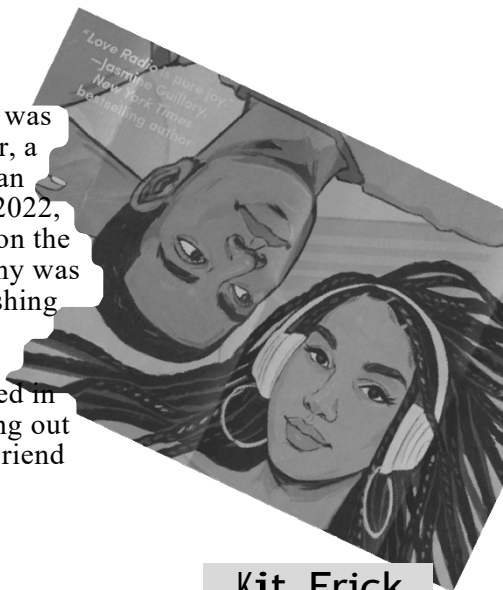


AUTHOR Q&A

We asked authors about their thoughts on content creation!

Ebony LaDelle

Ebony is the author of *Love Radio*—which was *People* magazine’s best book of the summer, a 2023 Audie Award Finalist, a 2023 Michigan Notable Book, Apple Books’ best book of 2022, an Amazon’s Editor Pick and was featured on the Today Show. Prior to being an author, Ebony was a brand marketing director in book publishing and worked at Penguin Random House and HarperCollins, among others. Born in MI, awoken at Howard University, and cultivated in Brooklyn, Ebony can usually be found eating out somewhere or being the undisputed Mom Friend of any group.



Kit Frick

Kit Frick is a MacDowell fellow and ITW Thriller Award finalist from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She studied creative writing at Sarah Lawrence College and received her MFA from Syracuse University. She is the author of multiple thrillers including, for young adults, *Before We Were Sorry* (originally published as *See All the Stars*), *All Eyes on Us*, *I Killed Zoe Spanos*, *Very Bad People*, and *The Reunion*, and for adults, *The Split*. She is also the author of the poetry collection *A Small Rising Up in the Lungs*. Kit loves a good mystery but has only ever killed her characters. Honest.





I Killed Zoe Spanos by Kit Frick

Why did you choose podcast as a focal point in the book? Why did you decide to make part of the text written in script?

The journalist protagonist has long been a mainstay of crime fiction. In the past decade or so, true crime investigative reporting has exploded within the podcast sphere. So, it was only a (short!) matter of time before crime fiction was going to begin marrying the two—the journalist protagonist and the podcast form—on the page. When I began toying around with the idea for *I Killed Zoe Spanos*, it was late 2017 or early 2018, and true crime podcasting was everywhere after the wild success of *Serial* about three years earlier. It felt like a natural fit for my teen investigative reporter, Martina Green. And actually, including Martina's *Missing Zoe* podcast in transcript form as part of the narrative was just as natural a fit; of course we needed to see her reporting unfold as part of the story. For more on this, *Crime Reads* published an article of mine on "[The Rise of the True Crime Podcast Novel](#)" that explores these ideas in greater depth and includes quotes from other novelists I interviewed about their own podcast novels.

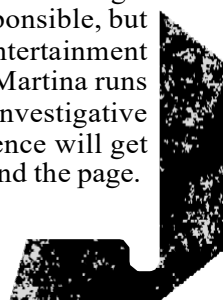


Why do you think podcasts are so appealing? What do they have to offer?

I love the podcast form. I listen to podcasts while I cook, while I drive, while I fold laundry. I think this is a big part of the appeal: because it's an audio form, you can multitask in a way that written and visual media doesn't always allow for. It's easy to fit podcast listening into my day, and as I write this in 2023, there is a truly tremendous variety of topics out there. Pick literally any topic of interest, and there's a podcast (or three or eight) for you.

What lessons do you hope that readers learn from your book about podcasts?

While I didn't set out to teach readers anything specific about the podcast form while writing *I Killed Zoe Spanos*, which is a work of young adult fiction, there are takeaways about true crime and podcasting baked into the story. All true crime podcasts are not created equal; there are those that report responsibly and those that sensationalize. There are those that approach their subjects with empathy and a desire for truth-telling and those that take a comedic or gossipy approach. (For the record, I'm not making a claim that all comedic crime podcasts are inherently bad or irresponsible, but it's a fine line when it comes to how hosts choose to create entertainment content about real victims and their families.) My fictional host Martina runs into a few of the quandaries faced by real-life true crime investigative reporters during the course of her work, and I hope her experience will get readers thinking beyond the page.





LOVE RADIO by Ebony LaDelle

Why did you choose radio as a focal point in the book?

I chose radio once the plot of LOVE RADIO had been fleshed out - once it was decided that Prince Jones (my male main character) would give out love advice, I began to think of ways he could dish the advice and kept going back to the radio. Growing up, I remembered the horrible love advice I'd hear while driving to and from school, and thought it could be a unique way to showcase Prince as a local celebrity and fixture in his community, and hence DJ LoveJones and his radio segment was born.

Why do you think radio is so appealing? What do they have to offer?

There's so much history when it comes to radio and what it's done, specifically for Black artists. Many times, Black singers couldn't get play in big venues or on television, so local DJs were the ones playing and promoting new artists on the scene. That still holds true to this day — radio play has always been a space where artists can get the most listens, and I love how we've seen an evolution of radio with streaming and DJ sets on Tiktok and Instagram.

What lessons do you hope that readers learn from your book about radio?

Like with any evolution of art, I just want readers to know how it began.

