

The Devil's Library Episode 1 – “I’m Thinking of Ending Things”

[Intro music]

Leraje

Welcome to a new podcast. It was kind of new podcast. It's a podcast about Satanists talking about books that they love. It's a continuation of the minisodes that Ligeia and I were doing on Gospod. We just decided to separate them out, but this time we also have a guest with us, and that is Pike.

Welcome.

Pike

Hello. Hail Satan.

Leraje

Hail Satan. And also Hail Satan to you too Ligeia.

Ligeia

Hail Satan.

Leraje

So last time we talked about Piranesi, didn't we?

Ligeia

Yes.

Leraje

Yeah, yeah. And this time we are talking about. Drumroll, drumroll, drum roll.

Ligeia

I am thinking of ending things. Ian Reed. That's the name of the book, guys. Okay. Sorry.

Pike

Are you all right?

Ligeia

I'm still, I'm still here. Yeah. Sometimes the thoughts are really incredible, but we will get there. But, yes, this is the name of the book.

Leraje

You'd already read it, hadn't you?

Ligeia

Yes, I reread the book for this. And also there is a movie with the name, so maybe people will be connected to some of them.

Leraje

Have you read it previously as well, Pyke?

Pike

No. And someone asked me what I was reading and I said, oh, I think this is going to be a book about suicide and mental health, which I guess it kind of is. But then I realised it's a. It's a horror book.

Ligeia

Yeah, it's a different kind of.

Leraje

Yeah, it's, it's. I, I, it was completely new to me. The only thing I knew about it was the title. But beyond that, I mean, like I just said, I'm thinking of ending things. And after I thought, oh, no, then I realised it was a book.

Ligeia

Yeah. And you guys, have you seen the movie? No, because I just mentioned it, so. Because it's maybe good to compare them, but if you haven't, it's fine.

Leraje

You said it wasn't very good, so I didn't bother.

Ligeia

Yeah, I did say that. I'm sorry, I, I hate that when I say it because you, you are allowed to have your opinion and then I can tell you I think it's horrible.

Leraje

Yeah, that's true.

Ligeia

But maybe I'll watch it. Yeah. Yeah, sorry.

Pike

It does say it's a Netflix film. Generally, Netflix films are not great.

Leraje

Yeah, that is true. That is very true.

Ligeia

And when you like the book, I don't know about you, but myself, if I really love a book, I'm scared to watch a movie because it's. Usually I'm really upset after that. Like, no, you don't know.

Leraje

Yeah, they tend to ruin it.

Ligeia

Yeah, yeah, okay, whatever. Like how do we start this? Maybe we should, we should say that we are going to spoil the book as always, as usual. It's not easy to. With this book. I, I think I say this every time anyway. But like really with this book is really not even possible to not bring any spoilers into this.

Otherwise we would just be here for five minutes and tell you to read it and that would be it, I think.

Leraje

And especially with this book because you know, unless we introduce some spoilers, all we're going to be talking about is a car ride. And that's pretty much it.

Ligeia

Yeah.

Leraje

And so it's a little bit more than that.

Pike

I mean to be fair, that is two thirds of it.

Leraje

It is. That's true.

Ligeia

True. Yeah. It's a short story. So it's a long ride and a short story.

Leraje

How long is it? Have we got a page for it?

Ligeia

I do have the book here, so I think it's like 210 pages, right?

Leraje

Yeah. So to me, when I first started reading it, I thought I'm thinking of ending things. What could that mean? It could mean that they're thinking of ending a relationship or it could mean like pike said, you know, they're talking about self harm or suicide or something like that. And you start off thinking it's about ending a relationship and then at the end you think, okay, maybe it's not.

Maybe it's about the other thing. It's a very, very slow reveal in my opinion of someone who's lost their grip on reality completely. Does that sound fair? I'm trying not to give blatant spoilers at this point in the recording, but that's. That to me is pretty much sums up what it's about.

Pike

I thought this was, like I said, I thought it was going to deal with suicide. But then I read on the COVID that it was about a relationship and the woman who's thinking of maybe ending the relationship. So then I thought her boyfriend was going to flip out and chase her around with an axe or something once I started reading.

And it obviously wasn't anything like it.

Leraje

Yeah, I mean there was like, there was quite a lot of red herrings thrown in the phone calls that she was getting that always came from inside the house. And then we got to his parents house and things got very fucking weird very fucking quickly indeed. That was, that was surreal. That whole section in the house was very surreal.

