

# How Joey Graceffa Went From Hating Books to Writing Them

*How one book sent the YouTube superstar on a journey from reluctant reader to published author.*

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, April 16, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Joey Graceffa hated reading. Now, he's a five-time published author.

In conversation with host Chris "Bulldog" Collins on the YouTube series Books That Changed My Life, Graceffa opens up about the book that ignited his love for literature: *The Subtle Knife* by Philip Pullman.

"THERE'S NO WAY IN HELL YOU'RE EVER GOING TO GET ME TO READ A BOOK"

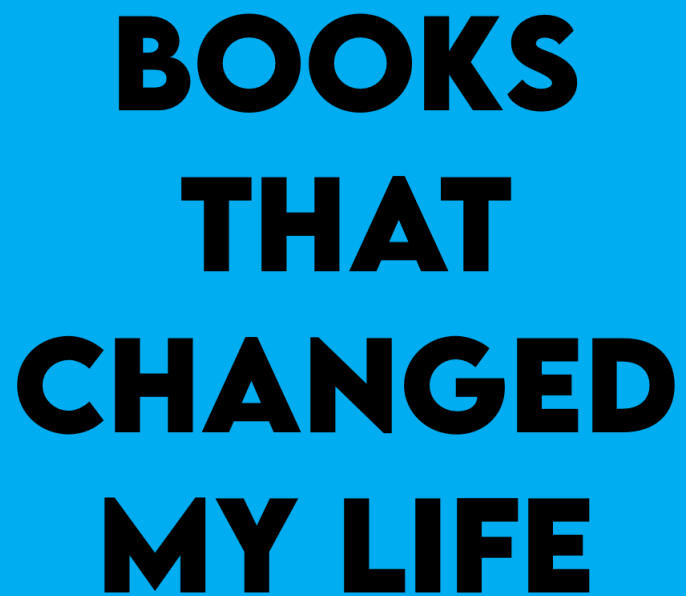
Long before he became an iconic YouTuber and bestselling author, Joey Graceffa wanted nothing to do with books.

"I hated reading growing up... I thought it was the most boring thing in the entire world. I hated English class. I thought, 'There's no way in hell you're ever going to get me to read a book.'"

Placed in special education classes, Graceffa internalized a narrative that stuck with him for years: he just wasn't a reader. In the midst of Potter-mania, Graceffa felt left out; he couldn't understand what all the excitement was about.

## THE BOOK THAT MADE JOEY GRACEFFA A READER

At fifteen, everything changed. Joey discovered *The Subtle Knife* by Philip Pullman, the second book in the *His Dark Materials* trilogy. For the first time, reading felt like watching a movie inside

A graphic with a solid blue background and the text "BOOKS THAT CHANGED MY LIFE" in large, bold, black, sans-serif capital letters, centered on the page.

**BOOKS  
THAT  
CHANGED  
MY LIFE**

Books That Changed My Life

his own head.

Graceffa recalls catching the reading bug:

"I was reading in school, any time I got a chance... 'I need to find out what happens next.'"

Asked why he chose to feature *The Subtle Knife*, Graceffa points to its transformative impact:

"This was the first book that got me into reading, so I have to choose this one. It was the one and only."

Graceffa was so affected by *The Subtle Knife* that he pitched himself for a cinematic adaptation in an email to the author:

"I looked up Philip Pullman's email, took a photo of myself holding my cat, and was like, 'Hi, I'm 15 years old. I was the lead of my play. And if you ever turn this into a movie, I would love to play Will.' I just sent it off into the abyss."

Though Graceffa still awaits a casting call, the book sparked a lifelong love affair with reading that set him on the path to writing five books of his own—including his most recent work, *The Twelve*, a young adult fantasy six years in the making.

#### GRACEFFA'S LATEST: THE TWELVE

In the course of the conversation, Graceffa highlights some unexpected pushback he received when pitching *The Twelve*, a young adult fantasy with an all-female cast.

"My manager at the time was like, 'You have to write a story about a gay guy. You're not going to get any meetings in Hollywood unless you write from your own perspective.' I was like, 'This is about magical powers... what do you mean?' So I just went back to writing... I needed to tell the



Joey Graceffa in Conversation with Chris Collins



Joey Graceffa Discusses *The Subtle Knife*

story."

Not to be deterred, Graceffa completed and published *The Twelve*, a story he identifies as speaking to the deeply personal struggle of finding one's people.

"It's all about sisterhood... All these girls are, in a way, abandoned... It's about this chosen family, which in a way is kind of my story as well. Being gay, I had to choose my family out in L.A... having people of my own community come together to support each other."

[Watch the full conversation HERE.](#)

#### ABOUT BOOKS THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

"Books That Changed My Life," hosted by bestselling author Chris Collins, is a YouTube show exploring how great books transform us in profound and unexpected ways. Each episode features a special guest sharing a book that shaped or inspired them, sparking deep conversations and unearthing unfiltered personal stories.

Recent guests include R&B singer Eric Benét, soap opera legend Susan Lucci, former covert CIA officer Andrew Bustamante, actress and reality star Lisa Rinna, *Dancing With the Stars* pro Jenna Johnson, and television legend Kelsey Grammer.

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Joey Graceffa and the Book That Changed His Life

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