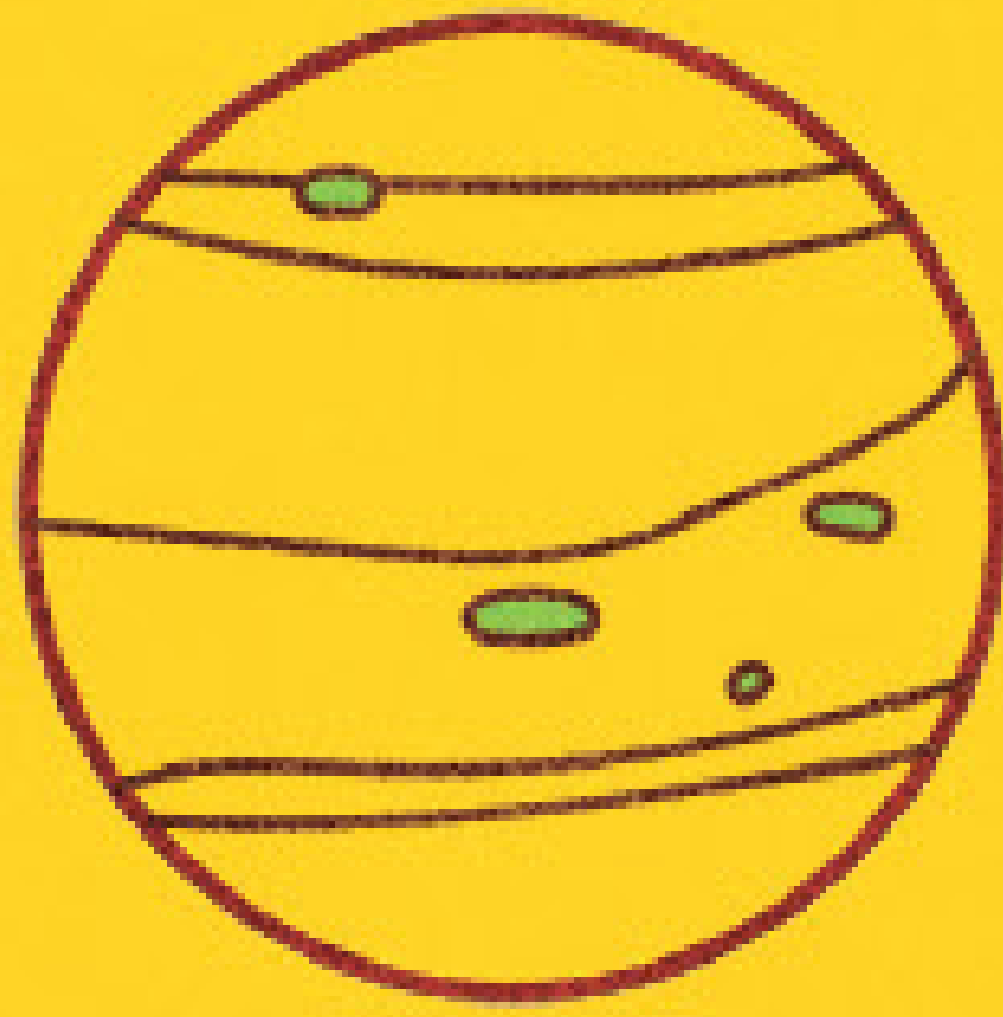


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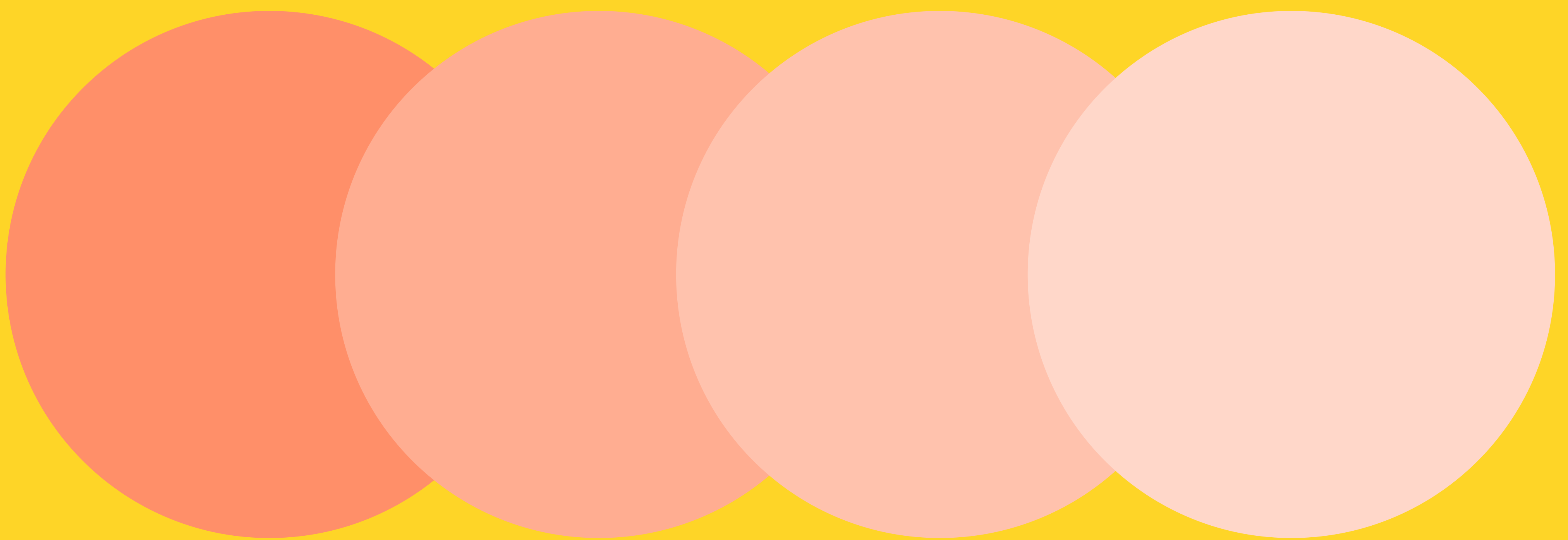


READERS' GUIDE FOR
TO LOVE LIKE VENUS

A NOVEL BY
STEPHANIE NINA PITSIRILOS



A NOTE FOR THE **CURIOUS READER**



This guide is meant to provoke
questions and generate
discussions. Your own reading
experience will generate unique
insights and takeaways.

