



## MINISODE: MEET THE HOSTS

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**LAURA:** *Shit We've Read* is brought to you by Oblivion Geeks in partnership with BYLO Network.

**JASON:** Please visit [shitweveread.com](http://shitweveread.com) to support the show.

**LAURA:** Now, let's talk about some books.

(theme music)

**JASON:** Hello and welcome to *Shit We've Read*, a sci-fi fantasy book podcast hosted by two geeky friends. My name is Jason Rico and on the other end of the Zoom call here in front of me is my good friend Laura Benson.

**LAURA:** Hello!

**JASON:** How's it going, Laura?

**LAURA:** Goin' pretty good. How are you?

**JASON:** I am doing well. Thank you. So now, this podcast that we have been planning for months is finally becoming reality. Like, it's out there in the world now. People are going to be listening to it. Pretty excited. Are you excited.

**LAURA:** I am absolutely very excited. Seeing our logo out there already is pretty cool.

**JASON:** know. I know. I listen to my podcasts on Spotify and seeing it up there with all the other ones I follow is like "Ah! Oh my god it's real. Okay."

(Both laugh)

**JASON:** Okay. Normally this is the part of the episode where we mentioned the book we're going to be talking about. However, we're not talking about a book this episode. Nope. Instead, we'll just be talking about ourselves.

**LAURA:** As a new podcast, we realize most of our listeners right now probably have no idea who we are or what this podcast is about. So we thought maybe we could just go ahead and introduce ourselves and tell all of you a little bit about us, why we started this podcast, and, you know, what to expect from our future episodes.

**JASON:** Exactly. I have loved reading since I was a little kid. I got it on my mom. She was a big book lover. She still is. We actually kind of have this silent competition about who can read more books. If I'm being honest, she can read more but get through more because of audiobooks. She hasn't gone over to the audio books. She's a purist.

**LAURA:** (laughs) Same.

**JASON:** Aside from novels, I grew up watching a lot of cartoons and reading a lot of comic books. I really love that visual storytelling. So novels, comic books. Those were like my media choice as a kid. Stuck with it my entire life until I got



to college where it got really busy and then once you're graduating, you know what, I need to go back to reading. I loved it so much as a kid, I want to rediscover it again and I discovered Goodreads, which I'm sure if your book lover, you probably are familiar with this website. I use it *religiously*. Like I am on there multiple times a day, discovering new books, organizing the books I'm going to read, rating books. It's kind of this weird obsession, honestly. I need help. Probably.

**LAURA:** Yeah, you have a literal schedule for what books you're gonna read and when.

**JASON:** I do. I know. And when I tell people that, they laugh at me. It's just because I like grouping books together by content or by, like a topic. So if I'm reading a book right now about, I don't know, like space travel, I want to read a few about space travel. And then I might move on to books about witches and then I might move on to books about fairy tales. And so I kind of plan out things but also like, I like to read books around premiers. So at the time of recording this, *Shadow and Bone* premiered on Netflix last week, I think it was. So I put all those books in my schedule to make sure I read them before that TV show came out. And so I do a lot of that. And then also I, you know, I schedule stuff for Halloween, schedule stuff for Christmas. So just easier for me to visualize when I'm going to read books.

**LAURA:** (laughs)

**JASON:** Although, you laugh at me when you say, "Hey, what about this book?" "Yeah, I might read it April 2022." And you're like "What???"

**LAURA:** And I'm like "But why?!"

**JASON:** Because that's what it is in the schedule. I'm not in charge of the schedule. The schedule is in charge of me, okay?

(Both laugh)

**JASON:** I am just the vessel that organizes these books but it's the schedule that's speaking.

**LAURA:** (laughs)

**JASON:** Okay, I feel like you're judging me. Let's move out. What about you? (laughs)

**LAURA:** My history with reading is very similar. I used to read a lot as a kid. It was just, it was very exciting going to new places by reading books and then it kind of tapered off when I, when I got into high school but then I got a job at Borders Books.

**JASON:** Aw, Borders. R.I.P.

**LAURA:** I know. I miss it. It was like one of my best jobs. Ever. But-

**JASON:** I applied to Borders and I didn't get a job.

**LAURA:** Aw, I'm sorry.

**JASON:** It's okay. It's okay. I don't even know if they called me back.

**LAURA:** (laughs) Yeah, so when I worked there, I read a lot, a lot of books. A lot of random books that probably not very many people know. To this day, I still don't know everything that I had read. We didn't have Goodreads back then, to keep track.



