

My Dog Ate My Book Report

Episode Three Transcript

Wren

Welcome to "My Dog Ate my Book Report" a podcast where two weirdo 30-somethings take turns introducing each other to a formative book from childhood the other has never read. However, this is episode five, so we're doing something a little different. Today we are revisiting some of the books we have already discussed by watching their film adaptations. Boy, did we.

Brandon

Yeah, I mean sorta.

Wren

Most of some.

Brandon

Most of some.

Wren

It's fine. I'm Wren.

Brandon

I'm Brandon.

Wren

This is a show we've done.

Brandon

Yeah. Sure is.

Wren

Alright, well, let's get right down to it. What we did manage to watch was "A Cry in the Wild" the 1990 film adaptation of "Hatchet" with a different name. And we watched about 40 minutes of "The Hardy Boys and the Applegate Treasure." The 1956 Disney mini series adaptation of the first Hardy Boys book "The Tower Treasure."

Brandon

Yeah, it was a part of the Mickey Mouse Club, a 19 part serial.

Wren

How many parts did we watch 5, 6?

Brandon

Three.

Wren

Three?

Brandon

Yep.

Wren

Oh golly. We tried. We tried, folks. If there's folks listening to this, we gave it a go.

Brandon

Well, and let's be clear. It wasn't like... it wasn't like something stopped us. It's on YouTube, you yourself could go watch almost four hours of the Mystery of the Applegate Treasure from the Mickey Mouse Club right now. Not that I'm endorsing piracy.

Wren

It's not really piracy. Isn't it sort of public domain at this point? 1956 How many years? Does it need to be? We should probably know the answer to these things.

Brandon

But it's Disney.

Wren

That is fair.

Brandon

Yeah, when a copyright is owned by an entity like Disney, it gets practically very, very long. Which is why, you know, a lot of things that are owned by big studios and such are still not public domain, even if they're fairly old. And a lot of a lot of that is because of laws that were and have been championed by companies like Disney.

Wren

I will say the theme song for the Hardy Boys and the Applegate Treasure, the first 15 seconds of it or so kind of sucked me in. I was into it. They took what is a story about a stolen car, and then some missing like paperwork and bonds and turned it into a pirate mystery. Sorta. We actually, you know, 40 minutes and I'm actually still not sure where the pirate stuff comes in, or if it's ever gonna tie back in but the theme song leads us to believe that it's actually stolen pirate treasure.

Brandon

Yeah, it's um, maybe we should just get into it. So this serial was the Mystery of the Applegate Treasure, it was the first as far as I could tell adaptation of anything Hardy Boys into film or television. It was a part of the Mickey Mouse Club. And if you are not particularly familiar with the Mickey Mouse

Club is which would be forgiven because it doesn't last for very long whenever they make one. It was sort of a like a variety show almost.

Wren

My very limited understanding of it was that it was Disney's early attempts at a young talent sort of like churning through mechanism.

Brandon

Yeah, they had like the Mouseketeers were all of these young actors and actresses presumably that you know Disney was hoping to parlay into popular stars etc. And they would do a variety of things like there was sometimes songs and performances and stuff like that of course the probably the best known thing in the zeitgeist about the Mickey Mouse Club is still the theme song or the or the like I don't know. You know, the M I C K E Y M O U S E. That's the Mickey Mouse.

Wren

Oh, I didn't know that. I just thought that was some random like commercial jingle thing.

Brandon

Nope, that is the at least I'm pretty sure that it's like the theme to the Mickey Mouse Club. And it would be like the Mouseketeers are singing it. Right.

Wren

I see. That makes sense.

Brandon

I might be incorrect. I am not a real authority on on midcentury Disney, but I believe that is where that comes from. But they also did as part of the Mickey Mouse Club, some of these, like serials that would be segments of the show. So not the entire thing. And would put some of the members of the Mickey Mouse Club, right in these in these serials? I think maybe one presumes I might be wrong. That's my understanding. I haven't found a lot of like good details specifically about the Mickey Mouse Club serial adaptation. As far as like, how it happened, why it happened, et cetera. But it was 1956. So it was actually you know, well, after the Hardy Boys had become a fixture right. You know, it wasn't an adaptation that was made like hot on the heels of these books starting to be published.