Stephanie



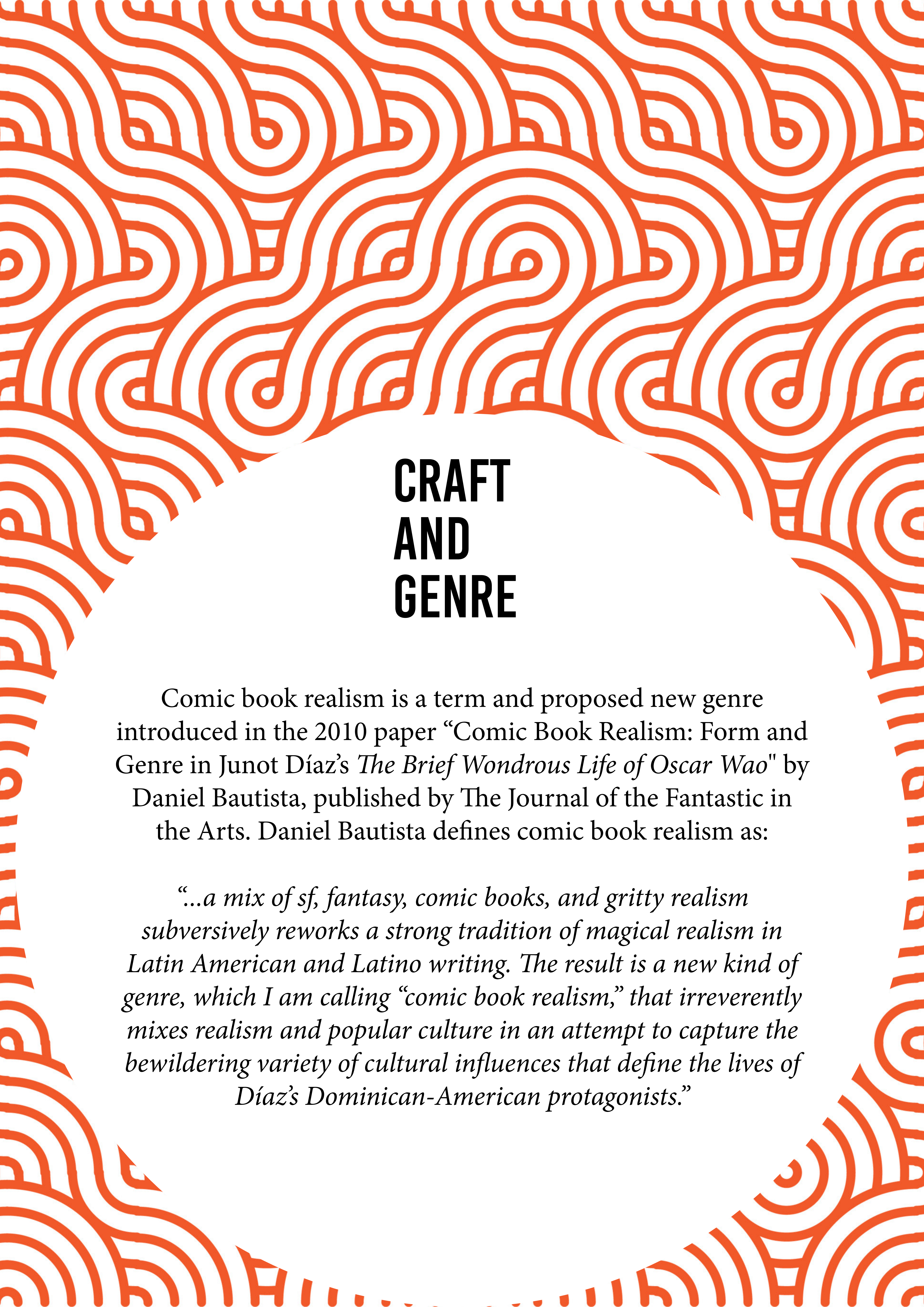
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1

**CRAFT
AND
GENRE**



CRAFT AND GENRE

Comic book realism is a term and proposed new genre introduced in the 2010 paper “Comic Book Realism: Form and Genre in Junot Díaz’s *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*” by Daniel Bautista, published by *The Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*. Daniel Bautista defines comic book realism as:

“...a mix of sf, fantasy, comic books, and gritty realism subversively reworks a strong tradition of magical realism in Latin American and Latino writing. The result is a new kind of genre, which I am calling “comic book realism,” that irreverently mixes realism and popular culture in an attempt to capture the bewildering variety of cultural influences that define the lives of Díaz’s Dominican-American protagonists.”

