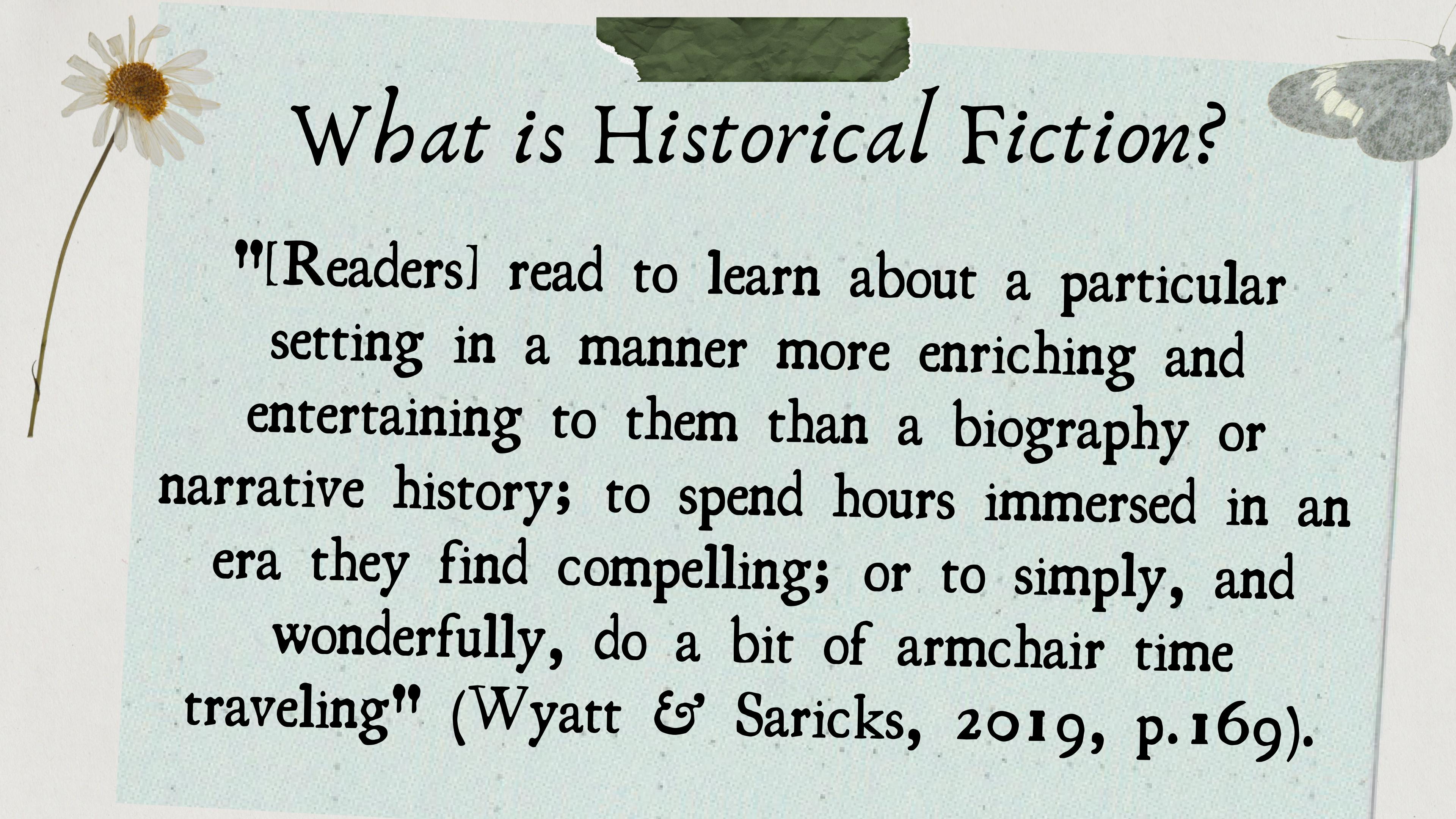


# Historical Fiction



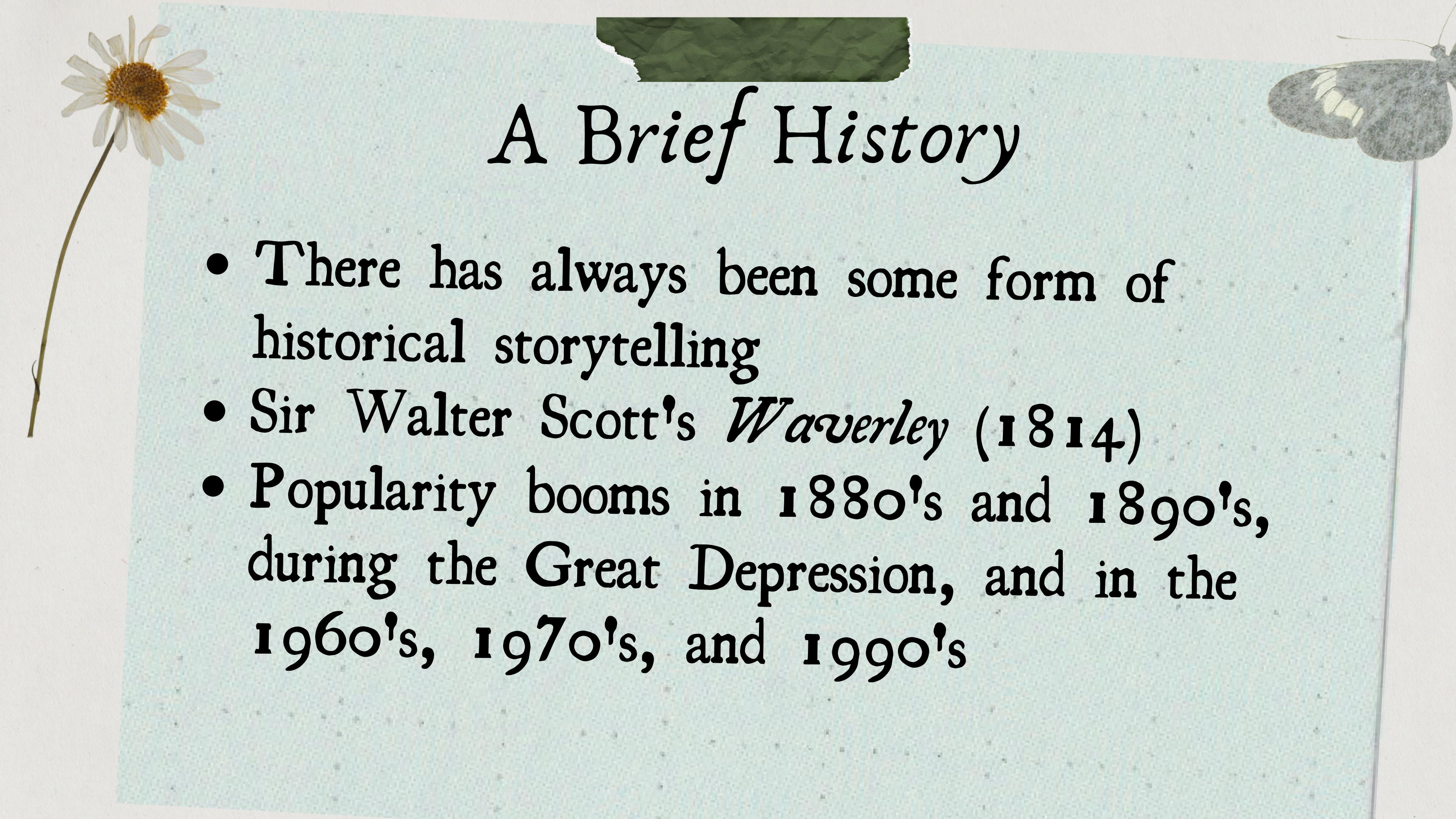
Presented by  
Bella Ross





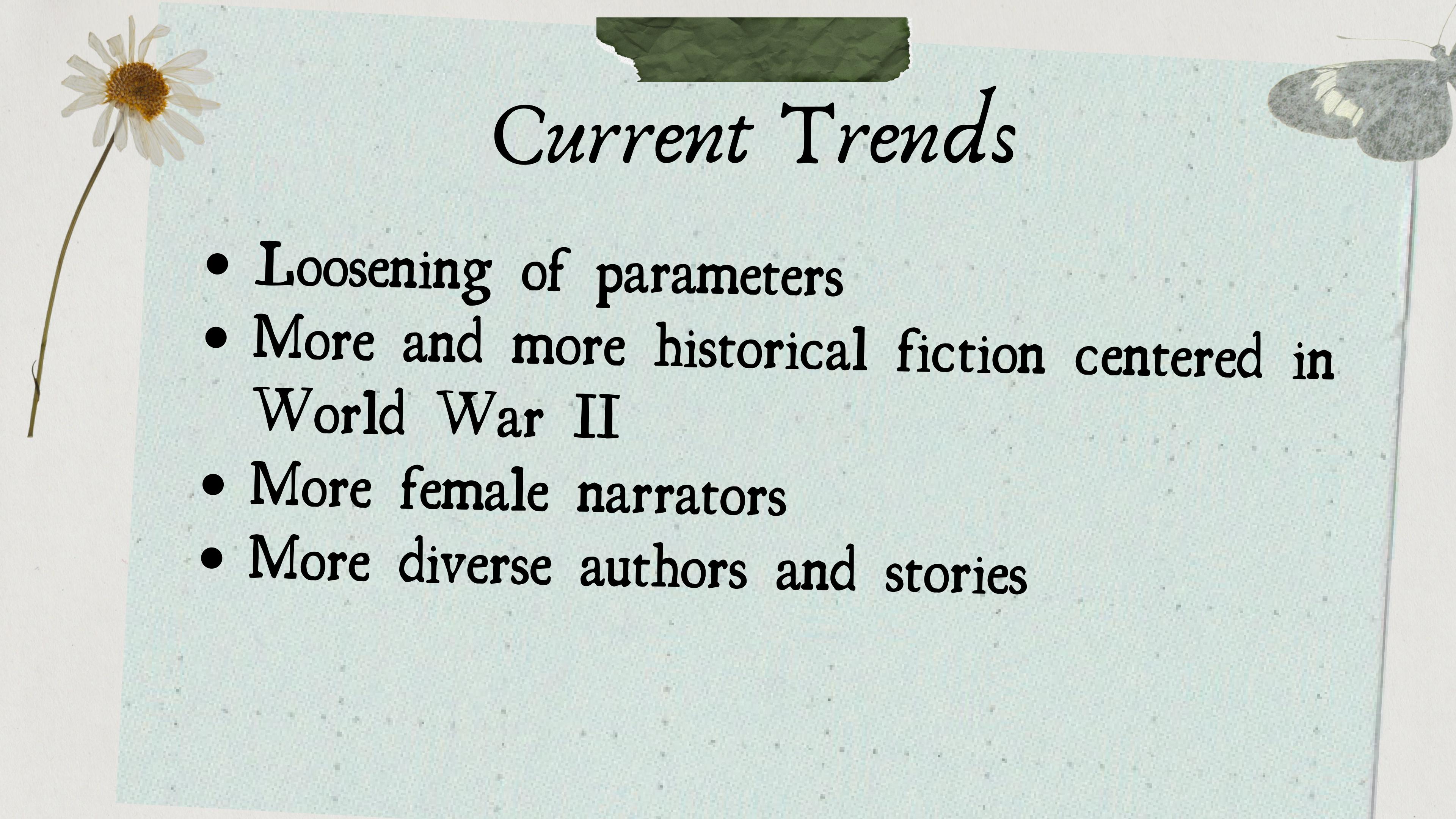
# *What is Historical Fiction?*

"[Readers] read to learn about a particular setting in a manner more enriching and entertaining to them than a biography or narrative history; to spend hours immersed in an era they find compelling; or to simply, and wonderfully, do a bit of armchair time traveling" (Wyatt & Saricks, 2019, p.169).