**JASON:** Oh, I wish we did. I really wish that was a thing.

**LAURA:** Yeah.

**JASON:** Then I could've kept track of everything I read. It's funny. I'm finding myself now going out of my way to reread things I know I read just so I can add them to my Goodreads. Like it's like this weird-

**LAURA:** That's a good idea, though.

**JASON:** -It's like this weird like, it's not "*official*" until I put it on Goodreads.

(Both laugh)

**JASON:** And so I'm just constantly like "Okay, I need to reread this comic book. I need to reread this novel" because I read it before Goodreads was a thing and I need to make it official.

**LAURA:** Yeah, there's so many books that I read that I just, I don't remember anymore. Anyways, but then I tapered off again because I started college. So only college textbooks were allowed at that point.

**JASON:** Boo!

**LAURA:** Except for my genre fiction class, which was all graphic novels. So that was a pretty cool class.

**JASON:** Did we have that class together because I took, I took that class as well.

**LAURA:** I think I took it after you.

**JASON:** Okay. Okay.

**LAURA:** Because I think I borrowed one of your books and I feel bad to this day because I returned it and not a very good condition so I bought you a new one (laughs)

**JASON:** That's right. I forgot about that. You're right.

**LAURA:** I feel very terrible about that.

**JASON:** No, it's fine. Don't think- god, it was fine.

**LAURA:** Anyways, I picked up comic books also a little bit more in college and so that's where I started getting a little more into Marvel/DC stuff. I definitely leaned more towards Marvel because I was a huge fan of the X-Men movies

(both laugh)

**LAURA:** Which kind of plays into into my favorite genres now, which are sci-fi kind of stories. Very big on scifi, powered people, mutants. That's my jam. Space stories, time travel, multiverse, parallel dimensions, robots, AI. That's my, that's my kind of stuff. I love reading all of those kinds of futuristic stories because they're just so cool. And I'm like, you know, one day this technology could be real.

**JASON:** True. I mean that's how we got cell phones from Star Trek.



**LAURA:** Exactly. Exactly. And now we have we have not only cell phones but there's video, you can actually talk to people over video.

**JASON:** Hmm.

**LAURA:** So, yeah. I love, I love that kind-those kinds of books. YA and adult. I will read all of them. They're just so cool to me. But you actually kind of got me a little bit into the urban fantasy genres. So I started kind of picking those up and I was like, these are kind of cool. I like, I like these.

**JASON:** Okay, when you mentioned your jam, urban fantasy is totally my jam.

**LAURA:** Oh, yeah.

**JASON:** Yeah, like, and I didn't really realize it was a genre until a little later on. Because I always assumed fantasy was just like, high fantasy. Dragons and elves and castles, and princesses. And, and I've never really been big on high fantasy. But then, you know, you read the Harry Potter books and then I later on, I read The Dresden File books and I realized those are all urban fantasy. There's a fantastical elements just in a real life setting and that's what gets me super excited because I can relate to it a little more, but I still get the cool wizards and still get the cool spells and, you know, trolls on the bridges and dragons in the subways and I don't know. I love that stuff so much.

**LAURA:** I love that to you. You're right. It's being able to actually connect. Like I totally understand high fantasy. Like, it's so cool. Definitely a lot of creativity that goes into those types of stories but the urban fantasy is where I feel like I can actually put myself in that story.

**JASON:** Yeah.

**LAURA:** And that's kind of what is definitely drawing me into certain, into certain novels. So I like you, I didn't know urban fantasy was like, the term until a couple of months ago when I was asking you about it. Like, I knew what I liked. I knew this is the thing I like, when it's present day and stuff and you're like, "Oh, urban fantasy. That might be what you're talking about." I was like, "Oh, that's a thing?"

**JASON:** It's always great when you can put a name to it. Like when you know what you like but you don't know how to like vocalize it and then finally you get it. Oh, now this is going to make searching for stuff so much easier.

**LAURA:** Oh yeah. Oh yeah. And I'm still, I'm still learning. Like I don't even know what some of the technical terms are for some of the genres I like. But the newest genre I discovered is eco horror.

