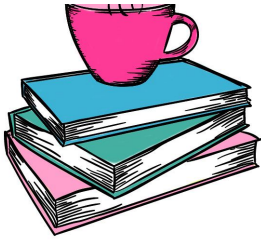


YA Café Podcast
Episode 27: *Seafire*
23 August 2018



Danielle: 00:01 Welcome to the YA Cafe where we share conversations about books for teachers, readers, and caffeine addicts, everywhere. On today's episode we'll be talking about *Seafire* by Natalie C. Parker. Grab a mug of your favorite beverage, friends and let's talk books.

Ad: 00:17 This podcast is made possible by Nouvelle ELA Teaching Resources. Find secondary ELA resources to engage and inspire, like Collaborative Bell Ringers. N-o-u-v-e-l-l-a E-L-A, something new.

Amanda: 00:32 Welcome, y'all! As always, our first segment will be spoiler-free and so you can stick around even if you haven't checked out the new novel yet. I'm Amanda Thrasher

Danielle: 00:38 And I'm Danielle Hall, an 8th and 9th grade English teacher and I blog at Teachnouvelle.com. We are joined today by Emily Skrutskie, author of *The Abyss Surrounds Us* and *Hullmetal Girls*, which we discussed in episode 22. Hi Emily!

Emily: 00:51 Hi! Glad to be here.

Danielle: 00:53 Glad to have you here, and I am so excited to talk to you because you are not just talented with books, you also like art, and film, and doodles, and tell me all about you. No pressure.

Emily: 01:07 I mean, I'm a girl of many talents. *laughter* I, I never actually studied writing formally uh, I was too busy doing other stuff. I studied filmmaking and computer science in college, so I have a very broad skillset. I work as a technical director of a visual effects house as my day job, so when I'm not writing, I am coding.

Amanda: 01:27 That's really interesting. I didn't know all that before, but you can definitely see all those influences in Hullmetal Girls. Like, the knowledge of the AI and just like, how visual things felt.

Danielle: 01:36 I'm totally ready for it to be a movie.

Amanda: 01:39 Also that.

Emily: 01:39 That'd be so cool. Hollywood, if you're listening ...

Amanda: 01:42 *laughter* As everyone knows, producers are just lining up to listen to our podcast, so this could be the moment.

Danielle: 01:47 And you're the one that said that you wanted to read Seafire with us. Is that because you have a secret, or not so secret fascination with pirates?

Emily: 01:55 I do, and with, uh, futuristic pirates especially. I feel like it's an undermined territory in fiction and so I was really excited that there's another futuristic pirate book coming out and I wanted to read it.

Amanda: 02:07 Was The Abyss Surrounds Us, is that space-pirates, or is that sea-pirates?

Emily: 02:10 No it's uh, the seas of the future. The Abyss Surrounds Us tho is very much more explicitly like our future. It's about 140 years in the future, so there's a lot more foundation on which we build like, you know, it's called the Neo-Pacific, but it's still the Pacific and the layout of the world is a lot more clear. So that was something I was really interested to see in Seafire was how it was our world, like it had a lot of influence. The names all come from like, Greek mythology or other things that are very clearly things that came from humankind. It's not like some other planet or some fantasy futuristic seaworld, but it was a little bit less clear like where we were in the world so it was kind of fun to try and piece that together from all the little clues that are scattered here and there.

Amanda: 02:54 Yeah, I agree and we can talk about that more when we get into the book. I hadn't looked at *The Abyss Surrounds Us* because we've been reading a lot of podcast books lately, and now that we have a little bit of a break I am looking forward to digging into it.

Danielle: 03:05 I am here for pirates. So I looked at a doodle on your art blog and it suggested to me that there might be some LGBTQ representation in *The Abyss Surrounds Us*. Is that accurate?

Emily: 03:18 That is, yeah. The central romance is a lesbian relationship.

Danielle: 03:21 Yes!

Amanda: 03:22 Lesbian pirates are the best pirates.