# A Brief History

- There has always been some form of historical storytelling
- Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley* (1814)
- Popularity booms in 1880's and 1890's, during the Great Depression, and in the 1960's, 1970's, and 1990's



# *Current Trends*

- Loosening of parameters
- More and more historical fiction centered in World War II
- More female narrators
- More diverse authors and stories

# Characteristics

## Frame/Setting

- Focus on worldbuilding
  - Must be accurate
- Variable settings throughout time
  - must be real and on earth



## Tone

- Wide range of tone
- Meant to help the reader with immersion and to make the setting feel real

# Characteristics

## Story Line

- Contextualizes and explains events
- varies in looking at specific events to covering great expanses of time

## Characterization

- "Characters underpin every historical event..."
  - dimensional, realistic fiction
  - rich and kept in pace with time

# Characteristics

## Language/Style

- Varies wildly
- Style: literary historical fiction
  - crystalline prose
  - deft construction

## Pacing

- usually longer, not fast paced
- "unhurried"
- "building-in-intensity"
- pace must foster engagement and immersion



# Key Authors

- Yangsze Choo, *The Ghost Bride*
- Yaa Gyasi, *Homegoing*
- Jean M. Auel, *The Clan of the Cave Bear*
- Geraldine Brooks, *March*
- Amor Towles, *A Gentleman in Moscow*

# Subgenres

*Pick a place*

- France
- Cambodia
- Japan

*Pick a time*

- Prehistoric
- Post WWII
- Pre Industrial Era

*Pick a subject*

- war
- pirates
- witch trials

# *Historical fiction based on time period*

(Very Eurocentric)

Prehistoric

Ancient civilizations /  
before the common era

The Middle  
Ages

Age of  
Enlightenment

The  
Renaissance

Nineteenth  
Century

Twentieth  
Century



# *Historical fiction based on place*

*(More focused on themes)*

Africa

North America

Europe

Australia

Asia and the Middle

East

South and Central  
America, Mexico,  
and the Caribbean

# *Historical fiction based on subject*

American  
Civil War

American  
Revolutionary War

History  
of Medicine

History of Science

The  
Vietnam War

Witchcraft

The  
Great Depression

Pirate/  
Nautical Times

World War II

Regional Historical  
Fiction

# *Time Travel/ Time Slips*

rise and grind

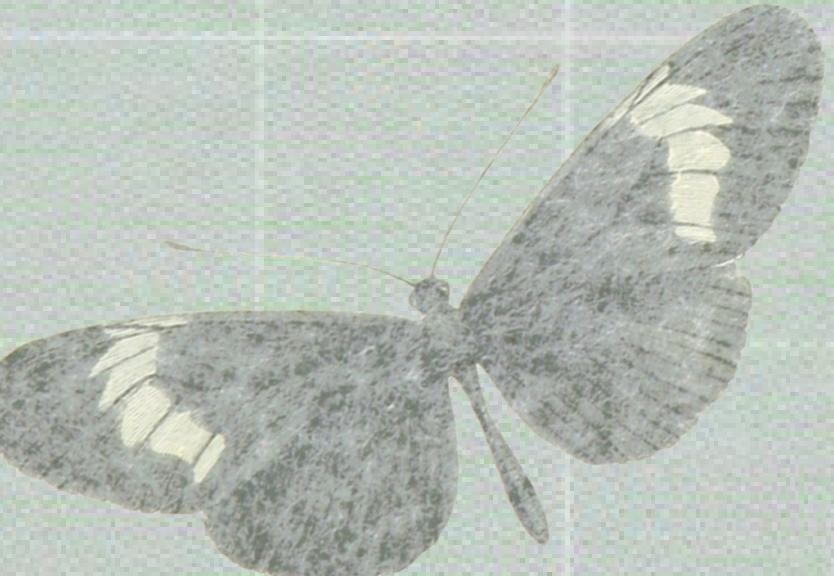


# *Blends*

# *Biographical historical fiction*

rise and grind

the island be



- Society of American Historians Prize for Historical Fiction
- Langum Prize
- Michael Shaara Award
- The Reading List (one of the eight categories)
- Walter Scott Prize

*Wall Street Journal* offered  
dollars. That was the star

was bought by a rich and  
d Taylor Collings, who  
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l the village as a holiday  
s and bought their plots,  
expect big money for a  
and? One man sold for a

# Awards

# Resources

- The Readers' Advisory Guide to Historical Fiction by Jennifer S. Baker
- Historical Fiction I and II: A Guide to the Genre by Sarah L. Johnson



Read on Historical Fiction: Reading List for Every Taste by Brad Hooper

# Resources

HistoricalNovel.info:  
in-depth bibliography  
of historical novels  
created by Margaret  
Donsbach.

The Historical Novel  
Society: Features book  
reviews, interviews,  
articles, upcoming  
books, and links to  
author's websites.



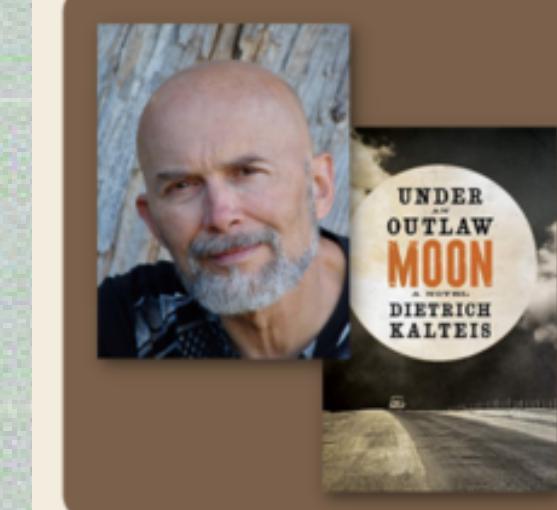
# Events

# club book®

the book club rewritten



bridge. There is  
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Dietrich Kalteis  
Under an Outlaw Moon