Wren

No, but it was right before they did the edit. Right? If I recall correctly, that was 1959 was when they did the edit?

Brandon

Yeah, it was a few years before they started to go back and edit the earlier books. And I do not know if that's a coincidence or not. Because this serial, at least from the part that we watched before we decided we didn't care enough to watch more of it doesn't bear a lot of similarity to the book. A lot of the names are the same. But that's about as far as it goes.

Wren

Yeah. So feel like the names were the same. The crime was not the same. The suspects were not the same. It just I don't know it. Despite the fact that the theme song made it seem like it was going to be more high stakes pirate treasure. It actually felt like it made it just kind of way lower stakes just like this delinquent kid getting into some trouble situation. It bore to me very little resemblance to the story.

Brandon

Well, from what I've been able to scrape together, it you know, eventually a treasure does go missing and it is incidentally formerly a pirate treasure that was like in the possession of Hurd Applegate, who's still a wealthy old codger. So it just kind of it turns the it turns the jewels and bonds of the book into you know, a treasure that was originally the ill gotten gains of pirates and has through the years fallen into the hands of Hurd Applegate for one reason or the other. I'm not really sure why.

Wren

That's fair. But but the first mystery that they show us is go find that girls missing lipstick or whatever.

Brandon

The thing that got me was that the Hardy Boys books were part of an attempt to attract young readers by being books that felt like they were dealing with adult topics, right? That was kind of the notion of the Hardy Boys and various other books that the Strattemeyer syndicate did was this sense that like all the children's books that existed at the time, you know, were children's books, they dealt with child things, and kind of talked down to the readers right? And there wasn't really a middle ground. And then the serial kind of takes everything and it ages the Hardys down a bit. They're like 14 and 15. I think it's at least what their actors were. And they sort of live on like, what seems to be a very stereotypical 50s American suburban street. They're friends with Lola Martin, not Morton. And Chet is nowhere to be found. And Lola is kind of has a has like a love hate relationship thing with with Joe, I think in that way that like, you see with people writing like 12 year olds who like each other, but don't know how to express it yet. And yeah, like you said, it kind of begins with some of her stuff going missing and and overall just really feels like the Hardys are, are getting into just being like these kids who have a tree house or something in the backyard where they find missing pets or some such right, it doesn't have the sort of feeling that they are involved in adult things.

Wren

Yeah, and the dad kind of, I feel like treats them like they're just a little bit of a nuisance and doesn't involve them in, in his in his Detective-ing. I felt like it it really I feel like for a book adaptation to, I don't know be at least tolerable to me, it has to you know, at least try to, to sort of capture like the heart of the book. And this just completely missed it. It felt like they didn't understand what it was about. You know, made it younger and just more childish and I don't know I didn't love the book "The Tower Treasure," but I feel like this was still a disservice to it.

Brandon

Yeah, it least felt like one of the to me one of those adaptations where it feels like somebody had a mystery story about two brothers who do mysteries on their block, around their block. And someone just pointed it out like "oh that's kind of like the Hardy Boys" and they were like okay, let's just take the

names and call it an adaptation. And like we see the like, that kind of adaptation happens with some frequency you know in even today where so many things are different that it's just like this isn't the same thing. You know, like for example the one that springs to my mind is probably not the best example because not a lot of people have seen it but if you've seen it you know, that the Earthsea miniseries that the sci fi channel did in the early 2000s. Really just feels like somebody had a kind of half baked Harry Potter rip off that they wanted to make. And then somebody pointed out that there is part of "A Wizard of Earthsea" where Ged or Sparrowhawk is at a...

Wren

Whispers Sparrowhawk... Sparrowhawk...

Brandon

...magic school...

Wren

Sorry...

Brandon

Thank you. That I could I could go on for literal hours about that miniseries. I kind of love it for just how terrible it is not only as an adaptation, but just like as a piece of a film.

Wren

That exactly though hits my point, though it also feels like it does a disservice to its to its origin material, because it just doesn't understand the point or the like the heart of the story that it's trying to adapt. And it wasn't a matter of 45 minutes in I, you know, flipped a table in disgust it was more just 45 minutes, and I felt like I needed to take a nap.