Danielle: 03:24 Yes! One thing I wanted to ask you, Emily, because you started with the, I mean I don't know what order you wrote these books in, but you published the duology first and as you may have noticed listening to our podcast, we are obsessed with the correct number of pages ...

Amanda: 03:50 *laughter*

Danielle: 03:51 ... and *Hullmetal Girls* was a standalone where it could have been much longer. Like, when did you make that choice to be like, "Okay, this is just going to be one book."

Emily: 04:00 I feel like it's kind of a matter of what the story demands, so like with *The Abyss Surrounds Us* I had this very clear idea that I was going to have two books and they were going to reflect each other, and I thought of them as like a descent into hell and then a return to the light. So there were all these pieces that kind of demanded that both books, or demanded that there would be two books and that they would interact in this way. Whereas with *Hullmetal Girls*, when I started playing out the story, it was just the story. It was just one story and it felt like it didn't need to have like a big cliffhanger ending and then a whole nother book. It just needed to be that one book. But again, now I'm working on - not to get any hopes up, maybe fingers crossed, knock on wood - but the next thing I really hope to work on is a trilogy, and it's because I saw the story structure demanded that we have three books that separate in these three ways. So yeah, it's all about what's the best way to tell this story and for *Hullmetal Girls* it was just a standalone. But I feel like I tend to go back and forth between wanting to

write a series and wanting to write a standalone, like I'll, I'll have like a series idea and I'll work on the series and then I'll be like, "Oh, series' are exhausting, I just want to write one book." and then I write one book and I'm like, "Oh, but it's so small and contained, like, I want to be expansive in telling all this huge interconnected things that demand like, the wait time between narratives", and then I'll get exhausted by that and be like that, "Now we're doing a standalone again?"

Danielle: 05:24 Was there a draft of Hullmetal Girls in which it was four perspectives?

Emily: 05:30 No, but there was the draft of Hullmetal Girls in which was one perspective. I actually started with just Aisha's perspective, and was telling the story and she bumped into Key who was in my mind, she was like, this Draco Malfoy-ish like, foil to her, this privileged girl who ...

Danielle: 05:46 I got that.

Emily: 05:46 Yeah, exactly. So she was there to just kind of bounce off Aisha and then I, um, started delving a little bit more into Key's character, realized she had some stuff going on under the surface that was really interesting, and then backtracked and wrote the book with her as a second protagonist.

Danielle: 06:01 That's really cool, and that definitely came across. One of the things that I loved about Key was that she wasn't even fully explained, like, you gave your readers credit in being able to kind of take what you had as enough for the story, but know that there were a million things that you could have said but chose not to in order to kind of focus on the story at hand.

Emily: 06:26 Yeah, definitely. Story to me is like, king. Like if you're not moving the story, if you're not, um, smoothly progressing from scene to scene, that's the ultimate failure for me. So I wanted to explain like, a little bit of where Key is coming from, but uh, it's more interesting when you have the bits and pieces and when you can imagine what fills those gaps.

Danielle: 06:49 Yeah, absolutely. I love subtlety. I love when authors and creators don't overexplain. Amanda makes fun of me because I have this whole, like, extra mythology in my head of stuff that isn't on the page.

Amanda: 07:03 I love it. It's your years of fanfiction that are just ...

Emily: 07:06 Yeah, no, you want this to be accessible for fanfiction too. I want fanfiction.

Danielle: 07:09 Yeah. Okay, so if anybody has written a Hullmetal Girls fanfiction, we want to know where to find it. In Natalie C. Parker's new book, *Seafire*. We are brought into a world where the seas and colonies are under the control of a brutal warlord. The protagonist Caledonia Styx leads her all female crew in raids against his fleet. When her second in command shows mercy to a single enemy sailor whom she claimed saves her life Caledonia is forced to choose between everything she's ever believed about the enemy, and trusting her own crew. Alright, so Emily Skrutskie, our pirate expert. What did you think of this book?

Emily: 07:46 I loved it. I love the action in it especially. I can see the *Mad Max: Fury Road* influence in it. It is like one extended chase sequence ...

