

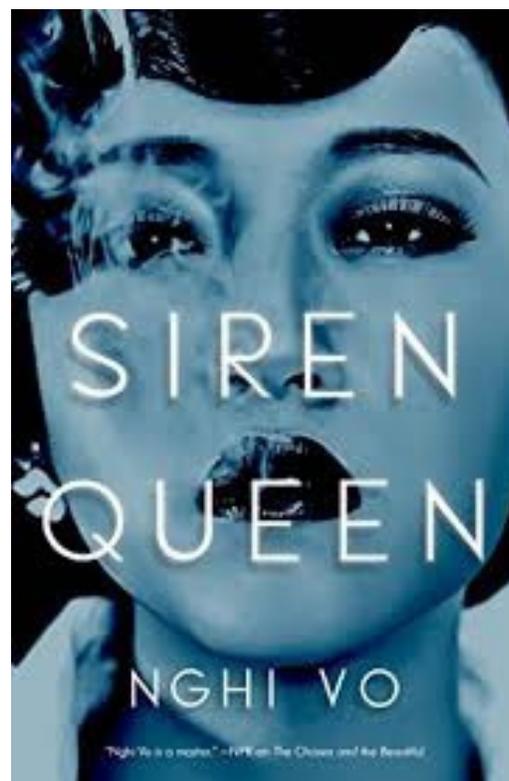


# Best Book Club

Where We Talk About All Things Books and Book Club

## *Author Bio- Nghì Vo*

Nghi Vo is a queer American author who was born in Illinois. Her first piece of published work was a short story called Gift of Flight in 2007. She has an ongoing project called the The Singing Hills Cycle which is a group of novellas - the first of which is called The Empress of Salt and Fortune which won a Hugo for best novella. Her first novel was published in 2021 and was called The Chosen and the Beautiful which is a queer, magical retelling of The Great Gatsby.

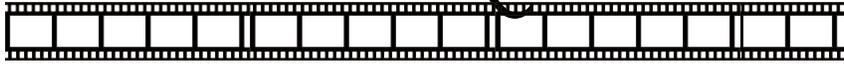


## *Synopsis*

“No maids, no funny talking, no fainting flowers.” Luli Wei is beautiful, talented, and desperate to be a star. Coming of age in pre-Code Hollywood, she knows how dangerous the movie business is and how limited the roles are for a Chinese American girl from Hungarian Hill—but she doesn’t care. She’d rather play a monster than a maid.

But in Luli’s world, the worst monsters in Hollywood are not the ones on screen. The studios want to own everything from her face to her name to the women she loves, and they run on a system of bargains made in blood and ancient magic, powered by the endless sacrifice of unlucky starlets like her. For those who do survive to earn their fame, success comes with a steep price. Luli is willing to do whatever it takes—even if that means becoming the monster herself.

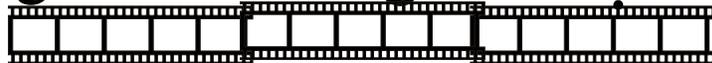
# Discussion Questions



1. We never learn “Luli’s” true name and names are very important in this world. Discuss why this may be.
2. Luli's mother says, “Your father and I made you. We feed you and care for you. We named you. That’s not nothing.” Do you think we inherently owe our parents?
3. Why is she willing to give absolutely anything to be a star, even her own life?
4. How was Emmaline and Luli's relationship significant? how did it compare to her other relationships?
5. What did you think of the use of fairy lore to highlight the workings of the movie industry?
6. Luli can't say that she wouldn't do it all again. Do you think that she was sorry for stealing her sister's name?
7. Why did Luli become a star in the end?



# General Questions



1. Did you race to the end, or was it more of a slow burn?
2. What did you think of the writing overall? Were there any standout sentences?
3. Which was your favorite part? What about your least favorite?
4. Did reading the book impact your mood?  
If yes, how so?