Brandon

Yeah. It was just kind of uninteresting, just...

Wren

It just made me sleepy and apathetic.

Brandon

Yeah, I think I think I would like it okay, if I had been watching it in serial form, where I was getting 15 minutes at a time, I think that like having a gap of at least a day or two, between pieces probably would have somewhat hidden the pacing issue, maybe. But trying to watch in the block, it just feels like it's 100% filler. And it's not, you know, the actors are doing a decent job, the writing is not bad. As far as the dialogue is concerned, the characters have a lot more actual personality than in the book, and so forth. So like, there's a lot of good things about it. It's just kind of one of those adaptations that it's it's not... it's not super true to the book, in plot or in spirit, and it's competent without being exceptional, right. And for me, that's like the worst thing an adaptation can be right. It's just kind of in the middle. I either want the adaptation to be like, wow this just makes me feel like I'm reading it again, for the first time, it's

amazing, or how did this train wreck happen? Why did they make all these decisions, you know, and this is just not either of those.

Wren

I am fortunate in that the Hardy Boys was one of your picks. So it was not something I read as a child. And so seeing this adaptation didn't you know, hurt me, in my soul or whatever.

Brandon

Oh I don't have a strong enough emotional adaptation to the Hardy Boys to be bothered by this either way.

Wren

That is fair. That was where I was going to segue to "A Cry in the Wild" hurt me in my soul somewhere or whatever. I don't necessarily believe in souls or whatever. But it stung. We did make our way through the entire one hour and 21 minutes of "A Cry in the Wild."

Brandon

Yeah, because it was a reasonable length for a thing.

Wren

I'm, I'm proud of myself, for that. It was... *sighs* Well, what did you think?

Brandon

I mean, I kind of feel like it's in the same place, honestly, it just kind of is a little bit nothing. Um it was truer to the book than I expected though. To be honest.

Wren

Eh, yeah. (noncommittal)

Brandon

Because honestly, going in, you know, we were both like how to how did they do... how do you do this? How do you do hatch it as a movie because it's just Brian in the woods by himself a lot. My expectation was that they would just add a bunch of scenes where we're like, cutting between what Brian's up to and then like back to like the parents or the people looking for him, et cetera and kind of having this plot that just doesn't exist in the book as a time where like, the actors they have for the parents and the adults can like talk about things and they're going to be some sort of like through line there so that when they're when they are following Brian around in the woods it's not like this movie has no dialogue. So the fact that they actually mostly do just follow Brian around in the woods was not what I expected to get. If that's good or not, yeah.

Wren

Well, okay, so "A Cry in the Wild" as we discussed in our very first episode, where we discussed Hatched, still, you know, inexplicably changed the name. And it was filmed in 1989. Filming took a whole eight weeks, and they just kind of went out into the backyard or whatever in California and filmed this

thing. And so yeah, Brandon is right. They did just follow Brian around and watched him do stuff and scream a lot. And without the internal monologue, and, you know, really digging into, you know, all of the sort of, you know, mental anguish and problem solving and stuff that Brian goes through in the book. It's really just a weird, California boy fumbling around the woods, grunting, making weird little accents at worms, and screaming a lot.

Brandon

Yeah, he talks to himself a lot.

Wren

Which is fine. I think it's completely reasonable for somebody to wander around the woods and talk to themselves. I know I would talk to myself. But...

Brandon

And there's a few lines where he says things that like, made no sense to us. I'm trying to remember the line he said to the about like, I can't even remember now.

Wren

When he found berries. And he walks up to the berries and he's, like, get ready to meet superior life forms and just shoves all the berries in his mouth. And I'm just like, what?

Brandon

Yeah, what? Which is weird, but at the same time, I'm like, okay, this, this is a thing that makes sense in Brian's head, because he's been spending the last 20 minutes thinking about like, the episode of TNG, he's missing right now. And we, as the audience only get the part at the end where he vocalizes something weird to go with his internal monologue that he's having.