Danielle: 07:54 Yeah!

Emily: 07:54 ... just over the span of like, several days. And every time we got into some big fight I was just like, "Yeah!", it was really, uh, exciting. I thought it was very cinematic too.

Danielle: 08:06 Yeah!

Amanda: 08:06 I agree.

Danielle: 08:07 I could definitely see a movie of this, we talked about that before recording.

Amanda: 08:11 So for me the biggest strength of this novel was Caledonia's characterization, and her relationship with her crew. And not just like, the crew as a whole, but like, each of her members of her crew individually. I think that we really had a clear picture of her character and I really understood her motivations in a way that sometimes like, excessively distrustful protagonists do not read true to me. I feel like Caledonia read very true because of like, what we see of her experiences up to the timing of the novel. So for me, I really liked that part of the book. What about you, Danielle? I really liked that. We know that Caledonia has this crew of like, 53 girls, but Natalie C.

Parker did a really smart thing where she chose to develop the command, (so that was like five girls), and she chose to develop a couple of other key characters to really flesh out the world, but she didn't try to, you know, George R. R. Martin it up and try to make us learn all 53 names.

Amanda: 09:12 With double names for most people. *laughter*

Danielle: 09:15 And also like honorifics and titles.

Amanda: 09:17 Yeah.

Emily: 09:18 So who's your favorite character?

Danielle: 09:20 Is it cheating to say Hime? Like, the gay one? I liked her a lot! So Hime is one of the command crew, she is a healer, and I think that she has this extra awesome layer of having been rescued from Aric's fleet. And one of the things that Aric does is he gets his fleet addicted to the drug Silt. I mean it's just terrible, and they really hit like, the withdrawal issues of the Bullet that they capture, and Hime's withdrawal is covered, and I really just liked that depth.

Amanda: 10:00 I really liked the detail of the Silt addiction too, like, that was such a good and real world ...

Danielle: 10:05 Yes!

Amanda: 10:06 ... way of manipulating people to put in there, I really appreciated it. Especially because it really called into question how complicit these Bullets and all these people who are under Aric's control are, because they're also under the forced addiction of this drug, so I liked the complexity that that brought into it.

Emily: 10:24 Yeah, it's an additional way of trapping them in there and then making sure that there is kind of a chance for redemption maybe. Like, they're not necessarily all bad dudes. They're basically enslaved to this drug and enslaved to this warlord.

Danielle: 10:24 How about you, Emily? Who is your favorite character?

Emily: 10:24 Definitely Red-Tooth. I love big, beefy, boisterous jock girls, and she was a great big, beefy, boisterous, jock girl. I really love when, um, characters have some sort of like, costuming traits that makes them really distinct. In Red Tooth's case. It's that she has this clay that she'll put it across her mouth when she's in battle and then she also uses it to dye the ends of her braids. As like, someone who draws fan-art or will draw characters it's something that makes the character really stand out for me.

Danielle: 11:23 Right. And there was also the detail with the character of Lace who wraps her hands in lace, like, for battle and so it's this contrast between like, the sweet femininity of lace, but like, then she's going to kill people.

Amanda: 11:38 Another thing I really liked about Lace, so Lace dies fairly early in the book, like within the first couple of chapters, and in a lot of books often that is just like the thing that shows this is serious business and like, people aren't all going to make it through, but I really loved that her loss continued to be felt throughout the novel. Like that Caledonia felt the responsibility for the mistakes, possibly the mistakes that lead to Lace's death, and felt the loss of her on the crew. I really liked that.

Emily: 12:08 Yeah, I really liked the way it kind of affected the chain of command. That was something that, like, was really well thought out the way that they used to be a well-oiled machine and now there's a gap in the workings where they need to figure out how they're going to fill that role that she used to play on the ship.

Danielle: 12:24 Yeah, absolutely. And with that friends, we'll take our first break. When we come back, we'll share about Things We Like A Latte, then we'll return to our discussion of Seafire and dig a little deeper.

