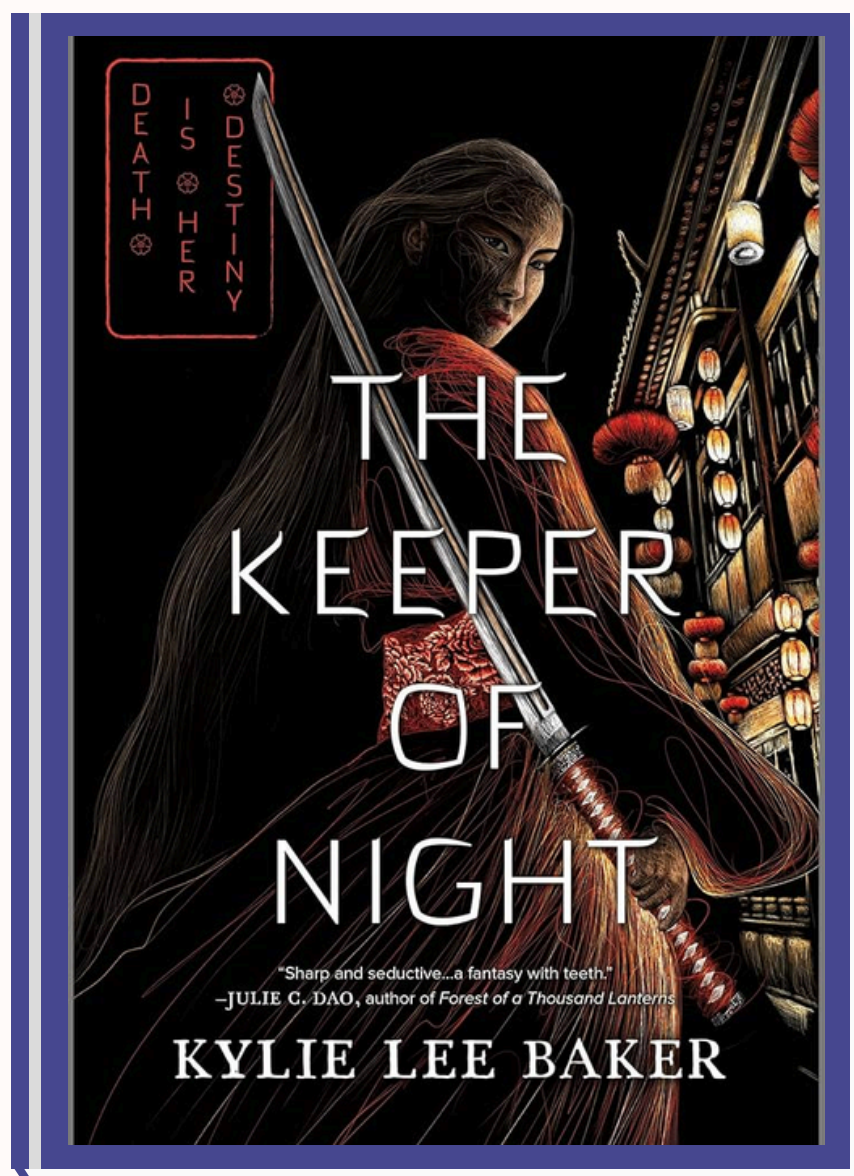


Young Adult Book Club Spring 2026!

Six Crimson Cranes

Elizabeth Lim

This book is a **breathtaking, fairy-tale-inspired fantasy** that follows Shiori, a princess with forbidden magic who finds herself banished, silenced, and racing to save her brothers, who've been turned into cranes by her sorceress stepmother, before it's too late. Every word she speaks costs one of their lives, forcing her to rely on unlikely allies: a paper bird, a mercurial dragon, and the prince she never wanted to marry. **Drawing on beloved tales** like *The Wild Swans*, *Cinderella*, and the legend of Chang E, Lim weaves a richly imagined world full of magic, sacrifice, and **self-discovery**.



