

The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue Transcript

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Holly: This is Bimbo Book Club with Holly.

00:12

Harley: And Harley.

Hello, everyone and welcome to our official first episode.

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Holly: This week we are doing *The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue*,

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Harley: Which Holly was like, I think you'll really like this and I got about halfway through reading it was like I might actually have to kill you because I think you know me too well.

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Holly: I loved it. I am so glad you loved it. It's definitely one of my favorites. I would say a top 10 favorite book of all time for me. Wow. I just love it. I love all the characters. She's done a really good job.

00:48

Harley: It felt, to me, like, not a first work in the *she's got room to become a better author* sense, but in the it felt like a book that she had taken the time to put years and years and years into, which I find is often early works of an author, because once they've got a publishing schedule and stuff, it can be hard to have a passion project like that.

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Holly: Which she did. So the author is V.E. Schwab. Bear with us.

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Harley: I downloaded it on Kindle and didn't look at the author's name even once.

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Holly: She's also the author of a few other popular novels, including *A Darker Shade of Magic*. And I believe it took her 10 years to write this one. And throughout those decades, she was talking about it quite a bit. So, it was a highly anticipated novel when it was finally published. And it did cop some criticism, because I feel like the author potentially hyped up a little bit too much. But as far as I'm concerned, you can't hype it up enough. It's amazing. Everyone should read it.

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Harley: To be honest, though, I think that some of the stuff in it is, I guess, not necessarily for readers, but lovers of art. Like, one of the quotes that I highlighted in the book was, 'Books, she has found, are a way to live a thousand lives.' And that's something that, as a reader, I love and I really kind of identify with. But if you don't particularly understand the concept of losing yourself in art, I don't know that you would have the same love of that book.

02:24

Holly: The whole novel just feels like a beautiful love letter to art and the process of making art and leaving a legacy of an idea, and the absolute power of an idea. So for those of you who may not have read the book, it's essentially about a girl, Addie, a boy, Henry, and the devil, Luc. And, I guess, the idea that, can life be considered valuable if it can't leave an impact or a legacy on the world directly?

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Harley: Yeah, so it plays into two themes. One is the deal with the devil and what do you truly desire? And the other is that sense of your place in the world and where you belong, and how much of that is in relation to how you see yourself through other people. And I think we see that both in Henry, and in Addie, who have very different results to their deal. So their deals are a little bit more complicated. But the simple version is that Addie's deal leads to her becoming invisible. So people forget she exists as soon as she leaves the room. And Henry is almost too visible, he's got a gravitational pull as a result of his deal where everybody just sees their idea of the perfect person in him, and gravitate towards him. So he is more visible than ever, and she is less visible than ever.

03:52

Holly:

I think this is such an interesting way of using the word invisible, because that's not what you expect, but she is invisible.

04:00

Harley: So we start essentially with Addie at the beginning of her deal. So she is at the, I guess, present point of the novel. She's about 300 years old. So she makes her deal in 1700s France.

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Holly: Yeah, I think it's 1716, 1714. Something like that. At a little, very small town.

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Harley: That adds up. Yeah, so a little country village in France, and she's wishing for a bigger life or more in her life.

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Holly: To not be owned by her husband, she wants freedom.

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Harley: And she actually realizes later in the book that one of the ways around that is if she could have wished to be a boy.

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Holly: Yeah, she definitely could have.

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Harley: Because particularly at that point in history, a woman's role was essentially to get married, have babies, and not exist in the world, except as a vessel for hopefully more sons. But she has a kind of that artist's desire for adventure and so she makes a deal with the devil, not *the* devil, but *a* devil. So, kind of crossroads, demon, old God.

05:09

Holly: Even though she was expressly told not to pray to the gods who answer after dark, and Luc is a God who answered after dark, and his imagery is just really beautiful.

05:21

Harley: So in a moment of desperation, she does pray after dark and Lucien appears. And he appears with the face of her dream man, so this kind of imaginary perfect man she has created for herself in her sketchbooks, which is actually on track for—one of the really interesting things about, devil mythology versus something angel mythology is that traditionally, angels actually appear as terrifying. Like their first words in the Bible, far more even than like, 'Praise God,' or things like that, the amount of times that in the Old Testament, 'Fear not,' basically, like, 'Do not be afraid' appears as an angel's appearing being like, 'Don't shit yourself in terror, it's fine. I'm a good guy,' appears constantly. So actual angels, like the good guys in those kinds of things often actually appear as

completely terrifying. Whereas the beings that appear as something lovely are often the devils or the darker fae, the things that are not so traditionally good. Depends on the mythology, obviously, from an angels and demons standpoint, the evil ones, but they're not always evil, of course. And I think we see that in Luc.

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Holly: He's a very complex character. I mean, they're all very well-built-out complex characters in their own rights. But I think Luc in particular, is really well done.

