

"THE BOOKMARKS"
EPISODE 1
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“HI! NICE TO MEET YOU!”

Scene One
INTRODUCTION

VIRGINIA

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INT. MARK’S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

(THE BOOKMARK
THEME PLAYS.)

MARQUELLE

Hey everyone!

MARK

Yo, yo, yo--

MARQUELLE

Yoooo!

MARK

Welcome, to our very first episode. The inaugural episode of--

MARQUELLE

Inaugural!

MARK AND MARQUELLE

The Bookmarks!

(MARQUELLE
RIFFS)

MARK

You, hit that!

MARQUELLE

Thank you!

MARK

Wow! Go ahead, Marquelle!

(MARQUELLE
LAUGHS)

MARK (CONT'D)

It's a pleasure to start this. I am your host, Mark Bookerson.

MARQUELLE

And I am Marquelle Bookerson, no relation!

MARK

Just friends who happen to have the same last name-

-

MARQUELLE

The same last name/--

MARK

And love books.

MARQUELLE

First name, too.

MARK

We're just super, duper excited--

MARQUELLE

Stoked

MARK

To start a awesome book podcast where we just kind of talk about a lot of new, cutting-edge, brand-new books that are on the market.

MARQUELLE

Mhmm; and this week, we are gonna be looking at, "The Liar Amongst Us", by Jackson Jackson.

(MORE)

MARQUELLE (CONT'D)

Which has been on the New York Time's best-selling list for like what, like eighteen weeks?

MARK

Uh, something like that, yeah. Something around that.. eighteen.

MARQUELLE

Crazy!

MARK

Yeah, you know. It's a cool number. And, you know we're gonna have some cool things to say about the book, so--

MARQUELLE

That's right, we are!

MARK

So, you know, really excited to get into that. But first...

MARQUELLE

A word from our sponsor?

MARK

Here they are!

SCENE 2

Commercial Break

(Classical music plays)

MARQUELLE

So, turns out that we don't actually have any sponsors, but if we did--

MARK

That was a little lie--

MARQUELLE

It was a lie!

MARK

Yeah.

MARQUELLE

It was a little lie!

MARK

A little fib.

MARQUELLE

A tiny little fib--

MARK

Between ya know.. hosts and friends and the audience.

MARQUELLE

But if we did happen to have a sponsor, this is where it would gooooo!

MARK

Exactly! And we're saying.. ya know, if you have a podcast--

MARQUELLE

Podcast. A service--

MARK

A service.

MARQUELLE

Anything!

MARK

Send us something over, and we'll listen to it, and if we like it, we'll feature it here. We'll feature pretty much anything!

MARQUELLE

We will promote! We will promote your product service or podcast! Send it to us!

MARK

Uh, exactly. Uh, for example, oof...uhhh.... Mar-
Marquelle, what's like a thing that we could sell?

MARQUELLE

Uhhh... a thing. Uhh.... Mmmm.. oh, uh, uh.... For
those who can't see, which is all of you, Mark, here,
is wearing a BEAUTIFUL, GORGEOUS, sweater.
It's very soft.

MARK

Oh, yeah. This is some classic designer stuff.
Chateau de Poubelle, definitely is not cheap. Uh..
and it.. it lives up to every single cent. I think I got
this at.. my mother purchased this for me. Well
version of it a long time back. I just loved it so
much that I knew that I had to get not one, but three.
I mean if you're--

MARQUELLE

Three?

MARK

Wearing clothes, you might as well wear the clothes
your mother bought you as a child. I mean, she
obviously has the superior fashion sense, here.

MARQUELLE

Your mother has the best taste!

MARK

Oh, Susan's style!

MARQUELLE

Yeah. If you don't mind my asking how much
would a real Cheateau de Poubelle run?

MARK

Ummmm... anywhere from, I mean this for example
was what like... \$2,700 or something like that. I...

MARQUELLE

Wha--aa-aat?!

MARK
\$2,400, because I got 3, so---

MARQUELLE
Ohhhh!!

MARK
What like \$900 in savings, what like---

MARQUELLE
Ahhh!!

MARK
Ummm.. a month's rent, half a month's rent, I don't know. Mom helps me out with a lot of that stuff. I don't regret, a single cent.

MARQUELLE
Clearly not. We should probably move into our review, huh? Of, "The Liar Amongst Us", by Jackson Jackson.

MARK
Jackson Jackson. Let's talk about it.

SCENE 3

Book Summary

MARQUELLE
Alright, so, "The Liar Amongst Us", by Jackson Jackson. Epic thriller novel.