New Speaker: 12:45 *music break*

Ad: 12:45 Hi, Listener! Are you ready for next week? We will be ending our first shelf, (you know, like a season, but for books ...

New Speaker: 12:54 so precious.

New Speaker: 12:55 I know, I'm so precious) with the anthology, *Toil & Trouble, 15 Stories of Women in Witchcraft* edited by Jessica Spotswood and Tess Sharpe. I will be joined by a special guest, Melissa Robles from the bookstagram community. She is @thereaderandthechef. You can pre-order *Toil & Trouble* through our Amazon link and that will support the author, and this podcast. Happy reading!

New Speaker: 13:19 *music break*

Amanda: 13:27 Welcome back, y'all it's time for *Things We Like A Latte*. Danielle, what's your brew of choice this week?

Danielle: 13:32 So this week I have really been enjoying the game, *Forbidden Island*. It is a cooperative game similar to *Pandemic* except that it feels achievable.

Amanda: 13:46 *laughter*

Danielle: 13:46 Like, my issue with *Pandemic* has always been like, you feel like you have so many things cooking and if you let any of the pots boil over your kitchen is going to explode. Whereas *Forbidden Island*, it's still cooperative, you still have to get off the island like, before it floods, right? But like, you can let parts of the island go, that's fine. So I really like *Forbidden Island*, the cooperative game. How about you, Emily?

Emily: 14:13 So recently I've been really into the series of novellas *Murderbot* by Martha Wells. The first book is called *All Systems Red* and it's about a security robot who has hacked its governor and doesn't want its clients to know that, because it's watching TV.

Danielle: 14:32 Nice.

Emily: 14:32 So all it wants to do is be left alone and watch its shows, but someone is trying to kill these clients that it's protecting on this mission exploring this planet, and so to prevent itself from being

discovered it has to go and like, figure out what the mystery is and uh, protect its clients so that they can go back to being left alone and watching its shows.

Danielle: 14:52 I love it. It's so funny, it's so well written and they're novellas so they breeze by. Um, I think the third one comes out this week, so I'm really excited for that.

Amanda: 15:02 That is a robot after my own heart.

Danielle: 15:05 *laughter*

Emily: 15:05 What about you, Amanda?

Amanda: 15:06 So for me this week I have been making another pitiful attempt to learn French. It is low levels of success, but I have really enjoyed sampling all of the different, like, language software online. And I think that my favorite one that I found is Babel. It does a combination of like, the immersion of Duolingo, but it also puts in like some grammar rules actually written out like you're an adult who doesn't have to look at the same picture seven times.

Danielle: 15:31 *laughter*

Amanda: 15:31 And so I really appreciate that. However, it doesn't sing to you like Duolingo does.

Danielle: 15:36 *sings* bum BAAA!

Amanda: 15:36 Yeah, when you accomplish something, so that's kind of a bummer, but I think it's been really effective for me as far as just picking up the basics of French. So if you're curious about a language you should see if it is on Babel, that has been really good for me.

Danielle: 15:48 *sings* bum ba ba BAAA!

Amanda: 15:48 Just like that.

Danielle: 15:51 We're going to take a break and when we come back we'll return to our discussion on Seafire. The rest of the show may contain spoilers, so if you're leaving here keep in touch on Instagram and Twitter @yacafepodcast. We'll be back!

Amanda: 16:23 Welcome back to the YA Cafe. We're continuing our discussion on Seafire by Natalie C. Parker. If you haven't read this yet, we want to warn you again that this segment will contain spoilers

Danielle: 16:33 SPOILERS! And pirates!

Amanda: 16:35 She really loves when she gets to say that, it's a problem.

Danielle: 16:38 Pirates are awesome!

Amanda: 16:39 Okay, so where are we going first?

Danielle: 16:41 Well, let's talk about the pirates, and the ship-y-ness, and the fact that they're on this ship, and how you feel about ships, Amanda?

Amanda: 16:49 Well, I feel generally positive about ships having spent a lot of my life on them. However, I, my biggest complaint with this book was kind of a recurring thread throughout this book that it never really felt like they were on a ship. Like, all of the technical details were right. Things like, the right language ...

