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MERIAM MEGAPHONE

a newsletter from the Meriam Library at California State University, Chico



FINDING A REALLY GOOD BOOK

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I read an amazing book (actually read it twice; got to the end and read it again) over the summer that I really can't recommend highly enough. "The Ministry of Time" by Kaliane Bradley blends wit, heart, and chaos, laced through substantive historical events and weighty political and social issues. This wildly creative debut novel drops us into a near-future London where time travel is not only real, but also bureaucratic. A secret government department has begun plucking historical figures out of their own doomed fates and relocating them to the 21st century as "expats." Our narrator, a British-Cambodian civil servant with a sharp eye and wry humor, is assigned to help Commander Graham Gore, a 19th-century polar explorer who suddenly finds himself navigating the strange new world of iPhones, vacuum cleaners, and Instagram. What begins as a story about cultural clashes quickly unfolds into a witty, thoughtful, and surprisingly tender romance. While not a huge fan of romance novels (nor of rom-coms), I found their relationship charming and tumultuous, sympathetic yet doomed, with both characters believable and deeply rooted in their own unique histories and perspectives.

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