

# Lyra: Pop Culture Superstar

## Intro

Kit: [Music]

Kit: [Music] Hello, and welcome to Starry Time, where stars plus lines equals stories. If you're a regular listener, thank you for listening. But also, you're probably wondering, where is my sister slash co host, Jordan? Well, she's fine. Start there. She's fine. But if you followed us on our socials at Starrytimepod, on the Universeodon server, on Mastodon or on Twitter, um, you probably know that this week's episode, uh, on the pop culture, broadly defined, of the constellation Lyra, has been a bit of an ordeal. We recorded it twice on two different platforms, and both times we had issues. And honestly, this is the kind of episode that's kind of hard to authentically record more than once, since we don't share our answers. And part of the fun of it, at least for us, is seeing how our answers will match up or won't. So we decided we didn't want to record it for a third time, and instead, I would just do a shorter episode summarizing a bit of our discussion since I had the weekend off and Jordan had to go to work. Okay, housekeeping slash tea out of the way. In today's episode, pop culture superstar, I'm going to give you a summary of our favorite and least favorite occurrences of this month's constellation, Lyra, in pop culture. I'll end by taking over the brand for us, wishing upon a star, and letting you know what we wish existed for using the Lyra brand. This podcast will also have a visual Tumblr post along with it, and we're at starrytimepod on Tumblr, but I'll be sure to post it along with this episode as well.

## **Favorites**

Okay, let's start with our favorites and a couple runners up. Let's start with Jordan. So Jordan's favorite was something that she knew basically right from the jump, as soon as we knew we were going to talk about Lyra, that she was going to pick this for pop culture. And it is a famous Lyra from fiction who maybe inspired a whole generation of people to be named Lyra. That's how big this book series is. Um, I think, I don't fully know. Um, so the character is called Lyra Belacqua from Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials trilogy. In the US, the first book was called the Golden Compass. So if that sounds familiar to you, it's the protagonist from that book. So Jordan appreciated Lyra's bravery, quick thinking, ability to read and understand people around her and to, sort of, fight back against the power structures of her world and time. So if you're looking for a YA adventure that has witches and polar bears and a little bit of both science and fantasy and mythology, this might be something to check out. As usual, I went in a completely different direction, um, something that's not really pop culture. Um, and just picked the individual Lyra Taylor, whose full name, Jordan would want me to tell you, is Lyra Veronica Esmerelda Taylor, which is really quite a great name. But Lyra Taylor lived from 1894 to 1979. She was a lawyer and social worker from New Zealand, and she was really interested in understanding the social effects of laws, which, sort of, led her into the field of social work. She is actually one of the founding members of the Australian Association of Social Workers. And so I just picked her because this sounded like she had a very interesting and impactful life, and I didn't know anything about her before this. So, Lyra Veronica Esmerelda Taylor won my, um, sort of, favorite for this month.

## **Honorable Mentions**

That brings us nicely to our runners up. Jordan had two, and I had one. So I'll start with Jordan's, then mine, and then we'll go to Jordan's final runner up. So Jordan's first runner up was Lyra Dawnbringer which is a Magic: The Gathering Card. Lyra Dawnbringer is an angel card, and the artwork on this is so beautiful. She's got a armor and shield that look sort of like stained glass, and she has, like, really long, glorious hair, giant angel wings. A little bit Xena meets Pocahontas in vibe. And so Jordan really liked this card, has enjoyed many games of Magic The Gathering, and recommends adding Lyra Dawnbringer to your deck, especially if you like to play with angels. Uh, I guess this card makes them all stronger. My runner up was

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actually in pop culture, and is the alternate future She Hulk, who is named Lyra, not to be confused with Jennifer Walters, who is also a She Hulk. Uh, Lyra She Hulk is the daughter in an alternate future, as I mentioned, of the Hulk and a Femizon character named Thundra. And, wow, I am entranced by the idea of a Femizon so this definitely piqued my interest. And another thing I really liked about the Lyra She Hulk was a twist on her powers. This version of She Hulk, Lyra version, she actually needs to remain calm in order to use her powers. So I thought that was kind of a nice twist on these powers. Jordan had, as I mentioned, another runner up, which I've saved for the end of this section, because, um, it's a bird. And if you've been listening to this podcast for any length of time, you know that Jordan and I have divergent beliefs and feelings about birds. So Jordan's choice here, uh, as a runner up, was the lyrebird, which is actually a relatively small ground dwelling bird in Australia. And I'll be honest, when you see a picture of this bird, and there will be one in the Tumblr post, it doesn't look like super scary. And in fact, the early drawings of this bird from the eighteen- hundreds, it just looks really cute and majestic. And its tail feathers look like a lyre, which as it turns out,