Wren

Yes, so much of the strength of Hatchet is in Brian's internal monologue. And, like, one of the things that I, I remember strongly is the scene where he figures out, you know, the water refraction in the book, and that's how he's like, okay, that's how I fish. You know, I have to do it at an angle. And he doesn't do that in the movie. He just stabs at the water a bunch of times. And then finally is like, yeah, I got a fish and waves it around. And, you know, figuring out how to start the fire was also just a completely flat scene because he just hits a rock with the hatchet a couple of times, and then he starts screaming around the woods, "no mud, no mud" for like, five, five repetitions of "no mud." And it just seems like this poor boy is just, you know, going a little crazy out in the forest.

Brandon

Well, which is compounded by the fact that later on, he starts to see things

Wren

Oh, yeah. Right. I forgot about ghost Wolf.

Brandon

Yeah, so like after... So the moose attack is replaced by a bear attack for one.

Wren

Which we posited while we were watching it, because we watched it together. That maybe it was because bears were more trainable to attack somebody without hurting them than a moose, which I think is probably true.

Brandon

Yeah. And so when Brian like, drags himself back onto solid ground, but he's kind of bloodied and stuff, and he sort of passes out on the shore of the lake for a little bit. First, we see so Brian has a dog, not with him. But like, when his mom drops him off to get on the plane at the beginning of the movie, there's a dog. So Brian has a dog. And so first, we see Brian's dog walk up to him, when he's laying there and start to lick his wounded arm. And of course, we're like, hold on a sec, how does this dog get here? And then it kind of stirs Brian awake, and then he looks over and it's not his dog. It's a wolf,

Wren

A white wolf. (Emphasis was given on white)

Brandon

...a white wolf. And then it's like, Oh, no. A wolf and the wolf growls at him, and then he tells the wolf to go away and then the wolf vanishes.

Wren

Vanishes like, like a dissolve effect on video vanishes and then reappears on the shore of lake on the other side of the lake.

Brandon

Yeah.

Wren

Teleporting white ghostly wolves? Yes. Also, there's a there's a bear cubs subplot where Brian kills a mother bear and finds its cubs and then Brian decides to basically raise the cubs for a little while by feeding it fish. Feeding them fish.

Brandon

Yeah, the bear, the bear comes back to finish the job several times. And at one of those points, I thought he was hallucinating the bear also, but then he like, stabbed the bear. And it's surprisingly gory. It's not very convincing or anything but it was, it was more than I expected this film to show. Yeah, and then he discovers after that, that there are some bear cubs.

Wren

What I have to say about that is that: book Brian would have eaten those baby bears. Book Brian would have seen too vulnerable small chunks of meat that will be easy to kill. And he would have eaten them.

He also probably I think would have gone looking for the body of the mother bear and eaten that too. Book Brian was a lot smarter than movie Brian.

Brandon

Yeah, movie Brian went and caught some fish and brought them to the to the bears. Which, you know, is nicer. I would feel bad if he killed the bear cubs.

Wren

Yes. Yeah, absolutely. I just think, you know, it really highlighted the difference between how, you know, sort of in his head survivalist book Brian got. And I think that they tried to show that a little bit with the weird tacked on scenes that they added at the end of the movie after he'd been rescued where he's walking through a grocery store, kind of befuddled. And then he like, gets into bed, and he's just like, staring around and he looks a little lost. And then it and then it cuts to the camp where he's left the hatchet, which I don't think is true. Where he's left the hatchet stuck in a tree where he's carved home into the tree. And I think that those scenes together are supposed to make us think, okay, Brian's really at home in the woods now. Now he's actually kind of messed up, which makes sense, but they just didn't lean into it enough for it really to be particularly impactful, I think.

Brandon

I almost want to applaud them for this specific choice, even though it doesn't actually end up working. But again, since I kind of expected the parents and stuff to have more scenes with dialogue, so that there would be dialogue in the movie. We do get to see him, like actually get back to his parents, you know, in the book, he just kind of gets on the rescue plane. And we don't really have scenes after that.

Wren

Yeah, they kept the last line which I liked, which was "Would you like something to eat?"

