

Holly: Hi, you are listening to the Indie Bookshelf Podcast with me, Holly.

Aimée: And me, Aimée.

Holly: As we champion the indie book industry from independent authors and publishers to independent bookshops.

Aimée: We have a range of literary discussions and book recommendations to indulge your love for all things bookish. In today's episode, we discuss a brand new five star historical fiction book published by Indie publishers Duckworth.

Holly: Yes, we'll be celebrating the book *Hester*, written by Laurie Lico Albanese. So make yourselves comfortable and let's dive right in.

Aimée: Cool. Could you introduce the book?

Holly: I will be absolutely delighted to. I'm super excited, um, to let you know about *Hester* I'm gonna pick up now. So this is an amazing historical fiction book, uh, written by the author Laurie Lico Albanese. She's written three other books, um, to date. And this is her newest book. It's an absolute stunner. And I'm just gonna have a moment where I'm going to appreciate the book cover because it is so beautiful. If you haven't, uh, seen it, it has this gorgeous, if I, if I describe it for you, this gorgeous black background with these sort of roses and climbing plants all over it and then a beautiful sort of white title of *Hester* across the middle. It is just a thing of beauty. Aimée, could you potentially sort of summarize for our listeners who may not have read this book, what *Hester* is all about?

Aimée: Potentially I can open it because then I have a little frame of reference. Well, if you haven't read it, stop listening and go and read it now, because it is fantastic. It's inspired by the *Scarlet Letter* and is a, a feminist retelling following a young Isabel, a seamstress who travels from Scotland to America, Salem, and her no good husband leaves her Penn. The story follows her through falling in love whilst also trying to achieve her dreams of being a seamstress, making dresses. She's got an amazing gift for embroidery as well as a, well it's described as a gift throughout of synesthesia. I'm not sure if they use the actual term. It would make sense if they didn't, but anyway, , it's delightful. Really, really. Yeah, it's just an amazing insight into America in the 18 hundreds and especially sort of a woman's perspective of what living through that era was.

Holly: I'm just actually gonna pick up on that time synesthesia. Because some of our readers may know what this term means and be familiar with it. Some others may not. So I'll just sort of give a bit of a, a brief description of what that is right now. I'm gonna be using the note to the reader that Laurie Lico Albanese, the author of this book uses at the beginning of her book to kind of talk about it. So I'll be basing my description of that, but obviously paraphrasing it and, and adapting it for, for the podcast. So, synesthesia, if you haven't come across it before, is a phenomenon, which is all about the senses. Um, it affects about 10% of the world's population. So it's a, a pretty substantial minority there, um, who may have some degree of synesthesia. So someone with synesthesia often experiences multiple sensory responses when only one sense has been stimulated. So, whereas somebody normally might you know, see words and just see, you know the words, somebody with synesthesia might then hear the words as music, or might see the words as colors or have another sense that is then brought into that experience. So as one kind of, you know, popular example, the painter Kandinsky saw colors when he listened to music as one example of that. Now obviously today, synesthesia is a, is a well known thing. It's, it's something that, you know, medical professionals and a lot of the public may know about, but actually, obviously in the past this was not

really a known phenomenon. So when Laurie Lico Albanese writes this historical fiction book, she's, she's basing it in a time and a place when people will have experienced synesthesia but won't have had that label to describe it. And so, for them, these experiences are, are mystifying. They're inexplicable, they're potentially related to the supernatural realm, witchcraft, or a sort of godly gift. And, and they interpret it in that sense sort of throughout the book. And the main form of synesthesia that's really experienced in this book, Hester, is called grammar-color synesthesia. So that's when letters are associated with color. So the main character, when she sees the letter A, she sees it as the color scarlet, and she's baffled by the idea that people can see the letter A, but in black. But this is obviously something that brings her a huge amount of grief as well as the richness that it brings to her life as well, just simply because she, at that time didn't really understand it. So that's your kind of introduction to synesthesia and one of the, the main themes of the book, I.

Aimée: Fabulously handled Holly.

Holly: I went into tittle teacher mode then, didn't I?

Aimée: You did do an education. Look at that. We thought, um, as a good, a good basis for beginning this discussion was not to give our own thoughts, but to start with the thoughts of other people because they're there and we can just read them.

Holly: So this first quote is from Jillian Flynn, who is an author and she writes: "Like the greatest historical fiction, it's a story about America itself and the fury, righteousness and mercy in which it was formed."

