

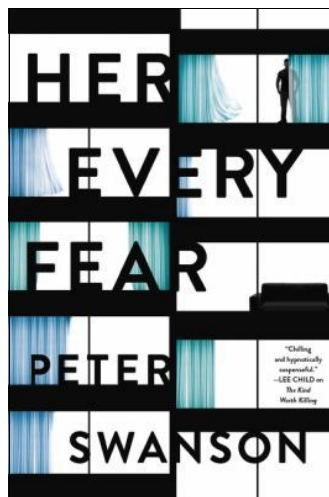


Staff Picks 2017

ADULT FICTION

Her Every Fear

By Peter Swanson



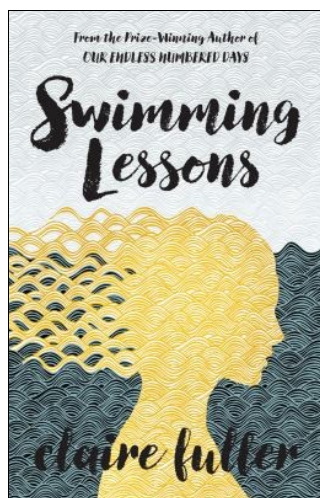
Kate, whose lifelong anxiety is compounded by a traumatic event, bravely switches apartments with her cousin — he moves to London and she to Boston. Right away a neighbor disappears, and this time Kate is right when she imagines the worst.

While not my usual fare, I really enjoyed flying through this page-turner of a story. With its suspenseful elements of *Rear Window* and a strong visual sense of place, I'd love to see this made into a movie! — Elizabeth

Swimming Lessons

By Claire Fuller

When elderly author Gil thinks he sees his presumed-dead wife Ingrid, he falls and injures himself. The action takes off when Gil's daughters arrive to take care of him, alternating between Ingrid's story and the present-day family dynamics.



I loved Fuller's *Our Endless Numbered Days*. While not as intense, this new work proves the author's ability. The gradual reveal of the mystery of Ingrid's disappearance kept me guessing to the end and beyond. Loved the setting, too! — Elizabeth

The Girl Before

By J.P. Delaney

Emma and Jane each rent a home from an enigmatic and stringent architect, whose rules and designs are meant to transform the tenants. Their stories unfold through suspenseful, short chapters alternating between the two women — one alive, and the other dead.

I like a fast-paced whodunit. Some sections were a bit graphic for my taste, but I couldn't put it down!

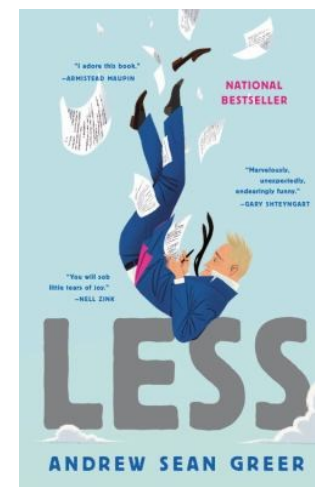
— Margo



Less

By Andrew Sean Greer

Less is more, unless your name is Arthur Less, and then less is never enough! He travels all over the



world trying to change his luck and forget his past. But fate has other plans for Arthur.

I loved this book because Arthur was so hopelessly loveable, even though he's convinced that he's unlovable. — Linda S.

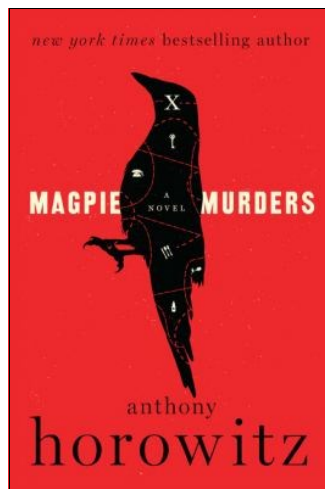
ADULT FICTION

Magpie Murders

By Anthony Horowitz

A publisher and editor are reading the newest submission from famous author Alan Conway in his *Atticus Pünd* series. Then they realize the last chapter is missing. Before they have a chance to ask him where it is, Alan commits suicide. Or does he?

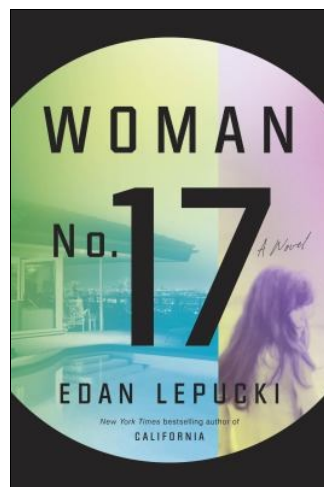
What a fun book! *Magpie Murders* is a mystery within a mystery — a really challenging whodunit! — Linda



Woman No. 17

By Edan Lepucki

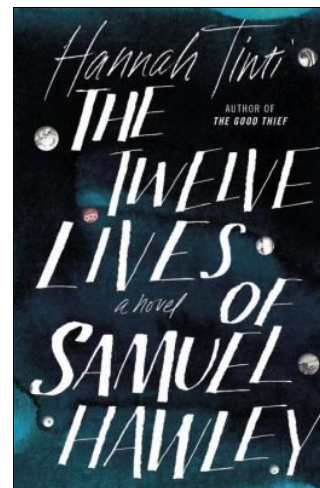
A mother's hurried choice of a nanny for her toddler results in multiple complications. Art, privilege, motherhood, love, and seriously dysfunctional relationships thrive in Lepucki's second novel, which is nothing like her first, *California*.