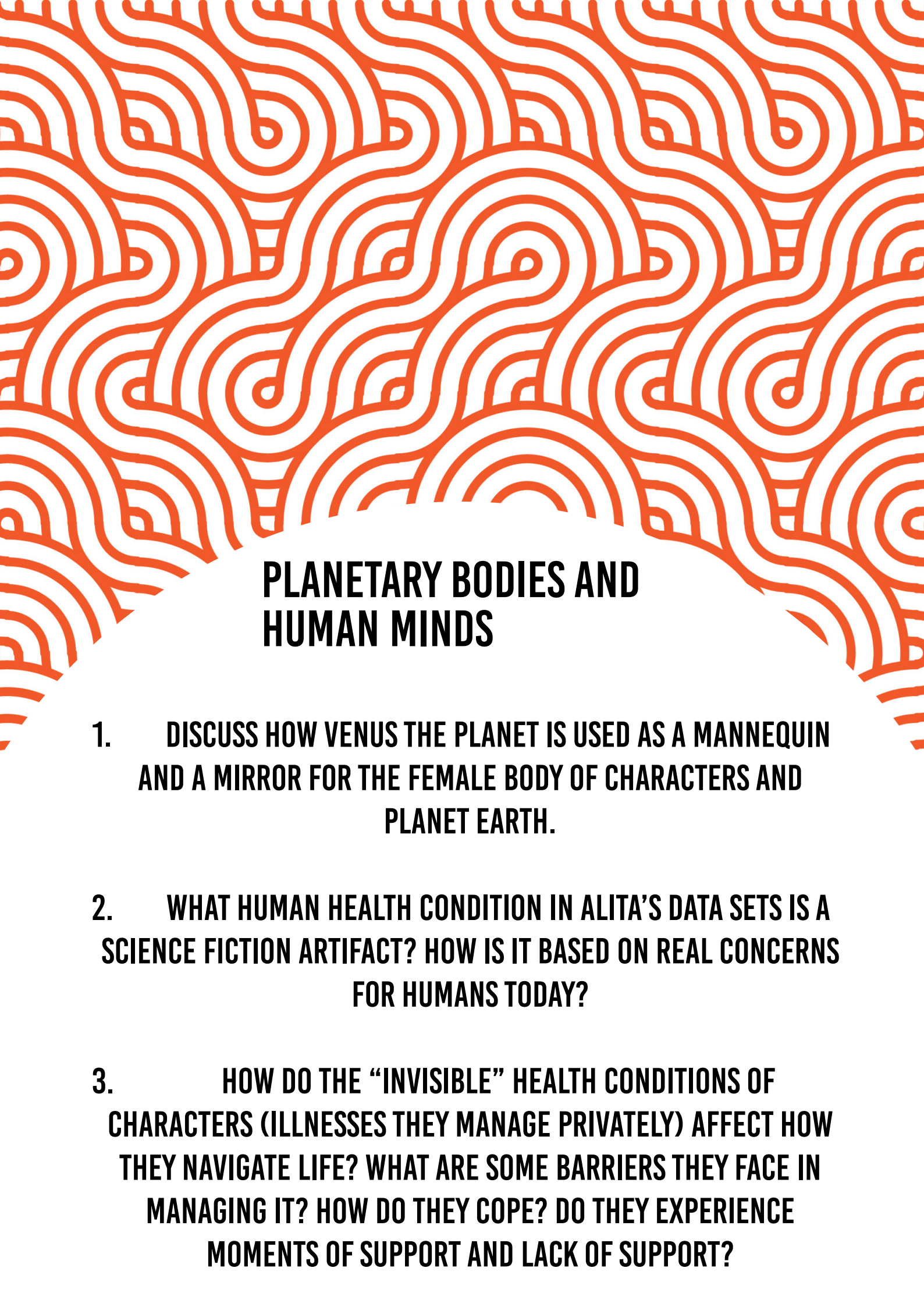
**CRAFT
AND
GENRE**

- 1. HOW DOES TO LOVE LIKE VENUS INHABIT THIS GENRE "COMIC BOOK REALISM"? HOW DOES THE READER EXPERIENCE CONTRIBUTE TO HOW A BOOK MIGHT BE CLASSIFIED FOR A BOOKSHELF?**
- 2. THIS STORY INHABITS A DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE OF TIME. IN WHAT WAYS DOES IT ACCOMPLISH THIS?**

An abstract pattern of orange and white wavy lines, resembling a stylized sunburst or a series of concentric, undulating arcs, filling the upper half of the page.

