

[Intro music]

SINÉAD: Hello, and welcome to the first episode of All Tropes are Bastards, the show where we break down writing rules.

My name is Sinéad McDevitt. I am a freelance writer. I write articles about video games, I play a lot of video games, and I read a lot of books, and I think about them a lot.

ADRIAN: Hi. I'm Adrian Northam. I am also a freelancer. I do voice acting, I do proofreading, and I do writing, as well. I, at this point in time, as I'm talking, have not necessarily published a full story publicly, but I am working on it. In talking about tropes and stories, I hope to sort of get myself out of this rut and gather up some energy to work on my own stories, so.

SINÉAD: We are a pair of nerds who like to talk about stories so much.

ADRIAN: We majored in English together in college, and you'll be able to tell.

SINÉAD: Oh, you will so be able to tell.

So what we wanted to do with this first episode was give a little high-level introduction to sort of what our project is here, and what we're trying to do. Basically, we both come at writing from the perspective that there are no bad tropes, only bad executions.

ADRIAN: The story – you know, you can put a story together with whatever tropes or elements you want. Ultimately, a story can be more than the sum of its parts. It can also be less than the sum of its parts, at times.

SINÉAD: Yeah. So after years of just sending each other bad writing advice that boils down to, “Never do xyz,” we finally made a podcast to tell you, “Totally do xyz! Just know all of these nuance things first.”

ADRIAN: Yes, exactly. There are no wrong answers in writing. I mean, there can be, if you try hard enough, but.

SINÉAD: You can try so hard.

ADRIAN: Yeah. There sure can be, but generally speaking, if you — if you take a story as it is, see all of the elements and — and how they play together, you know, again, any one element doesn't necessarily make the entire thing bad. One rotten apple doesn't spoil the bunch, in this case, unless you let it.

SINÉAD: Unless you let it.

ADRIAN: And people do let it.

SINÉAD: Oh, boy.

Going forward, our theoretical format is going to be zeroing in on a specific trope, but as sort of a demonstration of what I'm talking about, we've each prepared a trope that we hate done well, and an example of a trope we like done poorly.

ADRIAN: We should also probably define what we mean by "trope."

SINÉAD: Yes. Yeah. So "trope" is kind of sort of a nebulous term, especially if you are not an English major, but it's usually a recurring element that shows up across a broad spectrum of stories. Secret identities are one that I was going to talk about, but there's also "a guy bumps into a girl, and they look at each other, and they're, like, ooh, shoujo bubbles," and it's, like, oh, yeah, those are the main chara — those are the main romance.

ADRIAN: Yep. Or, like, fake dating is another example. Found family is kind of a broad one that seems to be very, very popular among terminally-online nerds.

SINÉAD: I wonder why.

It's very much, if you did not spend sophomore year of high school between classes on TV Tropes, breaking them down, specifically, it's something you've definitely seen, but would not have always articulated.

ADRIAN: Yes, yes. "Trope" is also not the same as "cliche." Cliche is specifically referring to something that feels super overdone or cheaply done. Tropes are just story elements. It's a neutral term.

SINÉAD: Yeah. And I think we could totally get into things that are cliches that we, like — we would like more of.

ADRIAN: Yes, absolutely.

SINÉAD: Cause, again, like we said, it's always execution.

ADRIAN: Yup. And how it works in combination with the other elements of the story.

SINÉAD: Yeah.

ADRIAN: Nothing in isolation is bad or good.

SINÉAD: Okay. So I think I'll get us started with our sort of example thing.

So my pick for a trope I hate is, I don't like it when video games have silent protagonists, usually. There are very few games with a silent protagonist where I feel like, wow, this is improved by not having this character be able to talk back or voice opinions to the other characters! It really makes the discussion interesting! I think my biggest example of, like, any benefit I get from this character being silent so I can project onto them is outweighed by, like, how little they're impacting the story.

It's something we're probably going to come back to a lot, but Fire Emblem: Three Houses. I find Byleth to be — I — I think Byleth has their moments, but, like, for the most part, I'm like, I wish you could voice your own opinion, or talk back to people, or snark, or even just, like, be kind of a quiet person, but still have actual conversations in the supports.

ADRIAN: Yeah. Like, in theory, Byleth is supposed to be sort of a distant, like, godlike figure, basically, for, you know, lore reasons. However, there are, like, discussions of the fact that they're still a human, they still have humanity, and in fact, one of the endings has them fully embrace that humanity. So having moments of Byleth being, like, having a huge personality would make thematic sense in the story, except we don't get that.

