

Rogue Librarians, Episode 28 Crank (Part 2: Close Reading)

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Welcome to the Rogue Librarians, a podcast in which three librarians discuss banned books.

We are your hosts, Marian.

Dorothy.

And Alanna.

And we are the Rogue Librarians.

We would love for you to participate in our discussion.

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So let's go ahead and get started with the background.

Alanna, would you like to give us some background information about the book, Crank?

Yes, thank you, Marian.

So today we are continuing our discussion of Crank by Ellen Hopkins.

Published in 2004, Crank was Hopkins' first novel.

It was a New York Times bestseller and listed on several lists, including the New York Public Library's recommended for teens list and the Book Sense top 10 list.

It also received the International Reading Association Board all in 2005.

Crank has been among the country's most banned titles in recent years in public schools and libraries.

Crank was 38th on the ALA's list of 100 most challenged books from 2010 to 2019, as well as in the top 10 list in 2010, when it was number four, and in 2022, when it was number 10.

The reasons for the challenges include drug use, offensive language, and being sexually explicit.

Please listen to our previous episode to learn more about why it's been banned and about the historical context.

Yes, and just to remind our listeners, if you haven't listened to episode number one of Crank, we do want to let you know that we are issuing a trigger warning in this episode and in the book, we will be talking about drug use, a suicide attempt, sexual assault, and teen pregnancy.

So just wanted to make you all aware of that because these can be difficult topics.

Dorothy, are you ready to give us a summary?

I am.

So Crank is about a teenager, Kristina, who goes to visit her dad.

It's a court-ordered visit, but she really wants to go.

Her mom doesn't want her to go, but she really wants to go.

She has idealized views of her dad.

And he turns out to be kind of a deadbeat, works off the books in a bowling alley.

He drinks, he doesn't have enough food in the house.

He doesn't know how to talk to his daughter.

He talks about women in front of her.

He does drugs.

And, you know, pretty quick disappointment.

And seems like he lives in a seedy building.

But Kristina makes the most of it by flirting with an attractive boy who lives in the same building.

And the two start a relationship, and he introduces her to the monster, which is the drug crank, which is methamphetamines.

And dad doesn't really do much to stop her going down that path, if anything at all.

And so, you know, there's some tragedy around her relationship with this boy, Adam, but she has to eventually go home, because it's just like a two, three week visit.

But she is still addicted to, or has become addicted to crank, and blows up her whole life on the other ends, just trying to find a source for it.

It's also written in verse, and it's vividly describes the highs and lows of drug addiction.

Yes, thank you, Dorothy.

We wanted to focus our characterization segment on the main characters, but there are so many interesting characters we could have mentioned.

So just know that we decided to focus on the people who are most important in Kristina's life at this moment.

So I'm gonna start with our main character, Kristina Snow, who also calls herself Bree sometimes.

And she seems to have this whole other personality when she becomes Bree.

And she's not scared about talking to boys.

She's more, the way she acts is a little more sexualized and she is interested in getting to know this monster, Crank.

So she goes back and forth at first between Kristina and Bree.

And then eventually kind of lets Bree take over.

So at the beginning of the book, it is the summer before junior year.

She's 16 years old.

And near the end of the book, she turns 17, or there's a big moment when she turns 17, she has a party.

And it follows her throughout the choices she makes.

As Dorothy mentioned, she's really disappointed by seeing her dad, because it had been several years since she had seen him.

And she seems to be somewhat close to her mom and stepdad, though she feels like her mom is ignoring her by focusing on writing now.

And her mom seems very happy with her stepdad.

And she seems to feel kind of left out at home.

She has an older sister, Lee, who, as we talked about a little bit last time, she talks about in derogatory terms occasionally for being lesbian.

But she also seems to have had a close relationship with her sister, even though she doesn't tell her a lot of things anymore.

And she has a younger brother who she interacts with, but it doesn't seem like she is super close to at this point.