Aimée: "This page turning and poignant novel, beautifully imagines the untold life story of the woman who went down in literary history wearing a Scarlet letter." Alice Elliot.

Holly: Brilliant. And the last quote we have is from Fiona Davis, who is the New York Times bestselling author of the Magnolia Palace and the Lions of Fifth Avenue. And she calls, uh, Hester a masterpiece no less. Um, so her quote is "a masterpiece that should be required reading along with Hawk's, classic tale of adultery, enthralling, ambitious, and a total knockout."

Holly: So if you don't believe our recommendation, You have, you know, five star recommendations all over. We, we cannot rate this book highly enough. But now that we've given you that, that overall little look, we're gonna delve in. You still need more, slightly more.

Aimée: Well exactly. You always need more with a, with a book recommendation.

Holly: Don't you need to get to the juicy bit.

Aimée: Yeah. You know, you're around.

Holly: Exactly. So, uh, without further ado, I think let's start with our favorite aspects of this book. So, um, Amy, I'm, I'm intrigued to hear what, what were your favorite aspects of this book?

Aimée: Oh, so many. I was from page one, I think partly cuz like, like I'm a crafter myself. So reading a book that's so immediately immersed with immersed in craft. I mean, I have yarn right here... So just reading a book that, that full of craft was, was awesome. Through its core was, was brilliant, but on a more literary level, um, it's, it's the attention to detail. It's the fact that that scattered throughout just so the kind of this that shows that so much effort was put into it, if that makes sense.

Holly: Mm-hmm. Yep.

Aimée: Um, there are details of how that craft would've been done at the time and how. Just how life would've happened for Isabelle as she's going about her time. Um, the details in, in the clothing, in what people were eating in social structures, just all of these, and the language, this attention, fine, attention to detail is beautifully well researched. For me, that's the, the peak of this book.

Holly: Mm. I think that's always the, the mark of a, a masterpiece of historical fiction really isn't. It is. Is how well it really immerses you in that world and transports you there. It's almost, it's a bit like fantasy, but in, in the past rather than in the alternative reality in the, actually when it's so well done, you just feel like you're living in that world and breathing in it, and, and you can picture what it's like to, to be there and live there and, and standing it.

Aimée: 316 pages in the hard bag to have that level of, of world building is what it is. Mm. Even though it's, it's the real world, it's the past and it's, it's an imagined version of past to have that level of world, world building that makes it so rich, but so succinct and concise, uh, that it, it adds color to the story rather than, than. Filling you in, filling you in on the context before starting the story. Um, it's just expertly crafted. What about you? What was your favorite bit?

Holly: Um, I think I'm gonna draw out two things actually. And one of them I think relates a bit to yours and that was, this felt like a really rich book and I'm thinking particularly there, sort of as an author, one of the pieces of advice you get given is show don't tell. So I can't just tell you I'm walking from A to B. I need to somehow show you how I'm walking from A to B so that you as the reader and know what it's like to walk and imagine yourself walking with the character in the book. And I think what Hester does is it brings those senses, it brings that, that showing rather than telling. An amazing way so that you, you really do feel the colors and the sounds and the, and the sights and the smells, and somehow it, it's very tangible. It's very, it's very sensory. It's an experience to read the book in a very rich way and in a way that for me, is actually sets this book, I think, apart from a lot of others that I've read, which, you know, are brilliantly well crafted and fantastic in many other ways. This somehow was a, it was a sensory experience reading it, and that I think really stood out as something that was like, wow, this is, this is something special and unique about this book. Yeah. But I think the other thing I'm just gonna highlight, and I don't worry no spoilers, but I really love the ending. I think endings are incredibly hard to write a satisfying ending, funnily enough, and I was quite worried about the direction this book was going, that I, I was sort of hoping it would have a good ending, but I couldn't see how she was gonna resolve all these different strands in a way that was going to feel satisfying to me as the reader who's just followed, you know, Isabel through this, you know, epic saga of her life. And I really wanted it to have that conclusion that was going to feel. Good at the end. And if I'm honest, I didn't have enough faith in Laurie Lico Albanese until I got to the end and it was just exactly what I would've wanted for the main character. And I think that is a real skill as well, that you, that ending was not the conventional end perhaps, but it was still so satisfying. And left me feeling really good at the end of the book, which let's be honest, is, is one of my aims when I read a book of our aims as a publisher.

Aimée: Publisher. Indeed.