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Harley: And I think tends more towards kind of fae mythology, then say, an angels and demons thing, which makes sense, because he's part of a—so we're kind of introduced to the idea of the gods that answer after dark through a character in the village, Estelle, who is, I guess, for lack of a better term, the village witch, who still prays to the old gods. So he's very much introduced in a way that is that old superstition, and that kind of fae-esque mythology.

07:23

Holly: Yeah, he even brings that up. So when they dine together, hundreds of years later, or 100 years later, the food appears in front of her and she sits down not wanting to eat, and he actually addresses it. He says, 'I'm not saying you can eat it, it's not poisoned, it's not going to trap you, you can just eat the food because it's lovely food. And how beautiful is this decadence that we get to enjoy?'

07:43

Harley: I mean, they don't go hugely into his mythology, because it's not about him. But he very much is complex in that way of something like a fae or a crossroads demon. But we do get into a little bit more about the idea of that deal with the devil. So traditionally, a deal with the devil is 10 years. So you get 10 years of sheer brilliance—or a crossroads demon at any rate—and you have to face the demons, the hellhounds, or whatever. And this is something that you find in real-world mythology in terms of things like if you look into something like the 27 Club, and there's a lot of stuff around, Have they made deals with the devil to become so successful, obviously, all at 17? But those kinds of people who've become successful out of nowhere, and then have very sudden, often violent deaths is very much that traditional mythology, that we get within the book. So Addie, her deal essentially leaves her immortal. So, she gets to live as many lifetimes as she likes, until she's prepared to give up her soul. But she is unable to make a mark on the world, so to speak, whereas Henry's deal is for a year.

08:53

Holly: Yes. So, when Henry made his deal, he was seconds away from committing suicide. And he didn't even really believe that this was happening because he had drunk a lot of alcohol. He had taken uppers. And he was out of his mind. He was unsure whether this was actually happening or not, whether it was hallucination. So he flippantly said, 'One year,' it was his choice, which is a point of contest later.

09:22

Harley: But yeah, I mean, it almost has that thing of when Addie made her deal, there was some stuff that she was flippant about in terms of choosing her words, or not kind of necessarily drilling down to the real specifics of what she wanted beyond freedom.

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Holly: Well, she didn't know, she simply didn't know how to articulate it.

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Harley: Yeah, but I do think it's that thing of the like, because the reason why I say this is because she understood, she believed that she was making a deal. And she took the moment seriously, she just hadn't really thought about what she truly wanted. Whereas for Henry, in that very modern perspective, he was like, 'Oh, yeah, whatever, this guy is just making shit up to get me to stop looking at the ledge with a little too much eagerness.' And it wasn't until later on that he realized that no, no, I actually made a deal with the devil. And I probably should have taken that more seriously.

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Holly: He should have asked for way more shit. Right, *I could have had 10 years, I only asked for one.* What a fool.

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Harley: What a fool. But I do also think that we only get a very brief look at the deal between Luc and Henry. And I think part of the reason why he got a year was because Luc was using Henry to get to Addie.

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Holly: So, there's this beautiful moment where Addie and Henry meet for the first time. Henry runs a bookshop. And Addie steals a book from his store. He runs out after her. And then in the end, it's just like, 'Oh, keep it.' Who would have stolen a very battered, old, classic in a different language, just keep it? The next day, she goes back, and she wants to swap it for another book. And we have this beautiful moment where Henry goes, 'Wow, that's bold of you.' Addie's going, 'Well, what do you mean?' trying to play coy. Then Henry says, 'I remember you.' And this is where I feel like the real story started. They've

embarked on this beautiful love story. And it just feels so romantic and heartbreaking. Because we obviously know what's coming for Henry, but Addie doesn't.

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Harley: Is that obvious?

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Holly: I think it is pretty obvious.

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Harley: I mean, you don't know how much time.

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Holly: Yeah, you don't know how much time. But you learn pretty quickly. But it feels very organic. And it's not until Addie and Luc come together again, and Luc kind of throws it in Addie's face. 'Do you think that I don't keep track of my charges? Do you think that I would let this happen?'

12:02

Harley: And it's a little bit naive of her because, these multiple times throughout the 300 years together, been like, 'I might only show myself on our anniversary or on specific occasions. But do you think I'm not watching the rest of the time?' He's given her a lot of clues that he watches her quite closely.

12:17

Holly: Yes, but he refers to her as my Adeline. Always *mine, you are mine. You were the one that got away, no one will know you. Even if they could remember you, no one will know you the way that I know you.* Which just ah, I love Luc. I think he's my favorite character.

12:38

Harley: Got a thing for the toxic devil boyfriend?

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Holly: I really do have a thing for the toxic devil. Just the way he materializes from literal shadows. Give me some of that.