Paula Martinac  
Dear Miss Cushman



Sarah Loudin Thomas  
The Finder of Forgotten Things

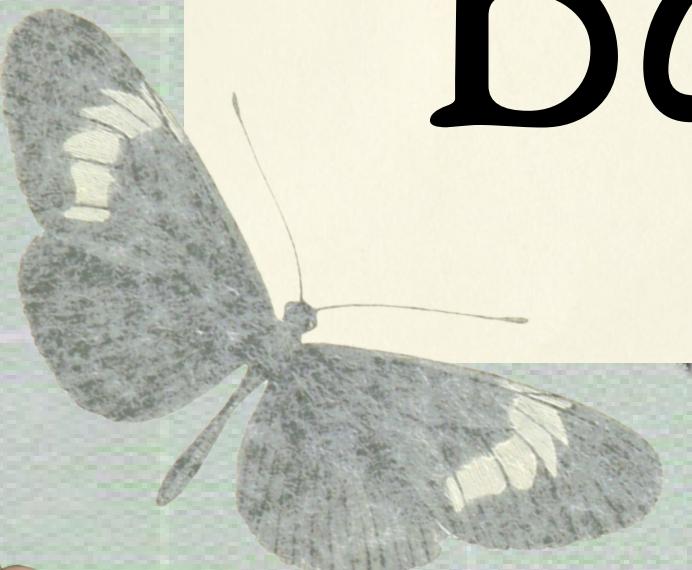
## What's New in Historical Fiction

A VIRTUAL EVENT HOSTED BY HISTORY THROUGH FICTION

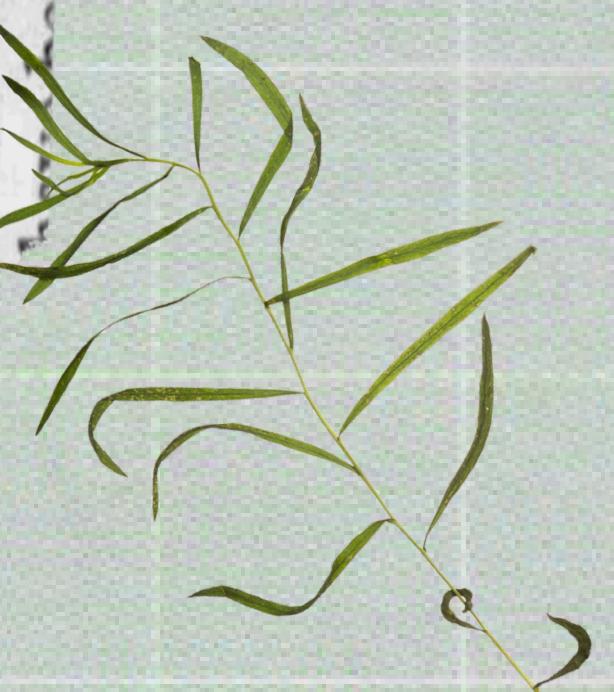
Wed, Nov 17, 8pm/5pm ET/PT  
[crowdcast.io/e/whats-new-in-historical-fiction-1/register](https://crowdcast.io/e/whats-new-in-historical-fiction-1/register)



# Booktalk!



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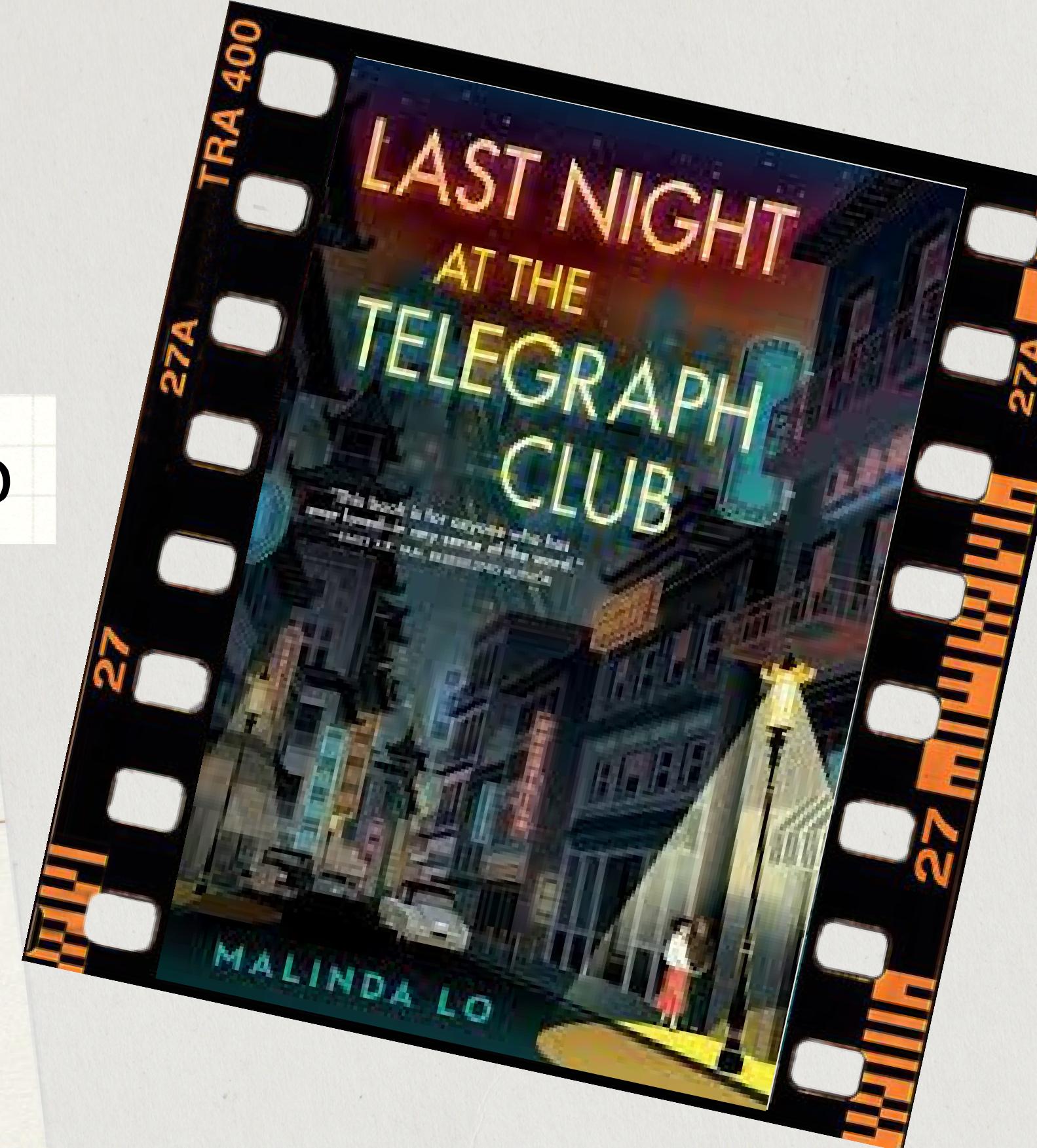