SINÉAD: Yeah. That's why I enjoy them much more in Three Hopes, which is another thing we will probably get into one of these days. Again, we have not decided on a specific structure for this, so it might just be, like, we end up talking about Fire Emblem so much.

But my example of a silent protagonist I do like is Monark, which, if you know me, I really love mid-budget JRPGs. So Monark came out a couple years ago. It is by FuRyu. It is a game where the protagonist wakes up with amnesia in a high school that is trapped in a mysterious fog, and you join up with your party members, and you go fight monsters, and there's a seven deadly sins theme. I'm — I'm completely underselling it. I would recommend people play Monark, because I love and support mid-budget JRPGs, and it's usually on sale all the time.

But anyway, one element I like is that there's this sort of theme of expanding your ego. Like, at the beginning of the game, you take a test, and that sort of determines your stat distributions. And it does feel like your character is growing into their own person, which, spoiler alert, turns out to literally be true, because they are an artificial being created by one of the antagonists, and they did not exist prior to this, so they are basically a baby forming their own personality, and that's why they are a silent protagonist.

And even then, there are a lot of moments where the protagonist — like, the player only has one dialogue option, or it's like, two dialogue options that are the exact same thing. The strongest moment: there's an adorable little sister character who ends up murdered, and when you confront the person who did it, the only option you get is just, "I will kill you," four times in a row. And it's — it's such a good moment, and it just — and it feels like, okay, this is a different

being from me, who is learning and growing and defining their self, instead of just a blank slate that I am supposed to be projecting onto.

ADRIAN: I love stuff like that, and also, not to be insufferable — Deltarune does the same thing. Not the exact same thing, but yeah, Deltarune's another example of a — of a really good silent protagonist, but generally speaking, I do like taking a trope and extracting, like, something thematic out of it. Like, Monark does that. It's, like, hey, this protagonist is silent not because they're a completely blank slate for you to project onto, but because they're kind of a blank slate at the start, and they grow.

SINÉAD: Yeah. That's — that's how it is, and I — I definitely think that's how silent protagonists can work. I also think another good example is Persona 3 Portable has, with the male and female protagonists, with the female protagonist being added later in development. But like, like, originally, it was just the male protagonist, and then they added a female protagonist in later releases, and because of that, a lot of work was put into fleshing out the dialogue options to make them seem different. Like, the male protagonist, he's more of an emo dude, so he's, like, "I don't care." That's, like, his most common dialogue option.

And I think Persona 4, there's also a good moment. The protagonist's most common dialogue option is, "Everybody calm down," cause it's, like, you're solving a mystery, you need to think this through. The only time the protagonist has, like, the yelling animation is, again, after your little sister dies.

ADRIAN: Huh. That's another trope, isn't it?

SINÉAD: Yeah. Turns out murdering your little sister is a very good way to motivate a JRPG player.

ADRIAN: Hmm. Sounds a little bit like fridging, another trope that we can talk about.

SINÉAD: Yeah.

ADRIAN: Not to section everything off into tropes all the time, cause, like, again, tropes are only what make up a story, and stories can be greater than the sum of their parts. But yeah, I think another — not necessarily a silent protagonist, but a blank slate protagonist that is for the player to, like, project onto and — and shape and mold is Scarlet Hollow. The player character gets so richly developed and has so many cool, like, new options unlocked as the player makes choices for them. Like, at the very, very beginning of the game, you can choose — like, if you say that you have a peanut allergy, then that peanut allergy's gonna stick with the player character for the entire game.

SINÉAD: I literally chose that because I didn't want to be rude, and I didn't expect it to come back as much as it does, but it — it is a very fun moment. Play Scarlet Hollow.

ADRIAN: It's a very good game.

SINÉAD: Okay, so what's a trope you hate?

ADRIAN: So I try not to, like, hate on specific tropes. I'm gonna go on this whole tirade about how no trope is bad, and I really wanna believe that, and then I'm gonna talk about a trope that I dislike. But basically, I don't really like mind control, or like, magical, like, you go into someone's brain and you directly manipulate stuff, or like, you possess somebody, or what have you. I feel like a lot of the time, not all the time, but a lot of the time, it's done kind of cheaply, or it's meant to be, like, it's — it's just angst fodder. It's supposed to be, like, oh my gosh, this character did this thing that they would otherwise literally never do, and now they have to live with the guilt. It's, like, there are other ways you could have made this character do this.