And she forms relationships with three different boys over the course of the novel.

And I think thinks that she is completely in love with Adam, her first boyfriend, in Albuquerque, and also with sort of her second slash third boyfriend, Chase, and you'll hear more about them in a little bit.

But she goes through exciting periods with each of them and also disappointments with each of them.

And we know before this all happened, she was a straight A student, she had friends she liked, and she seems to have certain goals in her life.

But once she quickly becomes addicted, that seems to be her main object is to get more of the drug.

And her friendships fall apart.

Her family can tell that she's acting weirdly, but they don't know what's going on and she doesn't confide in them.

And so pretty quickly, the life she had built for herself falls apart and she has to figure out which path she's going to go down as things develop.

Is there anything you two wanted to add before discussing the other characters?

I just think it's so interesting, the whole Bree situation.

Bree seems to behave like someone who has a lot more experience than Kristina.

But as we know, Bree does not have any more experience than Kristina, and I think that really, as part of what gets her in trouble, that sort of attitude that comes out with Bree, like she knows what she's doing when she doesn't.

Right.

That's a really good point.

It just gets her into even deeper trouble.

Yeah.

Yeah, and so then we have the parental figures.

Of course, there's mom, dad and Scott who is the stepdad.

So mom is Marie and she's an aspiring writer.

She has divorced Kristina's dad and has married Scott, the stepdad.

And I feel like she's trying to, you know, to put her family together, to make it a whole, healthy functioning family.

She's described by Kristina as being rigid and clean cut.

And Kristina doesn't feel particularly close to her mom.

And I think the feeling is mutual.

And I get the impression from, you know, the perspective, the little bit of perspective or conversation we get between mom and Kristina that mom would like for there to be more of a relationship with Kristina, but she's, you know, she's just got a lot going on.

She wants to be a writer, which takes a lot of time, and she's got this new relationship with Scott, and that takes a lot of time and energy, and Kristina's not her number one anymore.

You know, I guess I kind of almost feel like maybe from Kristina's perspective, she might feel like she's abandoned because her mom has this relationship with Scott now, although she likes Scott.

He's also very clean cut.

Kristina describes him as tall, lean and great looking for 40.

And he very much cares about Kristina as a father.

He wants what's best for her, and he is often shown in the book as trying to be like a father figure and saying, this is what we need to do to Kristina's mom.

He seems to have a clearer idea of what's going on.

Right.

And Kristina's mom may or may not want to see it, but he doesn't overstep his bounds.

He tells it to Kristina's mom and then kind of lets her dictate how it's going to go.

But yeah, he's involved.

The funny thing that we pulled into this description is that in the book, Kristina at some point describes him as smelling depressingly clean.

So mom and Scott are trying to raise this very clean cut family.

And then we have dad.

And dad has been absent for many years, it seems like.

Kristina has gotten the impression that dad, you know, has some flaws.

And certainly, you know, a big one for Kristina is that dad has been completely absent and silent.

And then apparently, suddenly, dad has decided that he wants to see his daughter.

And Kristina agrees to go and visit him for three weeks in Albuquerque.

So Kristina goes into this thinking dad's gonna be, you know, hero dad.

And it's not the homecoming that she had anticipated.

So her first impression is disappointing.

And then, of course, they get back to his apartment, which is in a seedy neighborhood.

And it's kind of a not a great building.

And so she's like, oh, and then, you know, she gets into the apartment and it's hot as Hades because it's summertime and it's Albuquerque.

It's just a bad situation.

And then she quickly finds out Dad is completely unreliable.

His job is very sketchy.

He uses a lot of alcohol.

He doesn't have any food in the refrigerator.

He's just not going to be Savior Dad.

He's just, you know, like he may want to have a relationship with Kristina, but he's not going to go above and beyond what he always does.

He's in his comfort zone.

He never even managed to take the day off work to hang out with her.

Exactly.

Like he invites her to come with him that first day.