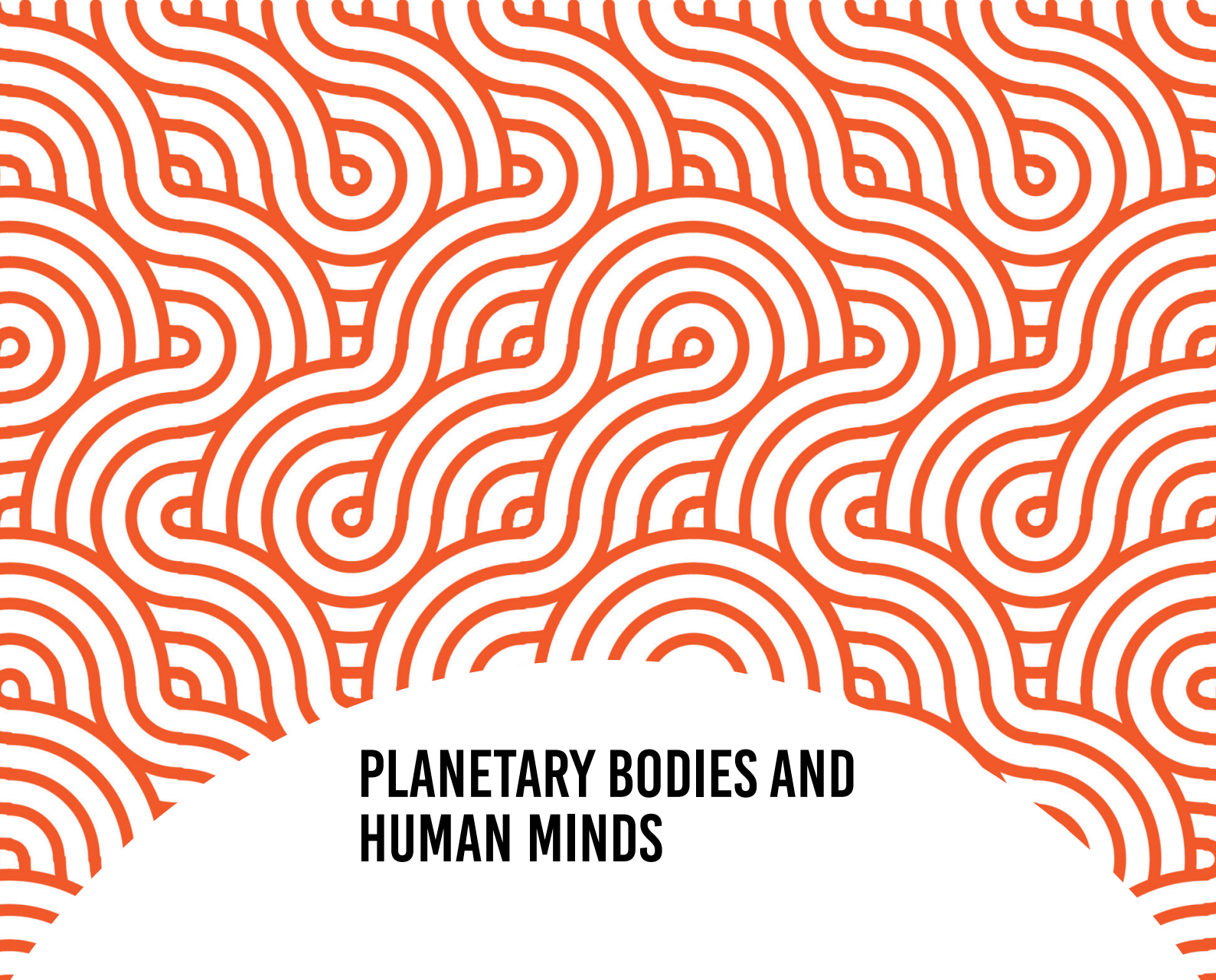
2

PLANETARY BODIES AND HUMAN MINDS



PLANETARY BODIES AND HUMAN MINDS

- 1. DISCUSS HOW VENUS THE PLANET IS USED AS A MANNEQUIN AND A MIRROR FOR THE FEMALE BODY OF CHARACTERS AND PLANET EARTH.**
- 2. WHAT HUMAN HEALTH CONDITION IN ALITA'S DATA SETS IS A SCIENCE FICTION ARTIFACT? HOW IS IT BASED ON REAL CONCERNS FOR HUMANS TODAY?**
- 3. HOW DO THE "INVISIBLE" HEALTH CONDITIONS OF CHARACTERS (ILLNESSES THEY MANAGE PRIVATELY) AFFECT HOW THEY NAVIGATE LIFE? WHAT ARE SOME BARRIERS THEY FACE IN MANAGING IT? HOW DO THEY COPE? DO THEY EXPERIENCE MOMENTS OF SUPPORT AND LACK OF SUPPORT?**



