



A QUILL'S LIFE

December 28, 2024

Greetings Fellow Reader!

If you celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah and/or Kwansaa, I hope you are having a wonderful holiday season, and wishing everyone a Happy New Year!

Don't forget to collect your ***Exclusive Subscriber Goodie*** down below, and remember that I'm eager to hear your thoughts, so don't hesitate to hit reply or click the buttons below to write me back.

Life Stuff

I'm enjoying lovely, quiet holidays but I'll confess that earlier this month, I had a big, ugly cry. It had been a while since I'd shed tears, but sorrows and doubts had accumulated almost without me noticing. When the tears overcame me, I wrapped myself in a warm blanket and surrendered to them. In that release, all that I'd lost or wanted but didn't (yet) have began to fade. As the torrent of my woes slowed to a trickle, all that I *do* have was able to poke through the mud again. That warm blanket was a gift from my son. My dear husband had wrapped himself around me, holding me as I cried. My darling dog licked my face, then curled up against my belly. I was literally surrounded by love, and at the end of the day, that's all that really mattered.

Love is the magic in our lives.

What's your favorite depiction of love in a book?
Click here and share it with me :-)

Fantasy Treat

In my emotionally tender mood when drafting this month's newsletter, wood nymphs/dryads came to mind. They're some of the fantasy creatures who appear in

ALL THAT SHIMMERS. In general, a dryad is simply a tree's spirit, one that lives and dies with the tree it inhabits. But mythology also offers sadder tales of spirits trapped in trees.

There's Daphne, who grew exhausted running away from the lustful Greek god Apollo. She called for help from her father, a river god, who turned her into a laurel tree. Probably not the solution she had in mind, but it did rescue her from Apollo.

Sculpture by Gian Lorenzo Bernini

Daphne's dad might have been inspired by Gaia, the Goddess of Earth and mother of all life.



After the Olympians won their war with the Titans, Gaia prevented Zeus from killing her Titan son Syceus by turning him into a fig tree.

And then there's Smyrna, who was tricked by Aphrodite into sleeping with her own father. When the incest was revealed, the shamed Smyrna ran into the forest and begged help from the gods, who turned her into a weeping myrrh tree. In tree form, she gave birth to Adonis, who, ironically, Aphrodite fell in love with.

(Disturbing) Painting of Smyrna by Marcantonio Franceschini



These stories were more likely intended to explain the origins of the natural world than provide parenting advice. Nonetheless, I find it disheartening that intervention on behalf of the victims caused the end of their lives as they knew them, rather than stopping or punishing the aggressors responsible for their plight.

When called upon to help, how often do we ask what help is desired ?



Saylie has questions.

Just a reminder, some links in my newsletter may be affiliate links, which means if you buy something using the link, I might get a small commission at no extra cost to you. Sweet, huh?

Historical Yummy

Given that the novel I'm currently writing is about a lady-in-waiting in France's royal court, I was intrigued to learn of another consequential lady-in-waiting known as *Murasaki Shikibu*. She is credited with writing the world's first novel, "The Tale of Genji," in early 11th century Japan.

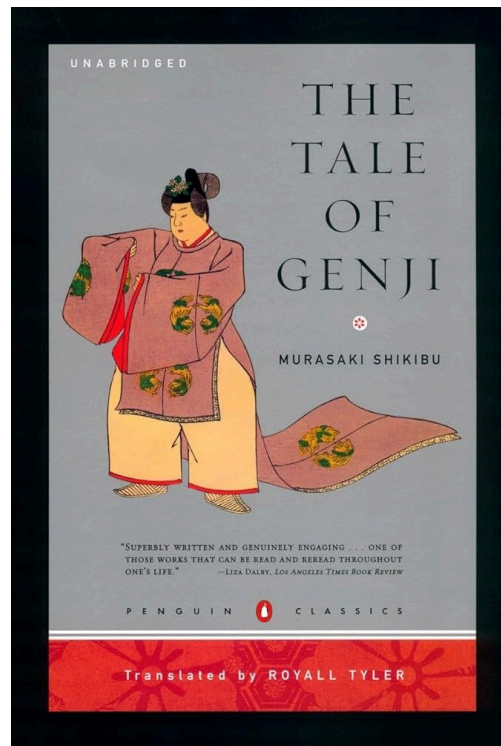
Painting by Tosa Mitsuoki



A well educated young widow, Murasaki was brought to Japan's imperial court around the year 1005 to serve the Empress Shōshi. This was during the Heian period, a time when most government business and literature was written in Chinese, a language Japanese women were generally not taught. Though Murasaki did possess the unusual ability to read and write in Chinese, she wrote in the "women's language," making her not only the world's first novelist, but also instrumental in developing and popularizing written Japanese.