Ligeia

So how I understood when I first read the book, I think rereading I will just say that re reading and maybe even re watching the movie.

Leraje

Should.

Ligeia

Be necessary for everybody because it brings you a completely new, you know how it's gonna end. You know, you have your ideas which you didn't have walking into this first time. The first read was incredible for me. I couldn't. I couldn't. Like I had to sit down and really think, like, this is awful what just happened.

I knew it's gonna be a horror movie, you know, book. Sorry. So the. The dread is there since the. The first page. You can feel something is really wrong. Something is so odd. You. You can't really put your finger on it. Like for the first. I don't know, until the end almost. You.

You know something is very wrong, but you don't know. Is it her? Is it him? Is it somebody like a third person? What's. What is. What's bothering me? You. You have that feeling like, ah, what is going on?

Pike

The collar.

Ligeia

Yeah, the collar. Now the. The memory of that stalker. You know, there are so

many little things that they don't come back. The Mrs. Veal. You remember the lady that was collecting the fat from the beacon. I still don't understand that little. So there are little things that are incredibly subtle in the story.

You can just think like, this didn't even need to be here. Maybe he didn't. But it's there and it's gorgeous, it's beautiful. It creates that. That dread. Why I loved it so much. But the reread was like building another level of understanding. Maybe it's like honour to the author because this book and the way it's written, it is a masterpiece.

Like this. This. The plot is not new. I mean, mental health is real and it can be really terrifying. It is usually that is quite often in any horror movies, horror stories you can see. But the way Ian did this, it's so unique. It's like you can't really forget this book. I don't think it's possible.

I. Yeah. And so I thought. It's like when I reread it now, I was thinking maybe it's one of the things that the book is about. It's not just this, but this was a new level that I just now realised was going on. Like the constant question about being in a relationship with another human being, your partner versus being alone.

It's not judgmental. It's not like, this is better, this is worse. It's just the constant questioning of both. Because none of that is easy.

Leraje

No, I mean, the first, you know, third of the Book. Maybe that's what I thought it was really about the couple. The subtext of it was about being in a relationship versus not being in a relationship. And like you say, not in terms of judgement, not saying one's better than the other, but just the way that the two.

The two different types of being.

Ligeia

Right.

Leraje

Yeah.

Ligeia

What do you think about the way they. They spoke like, those dialogues? Did you enjoy it? Was it annoying to you? Because it's slow. It's slow burning.

Pike

I enjoyed the dialogues. It read very much like it was written for a film script. I thought the whole book. I wonder if the author was contemplating a film script when he was writing it. There were moments in the dialogues where I thought it sounded a little bit off. Where, for example, she's telling him a story and she keeps interrupting, saying things like, oh, do you need a break from the story?

And it's just. Unless you're telling some kind of very dark or traumatic story, it's just not what people say. You know, you. You just go on.

Ligeia

Right.

Pike

So that. That was a little. Little off for me.

Ligeia

Stood out to you, like, it's not necessary.

Leraje

I did. I also noticed that. But by the time we got to the end of it, I thought maybe there was a reason for that. I mean, nobody can say what. What one person finds traumatic and one. And another person doesn't. And given what we know about. Oh, fuck it, we're gonna spoil it.

I'm just gonna. I'm just gonna rip the bandaid.

Ligeia

You have to do it. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Leraje

Given that we know that it's about one person at the end. At the end of the whole thing. Maybe when he, as she was saying, do you want me to stop? Do you want me to stop talking about, you know, do you want me to pause? Maybe he did find it traumatic. Maybe he did find talking about those things traumatic.

Ligeia

That's how I understood. Maybe.

Pike

See, that's. That's the sort of thing like. Geo. Did you pick up on this when you were reading it the second time or was it when you read it the first time, it was kind of clear to you by the end?

Ligeia

You mean the idea of it is one person and this is happening in their head? And maybe the dialogue is a little bit odd sometimes because of that? Like, yeah, it's not a real communication between people. I needed the reread. I did. After I read it, I was thinking back, maybe this is what was happening.

But as I was reading it for the first time, I didn't. I didn't know why Those dialogues were so odd. Sometimes I enjoyed it because, you know, I speak to myself and it's weird. If it was in a book, people would be like, thank you, I'm not reading this. This is weird. There is no nothing.