Holly: Yeah. You wanna bring your readers joy, right? It's a, a key component of the, of the reading process.

Aimée: So will that what, what for you is, or who for you is your favorite and or most interesting charact.

Holly: I wrote this question and then I, I was immediately then thinking about what I would answer, and I think it's slightly unfair because there's one character who just jumps out straight away. So, I'm

really sorry, Amy, if I've stolen this answer from you and it is the obvious answer. It, it's the main protagonist. It's, it's Isabel and I think where there are lots of other really, you know, deep and interesting characters in the book, but I think what. What makes what stands Isabelle apart is really the depth to which you enter into her, into her life in this book, and she's a very complex character. Navigating her experience of synesthesia and how that affects how she moves through the world and how she experiences it, and how other people then may judge her or elevate her or pay her because of this gift that she has. And I think. Yes, this is a feminist story and, and it has, you know, deep gender and also racial themes woven throughout it. But I think it's also so amazing to have a book which actually deals with a sensory phenomenon that actually, that is as much a part of Isabelle's personality in her quest to find, um, a good life for herself as her gender is as. Um, and so I think that gives it a really, an extra dimension, I guess, on top of the gender sort of theme that is also very skillfully done throughout the book. But yeah. What about you, Aimée:? What's, who was your most your favorite or most interesting character?

Aimée: You didn't actually steal my answer.

Holly: Oh, really? Oh, No way!

Aimée: I do, I do wanna dwell on a moment longer on Isabel who I think, and this might be the editor... is a beautifully well-handled main character, and especially, I think a well handed, naive main character. She's, she's not naive in, in the traditional sense of naivety. She, she's strong-willed and she knows what she wants and where she's going or where she sees herself going. So it's not, it's not one-sided naivety, but there's certainly a naivety. in how she, what she expects of relationships. Um, and it's, it's, it's that that level of naivety that, that runs her into trouble throughout the story. This, this trusting nature that she has with some people. And I think writing a, a naive character is an incredibly difficult skill to have. Without having the reader reading the book and screaming at this main character that they're doing the obviously wrong thing, because in actual fact, at every point we are empathizing and sympathizing with her decisions and the position that she's been put in. So yes, the empathy that, that Laurie creates for, the main character is, is stunning. But my, uh, favorite character, or at least the most interesting character for is Widow Higgins.

Holly: Ooh, interesting. Interesting.

Aimée: I mean, I guess I just, I, I like the kooky, reclusive type. Maybe that's what it is. But actually I think, so there are lots of themes in the, in this book, and again, for a book of this length and a historical fiction at that of this length to deal with so many themes and still be concise about all of them. But especially Widow Higgins, who manages to embody quite a lot of those themes. So in her character, she embodies this fear of the supernatural, and she embodies the superstition and the, um, sexist attitudes of the people around her and the themes of deceit and secrecy. Uh, she, carries all that in her and she walks around like a, a mirror of the whole book it seems, and I think distilling an entire set of themes into one character. So artistically I, it makes her such an interesting character cuz uh, she seems at first glance being a bit of an aside and a bit of like a, she pops up every so often to add some, add some color to the book. But when you look closely at her, what, what she's there for is, is to convey these themes and to, to show how in lots of the characters, each of them are relevant.

That's my answer.

Holly: Ah, no, that's, that's a really, that's a really great answer. Um, and yeah, she's, she's a fantastic character. Um, And yeah, I guess quite minor in terms of the plot, but major in terms of the themes that she represents and the, I guess almost the foil as well to Isabel. Mm-hmm. Um, and, and to the reader. I do wanna just shout out another name just because I, I have to mention this other character, and that's the character of Mercy who is this incredibly strong black woman who is just this, I mean, in some ways she's the non naive version of Isabel, um, in that she's navigating, okay, she's navigating race rather than synesthesia, but she is, she's the, the strong-willed woman who also knows about the world and who has found a groundedness and a rootedness in the world, despite all the obstacles that has been put in her way. And so I suppose in some ways she can come across as maybe slightly less complex, but she's just this fantastic. If I say like, you know, when you almost meet a character you feel safe with, like, you know, when they're in a scene, like it's gonna be okay, she has that. That kind of presence in the book. Um, and I just wanted to, to highlight, you know, how, again, how important it is to have these, you know, strong characters who aren't from a white background, but, you know, she's, um, and Mercy has a, a really interesting sort of connection with the, the slave trade and how she's now trying to navigate helping other people out of that. And navigating how other people perceive her because of, um, her skin color. And yeah, I just wanted to give that, give Mercy a highlight because, um, she's a fantastic character and yeah, just has this warmth, I guess, this warmth and this vitality to her. And, uh, and just add, add to the strength. The same with, um, with Isabelle's naivety.

