

Not Your Mother's Library Transcript

Mini-Episode 8: Cross-media McGuffins

(Brief intro music)

Rachel: Hello, and welcome to Not Your Mother's Library, a readers' advisory podcast from the Oak Creek Public Library. I'm Rachel, one of two hosts. My second half, Leah, recorded another episode so that we may continue with social distancing. In case you've somehow forgotten, let me explain: Coronavirus. So, everyone is staying away from each other or, at least, they should be. And while we're all getting lonely, we might as well indulge in all things digital. Now seems like a good time to mention that I am actually working from home, as are most of my coworkers, so the setup is a little different. If the recording sounds odd compared to past episodes, that's why. We all appreciate you bearing with us. As I was saying, though: all things digital. The library has a ton of online resources, and I don't just mean this podcast. Because while Not Your Mother's Library might be entertaining and, at times, informative, it isn't as useful as, say, Ancestry Library Edition, where you can take up genealogy as a new hobby. Or Auto Repair Source, where you can literally learn how to fix a car. Or what about Transparent Languages? You could be speaking Russian right now! You can find links to all of these and more on our website—that's oakcreeklibrary.org. I have also been periodically promoting these databases on the library's Facebook page, telling everyone about Gale Courses, Hoopla, rbDigital, et cetera. You can always head on over to our online catalog at Countyat.mcfls.org and go to the database page for a complete listing. These resources are free to every library card holder. Don't have a card? Well, during the outbreak season, you can register for a card online. That's right, visit CountyCat.mcfls.org/selfreg (that's s-e-l-f-r-e-g) and fill out the registration form. You'll be sent an email with a temporary barcode and a link to set up a PIN that will work for 30 days. If you want access to more than just digital resources, you can complete registration in-person at the library...so long as we're open. Just bring in a valid photo ID with current address, or a photo ID and a piece of official mail with your current address, and we'll get you set up. It takes me about 3 minutes, tops, to set up a patron record, so the process is painless. I'll add a link to that self-registration form in the show notes. But enough shameless plugging! This is a mini-episode! I'm here to recommend books 'n' such. Emphasis on the 'such'. So far, Leah's been pretty on point talking about books like a proper librarian, but I'm all over the place with TV shows, video games, and graphic novels. I enjoy media in all of its forms, as do we all, so let's dabble in cross-media mcguffins. In fact, I'm going to change up the format. I swear it's not because I've been writing the scripts for this podcast back-to-back and am starting to lose my mind—no. It's because I'm unpredictable and intriguing and no, nope. No. It's the first thing. Okay! So, this is my top-three list of cross-media mcguffins! Yes, it seems we're sticking with that title. Let's go! Number one: Marvel as comics, movies, and TV. We've all read the comics. But have we, though? Marvel is still pretty popular even post-Endgame in the cinematic universe, and that's really where it shines the brightest, at least in the eyes of most audiences. If you haven't watched "Thor: Ragnarok" or "Black Panther," then you've probably at least seen "Iron Man" or "The Avengers". These superhero movies have dominated the box office for years, and while some might feel exhausted by them, they're still popular. A tad lesser known are the Netflix Marvel series, which I want to focus on. They are all set in New York City and are meant to take place in the same universe as the big-time Marvel movies, but they keep the references pretty low key. It started with "Daredevil." A show about a blind lawyer by day, superpowered vigilante by