The Keeper of Night

Kylie Lee Baker

Set in 1890s Victorian London and Japan, *The Keeper of Night* is a darkly atmospheric **YA fantasy** that follows Ren Scarborough — half British **Reaper**, half Japanese **Shinigami** — and her loyal brother Neven. Despised by her fellow Reapers for her **mixed heritage** and struggling to control her Shinigami powers, Ren is forced to flee to Japan in search of the acceptance she has never known. But earning her place among the Shinigami proves just as **treacherous**. Rich with Japanese **mythology**, gothic atmosphere, and a fierce, morally complex heroine, this is a compulsively **dark read** that will keep you on the edge of your seat.



On Again, Awkward Again

Erin Entrada Kelly
& Kwame Mbalia

When Filipino American Pacy Mercado and Black drumming enthusiast Cecil Holloway lock eyes during the first week of freshman year, the moment is immediately derailed by clumsiness and some unfortunate health issues. Despite both being firmly anti-romance, the universe keeps throwing them together, especially when they end up co-planning the freshman dance. Told in alternating chapters **brimming with personality** and pop culture references, the book is a warm, funny, and **genuinely tender celebration** of finding people who love you because of your quirks..



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This book is a breathtaking, fairy-tale-inspired fantasy that follows Shiori, a princess with forbidden magic who finds herself banished, silenced, and racing to save her brothers, who've been turned into cranes by her sorceress stepmother, before it's too late. Alone and voiceless, Shiori is forced to rely on unlikely allies: a paper bird, a mercurial dragon, and the prince she never wanted to marry. Drawing on beloved tales like *The Wild Swans*, *Cinderella*, and the legend of Chang E, Lim weaves a richly imagined world full of magic, sacrifice, and self-discovery.



Discussion Questions

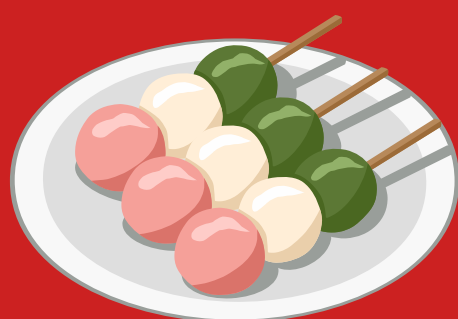
Which character did you connect with most, and what did you find most compelling — or frustrating — about them?

Shiori and Takkan's relationship starts on a rocky and comedic foot. How did your feelings about their dynamic change as the story progressed?

Shiori's curse forces her to stay silent while the people around her misunderstand her situation. How did that powerlessness affect you as a reader? Have you ever been in a position where you couldn't speak your truth?