And of course she's tired and she's like, yeah, no, I'll just rest here, which is how she meets the first boy, Adam.

But she's just, you know, it's just, he's just a disappointment from top to bottom to her.

He's, he doesn't follow through with his word.

He's and she, you know, she just gets the fact that he's not going to, he's not going to stop her from doing anything she wants to do.

But more importantly, he's not going to follow through to do anything she does want to do.

And that whole summer could have been very different for her had he, you know, I mean, no one said your dad has to live in a great place or have a great job.

But if he had just been someone who truly wanted to get to know her and had taken the time to spend with her rather than, you know, checking out for three or four days high on drugs, things could have been very, very different.

And that leaves the door open for Kristina to meet the first boy of the of the book, which I'll turn that over to you, Dorothy, to discuss the love interests.

I say love interest in quotation marks.

Well, the first one, Adam, is deeply, it's deep love of the way only a 16 year old can do it.

Right.

And I love the description.

His name is Adam.

I think he also goes by Buddy.

But that's kind of an interesting thing because she calls him Adam and introduces herself as Bree, so they both are having this sort of alter ego relationship.

But I love the first description of Adam, no shirt, hot bod, his that is.

So why did I break out in a sweat?

No shoes, barefoot, bare chest with a bare baby face to make the angels sing.

Nothing but ragged cutoffs, hugging a tawny six pack and a smile.

So therein lies the appeal, very attractive boy.

So she notices that there's a girl around, but the two of them seem drawn to one another.

And one thing leads to another, she's got nothing else to do.

So he keeps flirting with her and she eventually decides to go for it.

And Bree decides to go for it.

Adam, he seems very much like a regular, good-looking high school kid from the wrong side of the tracks.

He uses the drugs and smokes and drinks and all of that, but he seems to kind of have a handle on it, as far as we can tell.

He has a relationship with a girl, and still interested in another girl.

It's not an unusual story.

The two of them do really seem, once they decide that they are in love, they really seem intense about the whole thing.

It's a very intense relationship.

But it's interrupted when his other girlfriend tries to kill herself, and then they're very conflicted.

So with Adam, it ends that they love each other, but they have to separate.

And that goes downhill pretty fast.

Once she gets home, he's like, we should see other people.

I still love you.

I love you.

But he's maybe a little more pragmatic.

And he's living with the constant reminder and other relationship with the other girlfriend who has survived the suicide attempt, but not great.

She's not great.

There's physical issues from having jumped off a balcony.

So he's got that right in front of his face.

So I don't judge Adam for this.

He's maybe a little more realistic.

I also think, don't you, that he's got a case of guilt.

Oh, of course.

Yeah.

And I think they both do.

I think Adam and Bree have that case of guilt.

I do think that Bree, once Kristina goes back, it's there and it's looming, but it's not as present as it is for Adam.

But he does write to her sort of throughout.

But as soon as he says he wants to see other people, Kristina's like, OK, let's see what I can come up with.

And in the space of a day has already met like two boys.

Those are the other two.

So we've got Brendan, who's a lifeguard at the waterpark.

And Bree sort of comes out of nowhere to go, just directly flirt with him and gets his number.

And when you're talking about Bree, you're referring to Kristina, who calls herself Bree at this point, right?

I am, and I use Bree because that is how...

She's trying to be her.

That is how, that is who, that is which one of her names she is feeling when she goes up to talk to him.

And she very much says, Kristina would never do this.

Yeah.

And so he's interested.

And then she also runs into a boy named Chase from school.

He was, well, he's described as a football player, but he was known to use drugs and to be a little out there and maybe kind of a poet and hard to get to know kind of guy.

And because Kristina slash Bree is looking for drugs, you know, thinks, hey, this is another opportunity.

You know, I think that Chase might be able to find some.

And so she just hangs out with him and it turns out, you know, he's a good guy and she ends up deciding that she really likes him.

Brandon, on the other hand, is the one responsible for the sexual assaults.