is not really how the feathers fall in real life. And you can see on the Tumblr post how the feathers actually look. They sort of look like a little bit of an umbrella kind of situation over the bird, at least at times. So, okay, this is not the most terrifying bird. I mean, I'm looking at you, Secretary Bird aka *sagittarius serpentarius*, which is indeed a terrifying animal. But, uh, this bird is still scary. And Jordan was able to scare me with further information about the lyrebird. So its claim to fame is that it's an incredible mimic, that is able to mimic the sounds of other things. So there are other birds that can mimic other bird calls and this bird can do this, but it can also mimic cars, and chainsaws, and gunfire, and alarms, and babies crying and human voices. No, just. No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. Imagine you're out for a beautiful walk in the Australian, uh, forest, and then you hear your own voice talking to you, or you hear a chainsaw, or you hear a gunshot, like, right, terrifying, absolutely terrifying. And it's actually just the lyrebird. And I think I remember when Jordan and I were talking about the Lyrebird, that it is a bird that makes a lot of noise at all times. It's a very vocal, uh, bird which, you know, honestly makes sense if you have that range, you know, you better use it. So Jordan loved the lyrebird, and so here it is in favorites. But, you know, it's not my favorite, so perhaps I'm not doing it appropriate, uh, justice. And you can let us know over on our socials if you are more in my camp, a little bit afraid of the lyrebird, or more in Jordan's camp, entranced by all of the wonderful and amazing things that it can do.

## **Least Favorites**

Alright, now we are into least favorites. This was tough. And honestly, there were a lot of Lyra pop culture choices as well as just like people named Lyra. This was actually, to me, quite surprising how extensive the options were, and choosing a least favorite was kind of, I don't know, a little bit challenging, at least for me. So my choice ended up

being Lyra Health, which I think is some kind of mental health care provider. And I want to be very clear that provision of mental health care is good. So my concern here is not, like, what it's doing, and I don't know anything about, you know, this particular health company. My bigger concern here is really just about the use of Lyra as a brand for a provider that provides mental health services. Because Orpheus, like, we just talked about that myth, the Orpheus myth has some real weird, messed up, I don't know, strange, at least for our contemporary period, takes on grief and looking back and the consequences of, like, reflection. And I just. This just feels weird to me. I don't like the use of this here, even though the word itself is, of course, quite beautiful. Um, so that's just where I sat on that. Again, not a ton to choose from, and that's where I ended up.

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Jordan's least favorite, I think, is going to potentially be very controversial. And actually, it is my belief that her disparaging of this character is perhaps why this episode has become so cursed, because I think this is a beloved franchise. I think there is a lot of affection for this particular character, although I myself don't know that much about this franchise. But Jordan's least favorite choice was Lyra Heartstrings, which we both agree is a great name. But Lyra Heartstrings is a mint green unicorn, I guess, from the franchise, My Little Pony. And Jordan wanted to make sure that it was known that this is just her personal least favorite. Uh, she has no shade or anything bad to say about the My Little Pony fandom, which I guess is quite extensive and large. I don't know much about it. For my part, I like a teal horse, um, but I do, I don't love her cutie mark, which Jordan informed me means beauty mark. It's basically something on the flank of the horse, and it's a lyre. And I don't know, it just seems like, [weird noise] yeah, that's how I feel: [weird noise]

## Wished For

Okay, so we have seen what's out there, and honestly, like I said, lots to choose from. But Jordan and I still wished upon a star with the Lyra brand. And I'll be honest with you, my ideas, they weren't very good. Like, that's just the reality. Um, my first idea was just a word, and the word was lyracal, l-y-r-a-c-a-l. And then I was like, does that sound like a prescription drug? Is it a prescription drug? And so I just kind of was like, um, I feel like there's something there, but I don't know what. Jordan and I brainstormed on both of the takes of our episode, and we were both like, [weird noise]. So, that was my first idea, which is basically just a word. So then when I got frustrated about having a word that I couldn't do anything with, um, I came up with the laziest use of Lyra for pop culture, which is Lyra's Lyres and Other Stringed Instrument shop. Oof. Well, listen, it's it's not the best. And, um, and that's that. They can't all be really good. And in this case, Jordan's is very, very good. And I really wish we had the recordings because she had so much detail. She had, she had just really, really put life into this idea. So I'll do the very best I can, but I'm really hoping eventually we can recover some of these recordings so that we can release this really detailed idea that she had. So her idea is a video game called Lyra, or, uh, Lyra. And it's basically, my interpretation is it's, like, part Guitar Hero, part Zelda and part Hades. And it sounds really cool. Jordan described multiple levels of the game. You know, there's parts where you're just adventuring around your hometown and around the map in general, and then a part where you go into the underworld and a part where you go to space. Okay, just hold on. I know, I know. You're like, what? You go to space and you go to the Vega system. Mm hmm. You're seeing it come together now. Uh uh-huh. Huh uh. And you shred for your right to get your lyre in the night sky as a constellation. And that's sort of the ultimate prize of the game. And so it comes with a lyre sort or a loot or some kind of string instrument similar to the guitar in Guitar Hero. You learn to play it. Um, and, yeah, it sounds really

great. And I honestly was like, wow, this is very detailed. There's so much thought that went into this. I feel like people would love this. And so I'm wishing upon a star that Jordan's video game one day becomes real.

## **Outro**

All right, that brings us to the end of the pop culture superstar episode that wasn't. Thanks so much for your patience and understanding. We are really working hard to get back to normal and get back on track, and hopefully that will happen soon. This has been Kit, a sister, a lover of stars and stories. And we'll see you next time, on Starry Time. [Music]

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