkes but the good news is if you spill applesauce on them or anything it's a board book. You can clean it right off. Suzanna, what is your pick?

Suzanna: [00:44:19] I love that. Oh my gosh, my pick is Happy Narwhalidays, a Narwhal and Jelly book by Ben Clanton. I remember as a kid when I was super into series. I would get really excited if they had a holiday or a super special kind of edition. And that's what we’ve got here with this book. It’s a holiday Narwhal and Jelly book. If you guys don't know Narwhal and Jelly, it's sort of an early chapter book graphic novel series for ages six to nine. And it's just super fun and light and goofy. And what's not to like?

Jennifer: [00:44:54] wesome. So how about winter specific. So mine is Ten Ways to Hear Snow by Cathy camper and Kenard Pak. Comes out next week, I believe. Very soon anyway. This is a lovely intergenerational story about an Arab family. It touches some of the same chords as a modern Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats. In this one a little girl notices and shares with her grandmother all the different ways that she hears snow and the sound that is silence. It's an absolutely cozy book about mindfulness and family. It's got lovely illustrations, and it’ll be very special to read with kids while nestled in blankets and drinking cocoa.

Suzanna: [00:45:35] That’d be fine with me right now.

Jennifer: [00:45:37] Same. What's your winter specific book?

Suzanna: [00:45:42] My pick is Snow Birds by Kirsten Hall, illustrated by Jenni Desmond. It is an absolutely stunning picture book. It focuses on all the different birds who live in the snow. So lots of birds fly south for the winter, but lots of them stay in the north and survive in snowy climates. And this is a look at those birds, but it's also told in poetry, which is super cool. It is just so pretty and sweet. And I think kids’ poetry doesn't get enough attention. And this one is definitely one that people should check out.

Jennifer: [00:46:23] Awesome. I haven't seen that yet. But Kirsten Hall also wrote The Honeybee last year, which was one of my favorites. It's so—

Suzanna: [00:46:28] Gorgeous.

Jennifer: [00:46:28] Gorgeous and also really fun to read aloud. Okay, I'm totally cheating. I added two more categories without telling you. I felt like I had to mention them so whatever. You don't have to—

Suzanna: [00:46:41] Okay, I’ll try.

Jennifer: [00:46:41] You can if you want. So my best quarantine picture book. It's another one with Cindy Derby illustrations. Outside In by Deborah Underwood. Again, it came out in early spring. You might have missed it but it is just the most beautiful book about nature and the world's connectedness truly perfect for this time when people are staying in and homeschooling. It also got five starred reviews. It is gorgeous.

Suzanna: [00:47:04] Nice.

Jennifer: [00:47:05] And then my best book with bilingual elements, the entire ¡Vamos! series by Raúl the Third. They're super fun. Richard Scary-esque picture books the future tours around a border town, Mercado and all the vendors and food trucks and little characters you meet along the way. The latest is ¡Vamos! Let's Go Eat which will make you hungry as heck. There are also board books, early readers and another picture book coming out real soon.

Suzanna: [00:47:31] Oh, I have love that. I have one to add—

Jennifer: [00:47:33] The world of ¡Vamos! Is blowing up, so.

Suzanna: [00:47:36] That's so cool. I have one to add for that category. And it's… I'm sort of cheating because there's an English edition and a Spanish edition. But it's Gustavo,the Shy Ghost or Gustavo, el fantasmita tímido by Flavia Drago. And this is like one of our favorite picture books at the bookstore and I'm sorry, I didn't think to include it in my Halloween category. But it's like the the sweetest ghost picture book you've ever seen. I love it.

Jennifer: [00:48:05] Yes, I actually was wondering why you… I thought I had sort of left it wide open for you to talk about that one before.

Suzanna: [00:48:11] Apologies.

Jennifer: [00:48:13] It is very cute. Okay, now we're going to do grownup books. This is a weird category for me because I read so few of them. But I did actually read a few grownup books this year. Spoiler, all of the adult fiction that I have to recommend has one thing in common. It is fun, distracting, gives you a warm feeling. They're easy to read and delightful. So because I cheated in the last round, you can go first on this one.

Suzanna: [00:48:40] Okay, great. All my pics on are the opposite of Jenn's, they are slightly unsettling and upsetting.

Jennifer: [00:48:45] Oh, nice. Tell me all of yours and then we'll go into the nice ones, how about that.

Suzanna: [00:48:50] Okay, that sounds great. End on a light note. So the first one I think I’m going to declare it as my favorite novel of the year. Leave the World Behind by Rumaan Alam. This book is getting a lot of attention right now. It just came out and it was also just shortlisted for the National Book Award. And it is completely deserving of the hype. It's a fairly short novel, which I appreciate this year especially. And it's sort of, I don't want to give much of the plot away. It's about a family who goes to rent an Airbnb out on Long Island. They live in New York City, they're taking some time away from the city, and something happens and they aren't really sure what is going on in the world. It feels so timely. Of course he wrote it before corona, but it feels like the way you felt on March 15th.