And he's about as awful as a guy like that can be.

He doesn't, I mean, he rapes her, yes, but you know, it's not like he grabbed her off the street to rape her.

She went with him and she knew there was going to be sex, but he was just so awful about it.

You know, he was just like, are we doing this or not?

You know, you're a tease.

And just made her feel terrible and small afterwards.

So we don't like Brandon.

Brandon's a backup.

We do not.

We do not like Brandon.

And if you were dating someone like Brandon, dump him now.

Yeah, no, I love the scene where, and this is definitely Bree, goes up to some other girl at a football game and tells her to be careful.

I think her opening line is, hey, rape any virgins lately?

Or something along those lines.

Which, Balzy got to give that to Bree.

I actually really liked that scene.

Yeah.

Yeah.

So those are the boys.

Awesome, thank you.

So we'll move on into our second segment, which is talking more about some of the themes in the book.

And of course, one very clear obvious theme is addiction.

And more specifically that addiction destroys your life, but not only your life, it destroys the lives of others.

And we see that not just in what happens to Kristina in the book, but also by what has happened to her dad and inevitably her dad and her mom.

And perhaps the reason that mom's so squeaky clean cut and with squeaky clean cut Scott is a reaction to having been with someone who has some substance abuse issues.

But then we also see it in terms of the other characters in the books, in the book that are using in what has happened to Adam and then Adam's girlfriend, Lince, who we just mentioned makes a suicide attempt.

Dad sort of has this weird job where in the back room of the bowling alley, drug deals and drug use is happening and that leads to other things happening.

And, you know, one decision leads to another decision, leads to another decision.

And then in a mere three weeks time, we see Kristina slash Bree has a very strong addiction already to meth and how once she comes back to Reno and her, you know, clean-cut family, it's not enough to just, you know, have moved from Albuquerque back to Reno and leave behind what's in Albuquerque.

No, it's addiction is pervasive, it's sneaky, it's something that has changed her brain chemistry and her physical self and her, you know, she's just, she's on the path now.

And since, you know, mom and Scott and the family don't know, it continues to go and she continues to change her life as we see throughout the book in terms of cutting classes and no longer hanging out with her besties from the previous years of school and suddenly seeking out these boys and suddenly seeking out new friends who she's basically using to get to more crank.

And it just continues to escalate from there.

So I noticed right from the get go, like the first time she does the drug, she's nearly gang raped.

Right.

Yeah.

So it's like very clear connections to bad things happening when you're on the drug.

I was also thinking, just adding on to what you were saying, Marian, earlier, is that things escalate throughout the book.

So later on, she starts stealing drugs, right?

She buys them directly from a gang leader, and she steals her mom's credit card and pin number so that she can continue this habit.

And we know that her sexual experiences start while under the influence, and there's no discussion of protection or anything like that.

So it seems like she loses the ability to make good decisions and the consequences start piling up.

The next two themes we were going to talk about are tied to what Marianne was just saying.

So these are that choices have their consequences and growing up can be painful.

And I think you see those with addiction very obviously.

I think you can see it without thinking about addiction as well.

For example, the fact that growing up, you go through lots of changes and you have to figure out who you are and Kristina does not seem completely satisfied with who she is or what her relationships are like with all the members of her family.

And so sometimes people experiment to figure out who they are and who they want to be.

And we know that she at the beginning has had no experience with boys.

And then I think that lack of experience and maybe lack of discussion or education about it helps lead to these really dangerous circumstances that she becomes involved in.

And it seems like the road she takes is much more challenging than one that a lot of teens go through.

But I think for a lot of teens, there are painful moments.

And I think it's pretty common to make choices that they later regret.

And you can see her guilt and regrets in certain situations, and especially with Adam's first girlfriend, Lince.

And I think you see her regrets about Brendan.

So I think she is aware of some of the consequences, but she's not willing to face them always.