Brandon

But then he gets back. Like, we see the rescue plane land at an airport. And both of his parents are there. You know, we see his dad first. But then he turns and he sees his mom and his dog. So like they've come to where the dad is, or where somebody it's unclear where they landed, right. But the parents have come back together at least physically speaking, to meet Brian at the airport. And yeah, then it kind of goes into yes, this this like weirdly delirious scene at the grocery store. Because like it's, it's sort of very muted. And filmed in kind of a hazy sort of way. Like, honestly, the whole... there really isn't any dialogue between them at that point, right. We don't have a time where we like see, or at least hear, like his parents ask what he's been through or even like, say, you know, I'm so glad you're all right. Or whatever. There's no real dialogue. And it kind of makes the entire thing feel, I choose to read this movie now. Now that I've said this, went on a ramble for a few minutes, I choose to read this movie as everything, everything that happened, like, up to the rescue plane is real and like the rescue plane onward is just some kind of weird dream state. Because it seems so strange and like weird and oddly, like psychological horror or something. Like Brian, like Brian is trapped in this weird fantasy where he's like with his divorced parents, and they're together and stuff and it's like, I don't know it's strange. The other thing I delight in the moment where he like, looks out his bedroom window in a flashback to see his dad like get into a truck to drive away and he and he shouts "Dad No" but he shouts it much more

than I just did and it's like extended. It's like an extended No, he holds that for a while. And like as he's like shouting no, in a very long like how long can you hold this No, before he just sort of passes out from oxygen deprivation. He also punches the window and so like Brian already shouted about things a lot before he got lost in the woods. And then when he gets home he doesn't shout about anything.

Wren

There was so much shouting.

Brandon

They could have they could have just like he could have looked at some carrots and looked at the price tag and found that is was an unreasonable price for carrots at the supermarket...

Wren

Carrots Nooooo!

Brandon

...and he could have shouted no and like his mom could have hugged him, I don't know.

Wren

Oh gosh. It was very interesting that they decided to take the whole secret subplot and turn it into this I don't know, moment where like the dad confronts him about what he saw like because I don't know it was all still like this secret that he had been keeping within him in the book, but it clearly is not a secret and it's all out there in the in the movie.

Brandon

Yeah, they make it pretty clear that Brian at some point told his dad, it still wasn't clear in the movie whether or not that was something that like his dad kind of knew about already or suspected already and like was going to Brian for more information right? But but it's certainly more explicit as far as how that goes down in the movie than in the book and they sprinkle it in through the movie a little bit more than the book does, but not by a lot.

Wren

I guess my only other sort of like, and this is really such a small thing it's barely worth mentioning, but I'm going to do it anyway because I'm a jerk. I don't like his jacket. First off, because it's got such like product placement on it. It makes me feel like the movie was probably sponsored by Columbia outerwear or something. But also I don't like that they gave him this like three season nice brand new jacket to wear for this whole thing, where in the book, he has just a crummy flimsy windbreaker that gets all torn up. And so he is cold and uncomfortable and...

Brandon

His clothes as a whole survive this movie pretty pretty well. All things considered. He really doesn't um, it's not super clear how long he's out in the woods in the movie but it seems like a much smaller amount of time just judging by like how much his hair grew out and the fact that his clothes were not just totally disintegrating but because we don't have that internal monologue we don't we don't have...

Wren

They started almost giving us a way to know how long he was in the woods because he started doing this little like what's it called a hash mark or something?

Brandon

Yeah.

Wren

When when you start like cutting lines into a thing to show how many days time has passed. And he started that he was like you know this is the day the plane crashed, this is the day this happened, this is the day that happened, and then they did they never really cut back to it to show us how many marks were on it.

Brandon

Yeah. Yeah, so I got the vibe that it was a much shorter amount of time. But it's not clear how much. But yeah, he doesn't he doesn't get as as banged up. His clothes survive pretty well.

Wren

So ultimately, I feel like that movie also really missed the mark and what Hatchet is even about.

Brandon

Yeah.

Wren

It didn't make me tired. At the very least.

Brandon

It wasn't, it wasn't a bad move. be I guess, it also wasn't very long. It was only like 80 minutes.

Wren

There were so many things that I just would like sit up and go what? That I feel like you know, I was at least still engaged by how confused I was.

