



FINAL PROJECT

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EDITORIAL PLAN

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DUE DATE:

August 24, 11:59 PM ET

GRADE:

35 points

EDITORIAL PLAN

Select a book, showing how you've conducted market research and chosen it based on what's promising, then create an editorial plan.

- Conduct a thorough editorial assessment, and propose your edits (line or copy edit 2–4 pages).
- Optionally, include a marketing/publicity plan or cover design choices. Provide a PowerPoint/PDF/Google Slides with research, assessment, and rationale.
- Choose a book within 208–304 pages and justify your choices with market insights.

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EDITORIAL PLAN

- 01** Select a book within the 208–304 page or 60,000–90,000 word count range, ensuring it aligns with current market trends. It can be nonfiction or fiction.
- 02** Conduct a thorough editorial assessment of the book, including:
 - Analysis of content, writing style, overall manuscript organization and structure, and author voice. If choosing fiction: add genre, plot, character development, story timeline etc.
 - Proposed edits (line or copy editing for 2–4 pages).
 - Include a letter to the author explaining the editorial assessment; keep it to just one page.
 - Justify your choices with market research and trends.
 - Optionally, also include a marketing/publicity plan or cover design choices.
- 03** Submit your plan as a PowerPoint or PDF presentation.

Book Title: They Bloom at Night

Author: Trang Thanh Tran

Genre/Category: Fiction, Fantasy, Horror, YA

Target Audience: YA readers/teenagers, fantasy fans, horror fans

Market Trends:

- **Market trends related to genre/topic:** Rising interest in climate fiction and environmental horror, sustained interest in fantasy (adult/YA) with a boom in romantasy. Also an increase in LGBT+ characters/protagonists and #OwnVoices stories over recent years.
- **Competitive titles currently available:** *When Devils Sing* by Xan Kaur, *Awake in the Floating City* by Susanna Kwan, *Wild Dark Shore* by Charlotte McConaghy
- **Potential market gaps the book could fill:** *They Bloom at Night* provides a YA perspective in climate fiction typically dominated by adult/literary titles.

They Bloom at Night Assessment

Plot Summary

In *They Bloom at Night*, a teenager named Noon tries to survive in a small Louisiana town post-hurricane, all while dealing with her growing discomfort with her body, unresolved trauma, and her mother's supernatural beliefs about their deceased relatives.

Townpeople have been going missing since the disaster, and some suspect mysterious sea creatures created by a rapidly spreading algae bloom are at work. The town's de-facto leader enlists his daughter Covey and Noon to find the creature responsible for the disappearances, sending them on a hunt that uncovers fantastical beings and presents the hardest task of all—making peace with the past.

Assessment

Hello Trang Thanh Tran, thank you for submitting your manuscript for assessment. You've crafted an authentically relatable YA story on the trials of coming of age with a mountain of obstacles in the way, made even more interesting by the fantasy-based environment and events. Let's take a deep dive:

Language/voice: You do a great job of describing scenery in a tactile, vivid way that makes the reader feel present. You depict feelings, thoughts, and traumas that simultaneously speak to a universal audience while being specific to the cultural elements of the story. Your voice also comes through in clever and imaginative metaphors and imagery, which is apparent in paragraphs like these:

"This season used to bring back crayon-scented memories full of composition books and leaking glue. It had the slickness of a paper cut: sharp and quick, then pressed with humidity under a cartoon-themed Band-Aid."

"She's made up of knifepoints in other ways too: long fillet arms, a butcher's wedge of a torso, and paring knives for collarbones. She is exactly the girl you dream of cutting your teeth on, literally and figuratively."

Character development: We see a lot of great character development through Noon's journey. She goes from feeling alone, uncomfortable, and constantly haunted by trauma to someone who's more confident and accepting of who they are and has a strong support group to lean on. I appreciate the ongoing changes we see in supporting characters like Wilder and Noon's mother, too, who have clear arcs even if we don't know as much about their lives as we do Noon's.