night who is portrayed so well by actor Charlie Cox that I literally can't see him in any other role. Then came "Jessica Jones," this one about a private eye with super strength, enhanced healing, and I guess the ability to jump really high? It might be flight, who knows. Anyway, in season one, Jessica goes up against a mind-controlling psychopath brought to life by none other than actor David Tennant. He plays creepy almost too well. The show is dark, and I binged every episode within one day of their release, so you can guess at how good they are. After JJ was "Luke Cage," another hero with not only super strength but unbreakable skin. This series has a rad soundtrack, a more interesting setting in Harlem, and some layered villains. I, uh...(clears throat) kind of want to skip over the next hero on the list—"Iron Fist"—because the series is entirely forgettable apart from that sweet, sweet kung-fu. If my description feels shallow, you should see the show. Because, let's be honest, they did a rush job on the writing to make room for "Defenders." "Defenders" sees all four of these characters come together as a sort of mini-Avengers, I guess? And it was also pretty forgettable. However, we were also blessed with another show called "Punisher." This anti-hero was introduced in season two of "Daredevil." He's so cool that he got his own series, and it is superb. The writing, direction, acting, message, everything. (chef kiss) Magnifique. Honestly, if you're a fan of Marvel in general, all of these Netflix shows are worth a watch...even "Iron Fist." I guess. Want to read the source material? Then head on over to Hoopla! This database features a dynamic platform that makes reading comics easy and fun, and best of all there are no waitlists. Bonus: the number of checkouts allowed per month has been increased from four to eight until at least the end of April. Take that, Coronavirus. Next up on the list is number two: "Good Omens" as a book and TV series. "Good Omens: The Nice and Accurate Prophecies of Agnes Nutter, Witch," is a fantasy satire novel co-written by Terry Pratchett and Neil Gaiman. It's about an angel and a demon working together to try and stop the apocalypse because they've grown rather fond of Earth and all it has to offer. The book was published in 1990, subsequently won a bunch of awards, and as the British often do, they made it into a radio adaptation many years later. Then, in 2019, Amazon Prime released a mini-series by the same name. It's a bit strangely paced at times, which it to be expected given the number of subplots in the book, but Michael Sheen as the angel Aziraphael and David Tennant as the demon Crowley play off of each other perfectly. The series is charming, really, and the story probably translates to this medium as well as it does because one of the original authors—Neil Gaiman—wrote the screenplay himself. Gaiman has a knack for creating stories that shouldn't work in multi-format yet, somehow, usually do. I recommend the movies "Stardust" and "Coraline," as well as the television show "American Gods." Terry Pratchett died in 2015, but his works are also incredible. He wrote the popular "Discworld" series and was co-author of "The Long Earth" series alongside sci-fi writer Stephen Baxter. You can find a collection of Gaiman and Pratchett's work at Oak Creek Public Library as well as online via OverDrive and Hoopla. "Good Omens," the Amazon Prime series, was released on DVD, and copies are available at a number of Milwaukee County Public Libraries. Number three: "Everybody's Gone to the Rapture" as a video game and original soundtrack. For something that isn't available through the library—at least, not yet—I'm going to introduce a video game called "Everybody's Gone to the Rapture." Originally released for PlayStation in 2015 before coming to Windows a year later, this game is what some players not-so-lovingly refer to as a walking simulator. It is story and exploration-based. Make your way around a small, quarantined town in the English countryside. The town is mysteriously devoid of all its inhabitants, so you go place to place, slowly uncovering the mystery behind what's happened to everyone. The graphics are beautiful, but I want to highlight the game's other component: its soundtrack. It's composed by Jessica Curry who also made the OST for Rapture's spiritual predecessor, "Dear Esther." Both will set you spine on fire with frisson. The game's journey would be a

lot less provocative if it wasn't paired with such an emotionally haunting soundtrack. You can find it on plenty of streaming sites, like Spotify or Apple Music. You can also listen via YouTube. Try the songs "Liquid Light," "The Mourning Tree," "A Beautiful Morning," and "The Pattern Calls Out" for a small taste. I will say that you can most definitely enjoy the soundtrack just by itself; I listened to it for over a year before having the ability to play the game on my own PC. And there we have it, my top-three list of cross-media...mc...guffins. Oof, that name doesn't wear well. Anyway, both myself and Leah will continue with these mini-episodes while the library is closed, so we'll keep you company in self-quarantine. Subscribe and rate the podcast if you like what you hear, and remember that you can always reach us through the library's website or Facebook page. Use the #notyourmotherslibrary. Thanks for listening and, until next time, happy reading.

(Brief outro music)