**JASON:** Okay.

**LAURA:** And I'm really digging that. I don't do horror stories but I'm really digging the eco horror which is basically, you know like, Earth or whatever terrain planets or whatever, something happens that is scary. And and I think the the number one that I- the number one book that I'm thinking of is *Annihilation* by Jeff VanderMeer, I think was his last name, which is also a movie. There's a movie adaptation. And that movie is why I also read the book and it was just fascinating. So I'm starting to kind of like find titles that are that are eco horror as well. So.

**JASON:** Cool. I've just recently started getting to horror so maybe eventually going to eco horror. One step at a time.

**LAURA:** (laughs) This coming from somebody who read *Goosebumps* growing up.



**JASON:** Look, those are horror in like name only. Come on. Like, "Oh, the sludge under the fridge is gonna get you." But also I think like kids naturally are more open to scary things. Like they like being scared a little bit so as a kid I think I was probably more into it. But as you get old-at least myself-as I got older, I got a little more like in my head and it's hard for me to not freak myself out when I read things.

**LAURA:** I get you.

**JASON:** Mostly movies. Like when I watch-I don't like horror movies at all. Like no, thank you. Because I just, I scare myself more than the damn movie itself.

**LAURA:** Same.

**JASON:** Because I might, I think of everything that *can* happen and they never do. But I still hate it. Hate that feeling.

**LAURA:** I'm the same way, but with me it's mostly that it kind of just stays in my head and I will have like, very vivid nightmares. (laughs)

**JASON:** I'm good for the nightmares. I escaped the nightmares, thankfully.

**LAURA:** (laughs)

**JASON:** Okay, so we should probably talk a little bit about how *you and I* know each other.

**LAURA:** I feel like they might want to know a little bit more about who's going to be talking and who they're going to listen to.

**JASON:** That's fair. I'm sure I would, too.

**LAURA:** Yeah, so Jason and I actually went to college together.

**JASON:** Mhmm. Mutual friends. And then we quickly became good friends because we bonded over a lot of the same kind of geeky stuff. Like, we talked about movies, TV shows, mention comic books.

**LAURA:** And that kind of grew into now and just kind of just been friends ever since.

**JASON:** Yeah. Gosh. You and I have been friends for over a decade now.

**LAURA:** I think so. What is it? 2021? Yeah.

**JASON:** Oh wow. Okay. I don't know how that happened. I mean not our-not our friendship. I mean this time passing. Just let me be clear.

(both laugh)

**LAURA:** Time went by really fast.

**JASON:** (laughing) Yeah.



**LAURA:** Well technically last year didn't happen. (laughs)

**JASON:** That's true. That's true.

**LAURA:** The yearbooks are going to go from 2019 to 2021. There's no 2020.

(Both laugh)

**JASON:** So, we first met in college. We worked on a few projects together, video projects, animation projects, both in school and then work on a couple of them outside of school once we graduated. And then eventually we decided to go into business together.

**LAURA:** Yep. And that business venture ended up turning into Oblivion Comics and Coffee, which was a local comic book store and coffee shop that we opened here in Sacramento, California. And that was so cool.

**JASON:** Yeah.

**LAURA:** It was just such an amazing concept and just experience overall having and running that business.

**JASON:** Yes, yes.

**LAURA:** It was pretty, pretty crazy. It was definitely, it was a small, definitely small business. It took us a long time to plan it. And finally got it-got it open in 2017, I think.

**JASON:** Sounds about right.

**LAURA:** So yeah, it was, it was pretty cool having the coffee shop and the comic shop and all the different people used to come through and talk with us and geek out over things. To have an online presence for the shop, Jason and I created *Oblivion Geeks* and we had weekly live streams where we actually got to talk about the movies and TV shows and whatnot that we were watching and geeking out over. And we also got to geek out over just all kinds of stuff in general books, comics, and whatnot.

**JASON:** Yes, I will say that the store involved way more people than just you and I but the one thing that you and I did together was the *Oblivion Geeks* side of things, which was our first taste of something similar to a podcast.