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Harley: It felt like at the start of the book that it was gonna be a love story between Luc and Addie. And it was for a portion, it just didn't stop there. And it was not really about it being a love story, because, the book itself, that's just a vehicle for the real messages of the

book, which I think is a little bit more complicated and fascinating and all that kind of stuff. I mentioned earlier that at one point, Addie realizes that she probably could have just asked to be a man. And that's because everybody forgets that she exists. She can do whatever she wants in the world. She's forced out of her comfort in her home because her parents don't remember who she is, like, *Who the fuck is this stranger in her house? Get out.*

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Holly: So, it's not just that she can no longer be remembered. It's that she's been erased. No one remembers she ever existed.

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Harley: And as soon as they walk away, or a door closes or things like that they forget she exists again. So she constantly has to reintroduce herself to people.

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Holly: So she has this like *50 First Dates* moment with potential like men throughout the book where she'll fall in love.

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Harley: I think part of that is really important because it forces her away from her home and the comfort that she's in. So it's like, Luc has obviously gone, I mean, essentially shove you out of the nest, you can't make a deal like this and then go home and play normal and just get to live a boring life.

14:17

Holly: This is literally what you asked for. The good and the bad and the hard.

14:22

Harley: So she ends up in the streets of Paris and she goes to stay in a lodging house, but they, as soon as she shuts herself in the room, forget that she exists. And so they come back in and they're like, 'Who the fuck are you that's broken into this house? Get out.' So she basically is forced into homelessness because she can't sign a lease, she can't be remembered long enough to have any level of safety. And she does in that scenario turn to sex work, which both gives her a kind of a pretty brutal experience initially of what sex is. She does come around later on when she has the chance for some romance, but she does have to go down and up. And I think it's kind of nice that the author hasn't shied away from the fact that that would be a reality for her. And I mean, the reality is, aside from the time period that it's in, even in modern times, she would be stuck being a street worker because she can't put an ad online because she doesn't even appear in anything. She can't even show up in photos. She can't work at a strip club, because you'd have to

apply constantly and they'd still be like, 'Who the fuck are you? Get out of our dressing room.' So she has to work in kind of the most dangerous variation of this. And I think it's really interesting in terms of a lot of people don't talk about the kind of cycle breaking that sex work can be, but also the survival aspect of it a lot. I think it was kind of nice that she put it in there in a way that felt like, I was really, like, shoulders tense, ready for it to be a like 'whores suck!'. But, I guess I kind of it was there partly because that was all she could do to survive. But to me, it felt like it was also there because there is this idea of the fantasy of intimacy with a man that is then taken away because they don't remember who she is. So she can only give herself away in a way that is really transactional.

16:13

Holly: I think it was very well done. I think it definitely didn't cheapen the fact that this is a reality for a lot of people, this survival work.

16:28

Harley: And I do. I think it's one of those things that, certainly as someone who has been in the industry, there is always that kind of safety net of the industry. Like if you go and do other things, whatever it is, you can always go and work at a club or pick up a private or any of that kind of stuff.

16:45

Holly: I think that mentality runs, that *fuck it I'll just be a stripper* mentality. Whether it's correct or not, it's there.

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Harley: And I think too, the reality of knowing that you can take that leap because I think the like fuck it, *I'm becoming a stripper* kind of runs through society. But I say all the time, I'm like, What's the meme for *fuck it, I'll become a stripper*. But if I'm already a stripper, like, nobody told me I was going to work and run my own business. I work very hard. What the shit? And I feel like civilians would be like, 'They become an escort.' But that's just as much work, but in a different direction. Yeah, in fact, I personally would consider that more work, because it goes against my nature in the way that stripping doesn't.

17:28

Holly: If you want an easy job, like, I'm sure McDonald's is hiring. Sex work is not an easy job. It is quick money. It's very fast money. It is not easy money. And I think that's the difference.

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Harley: I think also, it's an accessible job. So it's easy money in the sense that it's money that is available or accessible to a far wider range of people than traditional paths to a lot of money or significant money, which is why often is part of people's generational wealth breaking and like generational shifts, poverty breaking, wealth creation, and breaking those cycles of poverty, because it is something that you can be trailer trash and go into the strip club and learn to hustle and really make something of yourself and pay your way through schooling or through starting a business or through a creative pursuit or things in order to finance escaping from that cycle of being poor or whatever, just as much as you can come in super, super rich, and hustle just as hard and make just as much as the next person I work with. It's very much an equalizer in that environment.

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Holly: But I think also—

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Harley: I mean, the money I make, and I would argue the money that you make, like we've both got regulars we like I've got relationships with agents, I've got all that stuff that requires being remembered.

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Holly: Absolutely it requires being remembered. It also requires communication, which is another thing that Addie can't do. She can't text, she can't write. She can't take a photo, like you said before. She can't do anything. She can't even say her own name, which wouldn't be an issue because we all have stage names.