SINÉAD: I understand that, but I am an angst gremlin, so like, if something's angst fodder, I will eat it up.

ADRIAN: And that's so fair. That's so fair. We don't have the exact same opinions on literally everything.

SINÉAD: Yeah.

ADRIAN: Which is great.

But all of that said, I think a game that does sort of — it's — I guess it's not exactly the same as, like, mind control in a traditional sense, but it is, like, mental manipulation. Psychonauts 2.

SINÉAD: Oh. Yeah.

ADRIAN: So the entire premise of Psychonauts as a series is, you go into people's brains, and you directly affect things. The very first mission of Psychonauts 2 is you accidentally — like, you — you go into your teacher's brain for a demonstration, you goof around a little too much, and you accidentally give her a gambling addiction. And then you have to go back into her brain to undo the gambling addiction.

SINÉAD: God, Psychonauts is — is so weird.

ADRIAN: It's so weird. It's such a weird game. It's delightful. Please play Psychonauts and Psychonauts 2. It is by Double Fine Studios. They're great. They do great stuff. I've also met the protagonist of Psychonauts' voice actor. Great guy.

But anyway, one of the characters in Psychonauts 2 that I find to be really fascinating is Maligula. And spoiler alert, kind of blanket spoiler alert for a lot of different media, I think, in this podcast. It's hard to talk about how tropes are done well or not well without spoiling stuff.

But — so Maligula is the protagonist's fake grandmother, basically. She was a psychic. She had psychic powers, like many characters do in psychonauts, and lived in a country that really shunned psychics, and she, long story short, kind of lost her mind and destroyed a bunch of things, caused a great flood, and the other — you know, her — her companions, her coworkers, made the very difficult choice to basically manipulate her brain to an extreme extent and prevent her from even remembering that she was Maligula. They implanted a psychic construct of, like, hey, no, you're a grandmother in this circus family now. You've always been that. This is completely normal. This is your life. Everyone's gonna go along with this.

It's sort of an extreme example of that mind control, where they're literally going in and changing her brain, which is what you do in Psychonauts, again. But I think it's a really fascinating example of, like, autonomy kind of being stripped away from somebody because of her prior actions, and, you know, as a result of that stripping of autonomy, it affects other people, too. The protagonist is horrified that this person that he knows as a close family member of his was actually an evil witch the whole time, and no one told him. That is wild.

I — I do really like how, you know, you really dive deep into the psyche of this character and the lore behind what she did and why, and how she ended up here, and how the other characters react to it, especially. I think the — you know, exploring the autonomy being stripped away from somebody as a result of that mind control, somebody being completely redefined as a person, if you dig into that, then I think that trope can be really interesting.

SINÉAD: Yeah. I think — we can go into this more in a later date, but I do think what I find the most interesting is the loss of autonomy, and admittedly, no one ever focuses on the loss of autonomy as much as fanfiction writers.

ADRIAN: And that's what fanfiction writers are for.

SINÉAD: Right. Okay.

So then shifting gears, a trope I like, and I will defend to my dying breath: secret identities. I feel like secret identities get a super bad rap in superhero media and comics. People are just like, oh, why don't they just tell them? Why are they forcing all this conflict? And I have several thoughts about it. First, it's that, like, obviously, a story thrives on conflict, so you're not going to be shown every single time a conflict is avoided because someone has a secret identity. Two, I think it's just very self-evident to why the characters might want a secret identity, because being a public figure sucks.

ADRIAN: Oh, yes. Also, not to mention the potential for, like, metaphors of queerness, for example.

SINÉAD: Yeah. Like — like, Power Rangers is one where, like, usually the characters, the villains will know their identity, but they'll still maintain secret identities in their civilian lives, and it's, like, yeah, cause sometimes, it sucks being a public figure.

ADRIAN: Yep.

SINÉAD: And frankly, I think it's totally fair not to tell someone if you're not 100% confident that you're ready to deal with the consequences, cause if you think about it, like, it's just a fact that no matter who you tell a secret to, the more people who know the secret, the more likely it is that secret comes out. That is more vectors for leaks or breakdowns, especially depending on the setting. So it's like, if you're not 100% sure that you're ready to deal with the consequences to yourself and that person, if you tell them a secret identity, then yes, I think it's fair to keep a secret identity, even if there's been, like, major conflicts in your personal life because of that secret identity. Cause it's, like, you can't un-tell them, unless you're like, Richard Gere's Superman.