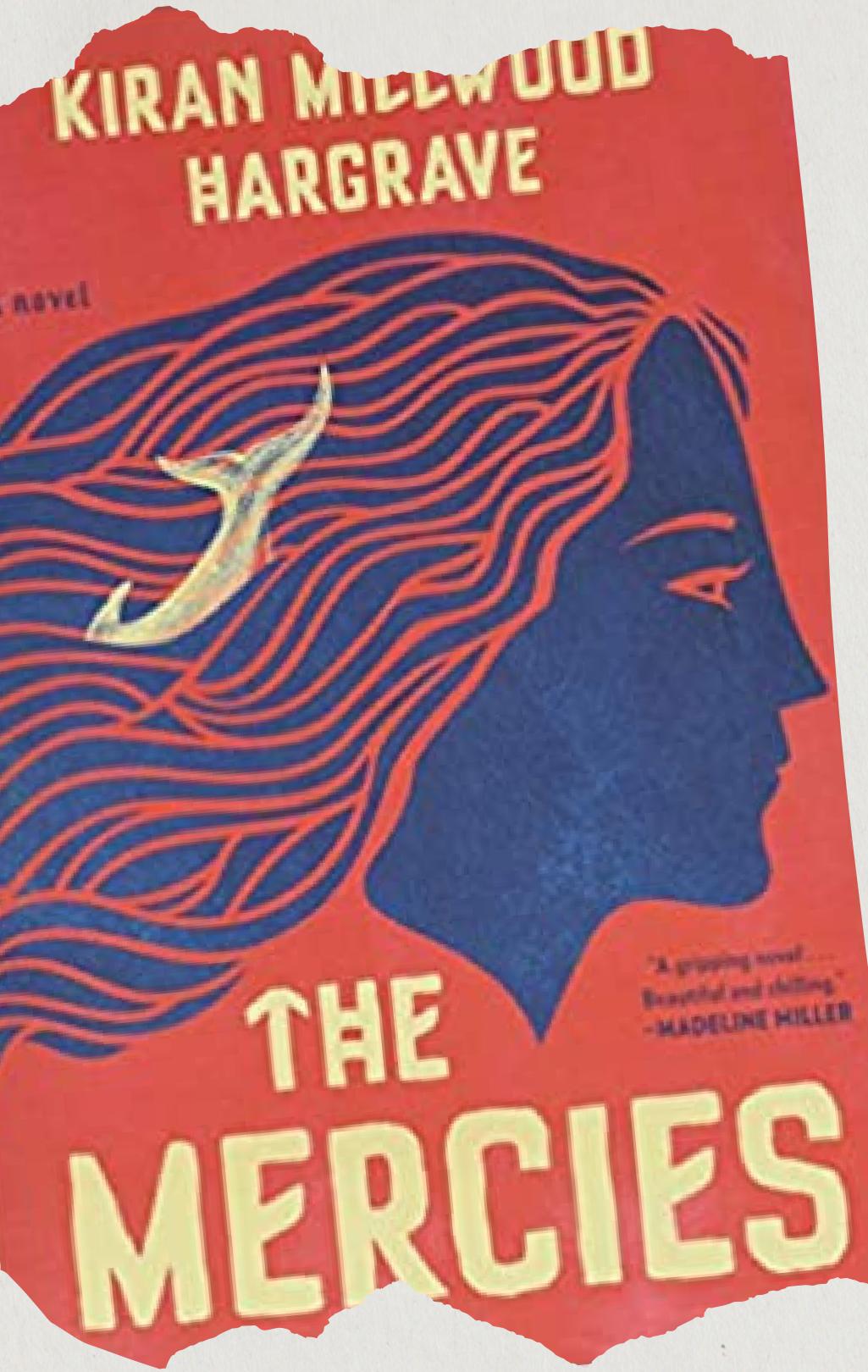
# Last Night at the Telegraph Club



By Malinda Lo

Slow build that intertwines intense world-building and historical fact to lead the reader through the coming-of-age of the protagonist.