And one of the moments you see that the most is when she is considering getting an abortion, and she goes to Planned Parenthood.

And I am wondering if the fact that it cost \$500 and the fact that if it had been Chase's baby, would she have felt differently about it?

But the fact that it was Brendan's baby and he's the one who raped her, it's like she feels conflicted about it.

But it's like thinking that she feels movement from the baby is the moment she decides she wants to keep it.

And then her mom also seems happy the fact that she wanted to keep it rather than getting an abortion.

But she's making really big choices at that point.

And Chase offers to marry her before he knew it was Brendan's, but maybe he still would have done that.

And she doesn't want to hold him back from his dreams of going to USC and being able to do what he wants to do.

So the choices get bigger and have bigger effects on her own life and on other people as she goes through the book.

Yeah, definitely.

Well, if you just think of the very beginning, the choice that both Kristina and her mother make is to let her go to Albuquerque, court ordered or not, right?

I only got the impression that mom would have fought that.

And she was right to be worried, right?

Yeah, yeah.

I mean, the fact that she hadn't seen her dad or heard from him at all in eight years, like you said, I think they divorced when she was six.

And so she still has this image in her mind of her dad as being more of a loving dad.

And she doesn't realize who he has become.

And they seem like complete strangers to each other since they haven't seen each other in so long.

Yeah, yeah.

And well, so I was just thinking that that choice, both, well, on the part of the dad and the mom and Kristina really led to everything else happening.

As a parent, I was, how do you deal with that when your kid is just insisting that they go and the court is saying you have to send them and you know in your heart of hearts, it is not a good idea.

I feel like I would, I don't know, maybe have post for some kind of, maybe mom goes along or something.

Right, or dad comes there to visit for a while or something like that.

Yeah, exactly.

I think that sets everything else in motion because it's her dad's neglect of her and also sort of his egging her on, I would say, in a way with her boyfriend.

And also he doesn't seem to mind the drug use like however much he's aware of it, since he's addicted himself.

Yeah.

Yeah, for him, it's like a bonding moment.

I mean, sadly, but.

Right, and I think it's heartbreaking for her that her father wants nothing to do with her once he finds out about the baby, right?

I mean.

Yeah, he just stepped away.

Yeah, exactly.

He's with someone else.

He doesn't want anything messy or complicated like that in his life.

He doesn't want to have to be responsible.

Just as a grandfather even, he doesn't want to have any responsibility.

And so it seems like the fact that she wants to keep the child and that her mother supports that and her mother becomes, it seems, the primary caregiver for the child pretty immediately.

So without her mother, you can just imagine things would have been so much worse for her by the end.

I don't know how much you guys have read around.

There's a series.

There's two more books about Kristina slash Bree.

And there are other children.

And the parents in real life, the parents ended up adopting several children.

I saw that, yeah.

I just have such a hard time putting together this girl who's feeling somehow like her family is not enough in life, with these people who are willing to open up to all of these children and care for them even though they're going to have problems.

And I'm interested to read because there's also a book about, it's from the point of view of some of the kids.

Very curious.

And a lot of that is less experiential and more fictionally reading into stuff, but like it goes into the future, whereas the rest of them are all about things that had happened already.

But I definitely liked this book enough.

I'm invested enough in these characters.

I want to see where it goes.

Yeah, definitely.

Yeah, I agree.

Do you want to take us to the last theme?

Yes.

This theme was mentioned in an article I really enjoyed from Women on Writing.

They quoted from the book, so I'm going to read the quote, and then I will voice the theme.

If you acquaint yourself with yourself, you don't always like the person you find inside.

That's a quote from the book.

So just that introspection and being a double edged sword, not liking who you are, really they all kind of dovetail with each other.

Growing up can be painful.

You have to live with those consequences and those decisions.

And that turns back around on yourself.

And God knows, I know this is written, you know, 2004, but I feel like that idea really speaks to the problems with self-esteem and anxiety that people are having now.

Yeah.