Leraje

So I will, I'll fully admit that after I finished it I went back and read and reread immediately the bit from, from the moment that she goes into the school.

Ligeia

Oh, because she follows him.

Leraje

Yeah, because I was pretty sure I understood what was going on, but I wasn't 100% sure. So I just wanted to reread just that last section just to make sure that I had understood it.

Ligeia

And did you prove that you were right or.

Leraje

I'm not sure whether I got anything new from it or whether I just reconfirmed my okay. Misunderstanding. I don't know. But I think it became clearer to me having sort of like reading it and then thinking, I think I got that, I'm just going to double check. And then reading it again. That, yeah, I think that's what, what was good.

That's how I interpreted it anyway.

Ligeia

It's not completely linear anyway. I mean the story goes like they are travelling in the car. Yes. You can follow that like time wise but with the dialogue they are going back and forwards and backwards and all over the place.

Leraje

Oh yeah. From the moment they go into the school, it gets very, very weird.

Ligeia

Yes. I mean even when they finally arrive at Jake's house, the parents house, that part is weird in a different way I think. It's like really like the tension, the build up of the tension, like it pays off. You can feel the tension through the book. But then when they arrive, the weather changes, it gets worse.

It's really cold. He doesn't want to go inside. She, she's like, what? Why, why do I need to walk in the snow now? Like I'm hungry. Hello. You want to show me your farm? I can't even see it, it's dark. And then she sees a farm that is really, really not nice. Like why did you want to show me this?

I was thinking like, what is this, boyfriend? I mean I would like to see the animals, but maybe feed your girlfriend first. Meet the parents, get her a coat.

Pike

Not the dead ones exactly, but like.

Ligeia

She sees the dead animals and he's like, well that's, that's okay. This is what it is. I'm like, no, that's not. I mean, of course animals also die, but this was only death. Everywhere she, she went like, how is he? How is he not seeing this you.

Leraje

Don'T go out of your way to show your new girlfriend.

Ligeia

No.

Leraje

All the dead animals you've got on your dad's farm.

Ligeia

To be fair, confusing.

Pike

He sort of foreshadowed by suddenly telling her about the tales of a sheep in the car.

Ligeia

Oh, yeah.

Leraje

Yeah.

Pike

I was reading that. I figured, I hope this is not true.

Ligeia

I. I don't even know. I thought about it, like, do people do this? Why. Why would they, like, leave the tales alone? Yes. I don't know if people do it. Please stop people.

Leraje

Yeah. Or at least tell us why.

Ligeia

If animals are suffering. I can't. I can't deal with that. But yeah. The dread that you were. Like, when she entered the school, that was where I would say the horror. Like, the real. Like, what is gonna. Like, who is gonna kill her? Who is it? Is it the Shining situation? You know, like, crazy Jack running around or

what?

Leraje

I mean, there was kind of. I think he. The author, Ian Reed. Reed. I think he was trying to hint or sort of like, push another red herring on us because. Because there was a bit before they got to the school, when they were still at Jake's house, when she went down to a kind of like, laundry.

Ligeia

Room type thing, basement in the house.

Leraje

And I, at that point, I was getting strong. Strong serial killer vibes.

Ligeia

Yeah.

Leraje

And I think maybe the author was trying to keep that kind of, like, red herring alive a bit. By the time they got to the school, wasn't quite ready to show his hand. And he just sort of wanted a float the possibility that maybe Jake was there.

Ligeia

Like, I don't know if you guys also had so many ideas, like, what is actually going on? I thought he killed the parents. They are not alive, and he's talking to their corpses. That's not true. But I was thinking, like, when the situation in the bathroom with the fly, I'm like, all right, there we go.

A fly. There we go. It's gonna be there. Corpses. No.

Leraje

Rotting corpses.

Ligeia

Yes. No. So I was thinking. I was clever. I was not.

Pike

I think by that point, I was thinking already about the brother.

Leraje

Yeah.

Pike

And I thought it's because of the painting in the basement has a woman and a child. And I thought maybe mother has some kind of illness, and then her son, his brother, did as well, and maybe they kept him in the base.

Leraje

Well, right. Yeah.

Ligeia

But, you know, it's still possible that something happened in the basement. There were the scratches. He was saying it was a dog, but why would you keep a dog in your basement? And with the paintings, who would be painting in the basement. What. What is. I don't know what that was. I don't understand that.