19:16

Harley: But she can't put an ad online and work privately through that. Because she can't type up the ad and she can't get someone to remember her long enough to type it up for her. So she's very much trapped in that, very much survival, she can't use sex work in a way that is beneficial to her beyond just a straight-up exchange. Give me money, get laid, peace out.

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Holly: She's very much backed into a corner and it's kind of a choice between sex work, and thievery. And it becomes an issue with Henry later because he is very much against her stealing things, but it's hard for him to understand.

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Harley: She doesn't have a bank account, she can't do anything. She also talks about how aside from two items that Luc arranges for her to not lose, everything kind of disappears when she's not looking. So she can't hold on to memories, or trinkets of memories. So I

mean, obviously, memory and memory loss is a big thing. Addie remembers everything. But everybody around her forgets her the second she's gone. But Luc, at one point, says something about ideas are wild, and they're harder to control. And Addie takes that and runs with it.

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Holly: She absolutely does. So while she can't directly leave a mark on the world, she does plant a lot of seeds. And then throughout the book, we see these seeds coming into bloom essentially, where there's a bar that she planned with a guy on a napkin throughout a drunken night. And then a few months later, walking down the street sees the sign for this bar.

21:03

Harley: And I think the book is broken up into sections where you have little museum notes and things like that on sketches or artworks or things that are all inspired by Addie, like, obviously, nobody makes the connection because they're across centuries.

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Holly: And so there's a beautiful quote from the book that says, 'Stories come in so many forms: in charcoal, and in song, in paintings, poems, films. And books.' And I think there's a really beautiful distinction throughout the book, where she has planted the seed of an idea, and allowed someone else to bring her creative vision into life, versus other pieces of work where she has been the muse.

21:51

Harley: I think one of the big things is, there is an artist at one stage who, she wakes up and he's doing a sketch of her in the bed. Versus at the very start of the book, she's with a musician who she plays a few bars for him, and he gets sucked into it, and then starts jamming with her basically. And then she disappears. And he's just left with notes of this song. And we run into him later in the book. And he's like, 'It occurred to me as though it was in a dream. I don't remember writing this, but I would wake up and I'd have bars on napkins, and when I put them all together, I had this amazing song. It's this thing that's blown me up in the world.'

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Holly: So they essentially wrote this song together, but he doesn't remember her.

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Harley: And so he doesn't even remember his participation in it. So he just wakes up, and there's songs and song lyrics in his head.

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Holly: And the lyrics from this particular song, something along the lines of, 'I'm in love with a girl that I've never met,' or, 'She's just from a dream.' It's just, it's obviously an idea that he's describing. So on some level, some deep psychological level, psychological unconscious, on some deep unconscious level, she has had an impact. And it's through art.

23:15

Harley: And it is that idea that she can't be remembered, specifically. But she can leave ideas in her wake. And that the impact of an idea or the impact of a story sticks with you more than a specific memory. And I think that that's true in general. Like, obviously, it's the theme of Addie's life. I think it's true in general, I am always when people are like, 'What did you do last week?' I'm like, that is more than like, five minutes ago, I do not remember. But if you ask me to tell you a story about something, I remember people's stories. I always say I forget people's names, but I remember their stories. So it's like that fact recall is not there. But the idea recall, that story recall, is there so people can recall the stories that she leaves behind. And they can see the kind of ripples from that, but they can't remember her specifically. So, she does manage to leave ripples in the world and becomes a muse through 300 years of artwork.

24:07

Holly: Yeah, so she is essentially this eternal muse for centuries. And Henry's friend Bea is the one who kind of identifies and would like to run with this idea that there's this woman who is appearing throughout history and all these various art forms from across the world. That doesn't make sense. But the same seven freckles which are referenced a lot, like almost too much, appear in all of these images, and they are obviously Addie's seven freckles, which are her seven stars.

24:47

Harley: Yeah, so they look like her constellation across her face. So they appear as constellations or things throughout drawings or paintings or whatever. So, there's some abstract ones where it's the night sky or whatever. And then there's some more direct ones, but nothing that's like specifically showing her face or like, obviously is Addie because that's where the magic comes in, of her deal. So a big part of the book is the love story between her and Luc and the idea that he's the only one who can truly see her. And that she doesn't matter to the world. She doesn't exist to the world except to him. So, he uses this as a way of trying to get her because essentially, the deal that they've made, she lives until she gives up her soul to him. So, it's in his best interests to have her go, 'Screw this, I'm done.' And he can have her soul. But she's a girl after my own heart, and she's like, 'Now that you want it, you can't have it, I'm going to be stubborn and stick it out.' So she initially kind of uses the power of ideas or making her mark through being a muse to

spite him. And then it becomes her way of surviving through centuries of being invisible to everybody except him. So she can wake up next to somebody and they can be like, 'I'm so sorry, I do not remember you. Like I must have been so drunk, because I don't remember you at all.' And like that embarrassment and awkwardness of like, as soon as the door closes, they've forgotten she exists.