Aimée: It's not, it's not a, a strength that lacks depth. It's not a dimensional strength. Throughout the novel, we see her being vulnerable as well. Vulnerable in her strengths and vulnerable without, without, you know, the, the co her usual confidence. So again, like at no point does this, this woman, Laurie, no, no point does she rely on two-dimensional stereotypes, archetypes of, of women womanhood and what it is to be a woman. Every woman has behaves differently and has different traits in the, the different circumstances that they, they've moved through, which I really love. It's, it's so thoughtful in how it depicts life and femininity.

Holly: Yeah. And interesting that, you know, there, we've just picked out three amazing female characters in this book each of whom actually has really their own dimension, their own way of navigating being a woman in 1800s Salem in America, and yet have these relationships with one another. Which I think brings us quite nicely on actually to talk about the themes of the book. I think we've talked about femininity and feminism quite a bit, but maybe we wanna just delve into a few of the other themes we find in Hester. I dunno whether you wanna kick us off, Amy.

Aimée: You do have, you've written, you've written quite a good list, and as I said before, there are so many themes in this book, and each are handled with such care and attention. It does like it is rich. It makes you feel like you are reading a 600 page book, but then all of a sudden you're at the end. So one of the, one of the really strong themes, I think throughout is, is the, is the trauma. And you see that, so the way the story is told is we are, we are mostly with Isabelle and we're following her through her childhood to her young woman. Because it's, it's important to remember at no point in this book is she a fully fledged adult, even by, by today's standard. And yet she faces all of this, all of these hard decisions and awful circumstance that we see her go through. But alongside that is this story of her ancestry and we see. Her ancestors, the women that backen her through her family and their trials with witch trials, witch hunts, and how that's influenced not only them, but generations. And you see the story of like this, this generational trauma and how that manifests in Isabelle's life and how that informs every decision she makes. And it informed her upbringing and her mum and her mum's upbringing. and it's so subtly done that if you're not paying attention to it, you, you might just miss it. But when you are, you, you realize how yes, these trials were hundreds of years ago, but,

but they're still, they're still, the trauma of that is still carrying on down through these families. I think that was just an exceptional theme and, and I think quite a rare one as well to.

Holly: I love, I love how the book, not only how it deals with sort of Isabel's navigating of that generational trauma and the fact that she's descended from women who've been seen as witches because of the synesthesia, but also how being in Salem and how the, the roots and you know, you've got people in Salem living in Isabel's time in the 1800s, some of whom were the ones who were prosecuting the witches and some of whom were the victims or the families of the victims. And they're all still living together and they don't really talk about the trauma. And yet that, that trauma is really, is really present in Salem at this time. And especially that comes out through the character of Nathaniel, Nathaniel Hathor who Isabella ends up having a relationship with, and he is tormented by the fact that his ancestors used to, you know, try and kill the witches or the, the perceived witches, obviously. And he's sort of trying to navigate that trauma and how that affects his mental health really. Not that he would describe it in that way. And his sense of what he wants to achieve with his life or feels like he can't achieve with his life. And I think it's, it's a, it's a really timely, I think, theme to explore in our world as well. You know, whether it be through our collective experience of covid, or whether it be through our collective experience of racial injustice, in the wake of, you know, George Floyd's death and Black Lives Matter and the fact that, you know, some of us have been the, the descendants of the colonizers, some of us are the descendants of the colonized and, and dealing with that trauma that that brings and that, that, that lasting legacy, I think. This is a book that explores that, but through the theme of witchcraft in the past, and I think we have a lot to learn about it as a society and can, and can access that through works of fiction like this, which is just awesome. I think I'm just gonna pick up one more theme, and that is the theme of what does it mean to have a loving relationship. I think this is a question that, um, Isabelle struggles with throughout the book is what, what is love? And I guess that that ties in with this naivety you're talking about that she often doesn't really recognize what a loving behavior might be. But I thought that was a really interesting question. And again, quite a timely one, maybe one that we ourselves are grappling with. Something that's very relatable is like what? Well, what is, what is love? What does that look like? What does it mean in the context in this case of a romantic relationship or in terms of platonic friendships? And I think it's really intriguing to see that that theme brought out so explicitly in that, in this book and in a really deep way, you know, it's not dealing with love on, if I call it quite a romcom, maybe quite a happy-go-lucky level. It's really delving deep into that question asking, well, what does it mean in the nitty gritty of life that isn't always easy?