PLANETARY BODIES AND HUMAN MINDS

- 4. WHAT TECHNOLOGIES DO THESE CHARACTERS FROM THE FUTURE LIVE WITH THAT WE ARE EXPERIENCING TODAY? HOW DO THESE TECHNOLOGIES ENHANCE, IMPEDE OR COMPLICATE THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE? IF YOU'RE READING THIS IN THE FUTURE, WHAT NEW TECHNOLOGIES EXIST IN YOUR TIMELINE THAT RAISE SIMILAR QUESTIONS FOR SOCIETY?**
- 5. WHAT CONSEQUENCES OF CLIMATE CHANGE DO WE SEE IN THIS BOOK? ARE YOU EXPERIENCING THESE EFFECTS TODAY?**

A decorative background pattern consisting of repeating, interlocking wavy lines in orange and white, resembling a stylized ocean or a complex geometric design.

3

**DESIRE &
AGENCY**



DESIRE & AGENCY

- 1. CLAIRE'S LIMITATIONS TO HAVING HER DESIRES MET ARE COMMUNICATED TO US THROUGH A LENS OF GENDER, CLASS AND SUGGESTED CULTURAL NORMS. WHAT WERE SOME OF HER DESIRES? WHAT WERE BARRIERS TO THESE DESIRES? WHAT WERE THE CONSEQUENCES OF HER GETTING—AND NOT GETTING—WHAT SHE WANTED? REFLECT ON HOW WOMEN IN THIS BOOK RESPOND TO LOSS AND DISAPPOINTMENT.**
- 2. IS KAVEH A “GOOD” PAIRING PARTNER? DOES KAVEH RESPECT ALITA? DISCUSS HOW SOCIETIES VALUE WHAT CONSTITUTES A GOOD MAN, A GOOD WOMAN & A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP.**