Leraje

Maybe in a slightly different book we would have got the story about his. A lot more about his childhood, because I kind of get the feeling it wasn't the greatest childhood in the world.

Ligeia

Maybe he was trying just to paint a picture of, like, this was not a nice

environment to grow up in. Like, some things I still don't understand. That's what I'm trying to say it would have been.

Pike

I think it suggests that idea about a brother because it's quite an old thing. So I don't know if I don't want to say a particular time period in case I get it wrong, but when families had disabled children, they would often lock them up either in attics or basements to kind of keep them away from, I don't know, people seeing them or having to see them themselves.

Ligeia

They were ashamed of them.

Leraje

Yeah, yeah.

Ligeia

It was a stain.

Leraje

Yeah. I mean. And that would have made it a very gothic kind of novel.

Ligeia

Yeah, yeah.

Leraje

There's that famous bit in Jane Eyre when Jane is at first with Mr. Rochester and Grace Poole bursts into her room and, you know, she's obviously been hidden away. That bit fucking terrifying being Jane there, by the way. I was scared shitless during that little bit.

Pike

It's a creepy book.

Leraje

Yeah, yeah, it is. It is.

Ligeia

Yeah. That is.

Leraje

But, yeah, that. That. I think what if. If the story had been about a literal brother and maybe it was. Yeah, I think it would have been quite a gothic take on.

Ligeia

Yeah, well, he kept it open. The author maybe wanted us to have questions because I think he actually really likes questioning and questions. He said it multiple times in this book. Like, questions are better than answers. We love questions. And I loved it. I'm full of questions and I don't bother finding answers.

I'm like, oh, these are questions. Bye. You know, like, who cares? You will not find answers to everything. So even. Even what I said, like, questioning what. What is better for humans to be in a. In, like a coupled life with somebody to share your environment, your everyday life, to respond to their mood, to their health, to their, you know, how they work with time.

It's not easy. It's challenging. But also, if you're. If you are living alone, you might really get lonely. And it's depressing when parents die or you don't have siblings. It's like you are really, really alone, which is great to have your own bed and not listening to anybody snoring. My husband is not listening.

But now I know what I'm saying. You know like you don't have to respond to

another human being 24 7. Yeah but the question is like maybe if we could like you know have a week off week there that would be really nice balanced life. But that. That's not how it works. So it is really a question.

There is no answer to that. I don't think it is.

Pike
Here's another question for you.

Ligeia
Hit me. So when she.

Pike
When the final. The ending happens.

Ligeia
Yeah.

Pike
I don't know if it's even worth not spoiling by this point but let's see. When the end happens. Do you think that's because of the potential for breakup? So that one personality wanted to kind of finish or was that out of loneliness is. You know what. What actually was the trigger?

Ligeia
I. I think Leraj, you can have a little think because I read it twice. So I think self talk like a monologue of a person that has decided what's going to happen. That decision has been made and now this is like a stage between the decision being made that is clear and the actual act of finishing something ending where there was question about what is going to be of.

Of me, of anybody of a human when you die. Because we are just. We are. According to the words of this book, we are mostly a collection of memories that we created in our life which is not the real. It's not reality. It's memories. And no memory is like. It is based on something that happened, but it's not real.

It is what we remember. It's the reality happens only once when it's happening. Everything after that one minute after that it's not exactly the true. So we are a collection of these memories and that creates, you know, the life like of course we are an animal. We are. We have a body that's physical but like everything else that is inside us.

Like what is it? You have hopes, you have dreams, but that's only based on what you remember, what you experienced already. You can't base your hopes on anything that you haven't seen, felt. You know, you always go to your past. So that's one question. I decided I'm gonna do something. But what's gonna happen?

What's gonna be left of the memories I had? And he knows those memories are not even real. So he is creating this whole story based on regrets, hypotheticals, what could have been if I only spoke and asked for her number. I don't even. She doesn't have a name for fuck's Sake. She doesn't have a name.

Leraje
Do you know what? I've never even noticed that until near the end.

Ligeia
She doesn't have a name. Not once in the movie. They had to create, yeah, a situation. She had like three or four names that were like changing. So it was creating a question, like, why is she Lucy? And then she's whatever, Amos, whatever. Sophie, whatever. It was changing. I'm like, okay, this is how they did it.