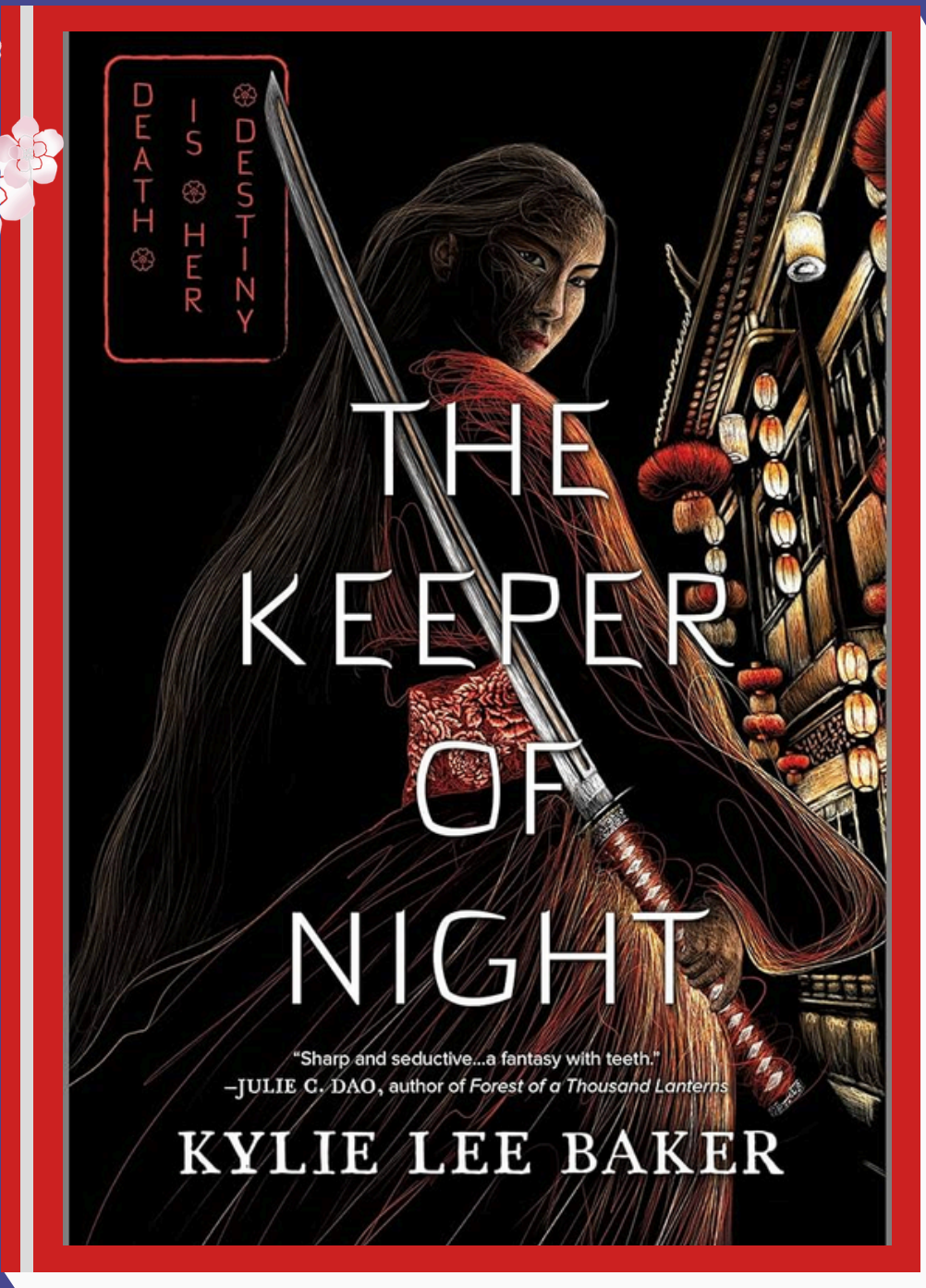
Shiori begins the book as a somewhat sheltered princess and ends it transformed. What moment felt like the biggest turning point in her growth?

The book ends on an open note, setting up a sequel. Did you find that satisfying or frustrating — and do you want to keep reading?