MARK
It's definitely very different than a lot of Jackson's older works. Which you know, we're kind of like overly mushy and maybe a little bit lacking perspective romances.

MARQUELLE
Well, I think that this is a sign that he's really coming into his own as an author. Because, yeah, his older stuff was a little bit, meh.

(MORE)

MARQUELLE (CONT'D)

Yeah, I can admit to that, but he's really pulling all the punches with this book. Like, "The Liar Amongst Us".. guys... guys! This book is nuts!

MARK

It's a certain gear shift for--

MARQUELLE

We're getting ahead of ourselves.

MARK

For Jackson. Umm--

MARQUELLE

It totally is! We, we should probably tell them what it's about.

MARK

Right, so the book follows.. sort of three prep school students that go to uhhh....-

MARQUELLE

Socialites.

MARK

Yeah, yeah, they're socialites. I--

MARQUELLE

Golden Lotus--

MARK

Golden Lotus Academy! Uhhh.. which is actually based on the Johnson School for Learning in Upstate New York, which was my school's rival-

MARQUELLE

Mhmm.

MARK

Uhh, but--

MARQUELLE

Mmmm.

MARK

You know, Golden Lotus Academy where, our main characters Chad, Ithaca and Leonard are the three top students. Yeah, and as a result of that they get to go on this cruise ship that's gonna go head to Australia. Yeah.

MARQUELLE

Australia, New South Wales, and uhh.. there's this, there's this bit at the beginning where you find out that uh, Chad, who is our main protagonist of the three, is actually.. uh, he's an orphan.

MARK

Mhmm.

MARQUELLE

And he's.. his, his parents both died in a horrible accident when he was very young; and, he's always been struggling, it's this really touching thing about how you got this kid who's on the up and up. Who's just been enrolled in this school and like.. he's not respected or liked by anybody except for Ithaca and Lawrence. And so, when the three of them come together on this, this cruise ship at the start. It's like, it's like his life is finally starting to go in the right direction.

MARK

Exactly; and, you know, as we sort of start going through the book, we kind of get on this ship and you know, they start noticing that things are perhaps, a little bit off--

MARQUELLE

(sings)

A little weirddd

MARK

A little bit weird. A lot of the people--

MARQUELLE

Yep--

MARK

Who run the ship are, you know, they have like weird.. smiles on their faces at all points in time--

MARQUELLE

Yeah, everybody--

MARK

They're always present--

MARQUELLE

Weird. Yeah, yeah, it's, it's a little off, it's a little off, but you can't put your finger on why. Cause I mean like, it's one of those weird cruise ships where everybody hss to go, "haha", you know; and, they're just, they're a part of a cult.

MARK

Like a Disney cruise.

MARQUELLE

Yeah, but anyway, anyway--

MARK

Yeah--

MARQUELLE

Like a Disney cruise! I wasn't gonna say, but there it is--

MARK

No, I get it, yeah; and so--

MARQUELLE

Yeah.

MARK

Been on a couple of those, myself.

MARK (CONT 'D)

So, they definitely, you know start going through being on this cruise ship and meeting some of the other passengers who aren't necessarily the staff, and kind of making friends and slowly some of the people they start to meet--

MARQUELLE

Yeah?

MARK

They slowly go missing...

MARQUELLE

Yep.

MARK

Yeah.

MARQUELLE

Yeah, yeah; and there's this, there's this beautiful scene, earlier in the book, where uh, Ithaca is going out to smoke a cigarette on the lower deck--

MARK

Yeah.

MARQUELLE

And.. uh, Jackson describe's this beautifully eerie scene, where there's just nobody... on the, on the ship, full stop. She's just like walking around, and she can't find a single person she's going through the buffet, where they serve like, it's like one of those Brazilian style buffets, you know, where they have all the meat--

MARK

The meat's amazing. They cut it up for you.

MARQUELLE

And, uh, and then she can't find anybody, and then she comes up to Chad, and Chad is just like.. weirdly calm about this whole situation.

MARK

Chad.. I think this is around the time that the alliterate, the v's--

MARQUELLE

Yes! It was, uh---

MARK

You know, Thebes--

MARQUELLE

God! I loved it! Guys, there was, there was this sentence that Jackson does where there's like 76 syllables in it.. all v's. All v-words, and it's just.. alliteration makes my little heart happy, and I just, mmmm... God, I loved it so much! I love his style. Just side note: I love Jackson's style. He has..mwah, it's gorgeous.

MARK

I definitely have some thoughts... but we, but we can talk about it later. Uh..

MARQUELLE

Yeah, wha.., wha--

MARK

To kind of get into where the book heads, you know they end up getting closer with the captain of the ship, Captain Stevenson.