Danielle: 17:04 There was a galley

Amanda: 17:05 There was galley.

Danielle: 17:06 It's where the food came from,

Amanda: 17:07 There were a couple blips, but for the most part she had put in the work. But in general like they never really mentioned the sea-state and that is huge. You are always aware of what the sea is, like whether you're going up swell or not, and so not having that really made me feel like we kind of forgot where we were. You didn't feel like the claustrophobia of a ship a lot of times, you weren't like very aware of the sea or the weather, and so it's kind of a bummer. Like, they talked about the wind some but not talking about the sea state really, like, betrayed it as being like, "Oh I forgot we were on a ship."

Danielle: 17:39 But they also talked about their propulsion and wanting to keep it down so that people couldn't follow their, their chop.

Amanda: 17:46 All that is true. And that's why I said like, she put in a lot of details, like, she clearly put in the work. But like, the feeling of it was missing.

Danielle: 17:52 Okay, so I kind of have two things here. One, if you've never spent time on a boat, this probably won't bother you.

Amanda: 17:59 Fair.

Danielle: 17:59 And two, Amanda, you mentioned before we started recording that you liked the claustrophobic feel of Hullmetal Girls. So maybe Emily can chime in on that?

Emily: 18:13 Well, I guess that's a difficult effect to create. Now I'm thinking about like "Wait, how did I do that? Did I do that?" *laughter* I don't know if I did that. I think one of the things that felt like it was a little bit missing for me in Seafire was, um, the sense that they were traveling. Not necessarily like, just being on a ship, but like, being aware of where you were going, how far you had to go. Because it felt like they were just kind of, it was also because, um, there wasn't really a grounding in where they were and a direction that they were traveling in, I didn't feel the location as acutely. Um, and because

I knew that this was like futuristic earth, but I didn't know were on futuristic earth. It was kind of harder for me to track and it didn't feel like, they were going to Cloudbreak, where is Cloudbreak?

Danielle: 18:59 So we are recording this episode early, um, and we haven't seen a final copy. The copy that we got did not have a map. Maybe the final copy will have a map?

Emily: 19:17 Maybe.

Danielle: 19:38 So the ship-y-ness of this book was a big question mark, and SPEAKING OF SHIP-Y-NESS ...

Amanda: 19:44 Wow. Oh, are we going gay?

Danielle: 19:46 Yeah!

Amanda: 19:47 Okay, let's go gay.

Danielle: 19:48 All right. So, I do have things for the spoiler-section that I want to talk about that are really positive, I just couldn't resist the "Speaking of ship-y-ness" thing for the redirect.

Amanda: 19:56 I see what you did there.

Danielle: 19:59 Y'all, I thought there would be gay pirates. Like not all of them but like, you know,

Amanda: 20:04 At least like 40 percent of them.

Danielle: 20:07 *laughter* I thought that there would be a more prominent same-sex relationship. Natalie C. Parker has a wife, is *chants* "One of us, one of us!" and like, all we get is this like, sidelined, cute, I mean it's cute, but it's like the family in the cabin in Frozen, and then they're offscreen and it's done.

Amanda: 20:32 Yeah, I agree. I feel like I can see it in previous editions of this book. And then it got edited away in favor of this like, media push. Which was depressing.

Emily: 20:43 Yeah. From an author's perspective I definitely understand, because my first series had a lesbian relationship at the core. And Hullmetal Girls is just a 'enemies to friends', there's no like central romance, and I know a lot of readers came into the hall girls like, "Oh, it's about girls, they're going to fall in love." Sorry. No, not in this one. So like, *sigh* there's a part of me that like, worries that that's why Hullmetal Girls got picked up by a big five was because it wasn't gay, and then uh, if I write something gay again that it's going to be harder to sell. Uh, so it is definitely something that is on the author's mind when we're pitching these stories.