Themes: Multiple themes are covered in this book, including climate change, gender identity, found family, racial discrimination, trauma after sexual assault, and cultural

identity. It's clear that you have many insightful things to convey about these topics through Noon's POV, but the shorter page count of this manuscript does them a disservice by not allowing all of these themes to be fully fleshed out.

For example, we're told about how the city of Mercy has been left for dead by the government after the hurricane, but this doesn't connect to the larger concept of the world's climates gradually changing due to human influence. Perhaps you could draw clearer connections between the various effects and consequences of the human condition, including how these occur on a smaller level (local government) and then span out toward a larger scope (the entire world).

This is an ambitious story, but condensing your ideas and concentrating on a few core themes could help this manuscript feel more focused.

Tonal shifts: Some sections of the story are disjointed within their surrounding context. For example, the scene of Noon and Covey finding an octopus running through the school gymnasium feels like it's meant to be comedic, which makes it tonally awkward as it's sandwiched between the darker scenes of Noon having a hallucination/anxiety attack and Noon and Covey meeting a former school librarian with dementia. Keeping the humor present makes sense since these characters are teenagers, but you might try zooming out to consider how this aspect meshes with the story as a whole.

There are also instances throughout the manuscript where Noon or other characters give scientific facts on specific animals during conversation. One example is in chapter twenty-one when they perform a makeshift surgery on Noon to remove the algae from her wound and she gives them highly detailed information on praying mantises and parasites. Some of these moments seem like they are meant to flesh out the characters by showing their love for/proximity to nature and the wildlife in it, but they can also come off as being random or not suitable for the context. Several of these monologues do provide valuable context for a character, but you might consider condensing or removing others.

Horror elements/genre conventions: Although we come to know much about Noon, it's hard to imagine what she looks like after her physical transformation into something resembling a sea creature due to the lack of description. Considering you define this manuscript as having horror elements, you can appeal to horror readers more if you lean into that aspect of your storytelling. Leaving Noon's physical description largely ambiguous might appeal more to readers who engage with the story for its gender identity aspects, but this vague description leaves a lot to be desired for fans of body horror who tend to prefer all the gory details.

For a re-focus, think about what type(s) of horror you want this story to embody most prominently and how closely your work captures those genre conventions. You hit the mark on atmospheric horror with the descriptions of decaying Mercy and eerie nighttime scenes where unseen creatures lurk, and the monster horror is portrayed well with the marine wildlife and the “undone” who inhabit the waters.

Structure/story timeline: The leader of Mercy gives Noon and Covey three weeks to find the creature that has been kidnapping/killing townspeople. Again, the manuscript’s shorter page count doesn’t work quite as well here; this manuscript has a defined beginning, middle, and end, but the pacing/timeline itself seems too short. The events that occur over this span of almost a month come off rushed. For example, the beginning paragraph of chapter twelve mentions that three days have passed since they started searching and essentially gives a checklist of things they’ve done throughout that time.

Since all of your chapters are fairly short, you can definitely play around with building scenes out and establishing the settings with enhanced detail. You might consider lingering on the action and giving scenes more room to breathe. That way, characters can react more fully without moving onto the next set of events so quickly.

Rationale for Manuscript Selection

Overall, your manuscript has a lot of potential for doing well in the current market based on recent trends and niches that have been gaining popularity. *They Bloom at Night* resonates with the climate fiction subgenre, which has seen more attention in the last few years with rising climate concerns and major natural disasters. Books in this subgenre often lean towards adult or literary fiction, such as *Migrations* and *Wild Dark Shore* by Charlotte McConaghy and *The Deluge* by Stephen Markley, but this YA take could be a fresh perspective among books featuring older protagonists.

They Bloom at Night also has elements such as supernatural/mythological creatures and beings that can appeal to fantasy readers, with a setting that dips into magical realism. It’s easy to picture Mercy, Louisiana, as any other Southern town that has been devastated by a hurricane, but this story brings an unexpected edge with an encroaching species of red algae that’s practically sentient.