ADRIAN: Or in Psychonauts.

SINÉAD: Or in Psychonauts. But like, yeah, and it's, like, oh my god, a teenager making a poorly thought out decision cause they're afraid of consequences. Who would have expected?

ADRIAN: Wow. What teenager ever does that? And we can talk about young characters and they're portrayed at a later date, as well. That's another very interesting thing.

SINÉAD: Yeah. So — so my beef with that is, like, I hate when stories treat secret identities as burdens, and I hate when fans are, like, ugh, why do they keep a secret identity? And as the staunchest of secret identity defenders, I cannot stand how Miraculous Ladybug handles its secret identities. Oh my god.

So Miraculous Ladybug, for those who don't know, is a French cartoon show about this girl. Her name is Marinette Dupain-Cheng. She has magic earrings that transform her into this superhero, Ladybug, and her magical guardian fairy kwami, Tikki, is like, you have to keep this a secret, and her guardian, the guy who guards all the magic jewelry, is like, you have to keep this a secret, even from her crime-fighting partner, Chat Noir, who is actually her crush, Adrien Agreste, which started out as a very fun spin on love triangle trope, and then just completely deteriorated.

But the thing is, as the show — and as the show progressed, there were a lot of instances, like, where they had problems, or, like, let people down, because they couldn't be two places at once, or people were disappointed cause of something related to their secret identities. Like, Marinette has to break up with her first boyfriend in the show because he can tell she's keeping a secret from him, and he doesn't like secrets. Which is, like, fair and valid for him to do, even though it really upset her.

But the thing is, the first major issue is that the show's really inconsistent about secret identities. Like, at first, they're like, every single hero has to keep their identity secret from one another, and they already sort of throw that out in the second season, when Ladybug is giving out — is picking specific people to be heroes, so obviously, she knows their powers and identities. But she's also the main character, so you can let it slide.

Then in the season 2 finale, two people who are — who are dating and also superheroes, because of the situation — so the way Miraculous Ladybug works is that the villain sends out these akumas, which latch onto negative emotions. So there was this crisis where there were, like, thousands of akumas flooding the city and turning anybody who was experiencing any kind of negative emotion into a supervillain who's controlled by the bad guy, and so — and the couple was fine, because it's, like, we're together, and we love each other, and we support each other.

ADRIAN: And obviously, being in a romantic relationship has zero negative anything going on, ever, right?

SINÉAD: Oh god. Oh, we're — we're not going into that. Anyway, so they were, like, we shouldn't split them up, because if they do, they might freak out, and then we just have one of them being an akuma, which is less helpful. So they reveal their identities to each other, but they don't know Ladybug or Chat Noir's. This directly gets them turned into akumas later, because the girlfriend takes a shot for the boyfriend, and he freaks out, and that — ends up leaving both of them vulnerable. So, which, like, in a normal show, would be, like, oh, that's why our two main leads can't know each other's secret identities. That could make them vulnerable. But the show never goes there. It just sort of continues on, and it's, like, well, they know each other's identities, but it's fine.

Then in season 3, we have this episode called Chat Blanc, which is a poorly-done alternate timeline episode. I — I'm gonna spare you the time travel rant, because as someone who also loves time travel, and especially loves freaky, weird time travel that doesn't make sense, they — they didn't have an inciting incident, and it's weird. But anyway, Ladybug ends the episode under the impression that her revealing her identity to her partner Chat Noir leads to the world ending. And the audience is shown the order of events, and it seems clear that that's not the case. Like, it — the problem is, like, the bad guy finding out their secret identities, but she doesn't know that, and that's something that's freaked her out, because she saw the entire world destroyed, cause Chat Noir's powers are destruction, so when he goes evil, you know, problems happen.

ADRIAN: Right.

SINÉAD: Anyway, and then — and then at the end of season 3, like, all the hero — all their temporary hero allies get their identities revealed. So that should mean, okay, we can't use them anymore, but then they just keep using those characters, even though there aren't, like, situations that require it. Like — like, the villains absolutely take advantage of knowing, like, oh, these are the people Ladybug has picked to be heroes, so we can use that to get close to them, and they have done that — and they do that several times across season 4.