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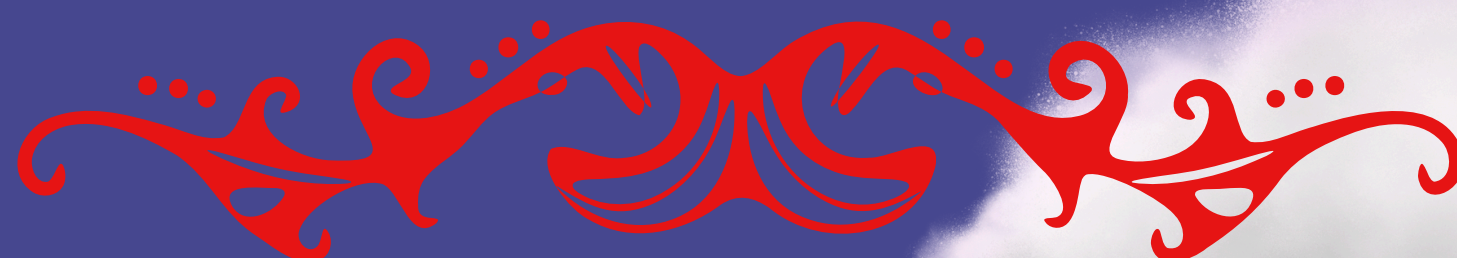
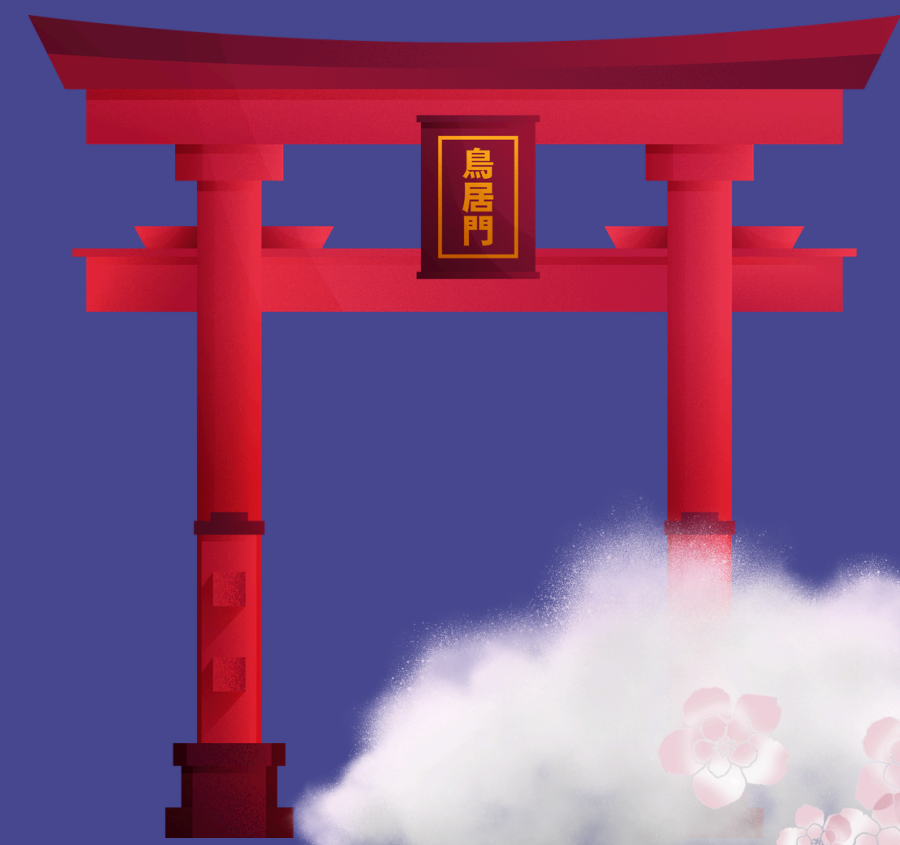
Rejected by the London Reapers, Ren's search for identity is marred by **betrayal and loss**, forcing her to confront whether identity is inherited, chosen, or imposed. What does her trajectory reveal about her true identity? Do you think she finds one?

Baker has said she wrote this book partly to explore her **own mixed heritage** after seeing few books about biracial or Asian kids growing up. How does knowing that context affect how you read Ren's story?

Another driving theme of the book is **destiny versus choice** – Ren describes death as inevitable and fateful. What do you think about this? Are the characters able to resist fate?

Ren's brother **Neven** is her only source of unconditional love. How does their bond influence the decisions Ren makes, and did you find yourself agreeing or disagreeing with how she treats him?

The ending surprised many readers. Without spoiling too much — did the direction the story took feel earned to you, or did it change how you felt about Ren?