MARQUELLE

Yes.

MARK

And--

MARQUELLE

Captain Stevenson.

MARK

They come to realize, right around the halfway point, you know there's something off with Chad and Captain Stevenson.

MARQUELLE

Yes.

MARK

Soon learning that they are in fact father and son. And--

MARQUELLE

Yes! Yep, yep. This supposed orphan's father is captain of the ship this whole time.

MARK

And... as we start pushing closer towards the conclusion, we start to realize that these buffets that they've been eating at have not had normal meat, and they have not been able to stop at port at all. And so as they've been slowly going mad and people have slowly been going missing, we've come to find out that they actually are being fed some of their fellow passengers, and as we keep--

MARQUELLE

Cannibalism!

MARK

Cannibalism. Full stop--

MARQUELLE

Cannibalism! Full stop!

MARK

And as we get really near the end, we find out that all of the people who work on the ship are in this weird cult and that not only is Captain Stevenson head of the cult, but the headmaster of the school and Chad are ALSO in the cult, because the cult does this weird cannibalism ritual where they basically do this weird ritualistic sacrifice thing in the open sea--

MARQUELLE

Every year!

MARK

Uh, in the Bermuda Triangle, and it gives them immortality, somehow--

MARQUELLE

Yes, yes. And every single year the students who win this competition, go out to sea to be eaten, sacrificed.. IT'S CRAZY

MARK

But that's not the actual twist of the novel, because we come to find out that Leonard and Ithaca--

MARQUELLE

Mhmm...

MARK

They actually are a little hip to this--

MARQUELLE

Yes, they are.

MARK

They are not, you know, brand new to this to what's going on because they're older siblings who were prior top students went missing, and so they--

MARQUELLE

On a cruise.

MARK

So they connected the pieces--

MARQUELLE

Yep.

MARK

Exactly. So they actually end up performing the ritualistic sacrifice while on the cruise. There's like really intense action in the scene, uh, where they get them all and they cook them in this very, very complex meal that was very in depth. Like beef wellington and stews and stuff. It's crazy. And uh, it's just this really--

MARQUELLE

It made me hungry.

MARK

It did. Which is weird--

MARQUELLE

It was a little weird, but--

MARK

It was just--

MARQUELLE

It is what it is.

MARK

Really crazy scene to end the book off from sort of eating these people on this ship, floating alone, laughing, uh...-

MARQUELLE

Drifting out to sea--

MARK

Into the void of the ocean.

MARQUELLE

Into the void of the madness ocean! Ohh, my God--

MARK

In the Bermuda Triangle. Crazy.

MARQUELLE

It was SO good! I, I--

MARK

Yeah.

MARQUELLE

It was a quick read. I couldn't put it down. I would give it a solid 8 out of 10. I really enjoyed this.

(MARK BLOWS A RASPBERRY)

MARK

Woah, woah, woah, woah, woah, slow your roll. 8 out of.. 8 out of 10, are you.. four twice?

MARQUELLE

Yeah! Four twice! That's what I would give it. I thought that this was really excellent, and it showcased his literary abilities, his coming up as a writer, he has a beautiful "v" sentence with the alliteration--

MARK

But you didn't feel like it was like, you know overly hammy or like oddly paced at times, or even just sort of like.. ya know, the character writing wasn't the best or all that?

MARQUELLE

No! I actually thoroughly enjoyed it! I, I don't understand how you didn't.

MARK

Well, cause it wasn't very.. good.

(BEAT)

MARQUELLE

OHH! That's interesting! Uhh--

MARK

Ohh.

MARQUELLE

We're gonna talk about that as we talk about our thoughts.

MARK

Yeah.

MARQUELLE

On, "The Liar Amongst Us", by Jackson Jackson.

MARK

Cue the music.

(CLASSICAL MUSIC PLAYS).

SCENE FOUR THOUGHTS

MARQUELLE

I cannot believe that you didn't like this book, Mark!

MARK

No, I--

MARQUELLE

I thought it be right up your alley.

MARK

Look, I just sort of feel like, it relies on cheap tricks, and I feel like it just rides waves and it rides trends and that's just not who I wanna be as a writer. So, I can't respect the book. Or the person who wrote it.

MARQUELLE

I get that. But the thing is, if you want to be a writer, you have to pay attention to the trends and sometimes you have to follow the trends, and you can be ahead of it. In some ways, Jackson is ahead of the trend. I mean, this is the first CANNIBALISM ritual sacrifice book--

MARK

That--

MARQUELLE

Yes, there are a lot of cannibalism books and a lot of ritual sacrifice--

MARK

I---

MARQUELLE

But never before has somebody put the two together!