**LAURA:** That was kind of the first version of us creating some sort of geeky online entity, if you will.

**JASON:** Mhmm. Yeah. During those live streams and all that stuff was a lot of fun.

**LAURA:** Yeah.

**JASON:** Eventually, though, the duties of the shop, you know, became numerous and so doing a weekly stream just became impossible unfortunately. But I think it was probably around and you and I first started playing with the idea of doing a podcast because we like the idea of doing something where we can talk about these geeky stuff we liked but we just couldn't meet on a weekly basis.

**LAURA:** Yeah. It got pretty hard.

**JASON:** . We threw a couple different ideas and for one reason or another, none of them really stuck.



**LAURA:** Mhmm. Yeah. And, and unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we did end up having to close our doors to *Oblivion Comics and Coffee* last year. It really sucked.

**JASON:** Yeah.

**LAURA:** Still sucks, and it's *always* going to suck. But-

**JASON:** Yeah. Always.

**LAURA:** You know, it was, it was a really, it was a really cool business, a really cool space. Um, you know, one of our goals of the shop was to create community and to create a place for, for people who just wanted to geek out and hang out and, you know, feel comfortable. So, definitely miss it and keeping that in mind when we found that we had extra time now, we got into reading more and so now that we are reading a lot more than we had before, we were like, "Hey, remember how we wanted to start a podcast? Maybe we should do a podcast about all the books for reading." (laughs)

**JASON:** Yep. Yep. And then we were just like "Yeah, that makes total sense. This is the idea we're gonna go with."

**LAURA:** Yes. And so we reached out to some friends of ours over at *Before You Log Off*, which is another great geeky podcast, and we were able to pick their brains on how to get started on our podcast. And so with all of their help, *Shit We've Read* was born.

**JASON:** Tada!

**LAURA:** Aaawwww

**JASON:** So now, you know a little bit about our past. I figured we should probably talk about the future of the podcast and what you can expect. Every month, Laura and I will be choosing a book to read. It could be sci-fi, could be fantasy, YA, a graphic novel, maybe throw in a horror for Halloween? Who knows? We'll try to mix it up, keep it varied. And then we're going to do what we love doing best, which is geeking out about it.

**LAURA:** And just, just so, you know, and remember this, we are absolutely 100% *not* professional book critics, nor do we pretend to be.

**JASON:** Not at all.

(Both laugh)

**LAURA:** just like talking about the shit we've read and we hope that you also do, our dear listeners.

**JASON:** Mmm.

**LAURA:** So if you have ever finished a book and felt the uncontrollable urge to grab a friend and be like, "Oh my God, I need to talk about this book that I just read," then welcome to our podcast. This is for you.

**JASON:** Of course, the more friends to talk about books, the better. Obviously these episodes are going to feature Laura and I and the occasional guest host, but really the conversation is bigger than just us. While our episodes may end, the best conversations never do so we absolutely invite you to find us on social media, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Goodreads, probably even, and then give us your thoughts on any of the books that we talk about. Doesn't matter if it's the latest episode. Doesn't matter if you listen to an episode 2 years after it's been released. We're always going to want to talk about books.



**LAURA:** Or even talk about the books maybe we haven't read yet.

**JASON:** True. True.

**LAURA:** We are always open to recommendations.

**JASON:** Yeah. Yeah. If you read a book that's very similar to another one we read but better, let us know. If you read a book that's similar to one we read but horrible, but that's what makes a good, let us know.

(Both laugh)

**LAURA:** Well, I mean. We might like it more, you never know. (laughs)

**JASON:** You never know. You never know.

**LAURA:** So we are very, very excited to finally be starting this new journey in podcasting and we would absolutely love to have you, our listeners, part of that.

**JASON:** Absolutely.

(Closing music begins)

**LAURA:** So I think that's, I think that's everything.

**JASON:** I think that's it. That covers it for who we are. Thank you so much for listening. We really, really appreciate it. And go give our first episode a listen.

**LAURA:** Yeah.

**JASON:** And then, depending on when you listen to this, all the other episodes that are released.

**LAURA:** (laughs) Listen to all the episodes. All the things.

**JASON:** All of them. Marathon them. Okay, thanks so much for listening, guys.

**LAURA:** Thanks.

**JASON:** Bye!

**LAURA:** Thanks, guys. Bye!

**JASON:** This episode of *Shit We've Read* has been an Oblivion Geeks production hosted by Laura Benson and Jason Rico, with music by Joshua Chilton.

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**JASON:** Thanks so much for listening.