26:23

Holly: Or worse when they wake up. And she hasn't been engaging in sex work, but they press coins into her palm anyway.

26:31

Harley: But yeah, that she's not memorable, but then she can walk through a museum and see the fact that she's real. She's like, I'm here. I exist. I have mattered in some capacity.

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Holly: And that'd be so frustrating.

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Harley: Yeah, and I mean, that craziness of constantly repeating those circles and not existing.

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Holly: And we see when Henry introduced it to his friends. And every time they have the same thing to say about her face, every time, would just be so frustrating.

27:04

Harley: And we see a little bit of that craziness in Henry trying to process it, because they find out about each other fairly quickly, that they both have a deal of some kind. And Addie is very upfront about her kind of thing. So she's very much like, 'Your friends will continuously forget I exist. And it is what it is. And we've just got to roll with it.' And he's like, trying to unpack it and be like, 'But how do you not remember her?' And she's like, 'You will go crazy. You just need to accept it and roll with it.' Because of course, it's the first time he's had to deal with people being like, 'Oh, nice to meet you. I've heard so much about you.'

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Holly: But I've met you 35 times already.

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Harley: I just went to the bathroom and came back and went, *Oh*.

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Holly: Where'd you come from?

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Harley: There's somebody else at our table. Cool. Cool. Cool. Cool.

I think that's really fascinating. One of the things that's really powerful about this book is the idea of being seen, and the people who see us and how they matter. And you do get that in their kind of Henry versus Luc thing. Luc obviously sees her and remembers her and has seen her for 300 years and all that kind of stuff. But Henry is the first person who's remembered her.

28:13

Holly: With Luc, he asks, he visits her every year on the anniversary and asks for her soul. And she turns him down, turns him down, turns him down. So, he starts to stretch out the gaps in between when he comes to visit her, and does horrible things like take her through the darkness and dumping her somewhere else after she's built a life in one location, dumps her in a different location. But then at some point, he changes up his tactic. And so he starts wining her and dining her and doting on her and trying to facilitate this relationship with her without actually asking her for her soul for 40 years or something doesn't ask her. And then when he feels like he's worn her down, he asks her, and she feels so betrayed by this and she feels like, he was playing this long game with me. And so we want to hate him and we want to be so angry for her because she feels humiliated and betrayed and because it's been going on for so long. But at some point during that time, Luc has also fallen for her as much as a devil made of shadows can fall for a human, I guess.

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Harley: No, I think he falls for her completely. And I think this is the thing that she realizes is that he has shown his hand.

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Holly: He has shown his hand.

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Harley: He has power over her but she has power over him.

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Holly: Yes, and he's lonely, too. It's a lonely existence being the night the God of the shadows and the God of the night.

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Harley: There were a lot of red flags right there, Holly. 'I can fix him I promise.' Don't just see the handsome shadow man, see all the red flags surrounding him.

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Holly: But oh my god, I would love a life that's just enjoying art and good food and exploring the world with my demon boyfriend. And looking at me like, oh, my ultimate goal in life is just to make and consume art. And if I had to give up making art for a demon boyfriend who could just dote on me, and we could just enjoy good sex, great food and art for forever, his way or the highway, right? I mean, I've been in relationships like that before.

30:38

Harley: And were they good relationships? What did I say about red flags?

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Holly: Well, I mean, he's made of shadows, so I don't think there's any red on him. I'm getting a very disapproving look over here. I know I don't have great taste in demons.

31:00

Harley: Great taste in demons, just terrible taste in love interests.

31:04

Holly: I'm not going to go and make a deal with the devil or anything. No crossroads around here.

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Harley: Can I write the terms of your deal if you decide to make a deal with a crossroads demon?

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Holly: Yeah, I'll allow it.

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Harley: Because I went on a schtick about genie mythology. So I will not ever make a wish on a genie, if I, tomorrow, found a ring or lamp—

31:04

Holly: Fuck no, we don't fuck with genies.

31:04

Harley: But you'll fuck with a crossroads demon?

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Holly: He's made of shadow and he's hot.

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Harley: What if it's a hot genie? What if you had a handsome man in a ring?

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Holly: No. It's Luc. Specifically. It's Luc specifically.

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Harley: So on that note, would you ever make a deal with the devil? And what would you do it for?

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Holly: What was the last five minutes of conversation about? No, I don't know. Getting laid, good food, and art.

32:01

Harley: Yeah, 10 years?

