



## Author of *The Amazing Adventures of Jafir* Appears On Top Book Podcast

(Tampa, Florida, March 1, 2024)

Charles T. O'Neill, author of *The Amazing Adventures of Jafir*, appears this month on *Reading With Your Kids* podcast and shares the story of how his five-volume historic fiction odyssey is inspired to get young people to read.

O'Neill, the Tampa, Florida author and entrepreneur, told podcast host Jed Doherty why, and how he built cliffhangers into each chapter of each of the first three volumes of the book and why he believes it's a crucial way to engage children in reading.

"The cliffhanger is a necessity if you want to get kids to read. You have to give them something original and interesting," O'Neill said. "I believe sometimes books gets bogged down with atmosphere. It's really about the adventure and getting kids excited about reading."

*The Amazing Adventures of Jafir* shares the story of Jafir, a ten-year-old boy from Ethiopia. The hero's tale of courage, bravery, daring and love of family is set in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. It leads Jafir on a quest that crosses continents, oceans and runs a gauntlet full of danger, prejudice, and even, slavery.

In "The Amazing Adventures of Jafir," O'Neill introduces readers to a child whose life changes forever during a sunny day of play with his younger sister near his home in Ethiopia. In the series' first volume "The Journey to The Sea" Jafir and his sister, Boomtina, must survive a terrifying encounter with a hungry lion. Not long after, both children become lost and Boomtina is taken by outlaws. Her older brother Jafir embarks on an epic journey to find her.

During his *Reading With Your Kids* podcast appearance, O'Neill shared the inspiration for the Jafir series; the bedtime stories he shared with his children, including three who were adopted from Ethiopia, the setting for the first volume of the adventure series.

"We would create stories at the end of the day about their homeland, adventures about a boy with a heart of gold who was tested by life," O'Neill said. "As the tale grew, my children suggested that I write them down."

Doherty, whose *Reading With Your Kids* is produced out of Boston, praised O'Neill for the way the adventure comes together.

"Really quick chapters. Lots of cliffhangers. That's a great way to capture of those young, reluctant readers. (In Jafir,) we have action, adventure, travel and love," said Doherty.

Chuck O'Neill's appearance on *Reading With Your Kids* is scheduled for March 16, 2024. The podcast can be found at Spotify and iTunes. It's also available as part of the *Reading With Your Kids* hour-long program airing new this month on WRIB radio and its network of affiliates.

*The Amazing Adventures of Jafir, Volumes 1-3* can be purchased on Amazon and at the series' website, <https://www.theamazingadventuresofjafir.com>

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Media Contact:

Jim Aroune

Aroune Partners, LLC

[info@theamazingadventuresofjafir.com](mailto:info@theamazingadventuresofjafir.com)

(585) 430-0622