Well, and I think this would be a good plug for mental health.

We need better mental health in this country, and we need to eliminate the taboo of mental health care.

Well, that lack of access to mental health care is definitely an issue.

Another issue is that a lot of times, health care providers are feeling a frustration because the system is putting people in places of vulnerability.

And then the psychologist is supposed to come in and say, hey, you know, you're poor, and you don't have enough food to eat.

Let me give you some coping strategies.

Right.

You know, like...

Right, exactly.

So there's so many layers of how these kinds of problems happen.

Yes.

And what we could do about them.

Yes.

But we must do something.

And at the very least, reading books informs us to make better informed choices.

Yes, it always comes back.

The books can be helpful.

The books.

Absolutely.

So are you all ready to move on to our final segment, Significance?

Sounds good.

And I'm ready.

All right, we thought we'd start with our question this time.

And the question that has been at the back of all of our minds, I think, is why does Kristina slash Bree, why does she start going down this road?

What do the two of you think?

I mean, she's in that situation.

She's got nothing to do.

She's infatuated with a boy and he offers her drugs, right?

I mean, it's just like perfect storm.

Yeah.

And everybody has a different perspective.

Every, you know, Kristina's perspective may have been, I'm not getting enough love from my mom.

And, you know, Kristina's mom's perspective may have been, I'm trying to show my kids how much I love them by being a writer at home so that I'm available to them, but I have to spend a lot of time writing and not giving them my full attention.

You know, just there's so many different perspectives as to what someone thinks they are doing in a loving way that may lead someone else to feel like they're not getting what they need.

And no one really knows what another person is going through.

And this has almost become cliché these days, but that's why we need to be kind to everyone.

Alanna, did you come up with an answer to the question?

Yeah, I agree with both of you.

I think it's a combination of things.

And I think, yeah, it probably comes down to feeling unloved or not loved enough.

And it seems like what she's especially interested in with Adam at first is this sensation of being loved and desired.

And as a 16 year old, she maybe doesn't completely understand what that looks like in a healthy way, maybe.

But that does seem to be what's driving hers, looking for love.

And I think it seems like at first the drugs are like, this is part of the lifestyle there of the people, the bowling alley and in the apartment complex.

And maybe she's looking to try something new and be someone new.

So, yeah, it's a little, I guess I found that part a little hard to empathize with, but I also know that I'm very lucky to come from a loving and stable household.

So I did not feel any sense of abandonment when I was young.

But I also, like having been close to someone with a substance abuse addiction, I think sometimes it can come on more slowly than you realize.

I mean, I think for Kristina, it was like a very quick time from the beginning of her experiences till like being addicted and craving it all the time.

But I think depending on the substance and the age of the person, I think sometimes it can be a little more gradual, and the person may be trying to cope with various feelings and trying to self-medicate.

I think that happens pretty frequently, but especially with the opioid crisis in this country, it seems like often it starts as taking painkillers after an accident or a surgery or something like that, but they're just so powerful.

It becomes all-consuming.

So it does seem like every person's experience is different, but Kristina's was a very quick jump into heading down this road.

So the quote that I have is from page 142 in Crank, and it is a scene between Adam and Kristina slash Bree.

I will call her Bree here.

And it's right after Adam's girlfriend, Lynn's suicide attempt.

And I'm just going to read it and then we can discuss it.

We sat on the floor, tangled up in each other, a knot of emotions, desperate for release.

And the more we kissed, the more we talked, the more confused we became.

He loved me.

He loved her.

He loved her first.

He loved me now.

I loved him.

I hated her.

I hated him for loving her.

I loved him for loving her still.

He wanted me.

He needed me.

He needed more to go to her.

Let her know he loved her still.

I wanted him.

I needed him.

I wanted him to forget her.

I needed more to let him tell her he loved her.

When he asked me to go along, some masochist piece of me agreed.

It's such a poignant piece of writing.

It really is.