Fantasy in both adult and YA fiction has been topping book charts and sweeping social media for a few years now, with romantasy in particular seeing sustained popularity. Though this manuscript focuses more on the fantastical, the strangers-to-enemies-to-lovers subplot and subtle tension between Noon and Covey still brings in that element of romance that fantasy readers love—especially the enemies-to-lovers trope.

Additionally, there's appeal for Gen Z readers concerning gender/sexuality topics and LGBT+ characters, and your manuscript offers thoughtfully done #OwnVoices representation for readers who are Vietnamese and/or LGBT+. Though mass appeal is valuable, tapping into specific audiences can yield long-standing interest from readers who stay loyal to their favorite subgenres and niches.

The suggestions in my assessment are areas that I believe will help your manuscript stand out and succeed with the markets mentioned above. In addition to YA, you have the potential to target several different niches with readers who are used to seeing certain things from books in those genres. A mix of genres can be an advantage that differentiates your story from others, so it's definitely best to make sure that it's executed in a way that flows well and makes sense for a range of audiences!

Conclusion

Thank you again for sharing your manuscript with me! I believe this can be a successful novel in various markets with a tighter thematic focus and the other suggestions I've given above.

Specific Pages/Sections to Edit:

The ~2 pages I've edited for *They Bloom at Night* come from Chapter 23, in which Noon and her friends try to capture Covey's mother, who has mutated into an undead sea being referred to as "the undone," but encounter a former school librarian instead.

Line Edit Goals:

My objectives were to line edit the content for clarity, word choice, and sentence structure.

Example Edits:

The line-edited document with comments is attached.

At our designated corner of the swamp, we get to work. Radio reports indicate that Tropical Depression *Sixteen* has officially become Hurricane Isaias. The water swells under a deceptively breezy day—all signs that the storm is on its way. We wear high waders to protect our bodies from the algae bloom, though only Covey's fit right since she's tall. Options had been limited at the port, so Wil, Saf, and I tighten the shoulder straps and clip any excess fabric. *Seaz the Day* is half-submerged in the muck, lying at an angle that blocks access from the northern side. Mold has eaten away its white paint. The brackish water, thick with eelgrass, tapers to a stretch of land that will serve as Covey's backup point.

Between the houseboat and thick trees, we lay down a net that's smaller and lighter than my trawling nets. Fiber cords are released from gear tethers on either end of the net. Retracted, the net will tighten over whatever's stepped or swam in it. It's not meant to trap something as big or agile as a human, but it'll give Covey time to take a shot at close distance.

Saffy and Wilder watch from their vantage point on a wide branch as Covey slides a sanitized blade across her upper arm, enough so there's a steady drip of blood into the water. We'd debated this part since the last thing we needed was an algae infestation in Covey, but she insisted, "I mean it when I say bait."

From *Seaz the Day*'s slanting roof, I poke my head over to make sure she's keeping the wound high above the water. The four steel traps sit underwater in a line ahead of Covey, in case the net fails. They are barely visible from this height. I lose my grip when I shift back out of sight, face-planting into the metal roof. My mouth is filled with brine as a tooth slides right into the swamp with a delicate ping. Giggling bursts from the trees, and I flip my friends off.

Hours pass where the only visitors are great blue herons, offended when we shoo them away. Covey gets more anxious as time goes by, but I simply observe our surroundings. The swamp, a declared dead zone where the bloom supposedly depleted all oxygen, teems with life. The herons snap up fish in their beaks, flying between cypresses held by thriving strangler figs. Frogs skip rock to rock. There are few flowers, but they punch the green landscape and grow from waters as red as burned blood. It's stunning here, aside from the refuse that's floated from the sunken boat.

Steadily, and from far away, comes a sound, breaking the surface of the water with rapid movement. No motor, no engine, just a body cutting through. We whistle to signal each other. My hand is sweaty on the gear tether, ready to retract the line at any time. From her spot, Covey glances at the tranquilizer gun hidden in a bush. With only a handful of tranquilizer darts, she needs patience to get the best shot.