Aimée: And again, I think that that theme of love ties into the theme of trauma. We see snippets of her relationship with her mother, and we, we know that there's love there but we don't know whether that's necessarily healthy, especially in the treatment of, of Isabelle's, uh, stern seizure and her colors as she calls them. And then we, we travel most of the book, assuming that her and her father have a very good relationship. And then there's a, a line in the book that refers. Her being sent to the white or white embroidery house, um, cast off there because of her poor circumstances and her father not shielding her from that whereas a previous mention of that hadn't been quite so scathing and it starts to call into question her relate her loving relationship between her parents and, and all of the things that have been portrayed before. And perhaps that's what's feeding into her, um, unhealthy dependence on these, these men, Edward and Nathaniel. Yeah, as, as we, as we see them. And again, it just brings more, it brings more legitimacy and more empathy to the naivety that she. in the choices that she makes with how and who she loves. There are so many themes for each of them, either mirror or play or tie into one another in such a, a delicate and well, it's like a tapestry.

Holly: Mm-hmm. Yes. What a beautiful metaphor to, to end that section on. That was exquisitely done? That was not scripted. I'm just going to shout that out. That was, that was pure Aimée genius. I'm intrigued to, to hear was there anything that you weren't such a fan of or that you thought could have been improved at all?

Aimée: I'm not very good at reading for leisure and looking for, for points to improve. I like to switch off that part of my brain when I'm, when I'm reading for having a nice time. But certainly I can, I can speak to what I wasn't a fan of and that doesn't mean that it's not good or even right, because what I wasn't a fan of was, was the romance. And that's definitely a me thing. I'm not a big reader of the genre. Many of the books I read outside, you know, what I have to read. I don't even have a romance subplot. So seeing, seeing this main character get handed off from love interest to love interest at times, got a bit tiring. And what I want is to like see an independent woman flourish, um, because that's less of a cliché. But, but then obviously when I go back and reflect, I realize I'm just being cynical and miserable because this romance is so key and so integral to all of the other themes that I love. Um, and maybe I should be less miserable. The, the thing that I wasn't a fan of in this book is that I'm a miserable person,

Holly: You're not a miserable person. But I, I do think the romance that sort of ends up blossoming near the end of the book, I think was one of the least, um, crafted maybe elements of this book. This is a book as we've sort of mentioned you, that has such attention to detail and really goes into depth in so many areas. I, I, I kind of, I do agree that like the way. It builds that romance, especially towards the end of the book, I don't think was maybe the most developed part of that detail that you find in other areas. Although I'm a lover of romance, I would happily read romcoms all day long. So I, I can't say that I didn't enjoy it. I've got space. I've got space and time for romcoms. To be honest, I'm not sure that there was anything. I really struggled with this. I think the, the only thing I would say is that maybe this is maybe this is a book that makes you think, and it's a book that has very deep themes and not a lot of lightheartedness running through it. And that is not something that I see as bad about this book. It's, it's just the type of book it is. And so I think it would just more be a caution to anybody who likes your lighthearted vibe that maybe this isn't the, the book that's, you know, a natural fit for you. Maybe it's something that you wanna read to experience, maybe something a little different. It's certainly not dark or gory, and I'm not trying to portray it as that in any sense. But I do think it, it's, it's a deep book and it's not a, if I say fun and lightheartedness aren't the central, that's not what the office is trying to do with this book. She's trying, I think, my experience was that she was trying to immerse us in that world and help us explore some of those themes in this context. And that necessitates that. Actually, it's quite a, it's a book that engages your, if I say your body and soul, it's not a kind of light entertainment read. And now that doesn't mean I'm not a fan of it. It's just, I guess, a something that it, it may or may not be what you wanna. If you want to cuddle up for a cozy afternoon on a Sunday, um, and just not think for two hours, it, it's, it's, it's a different kind of book to that. So I guess I just sort of put that out there. Is that fair?