MARK

I used to believe that. I'm sure that at least one other person has had the idea to put... cannibalism and sacrifice together. That's like peanut butter and jelly. Those are the two things that you expect to go together more than anything in this world, and I'm supposed to believe that Jackson is some great innovator who just discovered, who just created this cool new sandwich, that he made sliced bread that he made peanut butter and jelly?!

MARQUELLE

No, he didn't discover it. It's like that thing about how there's no such thing as a new story. You know, every story has already been told in some way shape or form and Jackson is an, he's an artist!

MARK

He's an industry plant. Are you--

MARQUELLE

An industry plant?

MARK

It's literally called Jackson and Johnson Publishing. It is a family name. It's one of the names of the publishing company, but it's very clear that this book was only even published probably only even successful due to nepotism.

MARQUELLE

Well, that's the thing though. J&J publishing is one of the best publishing houses in New York. Do you know how hard it is just to get their attention, just to get out of the slush pile and up to the top of it? It, it takes an incredible amount of work! I mean, I would love to see Jackson's query letter, frankly--

MARK

Oh, you mean the little, uh text that he sent to his aunt. Is that, is that the query letter you wanna see, the letter. "Hey Aunt, uh, I have a book manuscript that I wrote, and I think it's so great and I'd love for you to take a look at it".

MARQUELLE

Listen!

MARK

I mean, he, he had three terrible romance novels published before this, and I'm supposed to just think that was because he was some great writer you saw potential in?

MARQUELLE

No! Because, yes, he, okay Jackson Jackson, for those of you who don't know has written three romance novels, and they were all vampire romances, and they weren't the best work, okay.

MARK

Derivative is what I describe them as.

MARQUELLE

Okay. I admit that they weren't great, but that was the thing. Those were his stepping stones, you can see the progression of his, his literary skill evolving with the, the "Biters" trilogy, and moving on into this novel, "The Liar Amongst Us", you can really see him blossoming as a literary potential, literary great. Good for him, because frankly it's that---

MARK

But, but not good for him! Okay, because there are people who are better than him! I mean, Marquelle, you're better than him--

MARQUELLE

Thank you.

MARK

And this guy, has this book that's on the New York Times Best Seller's list for eighteen weeks, and I'm supposed to just sit here and be happy for eighteen weeks, and I'm supposed to just sit here and be happy for him because he's another author of color, and he's telling such brave, unique stories. That's ridiculous, to me! He's not, he doesn't deserve this! He doesn't deserve it! He doesn't deserve it!

MARQUELLE

You don't have to like the art. You know, I mean--

MARK

I don't want to like the art, either.

MARQUELLE

But I do! And that's thing! It's subjective, man! I mean like, yes, his first three books were not great, but this one is beautiful, and I think, honestly, I, I kind of wish that I could be a little bit like him. I mean--

MARK

Please don't say that!

MARQUELLE

He has this--

MARK

Please do not--

MARQUELLE

He has this, this trajectory! I know you say that I'm a great writer, but I, I doubt it sometimes! I mean do you know how many times I've been rejected? Seventy-eight times! Seventy-eight times, I've been rejected in the past month! It's hard to be brought in the fold the way Jackson Jackson was so I can improve, too! I wanna be on The New York Times Best Seller List for eighteen weeks!

MARK

Marquelle. My mother is in charge of, of one of the most successful publishing companies that is out there, and I understand the frustration; but for Jackson Jackson, to have a book out there that is, that is not... I could do better than I have. I have manuscripts right now that are better than that book; and, he... and for him to have a book that has reached such mainstream according to you is setting the trend, I, I... refuse to believe that he's not that good. He's not, he's not. He's rude and he's conniving, and he is just someone that gets under your skin; and when he gets there, he just rips and he just pulls. And he might even slam ya down and RUIN your really nice suit. That's the kind of that Jackson Jackson is.

MARQUELLE

What, are you talking about?

MARK

... We may have met.... once or twice, before.

MARQUELLE

You met Jackson Jackson?

MARK

YES! I met Jackson Jackson, and Jackson Jackson... is not everything he's cracked up to be, alright.

MARQUELLE

Why?

MARK

It was exactly five months ago, to the day.
(HARP PLAYS FOR FLASHBACK)

**SCENE FIVE
FLASHBACK**

BERLIN

Oh, I think your book will be so popular.

(JACKSON JACKSON LAUGHS)

JACKSON JACKSON

You're too kind.

BERLIN

In Hong Kong, oh Hong Kong, it would so well! I
promise you!