[00:49:40] I know you might not want to go back to that place.

Jennifer: [00:49:41] No!

Suzanna: [00:49:42] But I found it super cathartic and very like satisfying, frankly. So I would highly recommend it.

[00:49:49] And then my next one is definitely. Okay, that was definitely the most intense one of my three. The next one is Pizza Girl by Jean Kyoung Frazier. This is one I think also, that is definitely a YA crossover for your older teens. But it's about a high schooler who is a pizza delivery girl and she's also pregnant. And she becomes completely obsessed with this one woman who keeps ordering pizza from her. And they sort of develop this very interesting relationship. It also has the best cover of any book ever. So it has that going for it as well. Look it up, you'll see what I mean. And it's a little bit sad. It's a little bit melancholy. But she's a great writer. I'm super excited to find out what she's going to do next.

[00:50:38] And then my last one is The Disaster Tourist by Yun Ko-Eun, translated by Lizzie Buehler. And this book is also super timely. I couldn't believe it. It's translated from the Korean and it's about a woman who works for a travel agency and this travel agency, they specialize in types of tours, they send people on tours to places that have experienced terrible disasters. Whether it's a landslide or a terrible flood, they send people to essentially gawk at the aftermath of these things. It’s really quite terrible idea. But in this book, this woman has been sent on one of her own tours. Just, she thinks she's been sent on it to check on how it's doing, like make sure it's up to snuff for the customers. But when she arrives there, things go very sideways very quickly. It is such a great takedown of our modern society. Super genius. Also quite funny. I loved it.

Jennifer: [00:51:52] Awesome. So your books are timely. My books are timeless.

Suzanna: [00:51:56] Ooh, I like that. So first up, this is what I'm getting my mom for Christmas. Don't tell her. Actually I already told her. So Thursday Murder Club by Richard Osman. For British television fans, Richard Osman is a comedian who's always on. He hosts the show Pointless and he's always on like, Would I Lie to You and other British panel shows. So you will definitely recognize him if you watch a lot of British TV.

[00:52:26] Thursday Murder Club is cozy and seriously charming for anybody who's like a mystery or BBC kind of fan. This is about a group of old folks in a retirement community who have a weekly club where they discuss mysteries. But then a real crime comes knocking at their door and they're the ones that have to solve it. It has already been optioned for film and I can just literally see Judi Dench and Patrick Stewart running around the countryside in sweaters adorably telling jokes and solving crimes. I cannot wait. It’s a delight.

[00:52:55] Next up The House in the Cerulean Sea by TJ Klune. So this is for adorable fantasy fans. It's about a caseworker in the department of magical children, who is tasked with finding out if a group of kids in the strange kind of foster house are going to bring about the end of the world. It's the cutest book about the Antichrist you will ever read. It is a gentle and wonderful modern day fairy tale. And while it is an adult book, it will give you all the feelings of the best children's books. Like whatever vibes you had when you first read Harry Potter, or whatever your favorite was as a kid. That's the kind of feeling you have, but for grownups, which is nice.

Suzanna: [00:53:38] I will second that. I also read this book this year and it is just a delight. Highly recommend it, and I just saw that there's another book. I don't think it's a sequel, but he has a new book coming next year.

Jennifer: [00:53:53] Awesome.

Suzanna: [00:53:53] Yeah. So then, Party of Two by Jasmine Guillory. This is for romance fans. Actually, I'm going to go ahead and blanket recommend all of Jasmine Guillory’s books. They are funny, romantic, they're absolutely candy to read. I chose this one because it's the latest. It just came out, but you can read them in any order. They do not need to be read in order. This one, Party of Two, is about a chance meeting with a stranger that turns into a whirlwind romance. And surprise, the dude is a senator. And all the media frenzy that follows.

[00:54:26] If you want something more Christmassy, her book, Royal Holiday just came out in paperback. It involves an American mom who visits the UK to spend the holidays with her daughter in a castle and a romance with an envoy to the Queen ensues.

[00:54:39] Her books are just such escapist, wonderful books and they're in paperback, so you can't go wrong. Get them all.

[00:54:49] Now, I don't have a nonfiction pick because I'll be real. I have not been in the bookstore for so long. And I can only recommend things because I see them in the store and it reminds me. So I don't have a pick for this. But do you have a nonfiction or gifty kind of book?

Suzanna: [00:55:03] I do and it fits both categories. It is Shit, Actually by Lindy West.

Jennifer: [00:55:09] Ooh, language.

Suzanna: [00:55:11] Sorry. So you all probably know Lindy West as the creator of what's the show, Shrill.

Jennifer: [00:55:20] Shrill.

Suzanna: [00:55:20] Jeez, sorry it fell out of my brain. Shrill, one of my favorite pieces of television. But she got her start sort of writing movie reviews for a local journal publication. And this is a collection of her work. It's both old stuff she wrote and a bunch of new stuff as well. And each essay is a review of a movie. And they're all movies you've seen, for the most part. I mean, it's all like big tentpoles of American cinema. Jurassic Park, Back to the Future, The Rock, which I had never seen. Actually, after I read this book, I went out and rented The Rock and it was as bananas as she made it sound.