Aimée: That's, that's your experience. The book on hand. I found it incredibly joyful to read. There was a, there was a parallel in Nathaniel and, um, Isabel, there's a parallel of. Only seeing the darkness in the world and everything having to be tied to darkness and her, but where does the joy of love come into that? Why isn't love just joy? So I think that's, that's like where your what, what, what's speeding into it for you is that. It isn't pure joy all the way through. There's certainly a discussion of what's joyful and when should it not be, and should we be escaping or should we be facing reality and is reality bleak? So, yeah, no, I can see where you're coming from in there. It's a book that engages your brain, . That's the joy that it brings, is how I would summarize it.

Holly: I think I just wanna give a couple of shoutouts or we wanna give a couple of shoutouts. Sorry, I'm, I'm hogging the I there. We wanna give a couple of shoutout

Aimée: You wrote the script.

Holly: First of all, we just wanna celebrate Laurie Lico Albanese, the author of this book, I hope, as you've probably heard by now, we worried a fan of her work in this book. Just to say a little bit about her, if you're interested. So she's written three historical fiction novels and she's also published a memoir. And each of her books, this is incredible, has been chosen for the IndieBound list by independent booksellers, which is just amazing. She lives in New Jersey, and if you want to check her out her website, that is www.laurieleakeralbanese.com. If you're not sure you'll how to spell that. Don't worry. The link will be in the show notes, so that will be accessible to you there.

Aimée: We also want to give a shout out to Doug Worth. They are one of the oldest independent publishing houses in the UK, so a big, big publishing house to look up to for us. They're celebrating 125 years since they were founded, so huge history. They're a small team under managing director Pete Duncan, and they specialize in non-fiction and historical and literary fiction books. Everything that they put out is just delightful. So definitely look them up at [www. Duckworth books co uk](http://www.duckworthbooks.co.uk), which will also be in the show notes.

Holly: Wonderful. So that wraps up our book recommendation of Hester by Laurie Lico Albanese We hope you've enjoyed our literary discussion and that you, if you're interested in historical fiction, that you might give Hester a chance and go and get it. We can a hundred percent recommend it. So just to wrap up, I think we'll just give you a little update on Asteria Press what we're doing. So we're currently in the middle of, ah, this has been a saga trying to get our website. It is all ready to go apart from technical issue, which has resulted in a slight delay in it being actually put out on the public domain. But we are super excited to be launching our website, hopefully coming out this Friday, potentially next week, which is probably when you'll actually be listening to this podcast anyway, so hopefully you can now go and see our website. Hooray, [www dot asteria press dot](http://www.asteriapress.com). So that has been a big task. Yeah, go check us out. It's very exciting. Also, for those of you who aren't listening right now, the transcript of this podcast and all of our podcasts are available on the website. So I guess if you are listening, you don't really need that. But if you're not, go check it out. Aimée, do you just wanna give a little update as to the editing?

Aimée: What a horrible thing to have me do.

Holly: Oh, I'm sorry just to remind you of, you know, your work!

Aimée: Yes. The editing is underway. We are just over a month down now. Holly hasn't seen any of it, so I'm sure that she's, besides herself an excitement or anxiety. One of the two.

Holly: The suspense is real...

Aimée: But I'm, I'm having a lovely time. I assure you of that every week, and you can expect you do a very good job of reassuring me. I'm so pleased you can expect a full blog post. Right now I'm deep in the plot waiting around, basically pulling up a path and, I don't know, imagine me like waving wires around. And that's, that's about what I'm doing. Well, I'm more articulate in the blog post, so go and read about it there.

Holly: I have seen the blog post. I can, I can confirm it's a cracking read and you've made my book sound a lot more exciting than I think I would've pitched it. So, uh, thank you for that . If you want a little glimpse into Dragon Outlaw and into Asteria Press and Amy's work with editing, especially

developmental editing, then go give that a read on our website, no less. So that's super exciting and we'll be back in a fortnight with our third episode. Goodness me, we're on episode three already of the indie bookshelf. Our current working title is what makes a book magical.

Aimée: You've found out my...Does that mean you question my title?

Holly: Oh, excellent. I wasn't sure whether it was me or you and we hadn't discussed it. Okay. Well, our, our title for, for two weeks fine, has just been confirmed. You, you know, you're at the cutting edge of this listeners... is what makes a book magical. If you have any thoughts, ping them to us. Um, you can get in contact with us via are our website, I'm just gonna, you know, shout that out again, and we'd love to hear your thoughts and opinions on that. I think that's everything.

Aimée: That is everything. Keep reading,

Holly: Keep reading.