MARK

Oh, my gosh. I--

BERLIN

Mark!

MARK

I, my eyes must be deceiving me. You know, I just...
no, no, that's what I'm seeing, Berlin and Jackson
Jackson... together in the same place. Who would
ever think that!

JACKSON JACKSON

If it isn't Mark.

BERLIN

Marky!

MARK

Right?

BERLIN

Hello, darling! It's so lovely to see you!

(BERLIN GIVES MARK A BISOUS A BISOUS)

MARK

Oh, it's, it's lovely to see you too, Berlin. Uhh...,
how have you been since you.. things?

BERLIN

Oh, I've been so busy. I, uh, just flew in from Moon
Base Alpha this morning. I've got quite the jet lag.

MARK

Yeah, I love Moon Base Alpha.

BERLIN

I did a lecture up there.

MARK

Wow. Uh, uh a lecture?

BERLIN

But you don't want to hear about that!
(BERLIN LAUGHS)

MARK

Oh, hehehe, yeah.

JACKSON JACKSON

I don't know, it's---

MARK

You are, you are so considerate.

JACKSON JACKSON

It sounds like Mark might have some invested
interest in uh, hearing about what you've been up
to, Berlin.

MARK

Jackson, it seems like maybe you have invested
interest since your so interested in inquiring about
it. I didn't realize that you were so, uh, interested in
Berlin.

JACKSON JACKSON

Well--

MARK

Have you always been interested in Berlin? Has that always been a thing that you just been really into, Jackson?

JACKSON JACKSON

Berlin is someone I.. deeply admire as a literary artist--

BERLIN

Awww.

JACKSON JACKSON

Someone with such.. talent.

MARK

She is very, very talented.

BERLIN

Marky! Oh, you're so kind! Thank you both, gentlemen.

JACKSON JACKSON

Yes, well, you know, I always told her how talented she is, and uh, I think that you know, you coming up now with your little compliments won't do you all too good.

MARK

I think it's very fitting that you admire talent, because that's what people who often lack it tend to do. You know--

BERLIN

Marky!

MARK

We call that.. being a fan, Jackson.

JACKSON JACKSON

No Berlin, it's fine.

BERLIN

I don't think that you're like that, Jackson. I promise.

JACKSON JACKSON

Mark--

BERLIN

You're a friend. You're a dear, dear friend. I promise.

JACKSON JACKSON

No, no, you're too kind. You're sweet. Mark, have you read my new book?

BERLIN

Oh, it's wonderful!

MARK

Oh, I'm sure it is--

JACKSON JACKSON

It's hitting the market very soon. I thought I had you on the list to get an advanced copy, but it seems it must've missed you--

MARK

Funny how that worked out considering that--

JACKSON JACKSON

Funny, it's so funny that--

MARK

My mother hoped that she'd get it published. Funny how you just forgot name on the list, but it's cool. That's totally fine, right?

JACKSON JACKSON

I'm sure she got it. She called me on the phone last week to tell me all about how she loved the book and how you--

BERLIN

She's such a lovely woman!

JACKSON JACKSON

She was so nice--

BERLIN

Yes Marky, you're so lucky to have such a great mother!

MARK

Yeah, she, she loves to just help a struggling artist really build their confidence. So, that tracks, Jackson. That tracks, very much.

JACKSON JACKSON

Struggling artist? Wow! I mean she always tells me how she wished she had me as a son. So you know--

BERLIN

Oh, she's so funny like that!

MARK

Yeah, yeah that's honestly a hilarious joke. That's so funny that you would ever--

BERLIN

That's so funny!

MARK

Be capable of being in this family, you know because there's just a certain level of skill that requires a certain level of, let's say, je ne sais quoi, that you need to carry with you at all points in time. In so for Susan to extend that invitation to you is just so interesting. She's so funny like that. Isn't that right, Berlin?

BERLIN

She's such a funny lady!

MARK

That she would joke like that!

BERLIN

That was so much!

JACKSON JACKSON

Well Mark, I mean you know I do.. hehe, perhaps take a little bit more after your mother with my physique. Slim, uh, musculature of mine's.

MARK

Okay, so maybe you could keep my mother's musculature out of your mouth, Jackson. How about that?

(MORE)

MARK (CONT'D)

How about we, we keep the lines so that we stop crossing them. How about we just sort another line instead of crossing another one? How about that, Jackson?

BERLIN

Mark!

MARK

No, no, no, cause he wants to talk about MY mother. MY mother at a party that she's helping to what, to get your book out there, when you can have an awesome book, and you're gonna speak about her like that! I just won't stand for it!