Deleted: The batter sizzles to perfection. They eat them plain. Then, ¶

Commented [MR1]: Clever play on the boat's name!

Deleted: ¶

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Commented [MR2]: Changed back-up to backup for CMOS style. OK? Or do you prefer the hyphenated version?

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Commented [MR3]: "Net" is repeated often in this paragraph; could we use some synonyms or other nouns for variety? (Such as "it will tighten," "my trawling ones")

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Commented [MR4]: This sentence could be combined with the previous one to streamline things, as they both have the same subject.

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Commented [MR5]: Merriam-Webster is one source CMOS refers to for capitalization of animal names, and the dictionary formats this species as lowercase. Is that OK?

Deleted: G...reat bB...ue hH

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Commented [MR6]: Strangler figs are native to Florida and aren't found in the wild in Louisiana. Is this meant to be an invasive species here? Maybe mutated by the algae?

Deleted: ¶

Commented [MR7]: Creative simile! There's also a vivid color contrast going on here with green landscape/red waters.

Deleted: ¶

Commented [MR8]: Could this be "that's floated in," "that's floating," or something similar?

Deleted: ¶

Deleted: ¶

A skeletal hand emerges from the distant water. It pushes ahead, followed by another arm. Someone is swimming toward us at an alarming speed. They swim fast enough that red algae ripple outward. They stop about ten feet outside our net. The swamp is deceptively still, and all other animals are gone, including the herons.

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Slowly, the wet creature shows herself. I know by the gray hair barely hanging from the scalp that it isn't Mackenzie Boudreaux. Inch by inch, Mrs. Olivier returns to us, her shape no longer frail. With her skin gone, the outer membrane is dark pink and full of pulsing suckers, like an octopus's muscular arm.

Deleted: ¶

No, no, no—it isn't supposed to be her. The undone should want their loved ones most, and Covey scented the waters with her blood. Do we have it all wrong?

Deleted: ¶

"Mrs. Olivier," Covey says in a shaky tone. "Please come toward me, and I'll take you to Travis. Promise." I get her new plan immediately. We must hold off on the sedatives, but the net's free game. We have another net back at the mansion.

Deleted: shakey ...haky tone. "Please come¶ toward me, and I'll take you to Travis. Promise." I get her new¶ sedatives, but the¶ net back at the mansion.¶

The librarian moves forward. "Oh, my baby boy," she cries, voice distorted as if there's a marble under her tongue. "He's not here anymore, is he? My baby." The suckers along her body contract, as if writhing with emotion. I don't know what Travis will do if he sees his mother like this. Stopping just barely inside our net, she suddenly swivels her head up. Right at me. "Don't you hear how the water calls you home? You've waited too long."

Deleted: ¶

My stomach drops. While I process this voice that's not completely hers, someone yells "Now!" from the other hiding spot. I reel in the cord, which quickly zips up out of the water. I'm on my feet for leverage, but Mrs. Olivier has dived in, patches of algae and murky water shrouding her exact whereabouts. I focus on the weight in the net until it thrashes, throwing me aside. I dig my heels in, and that becomes a mistake. The houseboat's roof collapses in pieces, whittled down by mold and rot. Splinters and dust fall alongside me into the water.

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People are shouting outside, but the chorus of *let us in* has begun. "No!" Perhaps it'd been there all along, but I've been too stubborn to hear it. I dog-paddle through murky green water toward a rectangular opening of light, but something yanks me underwater. The grip is relentless. Water fills my throat, and yet I'm not drowning. Nothing about me aches here, except for the bruising at my ankle. I pry at the cool hand reaching through the hull, where jagged rock has long ripped a hole in this houseboat. When that fails, I try unhooking my suspenders.

Commented [MR10]: This could be more specific—such as, "my friends."

Commented [MR11]: Is this Noon shouting, or one of the others? Could you make this clearer?