That just struck me so much when I was reading it as well.

I mean, it's the want, the need, the feelings, that I don't know what to do with any of this.

And we're tangled, like we're in a physical, bodily knot, and so desperate, but with no direction of where to go.

And all of the emotions just continuing to go in cycles of feeling and, you know, just all the feelings and not knowing what to hold on to, so they just hold on to each other.

And I feel like this passage is really, you know, kind of symbolic, representative of the whole story of who Kristina is as a 16-year-old trying to figure out life and the pain of life, and that everything happens and everything has consequences.

It's like everything all wrapped up into one passage, and she goes along with it, even though it's not good for her.

I mean, that's kind of how it ends.

Yeah.

Do you want to say more, Alanna?

Oh, sorry.

I was just going to say, you remind me once again how beautiful her language is.

I mean, as we said in the last episode, the beauty of the poems, the depth of emotions she's able to reveal, it's why it's a heartbreaking book.

It really draws you in.

Yeah.

I love that at the core of all of those emotions, they both know kind of what the right thing to do is, which is for him to go see her.

I loved him for loving her still, that line.

She hates it, but she loves it.

That's part of what makes them a good person.

And she wants them to be a good person.

And she later wants Chase to be a good person, and she wants to be good, even though her choices are all kind of pointing the other way.

Yeah, it's heartbreaking.

But I think that's one to just let sit there.

Dorothy, did you want to go ahead and go into a song, TV slash TV show slash movie?

Yes, so as so often happens, I think of music.

And you'd all have probably heard the song Arms of the Angel by Sarah McLachlan, which most well known for being the backdrop to very sad doggies that need adopting.

Yes.

So, I mean, if you've seen those ads, you know how this song can just produce tears.

But what you may not know is that Sarah McLachlan wrote the song for all of her fellow musicians who had succumbed to drug overdoses off and while on the road, touring.

So, just some of the lyrics, there's always some reason to feel not good enough and need some distraction.

Memories seep from my veins, just like when you really hear the lyrics, you can hear the effects of the drugs and how they're searching for a way to sort of deal with the stress of fame and being on tour and feeling disconnected.

So, I thought that it was a very poignant song to go with this book.

Give it a listen.

Yeah.

I think it definitely is.

I'm just reading through the lyrics as you said some of them out loud and the ones that you didn't say.

Yeah.

It's the perfect choice, it turns out, for the story.

Yeah.

I'm looking at one now.

It don't make no difference escaping one last time.

It's easier to believe in the sweet madness.

Oh, this glorious sadness that brings me to my knees in the arms of the angel.

That is so clearly escaping into the drugs and looking for that sweet madness.

Yeah.

It's heartbreaking.

I need to go put it on right now.

I just want to cry right now.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Pass that effect.

I was a big Sarah McLachlan fan and I'm a big Sarah McLachlan fan back in the day.

Well, thank you for sharing that, Dorothy.

Well, should we wrap up our discussion of Crank?

I think I've used up all the emotion I have left.

Yes.

Yeah.

I mean, as we said earlier, this is such a challenging book to read because so many painful things happen, but it's also so well done.

And if it can help teenagers, especially who are dealing with some of these choices and feelings to make better choices than Kristina slash Bree made, I mean, that's just incredibly important.

So I'm really glad that I have finally read it.

So thank you for helping us choose that.

Next time, we're going to move on to a new book.

We're going to be reading *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky.

So please join us next time for our discussion of why that book has been banned and some of its historical context.

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And also, if you know of anyone who needs to listen to this episode and of course the first episode of Crank, please direct them to it.

And thank you for that.

Also, thank you to Chris for creating the music, to Heather and Lizzie for their assistance in previous episodes.

This episode is edited by me, Dorothy.

Yay, Dorothy.

And of course, thank you to our wonderful patrons for your financial support.

We couldn't have done this podcast without any of them.

Finally, thanks to all of you for reading with us because books are meant to be read.