JACKSON JACKSON

Well, if you got the musculature, well you can prove it right here, right now. Come here, Mark.

(JACKSON JACKSON PUTS HIS ARM ON THE TABLE FOR AN ARM WRESTLING MATCH)

MARK

Okay, then, put it up!

(MARK DOES THE SAME)

BERLIN

Oh, what a remarkable Hemmingway method of solving problems, gentlemen.

JACKSON JACKSON

Standard rules?

MARK

Yeah, standard rules. First count to ten, you get the dog. If the hand hits the table, you're out.

BERLIN

This is such a testament to toxic masculinity.

JACKSON JACKSON

Alright. On three... three!

MARK

Oh, no, no! That was supposed to be like a one,
two, three.

JACKSON JACKSON

Sorry you can't keep up, Mark.

MARK

Super uncool of you!

BERLIN

Marky, you're turning purple! Be careful!

JACKSON JACKSON

I'm sorry.

MARK

Literally, definition of cheating! You're literally--

JACKSON JACKSON

Can't keep up with someone who's your equal--

MARK

Cheating!

JACKSON JACKSON

Or better! In every way!

(MARK GROANS. HAVING BEEN DEFEATED)

BERLIN

Marky, are you okay?

MARK

It's not.. I'm fine! He cheated, I'm just gonna.. I
gotta go wipe my face in the--

JACKSON JACKSON

Watch out got the--

(CROWD GASPS. PUNCH SPILLS ALL OVER MARK'S WHITE
SUIT)

BERLIN

Ohh, Mark! Ohh

JACKSON JACKSON

You seem to have a little bit of a stain.. everywhere.

BERLIN

Please go clean up!

MARK

It's fine--

BERLIN

It's cashmere, Marky!

MARK

It's fine, it's fine. The cashmere helps bring out the fabric. O my gosh!

BERLIN

You've got to clesn it before it's ruined! I know how much you love that shirt!

MARK

Nope! No, it's fine. I just, I need to.. I need to go. I don't even want to be here anymore cause why would I want to be here with a bunch of jerks!

JACKSON JACKSON

A bunch of jerks--

MARK

Jackson!

JACKSON JACKSON

I warned you about the--

MARK

Who, who cheats, who cheat in arm wrestles and have no respect for--

BERLIN

He didn't cheat. I was watching very closely.

MARK

He didn't to count to three. He just counted three, and then he started..

(MORE)

MARK (CONT'D)

I don't wanna be here anymore! So just.. god you,
you all are just a bunch of jerks! Uhhh!

(FLASHBACK ENDS)

**SCENE SIX
PRESENT**

MARQUELLE

Wait, wait, where was I?

MARK

Uh, I don't know, Marquelle. I texted you like
literally like sixty times. It was I think the most I
ever texted you since that thing happened with
Jenny in H.R.

MARQUELLE

Wowwww. Yep, yeah you texted me a lot. Like you
average somewhere around like forty--

MARK

It was May 6th! It was May 6th. Do you not--

MARQUELLE

May 6th? Ohhhh

**SCENE SEVEN
SHORT FLASHBACK**

(FLASHBACK)

(BELL RINGS)

WRESTLER ANNOUNCER

I can't believe it! With one final meaty squelge, the
Hound has been defeated!

(MARQUELLE SQUEALS)

WRESTLER ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

The new winner of the Crimson Ring championship
is Marquelle "Golden Fists" Bookerson! The prize
for winning this championship is \$5,000 U.S.

(MORE)

WRESTLER ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

dollars. What are you gonna do with your winnings?

MARQUELLE

I'm gonna set aside most of it to help send the twins to college; and the rest of it's gonna go to my little sister's braces.

WRESTLER ANNOUNCER

Fantastic! Can I get a medic over here for the Hound?

(FLASHBACK ENDS)

**SCENE EIGHT
PRESENT**

MARQUELLE

That was the day... when I was hired by the um, a Mexican resturaunt down the street. Cracy Gringo's, and I'd been hired to be their pinata for the uh, Cinco de Mayo party. Yeah, so I was a pinata at and that's why I was unavailable.

MARK

Look, it doesn't even matter that you didn't come because honestly, I'm... over it.

MARQUELLE

Are you sure?

MARK

Did it hurt? A little bit. When I, I was walking down the street with my shoes squeaking like I was a little digusting clown. Squelch, squelch, squish, squish, did that hurt? Yeah. Did it hurt when a small German boy in leiderhosen pointed at me from across the street and called me a, "dirty little fruit boy?"

MARQUELLE

Oh, my god.