Because you need a name to talk, you know, but in the book you don't. There is a

no name. So this is what I think. The trigger, maybe. I think it was even there. I'm not going to be looking for those words. But he was saying, like, yes, I know I'm alive. I am alive, but I'm completely empty.

There is nothing. I don't feel anything. There was the question of sadness and happiness. He was saying both are completely normal and we shouldn't be asking about like, sadness. Sadness is just a feeling, but depression is something else. And there was the whole paragraph about depression. I can't. Because that was triggering for me.

Yes. So I think it was based on regrets and questions what could have been. Like. I think we all go through that. You know, you. You take one road through your life and. And you can't go back and try that. Like, what would have happened if I didn't marry or if I did to.

Did like study at a different school or a different field. I can't go back.

Pike
That's right.

Ligeia
What time do you have?

Pike
Never closes at the same time. So are you saying that then her. When she's thinking about ending things, it's not actually an interaction between different personalities such it's really ending as in the end, as in committing suicide.

Ligeia
It could be both. I mean, maybe. Maybe the regret that the relationship actually never happened is worse because it's idolised, it's romanticised. He only thinks it's gonna be. It would have been beautiful. I would have this partner, I would have this beautiful life. I wouldn't be alone. But it's not always the truth.

Sometimes you wish you never met that person and you don't want to see them again. You know, so. But if you don't have the experience, you might be romanticising and then you feel regret because you're like, he was old and like, what's the point? I'm not gonna change.

Leraje
I wondered. I mean, there was a. After I finished reading, reading that last bit the second time, I thought to my. One of the things that I thought to myself was has he actually already carried out the act? And this is. You know how they say your whole life flashes before your eyes before you die?

Pike
Uh huh.

Leraje
I wondered if that was it. The whole book was that last flash of your whole life before you died.

Ligeia
That's a different level.

Leraje
That's a fucking dark thought to throw out there.

Ligeia
I know, but it's a dark book. What do you mean? It's good. It could be.

Pike
I think it made me think of, I think R.D. Lang wrote when he was, I think, writing about schizophrenia. But he said if you don't have external experiences

and you just have your inner world and you are just interacting with that, it's great to start with. But because you're not feeding any input from the outside, it becomes more and more impoverished, smaller and smaller, until at some point you, you know, the person starts becoming very depressed and it can no longer.

No longer provide that nourishment.

Leraje

Yeah, it's not sustainable in the long term because there's. There's no fresh input coming in.

Ligeia

Yeah, that's interesting. The only argument against what you said, Larage, maybe, is that the whole book at the end seems to exist as a. Like a journal diary. Yeah, that is left.

Leraje

That's true.

Ligeia

Well, if that might also be just a fiction. But I thought he actually wrote this as his diary because it was found by those. I don't know who they were.

Leraje

That's true. Actually, I have forgotten him.

Ligeia

But I like that idea. That's horrible of me.

Pike

I mean, we don't know if this is exactly what they found because they found some writing that is also true. Yeah.

Ligeia

Oh, you're right.

Leraje

Yeah, yeah. They said. Didn't they say it was. Didn't they say something like it was incoherent or it wasn't very coherent or something like that?

Ligeia

Yeah, you can say that about the book.

Leraje

You can. That's true. That's the whole book.

Ligeia

I mean, like As I said, Mrs. Veal and the driving lesson, the candy wrappers. I. I really don't know what that was. For example, like that was.

Leraje

Maybe it was something as simple as his psychosis was so well developed by that point. He was inventing memories for his invented Personas. Yeah, maybe. Who knows?

Ligeia

It's well written because really these questions. It really looks like mental illness. It's. I can believe this is how it, how it is. It didn't feel fake to me. That was really scary.

Leraje

Without wanting to sort of like out myself completely, I do have some experience in that area, so I wouldn't say it was 100% accurate. But it's certainly, you know, the flavour of schizophrenia certainly comes through not in a literal word

by word retelling, but in the sort of flashes of emotion and the flashes of reality and unreality and the inability to really, truly be able to differentiate between what is definitely happening and what's definitely not.

Do we think that, and this is my question for both of you. Do we think that the. The stop off at Jake's parents actually happened at all other than in his head?

Ligeia

No, I'm not sure how it would happen because.