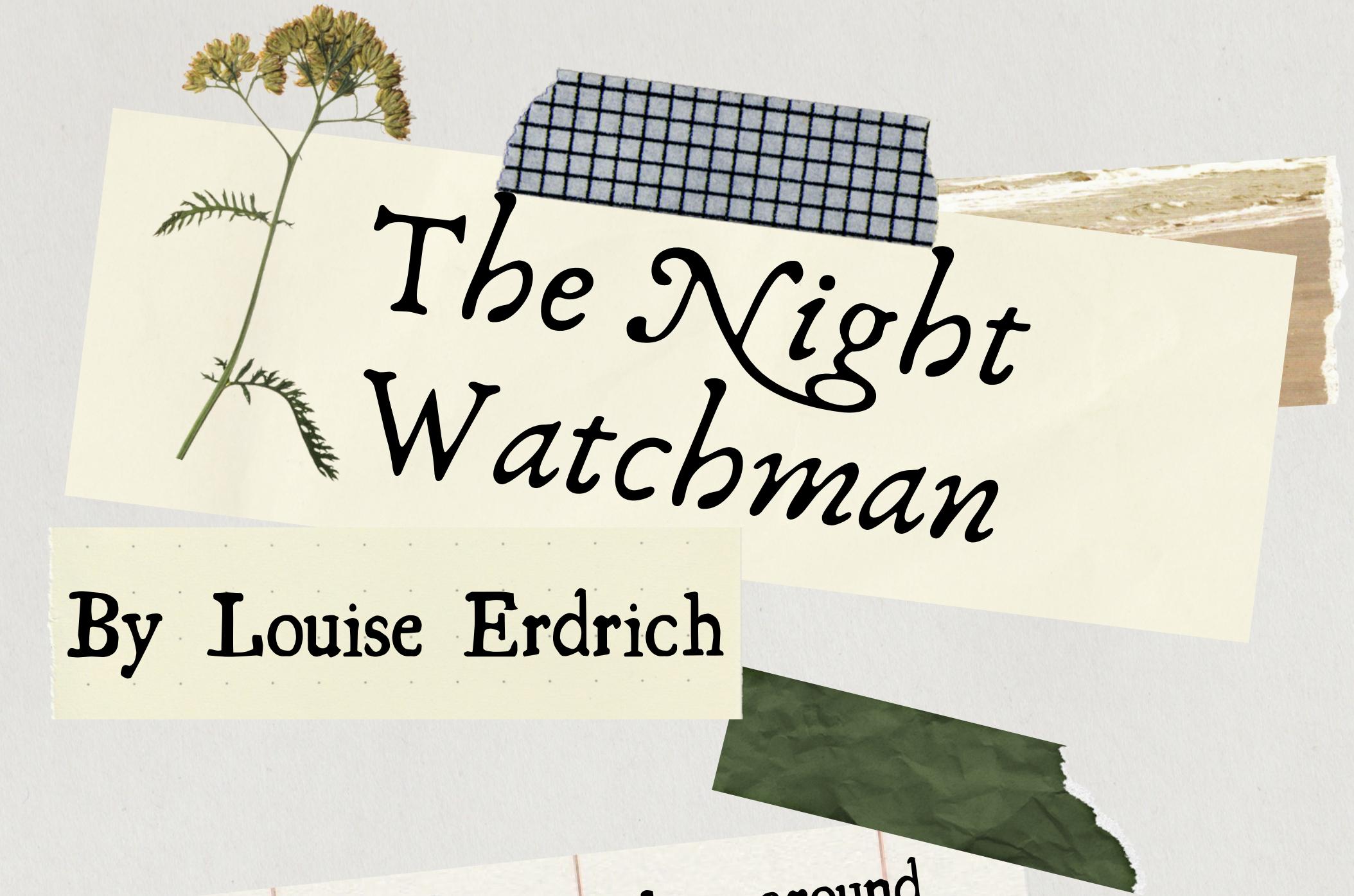
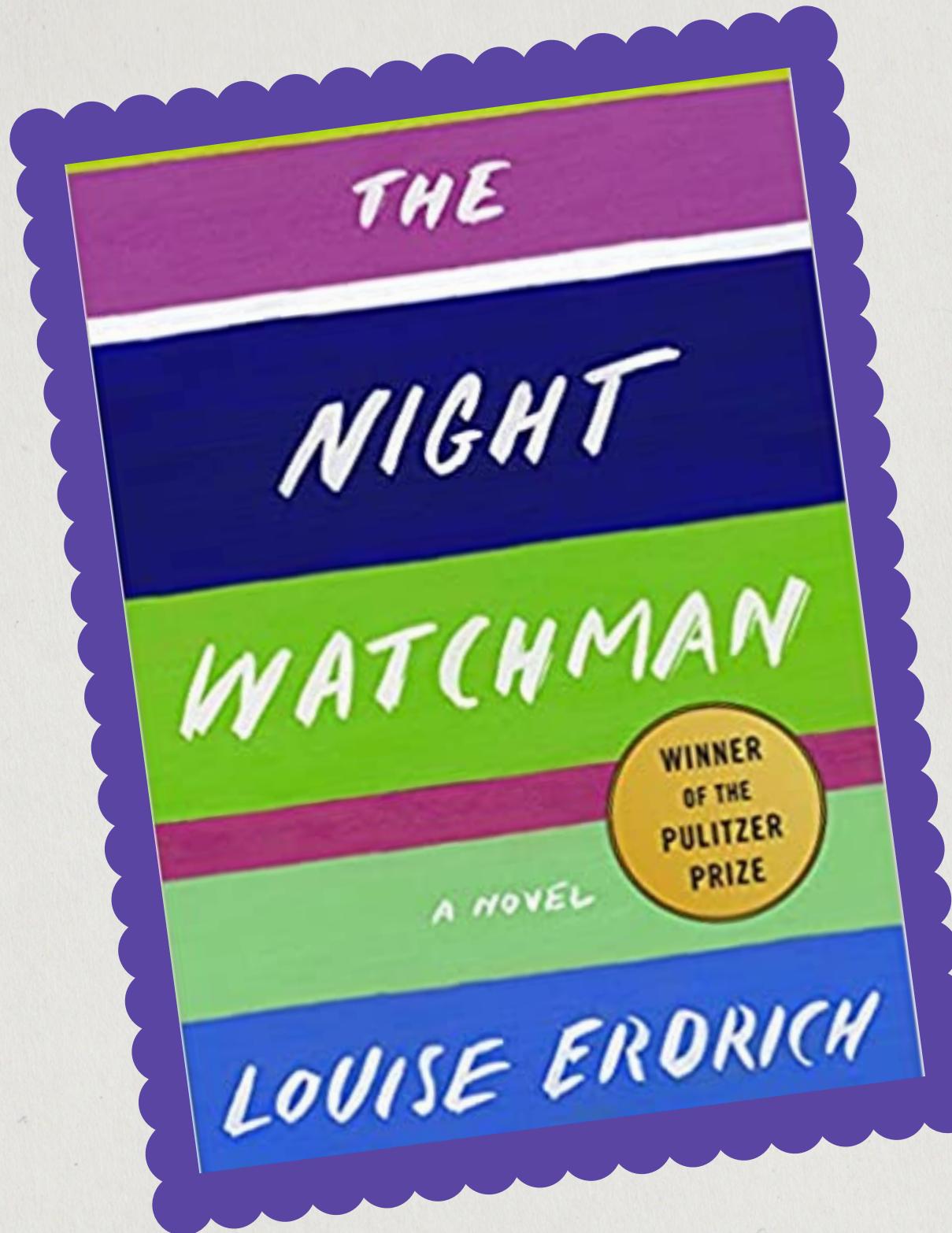