32:02

Holly: Absolutely. I probably want more than 10 years, though, but maybe not 300. I think I would get a bit bored. But there's always that out, because when she's done, she can just be like, I'm done. You can have my soul now. She's just stubborn. I feel like I'm not that stubborn. And I'd get to a point where I was like, I've seen enough. I've done enough. You can have my soul now. Be nice to it. I was so nice to you. Would you do a deal with a crossroads demon?

32:33

Harley: I think there's part of me that is tempted. It would be nice to know that everything would be guaranteed to work out. But, I think in that traditional sense of a crossroads demon probably not. But then again, if anybody could win over a bunch of hellhounds for their soul, that would be me. So, fun fact, Hades, your hellhounds are now my hellhounds. Also, my soul is intact.

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Holly: I don't doubt that for a second.

32:58

Harley: You can enjoy your work, shadow lover, and I'll just take over the underworld. It's not on purpose. I just control the hellhounds.

33:06

Holly: And back to Addie.

33:09

Harley: Honestly, the ending of that book very much has the, *guess who now controls the solar system?*

33:24

Holly: So Luc fucked up, one, by showing his hand. Two, also, he taught Addie too much.

33:24

Harley: Oh, yeah, he definitely taught Addie too much. So he taught her the power of words and the power of terminology. So to save Henry, Addie goes and changes the deal that she has with Luc because deals can't be broken, but they can be changed. So the terminology changes and she changes her deal, giving essentially giving herself over to Luc for as long

33:49

Holly: as he will have her, which is a little play there. Because she's assuming that at some point, he's gonna get bored of her. And when he does get bored of her, she gets her soul. She gets herself back. Yeah.

33:49

Harley: Which I think like I think there's two levels of so the first thing of like, undermining Luc, feeling like he's maybe not all-powerful is when they do run into each other. So Henry and Addie, and they're like, 'Our deals cancel each other out.' And they initially think that it's accidental, that it's not on purpose, but they've just run into something that he missed in the deals that he made with each of them individually, that each of their individual deals meant that, in order for them to work, basically, Henry had to be able to remember her. But they also realized through that, that she can literally make her mark. I mean, obviously she's realized throughout the book that she can make her mark through other people. But they realized that if she uses Henry's hand, so she's controlling his hands, but he's the one that's, say applying paint to a wall, that the paint stays the marks stay. And so throughout that process of them together, she starts telling Henry her story. So by the end of the book, Luc has essentially worked Addie to give up her soul to him and to erase her name from the world. And by the end of the book, she's managed to display her name to the entire world through Henry as a vehicle for that. But also in freeing Henry, she's managed to change her deal so that at the end of the day, she's

going to have her name, like her name, specifically, and her story specifically, be remembered and marked on the entire world, but then also escape her deal with Luc where she gets to own her soul at the end. So it's kind of is that she does emerge as though I guess, muse triumphant?

35:43

Holly: Absolutely. She's the winner in all of this. We assume.

35:49

Harley: Not a bad way to spend your waiting years, being wined and dined until he gets bored of you.

35:54

Holly: You just told me that's not a healthy thing to aspire to.

35:57

Harley: But I'm saying if you're already stuck in a shitty situation, better to have a good shitty situation no, I would not sign up for the initial deal, Holly.

36:05

Holly: I wouldn't give up my soul.

36:08

Harley: Well, Addie also isn't giving up her soul in the end.

36:10

Holly: Yeah, but she was stubborn.

36:13

Harley: We were talking about the stubborn bits where you were like, I'd probably get bored before 300 years and I'd give up my soul. So we were still in that early bit. I'm saying, if I've already lost my soul, and I've already been stuck with it, and I was trying to get it back, and I knew I had to suffer through maybe 300 more years of putting up with shit before I can get my soul back. At least I'm getting wined and dined for those 300 years. It's a different thing. Adjacent but different.

36:35

Holly: I guess the other question is, will Luc get bored of her? Or is he just so possessive?

36:46

Harley: I think it's also about winning for him, though. And he feels like he's won. So he'll enjoy his winning for a while, but eventually that won't feel like enough.

36:53

Harley: Again, he's a toxic boyfriend, Holly.

36:53

Holly: Made of shadows.

36:59

Harley: I get it. Shadows are hot and all that.

37:02

Holly: Still toxic, but he gives her a house.

37:06

Harley: I mean, I wouldn't mind a house. Oh, I'd love a house.

37:08

Holly: Who wants to give me a house?

37:10

Harley: Especially like in the middle of New Orleans. Beautiful. It's prime real estate, I mean, unless it's hurricane season.

37:17

Holly: I guess he did get grumpy and burn the thing down there.

37:23

Harley: Again, toxic. When I get what I want, you can have a house. The second you cross me, I'm burning that fucker to the ground? Sounds like a few men I've known.

37:32

Holly: Hmm.

37:35

Harley: Anyway, did you have any other stuff that you wanted to go over? I feel like this is just one of those beautiful complex things where you can say so much and then still feel like you've covered nothing. You can talk for hours. And like, there's more.