Leraje

Well, I'm thinking if, if. Let's say that I'm. I'm completely wrong. And there was a car journey, but it was just Jake.

Ligeia

Ah, that's how you mean?

Leraje

Yeah.

Ligeia

Like, did he go.

Leraje

Yeah. I mean, if we are proceeding on. On the very loose assumption that he was thinking of ending things in that literal sense, would he might he want to stopped off at his parents to say a last goodbye?

Ligeia

But they were dead. But he could still. Well, if they were dead. Okay. They said.

Pike

I think you're correct, that there was a car journey because I think the girls at the Dairy Queen were real. When one of them says, I'm worried.

Leraje

About you see, I got a completely different take on that. The Dairy Queen.

Ligeia

On the Dairy Queen.

Leraje

Yeah.

Pike

Okay.

Ligeia

Yeah.

Leraje

To me, that was the most surreal and unreal moment of the whole book. I'm sure that Jake did go to. I mean, a Dairy Queen in itself is an odd choice. It just felt like there was three. There was three members of staff and he only knew one. And when I say he.

I mean her only knew one of them or thought she knew one of them. And I don't know, it just felt that. That whole section in the Dairy Queen felt very sort of like David Lynchian.

Ligeia

There we have him.

Leraje

Yeah, it was very. I mean, yes, the whole book is surreal. The whole book is very odd. But that bit in particular really kind of like. I don't know, it really stood out to me as a particularly surreal.

Pike

I assumed that the reason why he or she recognised one of them was because they were likely. I mean, she mentions they were like students. So if Jake worked as a janitor at school, caretaker, he would have run into students.

Leraje

Good point.

Ligeia

And also the choice of Dairy Queen. I was looking for this. It's in the book at the end. Like, you know, the parts where the other people are talking about how they found him.

Leraje

Oh, right, yeah.

Ligeia

It says his hearing had become. He had become pretty bad. He had allergies. To certain foods. Milk, dairy, delicate constitution, blah, blah, blah. He was scared of the basement. So maybe his health was really not, not the best. And the Dairy Queen was something he never could actually do. I don't know Dairy Queen, but it sounds like, you know, ice creams and stuff made of milk.

So I think he never could. And other kids maybe could have been going there and enjoying ice cream. And he was always this weak, weird kid with allergies, maybe even rushes. Maybe he was bullied. You know, the girl, she had the rashes and it's just like the way the other two girls treated her was really upsetting.

I was like, haha, I'm ready here, girl. I wouldn't be able to work with people. No. But this is what I thought. Maybe he was, you know, mixing stuff in his head like, oh, I never actually could have had an ice cream even. I don't know.

Pike

Recently I read another book where an important scene takes place at the Dairy Queen. My theory is that you have these American writers who just, you know, drive down to their local drive.

Ligeia

Yeah.

Pike

And then they incorporate it into their. In their books.

Ligeia

Don't forget to say it's five blocks away, which I know exactly how far that is.

Leraje

Yeah. Everything's always five blocks away.

Ligeia

Yeah. It's only two. Two blocks away. Well, yeah, thank you. But. Yeah, I know. I know what you mean. I need to pay attention. And if I see Dairy Queen in my life, I might just enter just to see, like, what's this about? I have no idea.

Leraje

I think it's. It's kind of like a franchise type.

Ligeia

Yeah, I think so. Ice cream thing and like drinks with, you know, all this ice.

Leraje

Was there anything in the book or the way it was written or any aspect of it at all, which either of you found annoying or wrong or not within the spirit of the rest of the book? I didn't. I'm just curious because I've read a couple of reviews of things other people have said.

Pike

It's not. Not that it was incongruent in any way. This is maybe coming a little from a different angle, but I'm not sure how I feel about using disability and mental health as a kind of source of horror.

Leraje

Yeah. It's a bit of a trope, isn't it?

Pike

Yeah. And I mean, it does. It works because obviously we do have that fear. It feeds into a fear that actually exists, but also it makes that fear bigger. It. It feeds it as well. So I'm. I'm a little on the fence. I mean, I know Artistic licence and everything. But I'm not sure how.

How ethical that is.

Leraje

Yeah, funnily enough, that's. There was a. I can't remember. I should have kept the link, but I didn't. There was a review in the Guardian that said pretty much the same. The same thing that. I mean, this. It came out when the book came out. So we're talking about what, four or five years ago?