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Mrs. Olivier pulls me down before I can escape from her grasp. The aluminum cuts into my arms, and then I am in hers—wrapped in a net meant to save her. The water is frenzied with memory. There are so many happy ones: book fairs, gifted drawings, and warm summers. A few sad ones, too, like Mr. Landry, the former high school principal, standing too close to a

Commented [MR12]: Love this look at Mrs. Olivier's memories; it tells a lot about her we didn't know before, but without lingering too long in an action-packed moment.

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fresh-faced Grace Reed straight out of college. Then, Mrs. Olivier falling in love with a sailor who meant to blow through Mercy. Travis as a toddler enjoying his first sliced cucumber. There's me, too. Sitting in a sunbeam at a library table tucked away, sneaking bites from a granola bar since I was missing lunch. She saw it all in her incredible, blessed life.

She loves me. That's why she is here.

Commented [MR13]: From its placement in the paragraph, I get the sense this sentence is meant to be one of the sad memories. Is that correct?

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Visual Style:

For the covers I created, I wanted to convey a “darker” visual tone due to the contents of the book—mainly its horror elements. I included a picture of a swamp on the front and the ocean on the back, along with different visual components that could complement the front cover. The back also has a small coral decoration to continue the sea theme. The front cover font (Bebas Neue) is a common type that appears on horror novel covers.

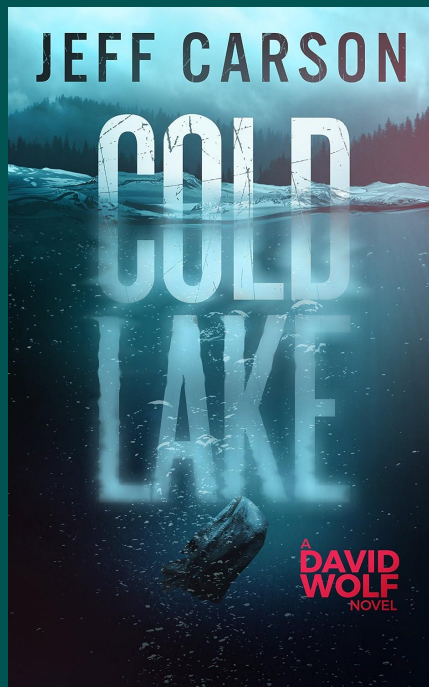
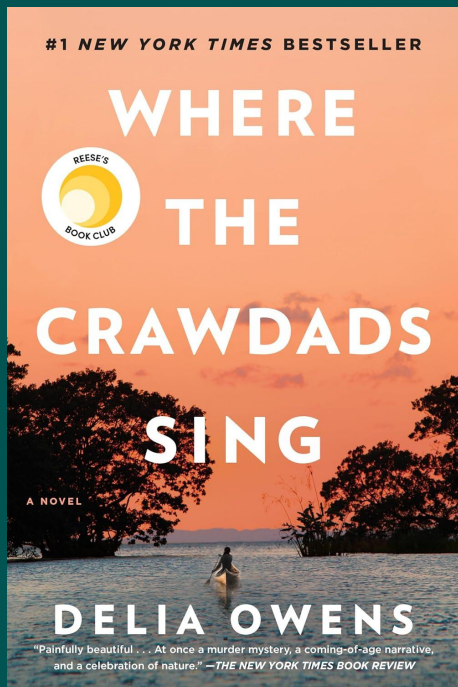
Target Audience Appeal:

The book is set in Louisiana and depicts a hurricane-ravaged town, so I chose marine/swamp elements to represent the plotline and let readers know what to expect. A lot of modern book covers have one central element in the center, but it was difficult to find a picture that both represented the book’s plotline and looked natural when incorporated on top of the swamp photo.

Design Inspirations:

On the next slide.

Design Inspirations:



COVER DESIGN (OPTIONAL)

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THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE WATER...