37:49

Holly: There's so much to this, though. There's 300 years of stuff.

37:56

Harley: But I think also there's such a complexity around the idea of memory and the power of ideas and how we all kind of feel invisible. And we're all trying to make our mark on the world. And how much impact do we have? And do all of us have to have our name splashed in neon lights in order to matter?

38:15

Holly: Hmm. And that's exactly it. So, throughout the novel Luc mentions, he asks, 'Do you think life has any value if one doesn't leave some mark upon the world?' I think we only see a few of the deals that he's made. We don't see all of the deals. But every deal that we do see has been an artist. And they want their 10 years.

38:40

Harley: Or their time, 5, 10 years in the book. That's just a traditional timeline.

38:45

Holly: And some of the things that Luc just says throughout the book are really, really beautiful. Like at one point, he says, 'Because time is cruel to all, and crueler still to artists. Because visions weaken, and voices wither, and talent fades.... Because happiness is brief, and history is lasting, and in the end... everyone wants to be remembered.' I believe he says that, it's like a taunt to Addie. But she's like, 'Yeah, bet.' And becomes the eternal muse.

39:16

Harley: I think too. I highlighted just the Latin version of this. Basically, it translates to, 'I shall either find a way or make one,' which I really feel I could be Addie's motto where it's like, so I've been put into this deal that was not what I actually wanted. It's the letter of the deal, but not the spirit of the request. However, in order to spite Luc, and to make an impact on the world, I'll find a way or I'll make one. And I think fairly early in the book, 38% of the way through the book according to my Goodreads notes, but it's so it's in the first third of the book, just over the first third, it is that point in the book where Addie starts to realize that she can make an impact through ideas, even if she can't make an impact directly. And I think that that very much sums up her character, even at the end, she's like, 'I'll find a way or I'll make a way to get my soul back and to get out of this deal.' But she doesn't actually try to go, 'You can have my soul just give Henry his back.' And that's where Luc goes, 'I can't get rid of a deal.' So he gets to like Henry and ends up being able to live his life out. But she has to stay with Luc. So yeah, she makes her way.

40:36

Holly: She does make her way. And she's very resilient throughout, whether it's survival sex work, or it's becoming the muse, or it's planting seeds of ideas, she is very resilient. And she's determined to leave her mark on the world. And through Henry, she does.

41:04

Harley: Yeah, well, I think not just through Henry, I think she does, through many, many artists throughout history. I think it goes back to that quote that I said, at the start of that you can live a thousand lives through books, whatever the official actual quote was, but it is that she's managed to live all of these lives by appearing as a background character or sketch that's not quite finished. She's made 1000 marks, however, seemingly insignificant each individual one is.

41:38

Holly: And I think your use of the word character there is really spot on. She does talk about how she studies the different socioeconomic classes, I guess, and is able to imitate their mannerisms to get him through certain doors, and get in certain ways. And she's listening to the names and she's listening to who's of note, who's in town, who's not in town, what names she can use to get into certain rooms. And she uses that to her advantage. And she's playing those characters. But ultimately, the art that's been created of her, is her in its rawest form. It's not that character, it is still Addie.

42:19

Harley: I think too, in terms of the idea of character and reality and fiction. So when *The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue* is published within the novel, and the novel within the novel shares the name, but when Henry publishes his book about his life, he publishes it as a work of fiction. So this is one of the things where his friend, who had the thesis about this muse that keeps appearing with the seven stars across her face or whatever, when he's finished this work of fiction, she is like, 'Ah, I inspired you. I want credit at the start.' And I think his only note at the beginning, or his author's note at the start of the book, is simply 'I remember you.' That's his last message to Addie.

43:06

Holly: How beautiful, lovely bookend from the inscription in the book in the book.

43:09

Harley: Yeah.

43:12

Holly: It's very important that there are no other author names on it is literally just her name on the cover. And it's Addie, not Adeline, because she wants that name. Adeline was the old her.

43:27

Harley: But also Adeline is the version of herself that has been forced upon her and Addie is who she chooses to be.

43:33

Holly: Luc also refers to her as Adeline. And never by Addie, I don't believe.

43:39

Harley: Which I think comes back to the idea that as perfect as he seems on paper, he doesn't truly see her. He doesn't pick apart the details of their final deal, because he thinks that he's won. And he knows her better than anyone, but he doesn't actually see her.

43:33

Harley: I think one of the really powerful things about, just circling back to that 'I remember you' saying, there's a point in the book where she's like, three words are so powerful. And it's really interesting, because usually in stories 'I love you' are the three most powerful words anyone can say and all that kind of stuff. And I actually think 'I remember you' or 'I see you' are so powerful. And especially for her. It's like she's been told that people have fallen in love with her over and over and over again. But to be seen, and to be remembered, is so much more significant. And I think it's a really fascinating take on those three most powerful words, maybe being something other than what we expect.