A bit more than that. I'm not quite sure when it was published.

Pike

Right.

Ligeia

I think it's like 2017 or something.

Leraje

2017. All right.

Ligeia

Longer. That's just. I pulled it out of my feet. I don't know.

Pike

Says 2016.

Leraje

2016. All right, so nearly 10 years ago. Oh, God. Maybe it wasn't the Guardian then. I'm sure it was Guardian. I don't know. I can't remember. I'll try and dig it out. If I find it, I'll put it in the show notes.

Pike

Turns out you are reading the Sun.

Leraje

Jesus Christ.

Pike

They probably don't have a book. Book review.

Leraje

As Far as the Sun Goes. I'm. I'm always just impressed they managed to string two words together in a meaningful sentence.

Ligeia

It's a good. It's a valid point, Pike. I. I love this book and I'm. I. I really love everything. Psychology and psychiatry and stuff. But I agree it has that little aftertaste or bitterness around it because it's. It's a moral question, I think. And it's not only just this. For example, have you seen the Substance, the.

The movie? No.

Pike

No, I haven't.

Ligeia

No. Okay. But any. Anyway, maybe not just that movie, but any movie that is about ageing, you know, and like anti ageing, you know, this battle is usually about women. Not surprised. But I always feel we know this is an issue. I don't need to be reminded with another movie that this is an issue.

I think the overexposure of that is not helping. And this somehow, what you said, pike, about this book and mental health. I think I would want to hope that in the current world everybody knows that it's not made up and finally we are getting somewhere with the mental health. It's not ideal. It's still really shitty to get help and to be understood and put on some track where they can help you.

It's. It's really tiring and exhausting and there is still that stigma and stuff around it. Like it's. It's not easy, but I think it's getting better than it was, at least. Like, we have autism and adhd other things. It's, it's, it was so not easy to get diagnosed with this. It's, it's nothing new.

Like these things, Autism, adhd, like, it's nothing new. It's, it's not that they needed to find a word for that. It's, you know, like, it's always struck.

Leraje

Me as funny what the hell, that something, something comes for some reason or other. The, the kind of like the cultural zeitgeist suddenly starts mentioning things like an autism is a good example. So 20, 25 ish years ago, it became part of the cultural zeitgeist and it became the accepted thing for the government and the medical profession to say, look, if you think someone you know is on the spectrum or you yourself is on the spectrum, go and see your doctor.

Here's, you know. And then 20 years later, we're now at the point where services are completely overwhelmed and there are people saying to you, you're not, you're not disabled enough. We're going to cut your benefits. And. Yeah, and it's like, hell, get you, you know, just decide what you want to do. Do you want to help people or not?

Ligeia

Yes. It's a good question about the book and books like this and movies like that.

Leraje

Conversely, just to play devil's advocate, do we think there might be an argument that it's kind of the role of the horror genre in particular to hold up a mirror to society in terms of things like feminism, in terms of things like disability, and say, this is something that we should be talking about more and here's a way to do it.

I mean, I'm thinking, I'm thinking it's not a horror, but I'm thinking of the recent Netflix show Adolescence.

Ligeia

Oh, yeah.

Leraje

Which was in terms of a piece of art, absolutely amazing. And it was horrific. The subject matter is absolutely horrific. So is it. What I'm saying is it's a good point that, you know, this book is about, on one level, is about the horror of disability. And the substance might be a film about how, how feminism is perceived and the duty that women feel they, they have to sort of like, remain young.

I just did air quotes there. I don't know why I did that. We're on a audio podcast. Never mind. But by the same token, I'm sorry, this is really long winded. By the same token, is it maybe the job of the horror genre to hold up a mirror to those things?

Pike

Right. Because we're talking about it now.

Leraje

Yeah, yeah.

Ligeia

And it gets you thinking.

Pike

That's for that's for you to say because I don't normally engage with the horror genre because I'm just too much of a wuss. I found this book absolutely terrifying.

Ligeia

Yeah.

Leraje

This will be Pike's only appearance as a guest in the podium.

Ligeia

We don't do only horror books. Piranesi was.

Leraje

No, no, that's true. No, apparently this is not horror at all.

Ligeia

Well, I am correct. So maybe I'm not the right person to decide if it was horror. I'm looking at Larage. Maybe it was at the end, I don't know. But pike, we will find books that are no horror. And I will be so happy to have you here. Of course we are able to talk about Bible, which is the most horrifying book of all.