The thousand-plus-page “[The Tale of Genji](#)” was written and widely distributed in sections over ten years. Though created over a thousand years ago, with its deep exploration of human relationships and sorrows, it remains resonant to this day.

As an author and avid reader of fiction, my life has been shaped by Murasaki's legacy, and I am deeply grateful for her work.



What's your favorite novel?
Click [here](#) and let me know.

The Nightstand & Pretty Pix

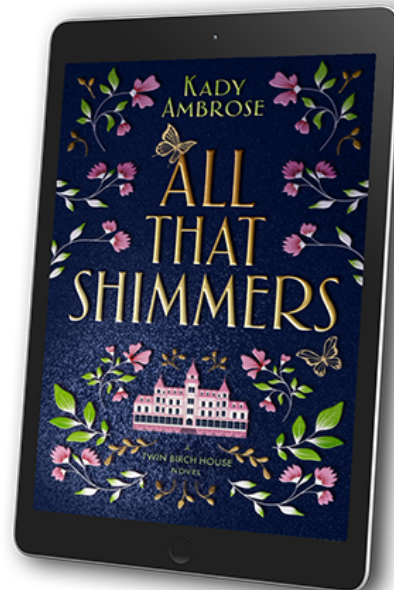
In the interest of shortening this newsletter to a more readable length, I've decided to suspend the book reviews (unless there's a hue and cry to bring them back) and to alternate Pretty Pix with snaps of Saylie. Hope you like the trim!

Behind the Curtain

The publishing adventure for [ALL THAT SHIMMERS](#) continues! The editorial reviews have started to come in and I couldn't be happier.

Here's a sampling:

". . . a well-written, atmospheric, and alluring fantasy that transports readers to a world of beauty and mysticism. It is a spectacular



and bittersweet saga of loss, hope, and love. . . highly recommend this captivating tale to all fantasy fans." - **Readers Favorite, Makeda Cummings (5 stars)**

"Kady Ambrose masterfully weaved the elements of fantasy and romance to create an enchanting story that readers of both genres will enjoy. I highly recommend it as it's a five-star book and more." - **Readers Favorite, Carol Thompson (5 stars)**

"Tragic and hopeful in equal measure, this is a heartfelt, character-driven romance that tugs at your heartstrings from start to finish . . . a must-read for readers of historical fiction and fantasy." - **Readers Favorite, Pikasho Deka (5 stars)**

". . . a magical romantic novel that never forgets that the journey of the heart is both perilous and wondrous!" - **Allison Morse, author of "Fallen Star"**

Fingers crossed that future reviews come in this strong!

Exclusive Goodie for Subscribers

This month's complimentary item for subscribers is a sneak peek at the first three chapters of ALL THAT SHIMMERS. Enjoy!

[Click here to download YOUR SNEAK PEEK!](#)

Like to be an Advance Copy Reader / Reviewer?

I'm still gathering readers of advance copies of the book who will leave reviews during Launch Week in May 2025 (and on Goodreads now or anytime, if you're familiar with the site). If you're interested in a complimentary advance copy to review, just click the link below to email me and let me know.

[Send me my Advance Reader / Reviewer Copy please!](#)

Have any **friends or family** who might enjoy this romantic historical fantasy novel but aren't yet subscribed? They can use this link: bit.ly/AllThatShimmersARC to go directly to the page on BookFunnel, where they can sign up for my newsletter and download their copy.

New to *A Quill's Life*?

You can read past editions of ***A Quill's Life*** and access all the exclusive subscriber content by clicking [your Subscriber Space](#). It's a page on my web site just for subscribers.

If a friend forwarded you this email, I invite you to subscribe for yourself and get the complimentary historical fantasy short story SILVER MOONLIGHT, set in the world of Twin Birch House by clicking here:

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1) *If you use gmail and this email showed up in the 'promotions' tab at the top, drag the email across to the 'primary' tab so future issues don't get lost among the advertisements.*

2) *Add kady@kadyambrose.com to your "safe senders" or "whitelist" so your newsletter doesn't get blocked as spam.*

Talk with you again next month!

Warmest Wishes & Happy Reading,

Kady

Kady Ambrose Writing in Paris, France



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