44:35

Holly: Little side note, did you know that the first three words that you said to me after we didn't see each other for several years was I remember you,

44:44

Harley: was it?

44:45

Holly: Yeah, because I came up to you and we were backstage waiting for like tech rounds and stuff that was like, Hey, I don't know if you remember me and you didn't even let me finish my sentence. You're like, 'I remember you.' Different vibe.

44:54

Harley: Of course I remember you. Because you were like, 'Oh, now, that you're so important.' I was like, 'I'm not important.' Also, even if I was that important, which again, I'm not, I'm not an asshole. Jesus. Anyway, look how powerful those words have been for us.

45:12

Holly: So powerful. Look at us now.

45:14

Harley: I mean, I love you, too. But I also remember you.

44:54

Holly: And I see you.

45:19

Holly: Any final thoughts on *The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue*. Would you recommend it? And who would you recommend it to, if you do recommend it?

45:27

Harley: So yes, I would recommend it. And I would recommend it to people who already appreciate art, and who maybe care about making any impact in the world on how they matter, in a creative sense. I think if you've ever lost yourself in a novel, you'll probably like this one. And, if you've ever felt insignificant, you probably will like it as well.

45:52

Holly: Yeah, it is a very beautiful novel. I think if you don't have an appreciation of art, you will lose a good chunk of the story.

46:00

Harley: I think so much of it is rooted in the idea of like that eternal muse, the power of ideas and being more powerful than a lot of people give it credit for. So if you appreciate those things, you will appreciate the way that she has so beautifully woven those concepts into her novel in the way that she's pulled them together. If you don't appreciate those things, a lot of the novel I think would just be banging on about bullshit you don't care about. And I know that's a really broad audience to leave it out, too, because most of us care about that stuff. But not everybody does. And that's cool, too. I guess everyone's entitled to be wrong.

46:38

Holly: I wouldn't say it's a heavy read. But it's also not a light read. There are complex characters, it has complex themes, it is very well done. But it does take some brain space to keep everything.

46:50

Harley: And that's really where I get more specific about the kind of people who would like to read it is, if you like reading airport fiction, it's probably not necessarily like, maybe you would like it as a foray into something that's a little bit more. I don't want to say heavy, but complex is the word.

47:07

Holly: It's got depth. There's very little sex. Like there's no sex scenes.

47:14

Harley: I don't remember.

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Holly: There's the implied sex. But there's no real sex scene. So it's not something if you're a big smut reader, it's probably...

47:23

Harley: No, no, no, it's not at all smut. So there is sex involved in a lot of stuff that she actually focuses much more on the idea of feeling used versus connected, which is, we all can experience both those things, or neither of those things or whatever. But it's more about that emotional experience of physically being with someone, as opposed to getting into the nitty-gritty of the physical act. There's no throbbing.

47:52

Holly: Definitely no throbbing. You will be taken on a deliciously heartbreaking journey through a range of complex emotions. So be prepared for that. But it is beautiful.

48:09

Harley: Yeah, I think it's beautifully done.

48:17

Harley: Okay, so that's it for this week's episode.

48:09

Harley: And this week, especially, we just wanted to take an extra minute to say thank you for making it this far. While this isn't the first time we've sat down to record a podcast, *The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue*, in some ways, was a perfect first episode, because this podcast really was an idea that refused to be forgotten. And like all creative pursuits, it's been a little bit of a daunting thing to release into the world.

48:42

Holly: It's especially scary since it's outside the skill set we've spent the whole past decade working on. We have to open ourselves up to being awkward and new with an audience. So we want to thank you for listening and for being that audience, and for joining us on that journey. We hope you enjoyed it, and we hope you're still enjoying it when we smash out 100 or even 1000 episodes.

49:00

Harley: We've already seen the improvement on the back end, as we've recorded and re-recorded episodes, that doesn't mean that we think we're anywhere near done getting better. In fact, we don't actually think you should ever stop improving. So if there's something you loved or something that you think was a swing and a miss, please feel free to jump over to our Instagram or to our website and send us a message we would love to hear from you.

49:22

Holly: Getting a podcast off the ground is a team effort. Every subscription, every listen counts, and five-star reviews on Apple iTunes are a huge help to getting our podcast seen by the people who will most appreciate it. So if you can take the time to leave us a positive review, we appreciate the hell out of you. We promise we're reading every single one.

49:41

Harley: If you want to see a little bit more, there will be exclusive episodes behind the scenes and other hot girl shit over on our Patreon links to all the things books, our socials etc. will be in the show notes or at www.bio.link/bimbo.

49:57

Holly: Episodes two and three are already live. Go listen to those and we'll see you next time for more books, babes, and banter.

50:04

Harley: Bimbos out.