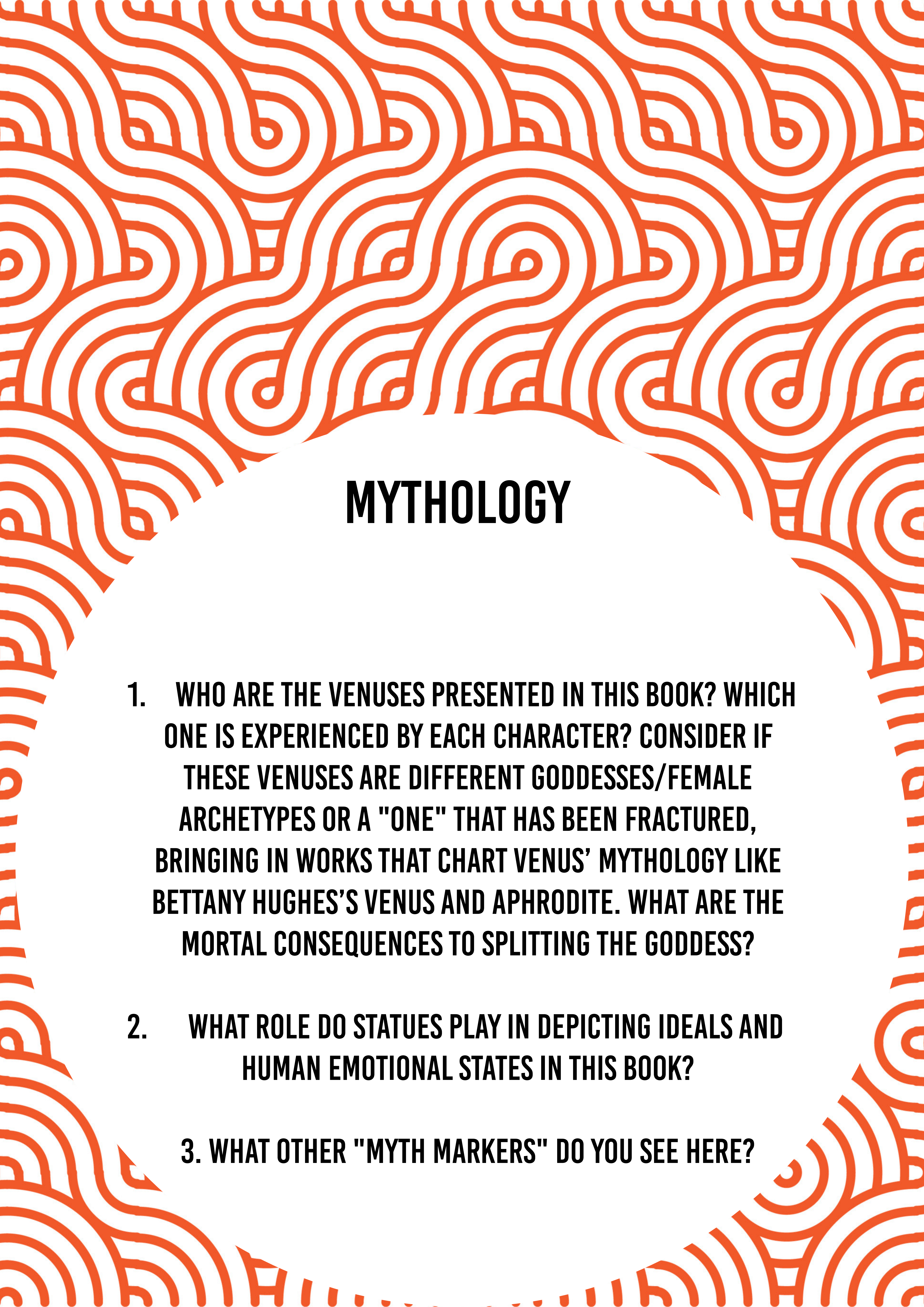


DESIRE & AGENCY

- 3. HOW DO YOU THINK ALITA FEELS ABOUT HER DECISION MADE IN THE LAST ROLLER RINK SCENE?**
- 4. HOW MUCH DO WOMEN REALLY GET WHEN MAKING DECISIONS IN THIS BOOK, AND HOW MUCH POWER DO YOU THINK THEY HAVE IN THESE "DECISIONS"? DISCUSS THIS BOOK WITH THE ANALYSIS OF BELL HOOKS IN MIND ON FEMALE LOVE, NOTABLY HER COMMUNION: THE FEMALE SEARCH FOR LOVE.**
- 5. HOW ARE BOUNDARIES AFFIRMING, FREEING, AND LIMITING FOR THESE CHARACTERS?**



4 MYTHOLOGY



MYTHOLOGY

- 1. WHO ARE THE VENUSES PRESENTED IN THIS BOOK? WHICH ONE IS EXPERIENCED BY EACH CHARACTER? CONSIDER IF THESE VENUSES ARE DIFFERENT GODDESSES/FEMALE ARCHETYPES OR A "ONE" THAT HAS BEEN FRACTURED, BRINGING IN WORKS THAT CHART VENUS' MYTHOLOGY LIKE BETTANY HUGHES'S VENUS AND APHRODITE. WHAT ARE THE MORTAL CONSEQUENCES TO SPLITTING THE GODDESS?**
- 2. WHAT ROLE DO STATUES PLAY IN DEPICTING IDEALS AND HUMAN EMOTIONAL STATES IN THIS BOOK?**
- 3. WHAT OTHER "MYTH MARKERS" DO YOU SEE HERE?**

A decorative background pattern consisting of multiple rows of orange wavy lines on a white background. The lines are thick and form a continuous, undulating pattern that resembles stylized waves or a maze.

