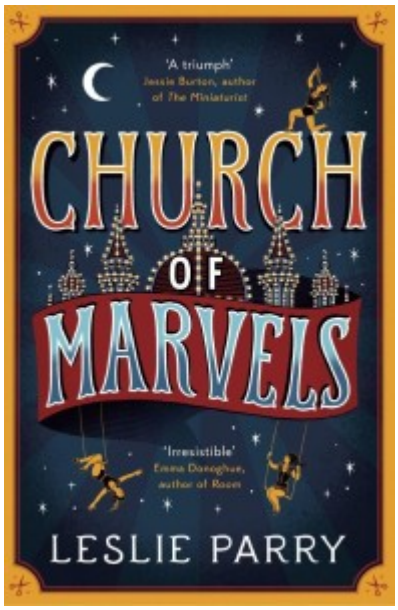
Judge a book by its cover (book club challenge & Church of Marvels review)

The book selection for our book club this time was a bit different. Instead of a set book being chosen for discussion, it was all about a challenge…pick a book by its cover. This means that inevitably we will have all read different books. I am looking forward to seeing what you chose, and adding to my already mammoth-sized to-be-read list!!

I am often looking at books. I love book stores, though do not visit the shops very often, so I often look at books online. When I found this book however, I was just mooching in Big W, waiting for my brother, and unsurprisingly for me, I ended up in the book section. As I wandered down the aisles, one book leapt out at me, and I thought 'what a great cover (I loved the texture and colours) – oooo I could choose that for book club!' I had never heard of the book, and flipped it over to read the blurb, and one of the locations in the book shared my last name, so I thought it was fate, and my 'choose a book by its cover' book club challenge was met!

The book I chose was Church of Marvels, by Leslie Parry. *NO SPOILERS AHEAD*



It was released this year, and is Parry's debut novel. It is set in New York City and begins in 1895. Four people's stories are told – outsiders and strangers: A poor night soiler who finds an abandoned newborn baby; sisters, who were raised in the magical setting of the sideshow, The Church of Marvels; and a young woman who is trapped in an asylum. These lives become intertwined, and their histories and secrets unfold.

This book is amazing. I am so glad that I picked it by its cover. It is now my current favourite book. Parry's writing is enchanting. Her style is beautiful and haunting. The story is dark, and dirty, and such an atmospheric world is created for the reader.

I was pulled in by the writing style, and then links began to form, and twists and turns made the story addictive. It was definitely one of those books that I wanted to read as fast as possible, but savour for as long as I could! It is stunning and brutal, and I am in awe of Leslie Parry.

I love intense and twisted books, so this was just up my alley, but I recommend it to everyone. I have been thinking about it every day since I finished reading it, and I couldn't start reading my next book for almost three weeks after I finished it because I was lost in the world!

Now it is your turn! What book did you pick up because of its cover? Tell us a little about what the book is about. Did you enjoy it? What did you think about the experience of choosing a book by its cover, rather than its blurb or recommendations? Do you think we should read the book you chose? Pop over to the book club page, and add your comments.

Thank you for joining in! I am excited to read your thoughts!

Also, I have not yet chosen the next book for book club, so I am open to all suggestions – throw them at me!!! What would YOU like to read?!