# The Mercies

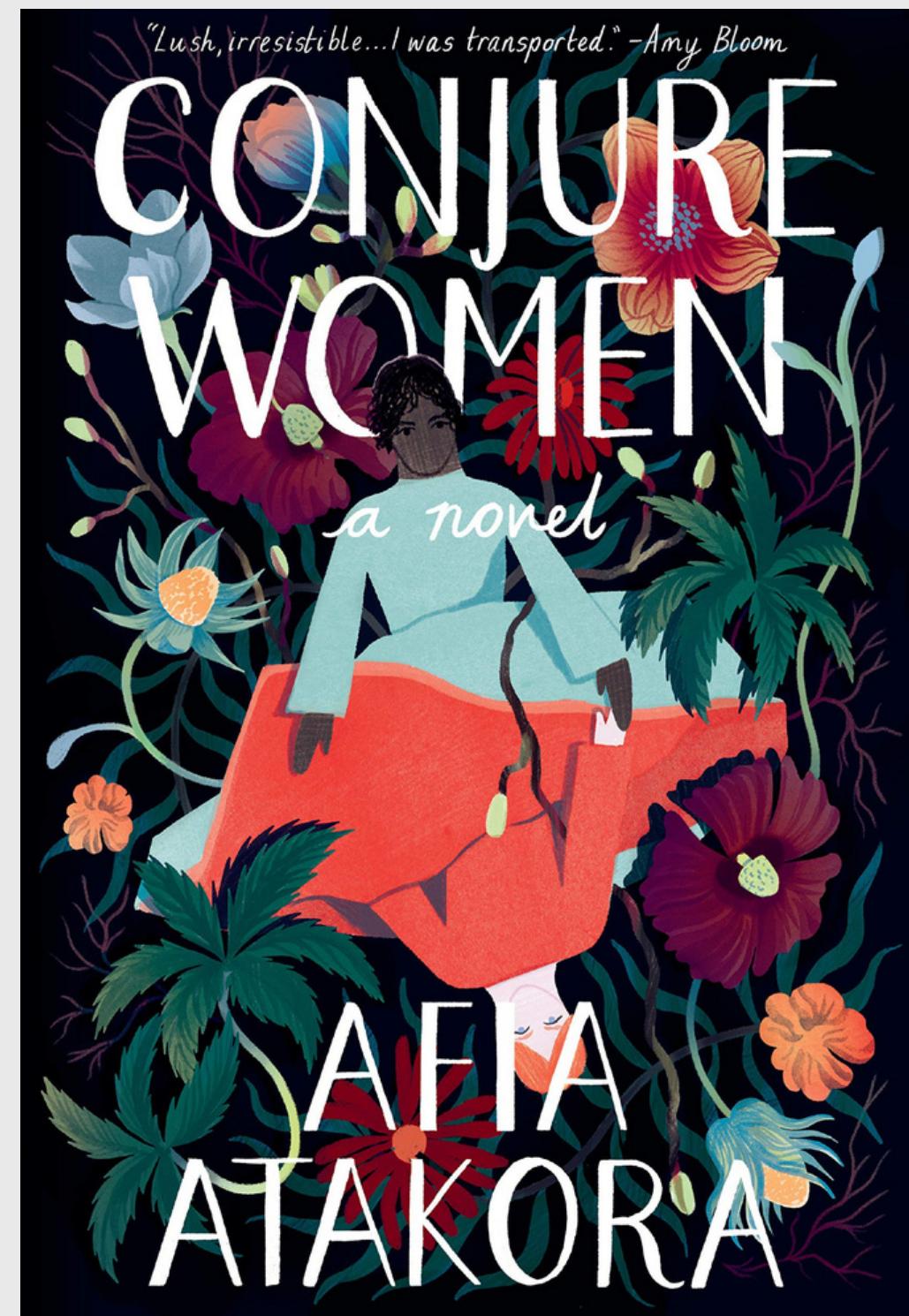
By Kiran Millwood Hargrave

"Hargrave's tale offers a feminist take on a horrific moment in history with its focus on the subjugation of women, superstition in isolated locations, and brutality in the name of religion" (PW).





The heart of the story revolves around the people living at Turtle Mountain more so than an intense political drama. The story slowly unfolds and keeps its characters at the heart of the tale.