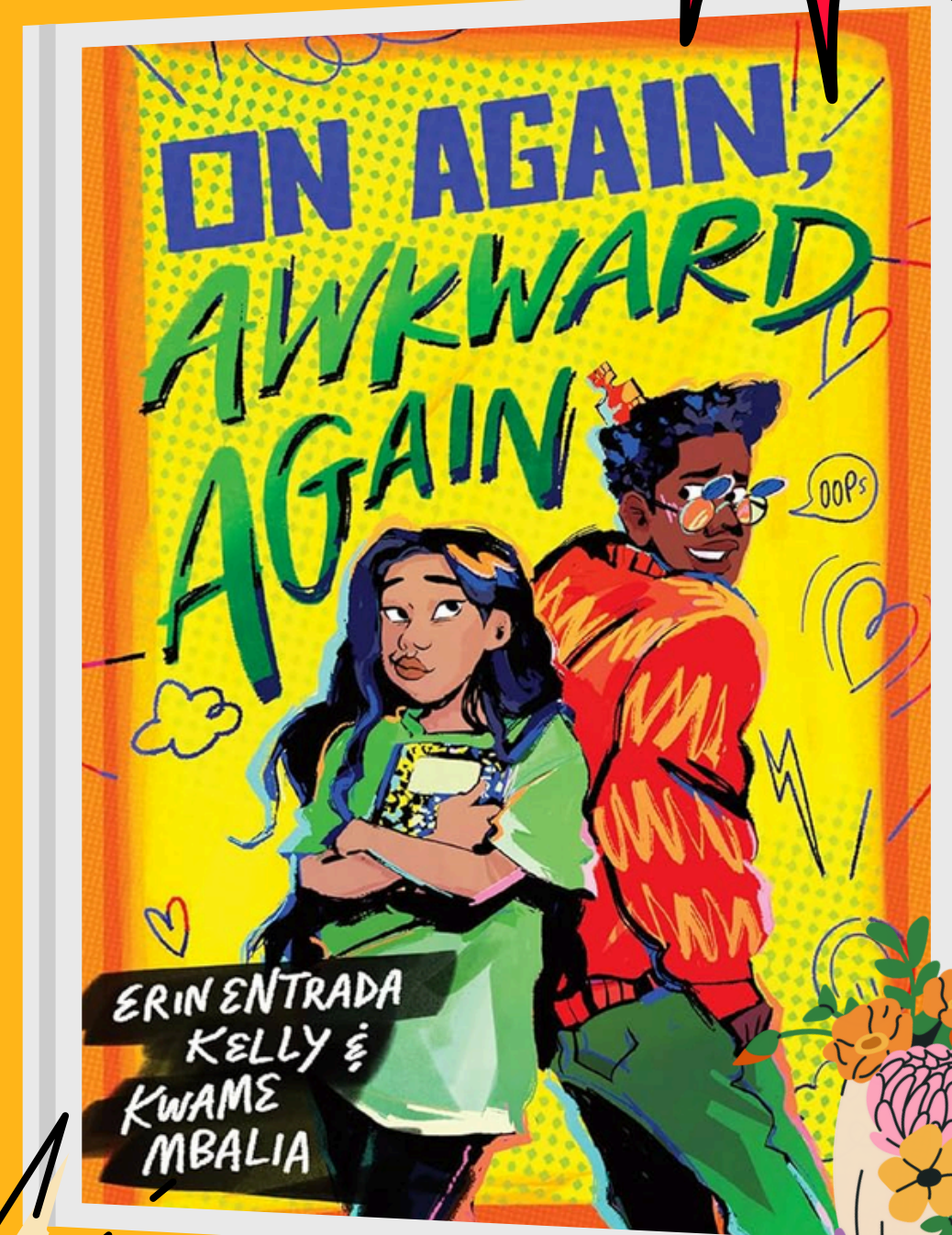


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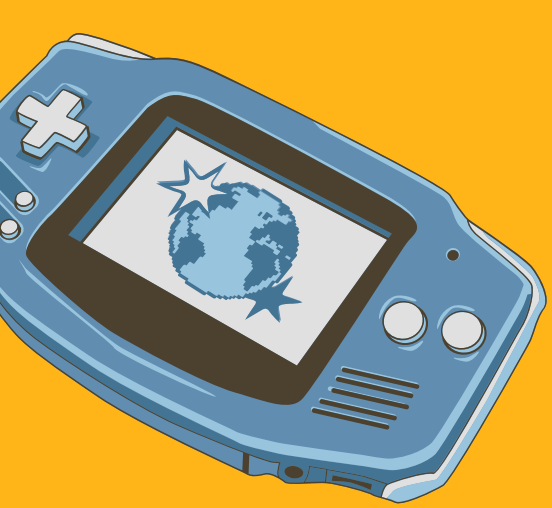
This book is narrated from a first-person point of view, alternating from Cecil to Pacy. How does this **narrative style** illustrate the pressure to be “prettier, funnier, and less awkward,” as Pacy says?



How does the book frame **awkwardness** — as a weakness, a strength, or something in between? Were there any moments that made you cringe from second-hand embarrassment?



Pacy struggles to live up to her “perfect” sister’s image, while Cecil believes his parents’ marriage is falling apart. In what ways do family dynamics influence the characters’ **confidence** and **self-image**?



Why do **small details** (lipstick, flowers, Benadryl, the museum) matter so much in a story about first love?



How does **vulnerability** function in the novel? Which moments felt most emotionally **risky**?