Danielle: 21:23 Yeah. So I recognize that Natalie may have wanted a more prominent gay relationship and that's fabulous. So maybe this is just our message to the publishers listening that we want more gay characters, more LGBTQ+ characters.

Emily: 21:44 Is this a series? This is a series, right?

Danielle: 21:47 Yes.

Emily: 21:47 Okay. Maybe in book two? Because that's, sometimes you have to Trojan Horse it. I know a lot of authors who, who Trojan Horse-d their diverse content into later books

Amanda: 21:57 Yeah

Emily: 21:58 because the first one is the foot in the door and then they can go hog wild in the sequels.

Danielle: 22:03 Yeah. That definitely occurred to me too, like maybe later the romances become more prominent.

Amanda: 22:10 I hope so.

Danielle: 22:11 Alright, so let's talk about spoilers that we loved.

Amanda: 22:15 So I mentioned a little bit at the beginning how I really loved the character of Caledonia, and one of the reasons is because her very first scene is this massive betrayal as soon as she lets herself feel any empathy for the enemy. And so I loved that like, a lot of the time when you have a character who is just needlessly antagonistic towards people who are exhibiting them kindness or like, could be on their side and that kind of thing, you are thinking like "You don't really have a good enough reason not to trust this person at this point.", and I definitely never felt that way with Caledonia because like her, like I kept waiting for Orin to betray them.

Danielle: 22:53 Yeah.

Amanda: 22:54 Because we'd already had this like, massive Bullet betrayal, and I thought that was really, really well done. And I always believed the character of Caledonia and I never thought that she was being ridiculous.

Danielle: 23:06 Yeah. One hundred percent. I thought that like, there was the tension the whole time that Orin could betray them. I never trusted him. Did you trust him, Emily?

Emily: 23:16 I actually trusted him from the start. I was surprised that you guys were, were so ...

Amanda: 23:22 Interesting.

Emily: 23:22 ... because I felt like it would have been to one-note if he did exactly the same thing that the other guy did, so he had to provide some contrast to the other guy, so I was like, "Oh yeah, no, he's chill."

Danielle: 23:32 I was anxious the whole time.

Amanda: 23:34 I think also part of it was maybe because we just read Children of Blood and Bone which had a lot of like, back and forth betrayal.

Emily: 23:40 Right. Especially like, the guy in that book is like, you know, he's, he's doing so and then he Zuko's super hard.

Danielle: 23:47 YES!

Amanda: 23:47 Such a hard Zuko.

Danielle: 23:48 We feel so seen. We said that in that episode, like ...

Emily: 23:52 He is so Zuko, he is.

Danielle: 23:55 Yeah. If you have no idea what we're talking about, you need to go watch Avatar: The Last Airbender, the Nickelodeon version, not the movie. And uh, let us know what you think of it.

Emily: 24:04 What movie?

Amanda: 24:04 *laughter* Oh, and then read Children of Blood and Bone. So you have a lot of homework.

Danielle: 24:08 We assign homework on this show.

Emily: 24:10 I mean Children of Blood and Bone is 600 pages, but it goes so fast.

- Amanda: 24:15 Wow, it's 600 pages? I didn't realize. I'm normally very attuned to page number.
- Danielle: 24:20 *laughter* It is the right number of pages. I really like that, you know, there's like the chase scenes, and the technology, and all that great stuff in this book that keeps it very action oriented. But at the end of the day, it is a book about a girl who's going to lead a fleet and she is developing her leadership skills, and that is so amazing. Like, Emily, you talked about the gap left by Lace in the chain of command and Caledonia has to reckon with that gap, she realizes that she's the one that left that position, you know, empty or un-clarified.
- Emily: 25:02 Right. And she has to figure out how to balance the rest of her crew.
- Danielle: 25:06 So Amanda, you are a leader of people and you know about taking orders and being on a ship, like, how did all of that resonate with you?
- Amanda: 25:16 I thought it was great. I thought she had a really clear understanding of like, how chain of command works and that kind of thing. I really enjoyed the argument that she has with her command, or no, it's Pisces specifically, she has this argument with Pisces where she says, "You're always disagreeing with me" and Pisces is like, "That's my job." And I was like, "Oh, okay. They got there." And I really liked that. I liked it especially because we have talked a lot, Danielle, about generally learning to disagree, and not be defensive, and just like, accept things as being disagreements and sometimes ...
- Danielle: 25:49 She means that our marriage, folks.
- Amanda: 25:51 And the podcast. *laughter* I liked that Caledonia had to learn that to be a good leader. I really enjoyed it, I thought it came across really well.
- Danielle: 25:59 Yeah, and the other kind of aspect that we have is that the ship is also like a family and there's this moment where Red-Tooth says to her, "The thing about family is sometimes you don't have to ask us to do stupid things, and sometimes you don't get to tell us we can't." And I just really liked that image of a crew that is also family, it's very Firefly. Did you like the ending? How all that played out, Emily?