# Conjure Women

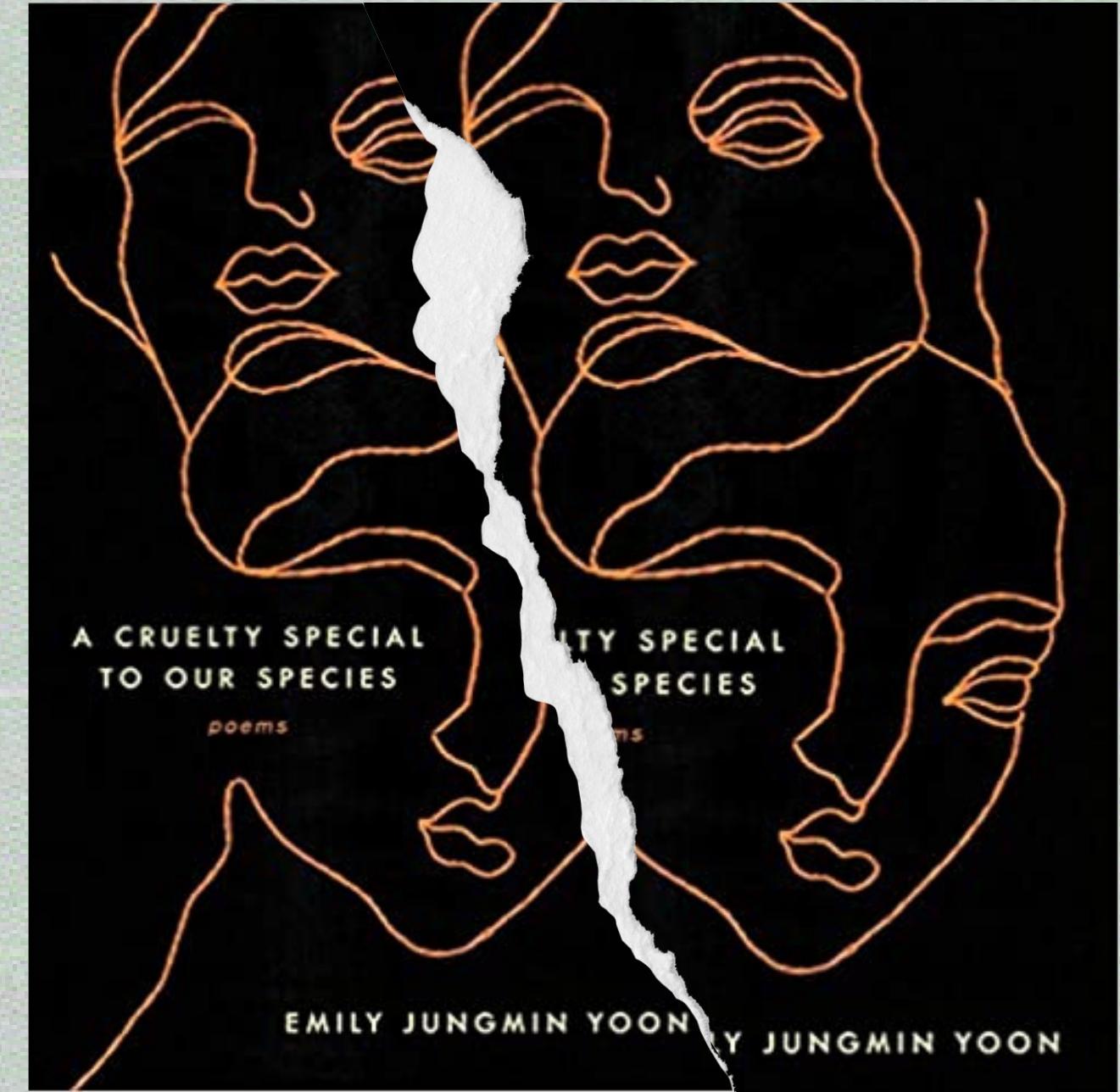
By Afia Atakora

Heavy world-building with lyrical words that tell a story where the characters are very much at the heart of the story.

# A Cruelty Special to Our Species

by Emily Jungmin Yoon

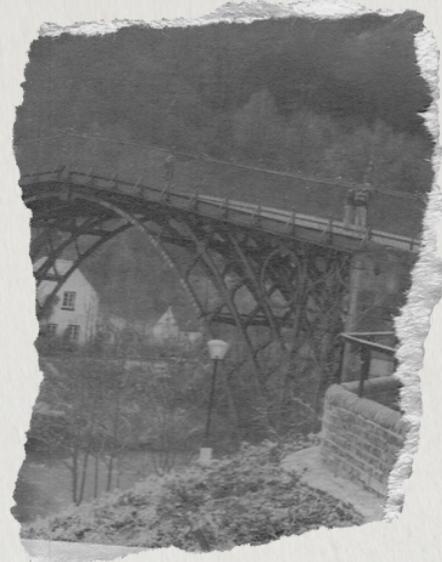
rw: rape, sexual slavery,  
violence against women  
and children



Historical Fiction  
through poetry

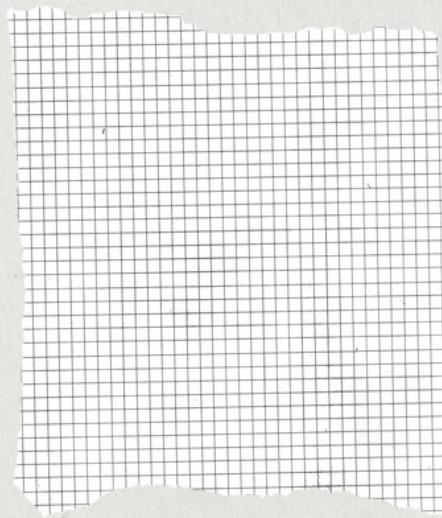
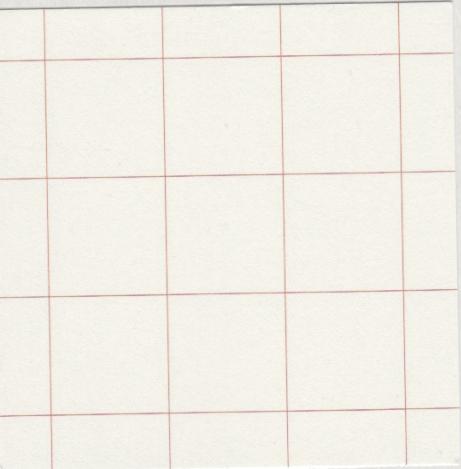
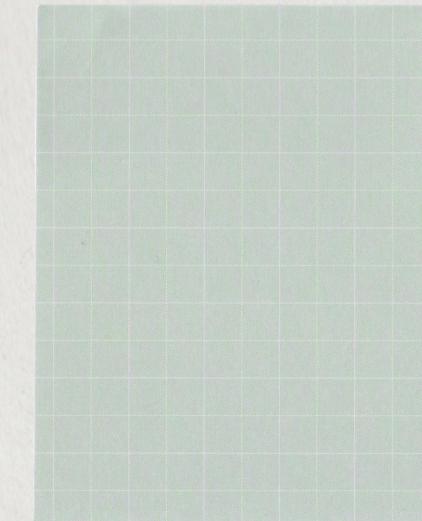
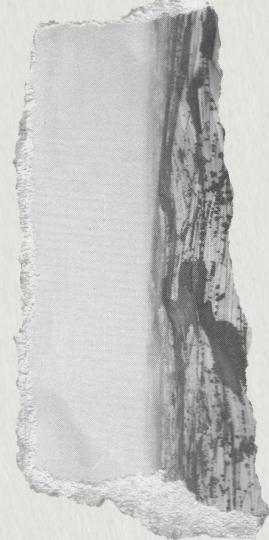
# Questions?

"Readers turn to the past, in fiction and in fact, to understand the broad sweep of narrative that has formed the world as we know it"  
(Saricks, p. 172).



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