

**English II Honors**  
**Summer Reading Assignment 2024**

**You must complete BOTH tasks!**

**Task #1: Read and annotate *The Seventh Day* by Yu Hua**  
**ISBN-13: 978-0804172059**

**Task #2: Read and annotate *The House of Rust* by Khadija Abdalla Bajaber**  
**ISBN-13: 978-1644450680**

**Guiding Questions**

You do not need to write responses to these questions. They are designed to help guide you as you read this summer.

- 1) What is the role of storytelling in *The House of Rust* and *The Seventh Day*?
- 2) What social commentary do you see in *The House of Rust* and *The Seventh Day*?
- 3) What other important ideas do you see in *The House of Rust* and *The Seventh Day*?
- 4) Does *The House of Rust* have a first person (I, we, me, etc.) or third person narrator (he, she, it, they, etc.)? How would you characterize the narrator?
- 5) Does *The Seventh Day* have a first person (I, we, me, etc.) or third person narrator (he, she, it, they, etc.)? How would you characterize the narrator?
- 6) What connections do you see between *The House of Rust* and *The Seventh Day*?
- 7) What unanswered questions do you have about *The House of Rust* and *The Seventh Day*?

**Annotation Advice:**

There are many ways to interact with a text. Everybody has a tendency when it comes to the type of annotations they tend to write – I ask a lot of questions, define words I don't know, make personal connections, and comment on language that I find beautiful, challenging or confusing. Find a way to balance your annotation with your enjoyment of reading.

**Book Information:**

*The Seventh Day* and *The House of Rust* are available on Amazon and other online and in-store locations. You are responsible for purchasing the books on your own.

Please finish reading and annotating *The Seventh Day* and *The House of Rust* before the first day of school and bring your book to your first English class.

***The Seventh Day* Synopsis (from amazon.com):**

“Yang Fei was born on a train as it raced across the Chinese countryside. Lost by his mother, adopted by a young switchman, raised with simplicity and love, he is utterly unprepared for the

changes that await him and his country. As a young man, he searches for a place to belong in a nation ceaselessly reinventing itself, but he remains on the edges of society.

At forty-one, he meets an unceremonious death, and lacking the money for a burial plot, must roam the afterworld aimlessly. There, over the course of seven days, he encounters the souls of people he's lost. As he retraces the path of his life, we meet an extraordinary cast of characters: his adoptive father, his beautiful ex-wife, his neighbors who perished in the demolition of their homes. Vivid, urgent, and panoramic, Yang Fei's passage movingly traces the contours of his vast nation—its absurdities, its sorrows, and its soul. This searing novel affirms Yu Hua's place as the standard-bearer of Chinese fiction."

*The House of Rust* Synopsis (from amazon.com):

"*The House of Rust* is an enchanting novel about a Hadhrami girl in Mombasa. When her fisherman father goes missing, Aisha takes to the sea on a magical boat made of a skeleton to rescue him. She is guided by a talking scholar's cat (and soon crows, goats, and other animals all have their say, too). On this journey Aisha meets three terrifying sea monsters. After she survives a final confrontation with Baba wa Papa, the father of all sharks, she . . . hopes that life will return to normal. But at home, things only grow stranger.

Khadija Abdalla Bajaber's debut is a magical realist coming-of-age tale told through the lens of the Swahili and diasporic Hadhrami culture in Mombasa, Kenya. Richly descriptive and written with an imaginative hand and sharp eye for unusual detail, *The House of Rust* is a memorable novel by a thrilling new voice."