5

**PERSONAL
REFLECTION**

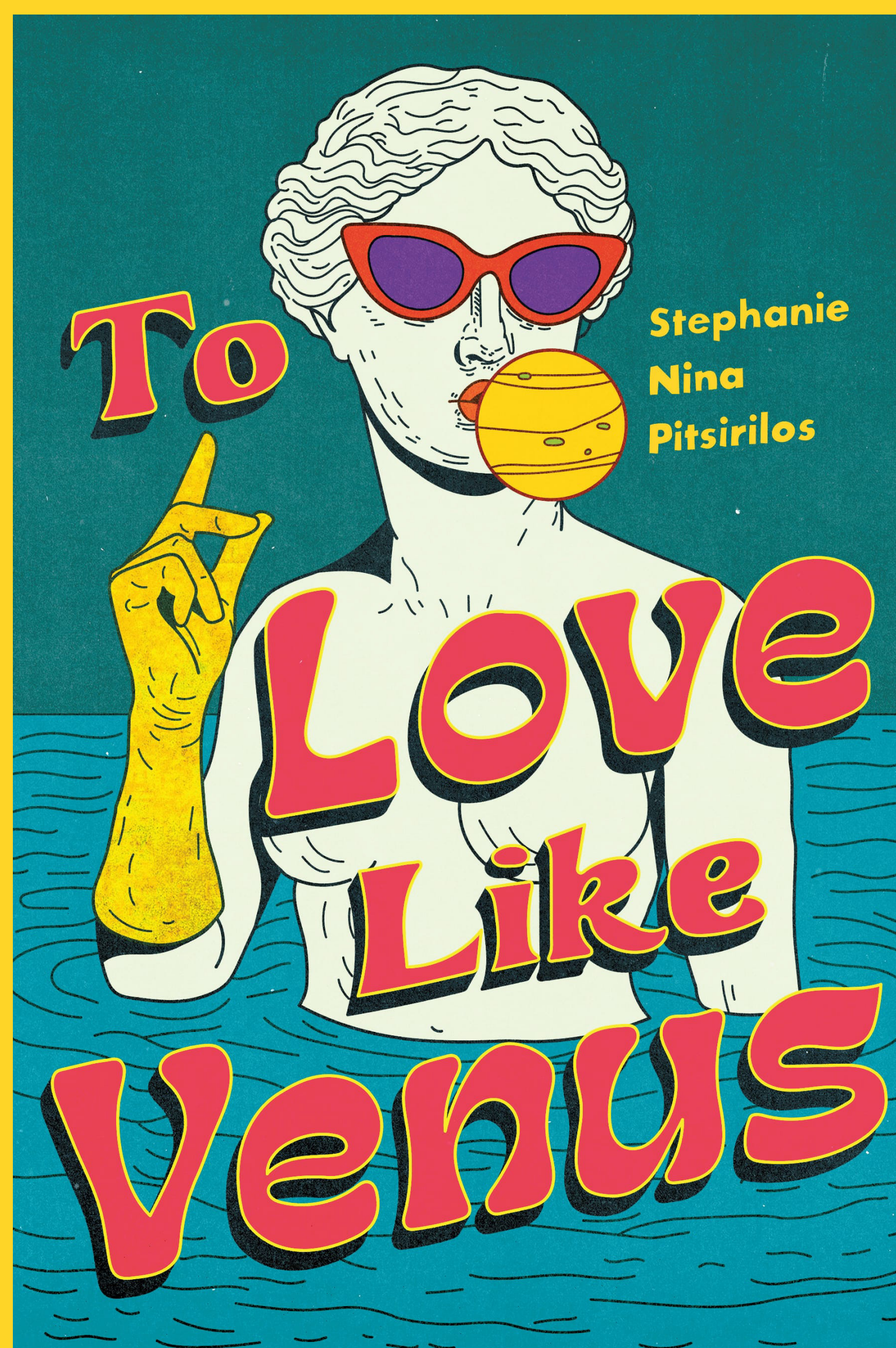


PERSONAL REFLECTION

- 1. ARE YOU ABLE TO SEE ANY PART OF YOURSELF IN THESE CHARACTERS? WERE YOU INTRODUCED TO NEW WORLDS?**
- 2. WHAT HUMAN OR PLANETARY CONDITIONS DOES THE BOOK ADDRESS THAT MIGHT ACTIVATE YOU INTO PROGRESSIVE CHANGE, OR REINFORCE THE WORK YOU ARE ALREADY DOING IN MAKING A BETTER PLANET AND MORE LOVING HUMAN EXPERIENCE?**
- 3. WHERE DOES ALITA GO AT THE END OF THE BOOK? THE MUSEUM? THE ROLLER RINK? WHERE DO YOU WANT HER TO GO?**



THANK YOU FOR READING



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