A teenager named Noon tries to survive in a small Louisiana town post-hurricane, all while dealing with her growing discomfort with her body, unresolved trauma, and her mother's supernatural beliefs about their deceased relatives. Townspeople have been going missing since the disaster, and some suspect mysterious sea creatures created by a rapidly spreading algae bloom are at work. The town's de-facto leader enlists his daughter Covey and Noon to find the creature responsible for the disappearances, sending them on a hunt that uncovers fantastical beings and presents the hardest task of all—making peace with the past.



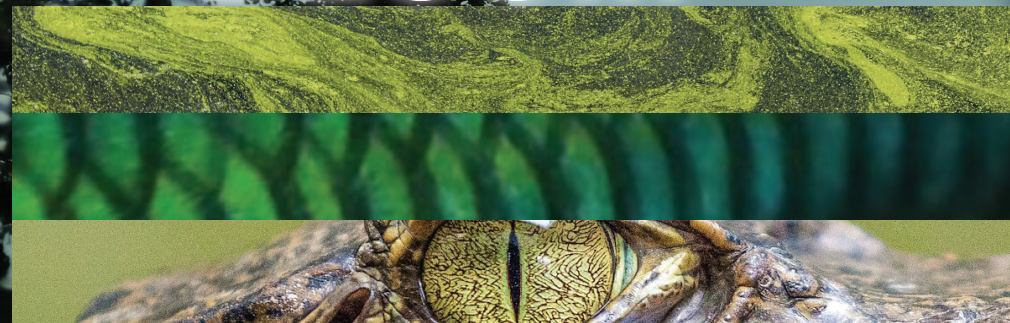
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THEY BLOOM AT NIGHT

Trang Thanh Tran
New York Times Bestselling Author of *She is a Haunting*

THEY BLOOM



AT NIGHT

THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE WATER...

A teenager named Noon tries to survive in a small Louisiana town post-hurricane, all while dealing with her growing discomfort with her body, unresolved trauma, and her mother's supernatural beliefs about their deceased relatives. Townspeople have been going missing since the disaster, and some suspect mysterious sea creatures created by a rapidly spreading algae bloom are at work. The town's de-facto leader enlists his daughter Covey and Noon to find the creature responsible for the disappearances, sending them on a hunt that uncovers fantastical beings and presents the hardest task of all—making peace with the past.



"Endorsement Quote Here"
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TRAN

THEY BLOOM AT NIGHT

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THEY BLOOM AT NIGHT

These resources connect to the Rationale I included in my Editorial Assessment:

- Creamer, Ella. "Romantasy and BookTok Driving a Huge Rise in Science Fiction and Fantasy Sales." The Guardian, February 3, 2025.
<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2025/feb/03/romantasy-and-booktok-driving-a-huge-rise-in-science-fiction-and-fantasy-sales>.
- Cybil. "Hot Ones: Readers' 80 Most Anticipated New Summer Books." Goodreads, May 12, 2025.
https://www.goodreads.com/blog/show/2922-hot-ones-readers-80-most-anticipated-new-summer-books?content_type=all.
- Cybil. "Readers' 84 Most Anticipated Books of Spring." Goodreads, March 17, 2025.
https://www.goodreads.com/blog/show/2896-readers-84-most-anticipated-books-of-spring?content_type=all.
- "The Guardian View on Climate Fiction: No Longer the Stuff of Sci-Fi." The Guardian, March 21, 2025.
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2025/mar/21/the-guardian-view-on-climate-fiction-no-longer-the-stuff-of-sci-fi>.
- McBride, Carrie. "15 Compelling New Climate Fiction Reads." The New York Public Library, April 15, 2025.
<https://www.nypl.org/blog/2025/04/15/compelling-new-climate-fiction-reads>.
- Moffit, Chris. "LGBTQ Representation in Publishing Is on the Rise." Technica Editorial Services, February 28, 2025. <https://technicaeditorial.com/lgbtq-representation-in-publishing-is-on-the-rise/>.

CONCLUSION AND JUSTIFICATION FOR THE BOOK SELECTION