Pike

I was going to say I'm seasoned now, so I can handle it.

Ligeia

We're corrupting another one a little at a time.

Pike

Maybe not the Exorcist just yet. I know. We've done that.

Ligeia

That's done. That's done. Don't worry.

Leraje

Yeah, but no, I mean, Logy is absolutely right. We don't have to do horror at all. The point is not to do horror. The point is to do things that we like.

Ligeia

Exactly.

Leraje
And that's about it.

Pike
Yeah.

Ligeia
Or, you know, I'm able to see horror in Jane Eyre or any like romantic shite that like other people. Okay. I'm happy. I can create my own horrors. Yeah.

Pike
Books are okay. There are no jump scares in books.

Ligeia
Just the movies might be fair enough.

Leraje
Technically, Jane Eyre is not a horror, obviously. And it's not really. I mean, it is a romance, but it's not. It's not a very romantic romance.

Pike
It's a horrible romance.

Leraje
It's fairly abusive a lot of ways. Okay, let's do something new that we've never done before. Let's rate the book out.

Ligeia
I was just going to suggest it. Pitchforks. How many pitchforks?

Leraje
Pitchforks? Yeah.

Ligeia
Out of 10. Out of 10 or 5.

Leraje
I don't know.

Ligeia
I like the 10. I don't know how bad you.

Leraje
10? Yeah. Okay.

Ligeia
It's like it gives you more space to be more specific. And we are talking about everything, like how we liked it.

Leraje
We don't need overall an overall impression of the whole thing.

Ligeia
This is the first one. What do we do? Because now, you know, after this, every other book is going to be following the same pattern. I can't do that. This is. This is my today's brain. I'm sorry, it's not gonna be the same tomorrow. So. Okay, let Me think. Do you have your number, Leraj?

Yes, you do. So maybe you start.

Leraje
All right. I would give it seven and a half pitchforks.

Ligeia

Okay. Okay. I need more time. Okay. Maybe I could. You know, I was just going to ask, like, how would you rate maybe some of the books we did before, so. I know.

Leraje

Piranesi. Nine.

Ligeia

Nine.

Leraje

Sorry. My West Midlands.

Ligeia

I love it. Oh, come on. You have to listen to me. Come on. Can't get worse.

Leraje

The Exorcist. I would give eight. Legion. I would give nine. Short Stayed. Hell, I would give nine. Good. Oh, and Grimscribe. I would give. Oh, it's difficult. It's difficult.

Ligeia

Difficult with stories, it's.

Leraje

It's difficult because they're individuals, aren't they?

Pike

And also you haven't read the whole book.

Ligeia

Why? I have for.

Pike

I'm thinking of ending things. I will say six. I might be a little unfair to it. I might be underrating because I can't tell. So when I reached the end, I felt a little bit cheated in a. In a. In a sense of, oh, it was all a dream, you know, it felt like one of those endings.

But maybe if I read it again, I could see him building it in quite things that. Where I think he just sort of went free with the story and then in the end flipped it. Maybe it wasn't like that. Maybe he crafted it quite carefully and built. Built it up. But I enjoyed the dialogues a lot whilst they're driving.

Ligeia

Okay, I'm gonna rate it 8. I love questions. This. This satisfied my question need. I love talking about like basically things that don't make more much sense or don't really necessarily move you anywhere. Forwards, backwards, they are not trying to solve things. It's just like questions. And maybe it's because I was not allowed when I was a child and a huge Christian family, I couldn't really voice all my questions.

Not even like, not. Not even looking for answers. Just the questions. I am. I have this thirst and this book was. Was nice. I. It kept me engaged, which. Which is difficult with me.

Leraje

Certainly kept me engaged as well.

Ligeia

Yeah, I'm sorry.

Leraje

It certainly kept me engaged.

Ligeia

Yeah, it kept me engaged and it was. It was a new writing style, I would say. So I think I will. I will remember it forever because of how it was written and how the story went in. So I. I give it an eight. Yes, I'm happy.

Leraje

Awesome.

Ligeia

Yay.

Leraje

Okay, so that's it from us and we will be back to you with you in a month's time. So from me, hail Satan Hail Satan.

Ligeia

Hail Satan.

Leraje

See you next time.