Brandon

And I enjoyed all the all the shouting and stuff. Some of it gets hammy enough that I'm like, kind of there for it.

Wren

Oh, I wasn't sure if you meant his shouting or my shouting at the movie.

Brandon

Mostly his shouting. Yeah, but yeah. And it did I feel like they at least did more or less hit most of these sort of bulleted plot events that occur like if you boiled Hatchet down to strictly just the events that

happened and none of the like whys or wherefores you know, they had the, he learns to fish somehow, sort of, he messes with a bow and arrow, he figures out fire, not in this order, obviously. Hr has that incident with the porcupine. He eventually goes... there's there's a big, you know, storm, and then that makes the plane visible. And then he goes out there. Like they hit a lot of the plot points. None of it is really invested with sort of the substance of the things attached to those plot points in the book. But you know.

Wren

Yeah, yeah. I'll give it that.

Brandon

You know, yeah, it felt like they were at least... It didn't feel like they grafted Hatchet on to a completely unrelated boy survival movie.

Wren

That is true, I will give it that, they very clearly did read the book. So, so good for them for doing that bare minimum of work. So we usually, you know, we'll write the book that we have read. But I don't feel like we need to do a new rating for this. Because it would just be more grumbling. So I thought maybe what we would then sort of pivot to is, you know, book adaptations in general, and maybe thinking of some good book adaptations so that we have some positivity in this episode. I mean, appropriately, because our rating system is based on giant peaches, which is a book that we both really enjoyed. I think James and the Giant Peach, the Tim Burton version, even though I know Tim Burton is kind of not everyone's favorite person at this point. But it was the 90s and Tim Burton was very popular. And he made a very good adaptation of James and the Giant Peach. I thought.

Brandon

Yeah, super good. I like that movie a lot.

Wren

I feel like the stop motion style really, really kind of like sent it over the edge from eh to "no, this is real good" because it made it weird and kind of otherworldly. And very, very, very much meshed with the whole weirdness of that story to begin with.

Brandon

Yeah, I think that Tim Burton adapting Roald Dahl is a pretty logical direction to go in, obviously doesn't work out great all the time. But in that case, I think it fit pretty well. They're they both have these sort of similar dark quirky sensibilities so I think I think that one turned out really good. I don't remember enough about how like, how faithfully it follows the book although I do feel like it's you know, pretty close.

Wren

If I recall, which it has been a while, it was it was pretty darn faithful.

Brandon

Like in any in any adaptation to a different medium, some decisions should be made to like, some changes should be made to adapt to the medium that you're working in. You know.

Wren

But it also, you know, it hit the important point I brought up before about what, what I need, at least in a book adaptation is it needs to get the point of it. And it definitely got got the feel of it. So, yeah. So that was that was one that came to mind, which, you know, matched up with our rating system.

Brandon

Yeah. I mean, for me kind of the bar for book to movie adaptations, is Jurassic Park. You know, Jurassic Park, the film would have been formative for me in the sort of time that we've been talking about though, I didn't read the book until quite a bit later. But I think I think Jurassic Park is a better movie than it is a book. It's a good book. I liked the book a lot, too. And there's definitely some like pretty big departures as far as what the movie is doing versus what the book was doing. But I think the movie just kind of works better.

Wren

I, it's hard for me to be really unbiased about that, because I loved Jurassic Park so much, as the movie. And I also saw it first. But I do know that I immediately ran to go read the book. And I was like, 10. And I do remember that the book scared the crap out of me, because it had pterodactyls in it and like a really horrifying pterodactyl scene. So I did, I did get a lot out of the book, having read it after seeing the movie, but um, they're both real good.

Brandon

Yeah. Yeah, the book, the book is great. The body count is higher. It is definitely a little bit darker in that regard. And you know, it deep dives as Michael Chrichton is wont to do, deep dives into, like, some of the science, more so than the movie does, certainly. Which, for me, is often a plus in a sci fi thriller, but maybe not for everybody. So take that as you will, if you're sitting here wondering if you should read Jurassic Park, but um, yeah, it's it's still a very good book that I really enjoy. But I think that some of the, some of the changes for the movie, certainly are helpful. Like, I like that, for instance, Ian Malcolm doesn't die. He's almost a nonentity in the book.