MARK

Yeah, yeah. That hurt. Did it hurt when my mom looked at me, shook her head and sighed? Yeah, yeah. That hurt a lot. Uhh, but honestly, I'm... over it, right. I'm over it! Uhh, I'm cool. I'm not upset about what Berlin's doing, or what Jackson Jackson is doing, uhh, I don't care that my mother thinks that he's on the cutting edge of literature that doesn't matter to me at all. I'm totally fine with that. The fact that Berlin and Jackson are both for some reason in South America, at the same time--

MARQUELLE

Wait, South America?

MARK

Yeah! Uhh, apparently there in like Chile or something together and if they are uhh, posting each other on each other's Instagram story, but it's not really them cause it's actually just their hands and it's like--

MARQUELLE

Oh, God

MARK

Ohh, first date, kinda nervous--

MARQUELLE

Ohh, I hate when people do that.

MARK

We're doing a soft lunch. Yeah, they're doing that, uh uh, I'm not upset about that. If they're you know, maybe sharing a small, charming apartment over a little bakery where the locals, you know bring them fresh bread every day, and it looks like it tastes delicious and it's just got like such a great volume to it. Maybe, maybe I'm not upset about that if Berlin feels like she's happy doing this. I'm happy that she thinks I'm happy with this, with this, with this act.

(MORE)

MARK (CONT'D)

Honestly, that's good for her that she has found what she believes to be happiness and that Jackson, uhh, gets to, oh waste his time in and eventually get his heart broken in two because I'm sure, you know, he's gonna, you know, ask his mother for the family ring, and then he's gonna find out two weeks before he was planning to propose that actually, actually the relationship isn't heading in the direction that she wants and actually, he's not mature as she needs from a partner at this point and time. Actually, he's gonna go home and he's gonna cry himself to sleep because maybe he is a sad, dirty little fruit boy!

MARQUELLE

O, my god. Mark.

MARK

I need a moment.

MARQUELLE

Are you--

MARK

I'm gonna head to the balcony.

MARQUELLE

Okay.

MARK

And um--

MARQUELLE

Do you want me to bring you some water--

MARK

No, it's cool. I have some out there, already. I also have Kleenex. It's fine.

MARQUELLE

Okay, you go outside and go breathe.

MARK

Yeah. I'm just gonna, uhh, count stars in the sky and hope that they fill up the void.

MARQUELLE

Yeah, uhh--

(MARK GETS UP TO LEAVE)

MARQUELLE

Yeah, well uh, while Mark does that cause self-care is important here at The Bookmarks, but uh, while Mark takes care of himself, we're gonna head to a pre-recorded commercial. We'll be right back.

(TRANSITION MUSIC)

**SCENE NINE
COMMERCIAL BREAK**

MARK

Thank you for tuning in, this far into The Bookmarks podcast. Now, we just have a little brief word from our Sponsor.

(SPONSOR BARKS)

MARQUELLE

That would be Mark's dog, whose name is Sponsor.
(SPONSOR BARKS IN AGREEMENT)

MARK

I would agree that, you know anyone, who is in business, of any business oughta get themselves a little commercial spot. Get it, like a dog named Spot, with us!

MARQUELLE

Ayyy.

MARK

The Bookmarks. Thank you, Marquellle.

MARQUELLE

Mhmm.

MARK

Hey, um, Sponsor. Hey Sponsor, don't eat that Sponsor! Sponsor, that's my sandwich!

(SPONSOR BARKS)

MARK (CONT'D)

Sponsor, you are not supposed to be eating mayo. Sponsor. Sponsor! Marquelle, Marquelle, Marquelle.

MARQUELLE

Oh, god. Oh, god.

MARK

How is he eating that fast? It's two separate halves.

MARQUELLE

C'mon! Sponsor--

(GLASS SHATTERS)

MARK

Ahh, Sponsor! Sponsor, spit it out!

MARQUELLE

Mmm, mmm. Ahh, ahh, stop! No, no. Put it down.

MARK

You're not supposed to eat that fast!

(RECORD SCRATCH. END OF COMMERCIAL)

SCENE TEN

MARQUELLE'S CORNER

MARQUELLE

Mark is currently sitting out on the balcony. So, uh, you know, I'm gonna take over for a little bit. Um, I've been thinking about having this segment that I'm gonna call, Marquelle's corner. Where I'm gonna talk about anything that's loosely related to books. Um, and so, today, what I think I'm gonna focus on is Twitter.

