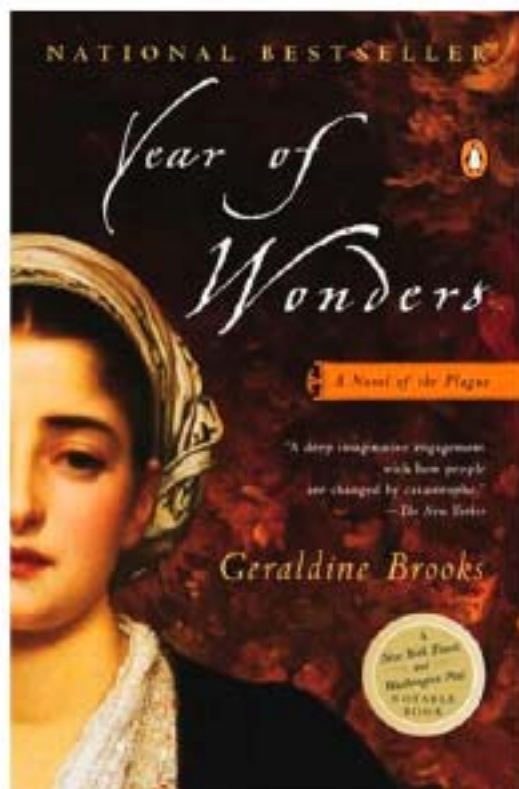




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BATTLE AXE'S BOOK OF THE MONTH



Year of Wonders

by **Geraldine Brooks**

When the 17th-century plague is carried from London to a small Derbyshire village by an itinerant tailor, the villagers face a choice: do they flee in hope of outrunning the plague or do they stay? The rector, Michael Mompellion, argues forcefully that the villagers should stay and isolate themselves to prevent the contagion from spreading. His oratory wins the day and the village turns in on itself. Cocooned from the outside world and ravaged by the disease, its inhabitants struggle to retain their humanity in the face of the disaster. Young widow Anna Frith, is one of the few who succeeds. With Mompellion and his wife, Elinor, she tends to the dying and battles to prevent her fellow villagers from descending into drink, violence, and superstition. All is complicated by the intense, inexpressible feelings she develops for both the rector and his wife. There is no mistaking the power of Brooks's imagination or the skill with which she constructs her story of ordinary people struggling to cope with extraordinary circumstances.

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