[00:56:03] But Lindy is one of the funniest writers, the title comes from, of course, Love, Actually. And her review of Love, Actually went viral maybe a couple years ago, where she sort of rewatched Love, Actually and realized that it's actually the worst possible film. It's really terrible. And she just totally deconstructs these movies, and in just the most entertaining way possible. I think this is a book you should you all should read, but a book that you could give to anybody who enjoys pop culture or movies, which is like most people, so I think it's going to be a huge hit for the holiday season.

Jennifer: [00:56:39] Great gift idea. Now, for everyone's favorite part of the program. What are you obsessed with right now? It does not have to be bookish, but it can be. Mine is a show. I'll go first so that you can think.

Suzanna: [00:56:52] All right.

Jennifer: [00:56:53] I am obsessed with a show, Staged on Hulu. It's about two actors David Tennant and Michael Sheen. They're playing themselves. You might remember David and Michael from Good Omens.

[00:57:08] In this, the premise is that David and Michael were in the midst of starting to rehears a play when quarantine started. So rehearsals in person are out, but they're determined to continue rehearsing over Zoom. So they're gonna be ready as soon as the theaters come back, like everybody else is just gonna be messing around, they're not gonna have anything prepared. And they're gonna be able to get the best theater and like have a show running in no time. Great idea.

[00:57:36] A variety of complications obviously ensue, including an unforgettable guest bout by Samuel L. Jackson. It sincerely laugh out loud funny, but it's also tragicomedy about loneliness and figuring out a new normal, because it's filmed literally on Zoom. So it's very poignant, too, but it's also just very funny. It's a must watch for fans of David Tennant and Michael Sheen, obviously, but also anyone who likes theater, and theater-ish shows like Slings and Arrows. I really want to binge them all but there's only six episodes. So I'm parceling them out very slowly. So it won’t be over. Staged on Hulu is what I'm obsessed with.

[00:58:16] Suzanna, what are you obsessed with?

Suzanna: [00:58:17] That sounds amazing. I want to watch that.

Jennifer: [00:58:19] You're gonna love it.

Suzanna: [00:58:20] Right away. Right away.

Jennifer: [00:58:22] Yeah, you need to do that.

Suzanna: [00:58:23] So my current obsession took me a while to come around to it. It’s the show What We Do in the Shadows. And I have had multiple friends, including you, tell me that I should watch the show. And I had watched like the first one and I just didn't like it. I didn't get it. I didn't like it. I said to myself, no, I do not want to continue watching this. And my husband was like, but could we just watch like one more. And finally I was like, oh, okay, I'll do it. And now I'm completely obsessed. Like, we're gonna dress up as those characters for Halloween. Our friends are getting married on Halloween, and it's a costume wedding. So we're going to dress… a small, obviously, socially distanced wedding. And we are going to go as vampires.

[00:59:10] So if you don't know the show, it's based off of a film from a few years ago of the same title, which we actually just rented this week, I think, and watched it. And it's also fantastic. But it's a mockumentary about vampires. And in the TV show they're living on Staten Island, and they've sort of been tasked with conquering Staten Island for vampires and it really has not gone super duper well. It's so funny. It also has one of my very favorite people in it, Beanie Feldstein. She is in a few of the episodes. And it's like the perfect thing to watch in October. So get on it. It's on Hulu.

Jennifer: [00:59:47] Yes, I completely concur. I love it. And it's funny because I'm always sort of like. No. No, no, no. But then I watch it. I'm like yes, I love this show. So much.

Suzanna: [01:00:00] So much.

Jennifer: [01:00:01] I understand why people are reluctant. Like I get it. It's weird, whatever. But like, it's a total delight, and especially when you get to know the characters and get to know the running jokes. It is fantastic.

Suzanna: [01:00:13] Yeah, the actors on it are exceptionally good.

Jennifer: [01:00:17] Yes,

[01:00:17] Suzanna, thank you so much for taking the time to chat. Thank you for all your book recommendations.

Suzanna: [01:00:21] Thank you for having me. This was so much fun.

Jennifer: [01:00:26] Of course, I'll see you on the internet or maybe at the bookstore.

Suzanna: [01:00:28] Yes.

Jennifer: [01:00:30] Thanks so much for listening. And thanks to Suzanna for visiting with me today and sharing all of her great book recommendations. Reminder that all these books will be linked to in the show notes. So if you miss something, check my website. It's JenniferLaughran.com/Literaticast.

[01:00:46] Also, we have a Patreon under the name Literaticat on Patreon. If you like the show, consider donating a buck. These donations help me keep the show coming and it's much appreciated. The link for that is also on my website. Thanks again for being part of the podcast family and I'll see you next time.

[01:01:02] Literaticast theme music plays.