- Emily: 26:28 I was really surprised it cut off where it did. I was like, uh, kept on trying to scroll past on my phone, like 'go to the next page, next page. There's no next page?' It was a little abrupt for me, I guess, in that sense. But um, I liked that it kind of synthesized the things that she had been struggling with throughout the books, the whole "hoist your eyes" thing, the whole, um, she got her, she didn't really get her moment of revenge ... She kind of just got shoved onto a pike and then thrown overboard.
- Amanda: 26:58 That's pretty much how it went. I was kind of expecting her brother to be the captain of the Bail Blossom now. I was surprised it was still Leer, the original boy who betrayed her.
- Emily: 27:07 Yeah.
- Amanda: 27:07 And so, I'm not sure that it was really necessary that part of it versus like just the, 'your princesses in another castle moment' that we had on the first ship. I thought that was like a good place to end up.
- Danielle: 27:18 *laughter*
- Amanda: 27:18 That's exactly what it was, right?
- Emily: 27:19 *laughter* Basically too, yeah.
- Danielle: 27:21 So, I don't mind a cliffhanger, but why spend the whole book building up the thing about family and sisters, if she's just going to break off from them and do her own thing? I hate it when friends separate, stay together! You're more powerful together.
- Emily: 27:37 It also just tell us a little bit weird for the character too, because the whole book we see her, like, through how she relates to her crew and then she splits off and then we don't get that lensing anymore, and she becomes kind of a completely different character just for like the last five percent of the book.

- Amanda: 27:54 Yeah, I agree. It definitely resets a lot of her character development, so I hope they just kind of like, reset it at the start of the next book, be like "That was dumb." and then we all carry about our lives.
- Danielle: 28:03 Yeah, I feel like they could have achieved a lot of the same thing, um, we have these moments where it's like, "Oh, the ship has to leave. It's like the good of the many and if you're late like, you could get lost." And like, there could have been the same moment where she gets separated, but not willfully.
- Amanda: 28:21 Overall, I think that even though we had some quibbles with this book, I am really looking forward to there being more of a series because I just feel like there should be more books about
- Danielle: 28:30 awesome girls
- Amanda: 28:31 Bad-ass crews of ladies, yeah.
- Emily: 28:33 I really love stories about women, that completely sideline men.
- Danielle: 28:38 Yes! Like Ocean's 8, no romance.
- Emily: 28:39 Like, yeah, because I feel like we're still kind of circling this point of like, if two women are fighting, they're fighting over a man, or there's some Bechdel test thing, and we had a little taste of that in this book, but mostly it was about these, um, disagreements that are rooted in who these characters are as people and that's something that like I really want to see more of instead of the tension that stems from a main romance. So I really, really liked that about this book.
- Danielle: 29:08 Me too.
- Amanda: 29:09 Agreed.

Danielle: 29:11 That's our show for today, friends. Thank you so much for joining us, Emily.

Emily: 29:15 I was glad to be here, thank you for having me.

Danielle: 29:17 You can find Emily around the web @skrutskie, and you can find us on Instagram and Twitter @yacafepodcast. We'd love to hear from you, and if you're enjoying the show, leave us a review on iTunes. Happy reading!