During season 4, Ladybug, like, tells her best friend, before her partner and love interest, that she's Ladybug, and they're working together, and that's a fun dynamic. But then the best friend tells her boyfriend, and he's also very free with telling his — telling Chat Noir's civilian identity. Oh my god, this is so hard to explain. But like, oh, by the way, we used to be superheroes. It's not this big a deal.

So it seems like the only character that cares about keeping the secret identity is Ladybug, and the show doesn't treat, like, actual instances of revealing secret identities as a problem, but they also keep writing the characters being, like, ugh, if only we didn't have to keep these secret identities! And it's, like, girl, you're literally the guardian now. You make the rules. Is it really that big a problem? And it's, like — and they've just dragged it on for, like, I think we're on season 6 now. I stopped watching when it —

ADRIAN: Oh, there's six of them?

SINÉAD: I — I stopped watching, like, mid-season 4.

ADRIAN: Okay.

SINÉAD: But like —

ADRIAN: Fair enough.

SINÉAD: But like, I've — I've fall — but from what I've seen, it's just, like, no, they've never had a good reason not to tell anybody. Like, even in, like, an I don't want to be a public figure way, it has reached a point of, they would just be easier to tell, and the reasons you're giving the audience for not telling don't check out, because it doesn't apply to other characters. And it's, like, other characters reveal each other's secrets, and it's good, and it's trust then. But like, they have, apparently, another episode centered around, like, Ladybug finding out who Chat Noir is, and that's also a — leads to the world ending. So it's, like, everybody else can reveal their secrets, but if these two find out, it will end the world. And it's, like, okay. I — I'm probably the most good faith person here. I don't think you can do that.

ADRIAN: See, like, there would be something really interesting to explore in terms of, like, the idea of tradition. Of, like, well, we need to keep the secret identities cause everyone always has, and this one person's still sort of clinging to the tradition of that while everyone else moves on. I did not get the impression that the show explores that in any capacity.

SINÉAD: No. No it does not.

ADRIAN: Great.

SINÉAD: Yeah. Like, I've — I've def — I've talked to people who are, like, still sort of actively watching the show. They're stronger than any U.S. Marine, frankly. But yeah, it's — it seems like there should be no problem with revealing their identities at this point. The thing is, Chat Noir's dad is the big bad, which I probably should have said earlier, cause that explains why, like, him finding out about their secret identities always leads to the world ending. But the show treats it as if them finding out about each other leads to the world ending. So even though his dad isn't the big bad anymore, we, like, still have to deal with all of this.

ADRIAN: Oh boy.

SINÉAD: So it's, like, I am someone who will eat up the same trope over and over again. I have read so many, "Oh no, I've died and reincarnated as the villainess in this book!" stories, and I have read so many superhero stories, but even I can't handle the same series just, like, dodging the, okay, why not just tell them question this long.

ADRIAN: Yeah. Six seasons in. Jeez. Yeah. No, that's — that's — I think that's a fair assessment, as someone who has not watched *Miraculous Ladybug*.

But I have my trope that I really like, and I also realize I — I wrote down multiple examples of tropes that I dislike done well, but only one example of a trope that I like done not so well, which I guess just goes to show that I really, like, any story element can work for me.

But — and I — I hate to say anything negative about this book, because I think, in many ways, it's a very, very good book, and I would encourage people to read it, generally speaking, and support stories like this. *Son of a Trickster* by Eden Robinson. The prose is absolutely gorgeous. Like, the entire time I was reading the book, I was taken aback by how awesome the prose was. It struck the balance of this sort of casual teenage, like, thought process, and this, like, magical, enchanting world, this magical, enchanting backdrop, where the protagonist is — spoiler alert — the son of a trickster. I think — I think it's a great book. I think people should read it.

I also think it — I like that it uses the trope of, you know, a character that's been miserable the entire time getting better, recovering. Like, in this case, the protagonist — again,

spoiler alert — you know, recovers from his addictions and sort of, like, starts cobbling his life back together. I think that's great. I'm glad it happened. I wish we spent more time with it. I really felt myself being kind of disappointed that, like, you know, we go from — 90% of the book is the protagonist just being miserable, and, you know, there is absolutely a place for, like, an exploration of a mundane life that just kinda sucks. And then it felt kind of fast that he turned everything around. We just kind of skipped to, you know, he went to his very first Alcoholics Anonymous meeting, and then he tells his mom, like, a couple pages later, I believe, that, you know, I'm still the person you knew, I'm just not an addict anymore, and his mom's upset, cause he used to be fun.