Wren

I think that the world would have revolted. Had they done that in the movie. My other two examples, which I'll get into of really good book adaptations, I had this whole spiel in my mind about how maybe it's the music that makes it because they're two very musical adaptations. And then when you said Jurassic Park, I was like, "Oh, that kind of breaks my premise." And I was like, wait, no. Jurassic Park has amazing music. James and the Giant Peach also had really good music. Cry in the Wild had weird plinky hard stingers randomly.

Brandon

It had a pretty subdued soundscape, and a lot of it got like weirdly synthy sometimes in a way that didn't, I guess was kind of the time for a thing that came out in 1990. But didn't really fit the material.

Wren

Like you knew the bear was coming when the you know, Friday the 13th music started. I was like what? What is happening?

Brandon

Yeah, that's why I'm saying the ending is like some kind of weird psychological horror thing like A Cry in the Wild is adapting Hatchet into horror. And it's just doing it stealthily.

Wren

I mean, I really feel like you could take Hatchet and adapt it into a pretty serious like thriller sort of horror thing. There's there's some scary shit that happens. I think you could make it a pretty dark movie. Yeah. Especially reading the sequels and knowing his whole psychological state afterwards.

Brandon

If somebody asked me "hey, recut The Cry in the Wild", I'd be like, okay, good. Keep it all the same, until he gets out to the plane, after the plane resurfaces, he bangs on it for a while, I would just add in one of his breaks between banging on it (knocks on the microphone to simulate return knocking) from inside the plane. Cut to black. Roll credits.

Wren

Nooooo. That's so fucked up! So other than Jurassic Park, are there any others that you could think of?

Brandon

I don't know. There are certainly adaptations that I like, but for different reasons, right? Like Starship Troopers, for example, is kind of a parody of the book almost. So it's, it's you know, it's a film that arguably understands what the book is saying. But besides that, what the book is saying is stupid. Fairly, and I really like that film. I also really liked the book. We might read at some point, because it did read it kind of in, during school. You know, I never was like, on board with its politics, but I enjoyed it anyway. So we might, I might subject you to that at some point. Oh, you know, what is one that I frequently forget? Well, I grew up on the animated Charlotte's Web, certainly, and didn't quite attach to the book as much. When I read it. That may very well be a matter of like having seen the movie so many times before I ever read the book. But that for sure was a thing.

Wren

Charlotte's Web is the second one on my list. Some people think, you know, maybe it's kind of sacrilegious. And I do really love the book. The especially the illustrations. Garth Williams is basically the illustrator of most of my childhood. But the movie and the songs. So good. And Templeton's song. Oh, God. He's so good.

Brandon

Yeah. And keeping with, you know, musical adaptations. You know, frankly, Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory. You know, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory the book is fine. The Tim Burton movie is weird, even if it is more faithful to the book than Willy Wonka.

Wren

I forgot they did a remake. I didn't see it.

Brandon

Yeah, that's why that's why earlier I kind of avoided just outright saying Tim Burton and Roald Dahl are great.

Wren

Oh, okay.

Brandon

Because that one doesn't.

Wren

I thought maybe you were making a reference to something but I couldn't think of what you were talking about. And I didn't want to sound like I didn't know what I was talking about on this here podcast. So I didn't say anything.

Brandon

I mean, it is it is more faithful to the book, like Willy Wonka does not really get the tone either, right? Because it's very sort of like, it's still weird, and has like moments of weird darkness, obviously. But it's much more fanciful in a way than Charlie and the Chocolate Factory is. So I do think that the Tim Burton, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory is on paper, well, not even on paper, is truer to the book. I think that Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory is a better film. And also, just better than the book. I'm sorry if you love Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, listeners. It's a fine book. It's a fine book. But Willy Wonka is just amazing. And a lot of that yeah is down to like Gene Wilder's portrayal of the character and some of the set pieces and stuff like there's a lot of reasons for that. But that's another one that like with Jurassic Park, I would say it's just strictly better than the than the book.

