

"UNIQUE, ENCHANTING, AND HAUNTING."

—BRIGID KEMMERER, *New York Times* bestselling
author of the Cursebreaker series

SMALL FAVORS

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF
HOUSE OF SALT AND SORROWS

ERIN A. CRAIG

BOOK CLUB GUIDE

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THE BOOK

From the *New York Times* bestselling author of *House of Salt and Sorrows* comes a mesmerizing and chilling novel about what lurks in the shadows of the people you think you know that's *The Village* meets *Needful Things*.

Small Favors is set in the secluded town of Amity Falls, where Ellerie Downing is waiting for something to happen. Her days are filled with tending to her family's beehives, watching her sisters, and dreaming of bigger things, while her twin, Samuel, is free to roam as he wishes.

Strange happenings begin to plague the town. It becomes clear that the monstrous creatures who once roamed the land have returned, and they're offering to fulfill the residents' deepest desires, for a small favor. Ellerie soon finds herself in a race against time to stop everything she loves from going up in flames.



THE AUTHOR

ERIN A. CRAIG is the *New York Times* bestselling author of *House of Salt and Sorrows*. After getting her BFA in theatre design and production from the University of Michigan, she stage-managed tragic operas filled with hunchbacks, séances, and murderous clowns, then decided she wanted to write books that were just as

spooky. An avid reader, an embroidery enthusiast, a rabid basketball fan, and a collector of typewriters, Erin makes her home in West Michigan with her husband and daughter.

erinacraig.com @Penchant4Words on Twitter and Instagram

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



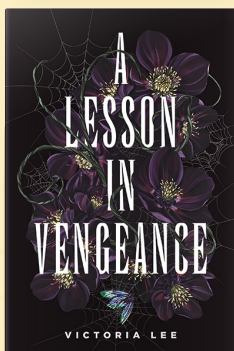
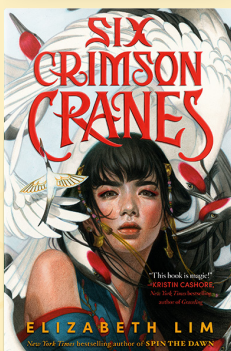
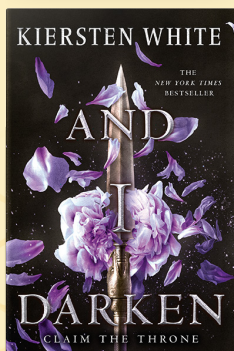
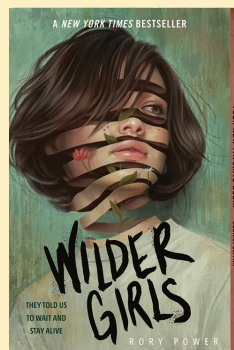
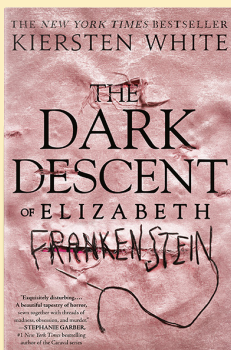
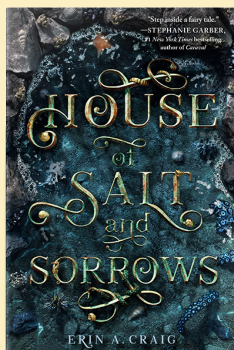
1. What four words would you use to describe *Small Favors* to your friends? Compare your words to those chosen by the other readers in your group.
2. If you've read Erin A. Craig's other novel, *House of Salt and Sorrows*, you know she is a master of dark fairy tale retellings. Can you tell which fairy tale she has reinvented in *Small Favors*? What did she change, and what did she keep the same? What lessons does this fairy tale teach Ellerie and the townsfolk?
3. Temptation is a powerful force in this novel. What temptations did you observe? What would have been worth the risk for you?
4. The trouble begins when the town's supply run party fails to return. This is the first sign that things will not go well for the townspeople. Instead of goods, this episode brings the first signs of ruin. How does this situation expose the darker sides of the characters?
5. Ellerie spends much of her time tending to her family's beehives. How do the bees and what they represent change throughout the story?
6. There is a shroud of mystery around the monstrous creatures that early settlers fought in the woods. How do these legends and the fear they stoke drive the townsfolk to action, both good and bad?
7. Ellerie has a big family, including a twin, Samuel. Describe Ellerie and Samuel's relationship. What bonded them? What pulled them apart?
8. Anticipation and suspense build up to the action-packed climax of the novel. One indicator of this progression is the changing of the seasons. What other devices did the author use to build tension?
9. How does Ellerie's budding romance with Whitaker affect her choices? How do revelations about his life affect their relationship?
10. The creatures lure the townsfolk in by requesting small favors that hide more sinister intentions. What favors did the townsfolk perform? At what point did you understand the bigger picture? Was it before or after Ellerie's revelation?
11. Neighbors, friends, and family alike are guilty of theft in times of great need and moments of greed. What part cuts the deepest: the items that were stolen or the trust that was betrayed?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS *continued*

12. The events of this novel take place in the town of Amity Falls. Readers do, however, meet several characters from beyond the town's borders (real or imaginary). What do these characters bring to the novel? How do they act as catalysts for change in the town?
13. Toward the end of the book, the town gathers to publicly cleanse themselves of their sins, but it turns into a public trial. How did you think this scene would play out? Did you think it was going to initiate healing? Or did you expect the chaos that ensued?
14. Nearly all the characters in the book go through major changes. Which one was most shocking to you? Whose ending did you least expect?



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