SINÉAD: Oh boy.

ADRIAN: It's — it's — yeah. It's a complicated situation. I really like — like, again, the vast majority of the book, I really like. I really like how the nuance of, you know, this kid's situation is handled. I — I really like the depiction of — of trauma. I really like — you know, as much as I — I enjoy faster-paced stories, I appreciate the place that a book like this has, where it's, again, mundane life that has, like, weird magical elements that kinda make you squint, but for the most part, it's a mundane life that just sucks.

I just think it would've been more impactful if the change was more gradual throughout the book. Maybe I was missing something. It's been a while since I've read. I — I read it, I think, earlier this year, in 2025. I found myself not really buying how quickly he was able to get on his feet. And that saddened me, cause again, great book. I just want more of the detail that the rest of the book had in exploring how miserable he was. I wanted that detail for the joy, too, you know?

SINÉAD: Yeah. No, I — I get it. I think a recurring thing that we're gonna see a lot, cause it's what I notice, is what is much more likely to hurt something over any specific trope is just, like, rushing something, or just not having enough time. Like —

ADRIAN: Yup.

SINÉAD: Yeah. Like, there are tons of shows and movies, and it's, like, this — this could have been twice as long, and we could have actually let these ideas breathe.

ADRIAN: KPop Demon Hunters.

SINÉAD: Yeah. But with books, it's a little harder, cause it's, like, you don't wanna be publishing, like, over a certain length, I think. It's — it's just — it's a mess.

So I — I — that's another thing that I wanna do with this show, is I do wanna be sympathetic to, like, sometimes, you're writing something, and you don't have infinite time and money to do whatever you want.

ADRIAN: Exactly. And sometimes, like, you know, studios or sort of executives are gonna tell you to do a certain thing. And that sucks.

SINÉAD: Yeah. Or sometimes, you don't have your actors around. There's definitely going to be an episode where I make you watch a lot of Power Rangers, because I have a lot of thoughts on that. But, like, that's definitely a show where it's, like, yeah, they're hamstrung by a terrible budget and having to utilize Japanese footage, so it, like — it's like, I'm more forgiving of certain things.

And I — I guess I just wanna close this out by saying, like, just because I complain about a trope or a thing, it doesn't necessarily mean I dislike every instance of it, or like, they're bad, or you're bad for liking it. Cause I think a lot of it comes down to personal preference, and how you even approach the story in the first place. But I think it's important to be able to discuss what you like and what you don't like and think of it in terms of personal taste, so that there's not this sort of collective idea that, like, oh, this is the guidebook to writing a bestselling novel.

ADRIAN: Exactly. My philosophy is that, for every story out there, regardless of one given individual's opinion on it, that story is the perfect thing and exactly what somebody needs for some person at some point in time. And, you know, there are, like, some more popular sentiments, some more popular opinions, absolutely, but at the end of the day, the critiques that someone provides say more about the critic, and, you know, the critic's relationship to the work, than it says just about the work itself.

SINÉAD: Which is why criticism is important, and it's important writing skill, and you should pay critics.

ADRIAN: Yes. Absolutely. Please do. You know, this isn't to say that, oh, if every story is perfect for somebody, I should write the most self-indulgent things all the time. Now, should you write self-indulgent things? Of course. Yes. Absolutely.

SINÉAD: Sometimes, you don't have to publish it.

ADRIAN: Sometimes, you don't have to publish it. Or sometimes, if you really like it, you can publish it, and other people will have the same sort of fantasies, and like it, and read it, too.

SINÉAD: We are definitely thinking of different things.

ADRIAN: We are definitely thinking of different things. But here's the thing. I started saying something and then I forgot it. One second.

SINÉAD: Not everything needs to be a mass market bestseller.

ADRIAN: Exactly. Sometimes, you need to write for yourself and your three weirdo friends that all play D&D together, and that story that you write is gonna be perfect for that group of four weirdos. And then sometimes, in order to convey the message that you really want, to create the effect that you really want in a story, you need a second set of eyes. That's also fine.

SINÉAD: Yeah. Okay. I think — I think that's probably a good place to end it here. We haven't decided on the schedule, so we will see you when we see you.

ADRIAN: See you when we see you.

[Outro music]