

Love What You Love Podcast

Episode 24: Minisode

October 27, 2020

Hey, I'm Julie Rose. Welcome to *Love What You Love*. I'm an author, creator, and enthusiast, and I've always been intrigued by the things that people are super into. So every week I'll introduce you to another fascinating human who's into really interesting stuff.

Welcome back! Or, Welcome! Usually at this point I introduce you to my fascinating guest for the week, but today's mini episode is going to be pretty different than the first 23, so if this is your first time, I'd recommend going back and listening to those shows to get a sense of what this podcast is actually like from week to week.

Cutting right to the chase, the podcast is going to be on a break for two weeks. I mean, there's just not much I can say about the last year, or the last four years, that hasn't already been said. It just feels like we've all been in this planet-sized press that keeps pushing, and pushing, and pushing; flattening and bruising in ways that are big and small, every single day. And yet, I felt a surprising amount of encouragement and hope as well.

Even so, back in April I wasn't sure this was the right time to launch a podcast like this. A podcast that focuses on hope, and love, and joy. It turns out, it was really a perfect time because I desperately needed that hope and joy, and I like to think that learning about what people love and experiencing their joy has given you the same.

So before the podcast goes on a short break, I wanted to leave you with something cool. This poem by American poet Barbara Ras has been taped to my fridge for about a year. I'm sharing it with you today because it so perfectly conveys the heart-cutting beauty and inherent hopefulness of being human and alive on this planet.

You Can't Have It All

*But you can have the fig tree and its fat leaves like clown hands
gloved with green. You can have the touch of a single eleven-year-old finger
on your cheek, waking you at one a.m. to say the hamster is back.*

*You can have the purr of the cat and the soulful look
of the black dog, the look that says, If I could I would bite
every sorrow until it fled, and when it is August,
you can have it August and abundantly so. You can have love,
though often it will be mysterious, like the white foam
that bubbles up at the top of the bean pot over the red kidneys
until you realize foam's twin is blood.*

*You can have the skin at the center between a man's legs,
so solid, so doll-like. You can have the life of the mind,
glowing occasionally in priestly vestments, never admitting pettiness,
never stooping to bribe the sullen guard who'll tell you
all roads narrow at the border.*

*You can speak a foreign language, sometimes,
and it can mean something. You can visit the marker on the grave
where your father wept openly. You can't bring back the dead,
but you can have the words forgive and forget hold hands
as if they meant to spend a lifetime together. And you can be grateful
for makeup, the way it kisses your face, half spice, half amnesia, grateful
for Mozart, his many notes racing one another towards joy, for towels
sucking up the drops on your clean skin, and for deeper thirsts,
for passion fruit, for saliva. You can have the dream,
the dream of Egypt, the horses of Egypt and you riding in the hot sand.
You can have your grandfather sitting on the side of your bed,
at least for a while, you can have clouds and letters, the leaping
of distances, and Indian food with yellow sauce like sunrise.
You can't count on grace to pick you out of a crowd
but here is your friend to teach you how to high jump,
how to throw yourself over the bar, backwards,
until you learn about love, about sweet surrender,
and here are periwinkles, buses that kneel, farms in the mind
as real as Africa. And when adulthood fails you,
you can still summon the memory of the black swan on the pond
of your childhood, the rye bread with peanut butter and bananas
your grandmother gave you while the rest of the family slept.
There is the voice you can still summon at will, like your mother's,
it will always whisper, you can't have it all,
but there is this.*

I'm so grateful to Barbara for this poem and her permission to read it for you. It can be found in her collection *Bite Every Sorrow*, which I'll link to in the show notes, of course.

So yes, we'll be back again on November 17th with some seriously fascinating guests. If you need some distraction and joy during the break, I'd recommend listening to or revisiting the *Love What You Love* back catalog. I'd also highly recommend bingeing the *Ologies* podcast. If you listen to *Love What You Love*, I know you're curious, and you're open-hearted, so you'll love *Ologies* as well.

If you want to keep in touch while the podcast is on this short break, we're on Instagram [@LoveWhatYouLovePod](#), and on Twitter [@WhatYouLovePod](#).

Keep loving the hell out of whatever it is that you love, and share that love, and hope, and joy with other people. You need it; they need it. We can do this. Thanks for listening. See you in a few weeks.

Links:

[Purchase *Bite Every Sorrow* at LSU Press](#)

More about Barbara: [John Simon Guggenheim Foundation](#); [PoetryFoundation.org](#); [Poets.org](#)

Additional editing by [Mindjam Media](#)

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