(MORE)

MARQUELLE (CONT'D)

And, my feelings about the platform. Um, I think it's a great way for authors and readers to be able to interconnect. And it's a great tool for people who want to become aspiring writers to reach out to publications and agents. But, it's a little bit weird as somebody who is working on their own version of the Great American Novel. That you have this ever present audience, like you need to be open and available to people to create content, and to show that you're a real person and not you know, like a commercial, you know. But, you have to protect your privacy at the same time. Because, I mean, I know that I've personally done some things that you know, if, if anybody found out about then that would not be ideal. I mean, nothing bad, nothing serious, but I mean you have to be on social media these days if you're a young artist, and you wanna get anywhere, you have to be noticed, and you have to have the followers, and you have to have the content. I mean, what is a novelist/cage fighter/drag racer/keyboardist for an underground indie band/redacted/monkey trainer/podcast host suppose to do?

(MARQUELLE SIGHS)

MARQUELLE (CONT'D)

Personally, I think I need to go and post a haiku. And on that note, I'm gonna read out some of my favorite tweets that sound like poetry.

(BEAT)

MARQUELLE (CONT'D)

Verily vindicated viniferous veautiful vowels. God, I love alliteration.

**SCENE ELEVEN
CLOSING THOUGHTS**

(BALCONY DOOR SLIDES OPEN AND THEN CLOSES)

(CONT'D)

MARQUELLE

Are you uh, are you feeling better?

(MARK SLOWLY WALKS OVER. PULLS OUT HIS CHAIR, AND
SITS.)

(CONT'D)

MARK

A lot of stars in the sky.

MARQUELLE

Yeah. Yeah, it's a--

MARK

Yeah.

MARQUELLE

It's a beautiful night. I, um--

MARK

Yeah.

MARQUELLE

I'm so, so sorry that I didn't realize that you had such strong feelings for Berlin. I mean, I know that you'd been with her for a while, but I, I, marriage, that's a big step.

MARK

Umm... honestly, you know. I think that I've been a little bit unfair, um... to this book, and I've even been a little bit unfair to Jackson Jackson. And even Berlin, a little bit today on the podcast. I, you know I did. I really liked her a lot. And, you know, I could see a future with her. But um, honestly, in life, people have seasons and sometimes, people leave you.

(MORE)

MARK (CONT'D)

Umm, because they're in a different season and maybe in the future, you'll be in the same season, again, but for now, I just have to respect that she's in a spring, and I'm still in a bit of a winter. The book was good. The book was good.

MARQUELLE

Mhmm. Yeah.

MARK

So--

MARQUELLE

Yeah.

MARK

Yeah.

MARQUELLE

Yeah, this is a great book. "The Liar Amongst Us", by Jackson Jackson. Yeah. Uh, pick it up if you can. Give it a read. It'll take you a weekend. You know--

MARK

Not a long book. It's got some fun moments.

MARQUELLE

A lot of them.

MARK

It's got some characters. And, even though... I do sort of hate to admit it because.. he is kind of a jerk. Jackson Jackson is a very talented author.

MARQUELLE

You know, I gotta say Mark. I think that you're coming at this from a very healthy standpoint. And I, I just wanna say that I'm really proud of you.

MARK

I appreciate it. Umm, I think I need to go to McQuellan's and--

MARQUELLE

Yes!

MARK

And.. uhh, maybe get a slice of chocolate cake.

MARQUELLE

Chocolate cake, yeah.

MARK

Hopefully, I don't cry into it this time. Umm, you wanna go, you wanna go get some--

MARQUELLE

Yeah, let's go get some chocolate cake.

MARK

Yeah--

MARQUELLE

Yeah!

MARK

Okay, cool. Well, ya know, I heard they're thinking of like redoing the menu kind of soon. So they might have some new menu items in the future.

MARQUELLE

Do they have a brunch menu?

MARK

Uhh, totally. Duh, that's like the thing that they just added.

MARQUELLE

Well, I know what we're gonna do this Sunday.

MARK

Sounds good!

MARQUELLE

Well, everyone! Thank you so much for joining us this week for our inaugural episode of, "The Bookmarks".

MARK

(Sings)

The Bookmarks.

MARQUELLE

(Sings)

The Bookmarks!

MARK

Yeah, I knew that I had to sing it to get you to sing it.

MARQUELLE

That's how it works around here.

MARK

Yeah.

MARQUELLE

I'm Marquelle Bookerson!

MARK

I am Mark Bookerson, no relation.

MARQUELLE

No relation.

MARK

And this has been, The Bookmarks, follow us on socials!

MARQUELLE

All the socials. We're on every single one of them. And we'll catch you next week with another hot read.

(THE BOOKMARK THEME PLAYS)

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)