Wren

So my final "I think this adaptation was brilliant. Maybe even liked it better than the book" is The Last Unicorn. Also has very strong musical moments that make me cry. I, didn't I make you watch that for the first time a couple years ago?

Brandon

Uh Hmm. I've still not read it. So I can't make the book movie comparison. But yeah, the movies really, really nice. It's pretty. It's very somber in a way that is kind of haunting.

Wren

I know I saw it for the first time when I was really young. And the Red Bull definitely gave me a lot of nightmares.

Brandon

Why were you drinking Red Bull when you were really young?

Wren

You know, I was so confused when they released Red Bull as a drink. I was just like, what does this have to do with the Last Unicorn? That was my only context. I'm kind of wondering, with the exception of a couple of them, if maybe it's just the animation is sometimes better at adapting books that live action.

Brandon

I mean, certainly when you get to into fantasy and stuff, I think, I think where a lot of adaptations stumble is making those worlds feel as like, legitimate, I guess, as they feel when they're just on the page and you're imagining them, right? Because there's plenty of relatively inoffensive adaptations of fantasy novels and stuff that just kind of don't really hold together. They're not just they're just not quite as good either because they clearly omit parts, they just were too expensive to make, right? Or they try to make things that clearly they didn't really have the budget to pull off, or whatever, right. Like, it's a big reason why it took decades and decades for Lord of the Rings to get live action movies. Because like people were trying for ages, since you know, the books were big, but it was always kind of like there's no way we could ever film these. There's just no way. And even even the animated attempts were like, strapped for the necessary funds to bring Lord of the Rings to life.

Wren

(Interupts) Yes, the Lord of the Rings specifically, were kind of an animated mess. But the Hobbit animated movie is wonderful.

Brandon

It's quite good. Yeah.

Wren

Ok, just so we're clear here.

Brandon

Yeah, The Hobbit works pretty well. I really liked that movie. And I guess ultimately, it's just kind of like, there's so much more going on and Lord of the Rings, right. And there's so many more like big scenes that would need a lot of stuff happening, these big battles and all these different locations, and characters and stuff like that. And, you know, that's, that's where they struggle. And you know, if somebody had made like, a live action, Lord of the Rings in the 90s, or whatever, probably wouldn't have gone great, right?

Wren

Oh, gosh. Well, I think we have an episode.

Brandon

Yeah. Sure. Seems that way. So what are we gonna do next time?

Wren

Well, we are swapping up the order. Because we were going Wren, Brandon, Wren, Brandon and now we're gonna go Brandon, Wren, Brandon, Wren, until our next increment of five special episode. So the next thing we're reading:

Brandon

Caves of steel by Isaac Asimov.

Wren

Which I have in my possession right now. I'm very excited. What's the sort of like age level that this was for?

Brandon

Um, so Caves of Steel was, you know, in theory, a proper novel. I don't it wasn't like written for YA or anything. It isn't a very long novel. Or a very like, hard one, but I wasn't written for like a juvenile audience in particular, I don't believe.

Wren

Yeah, I wasn't sure if this was the first. I think this is the first sort of not children's book that we're hitting.

Brandon

I believe that is accurate. Yeah. Yeah, it's not we're not like moving to really advanced content or whatever. But it is, I think the first thing we've hit that was not written with young adults in mind as the primary (Something?)

Wren

So we will be you know, bouncing back to more more children's books soon. But we've got a couple of, you know, air quotes here that you can't see adult books that we read at probably not ages that we were supposed to read them, but it's fine. We were weird kids. And you probably know that by now. Dear listeners.

Brandon

There's nothing in Caves of Steel that I feel is probably objectionable.

Wren

No, but I'm making us do Stephen King next. Well, the music used in this podcast was licensed by Epidemic Sound and the transcripts were generated by otter.ai.

Brandon

Have a question or comment for the team. You can find us on Twitter at dog ate my book pod. And on Instagram at my dog ate my book report or by emailing at dog ate my book report at Gmail. We would be super excited to know what books you loved growing up,

Wren

Or what movie adaptations you either really hated or really loved. And thanks for listening to our weird fifth episode, oh gosh. Do we have any listeners yet or left? Probably not. Not yet.