Having gone to art school myself, I enjoyed the bizarre art project that the nanny contrives to undertake right under the nose of the mother. The added touches of Twitter addiction, selective mutism, and reckless behavior make this an entertaining read. —Elizabeth

The Twelve Lives of Samuel Hawley

By Hannah Tinti



Samuel Hawley, scarred from 12 bullet wounds, has lived a life of crime about which his daughter, Loo, knows nothing. Gradually, the story behind each of those bullets is revealed, along with the truth about Loo's mother's death.

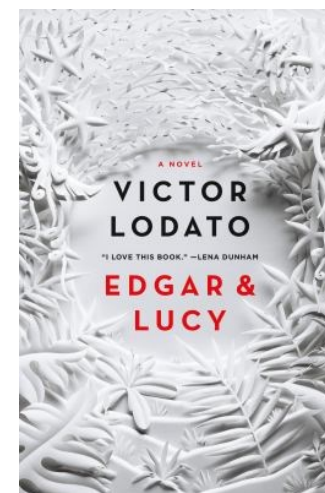
Despite the violence of Hawley's former life he fiercely loves and protects Loo. This dichotomy between despicable behavior and tenderhearted parenting makes this an endlessly intriguing story, full of intensity and complexity. I loved it! — Elizabeth

Edgar and Lucy

By Victor Lodato

Edgar is a quirky 8-year-old struggling to find his place. His dad is dead, his mother is a messed up partier, and his loving grandmother just died. When a strange man treats Edgar with kindness, he makes the grave mistake of getting pulled under his spell.

Seriously flawed characters galore here, but you can't help but empathize with each one and even understand their crazy actions. Suspenseful, full of twists and turns — it keeps you guessing! — Elizabeth



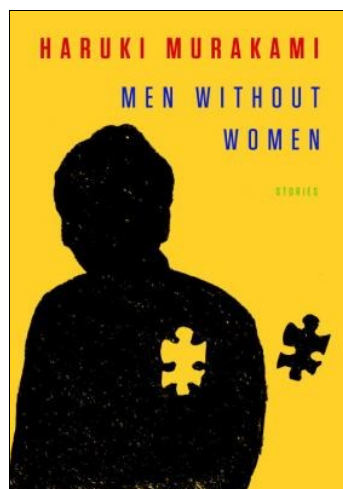
ADULT FICTION

Men Without Women

By Haruki Murakami

Seven tales of middle-aged guys and the women they've known, loved, used, and lost. One is starving from unrequited love. Another hears about his lover's former life as an eel. One wakes up as Gregor Samsa, now a man after having been a cockroach.

It's hard to put into words why I love Murakami's work. It's a sort of intense introspective wonder



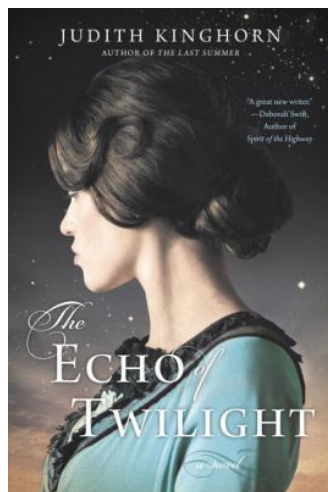
about people, relationships, and the world in general. I loved the incredible details of these stories, and didn't want any of them to end. — Elizabeth

The Echo of Twilight

By Judith Kinghorn

Pearl Gibson works her way up to becoming the head maid for the wealthy and strong-willed Lady Ottoline Campbell. The two ladies' lives intertwine over the years as they deal with love, loss, and secrets.

The Echo of Twilight is a sweeping story that is reminiscent of *Downton Abbey*. The descriptions of lush scenery, opulent surroundings, and interesting relationships between characters made for a fantastic read. — Liz



A Court of Wings and Ruin

By Sarah J. Maas

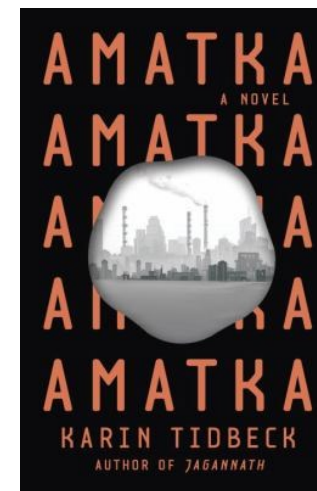
This is the last installment in the *Court of Thorns and Roses* trilogy. Feyre learns how to use her powers and become a leader in order to try save those in the human realm as well as those in the Faerie realm.



I would describe this book as "Twilight for grown-ups." It's filled with action, romance, magic, and the supernatural. — Liz

Amatka

By Karin Tidbeck



In a world where nothing holds its shape unless labeled and named by humans over and over, Vanja travels to cold, dreary Amatka to study hygiene products for the government. Initially, she is a loyal servant but soon discovers all is not what it seems.

Amatka kept me fascinated from bizarre beginning to ambiguous end, which I hope hints at more to come from this debut Swedish author. — Elizabeth

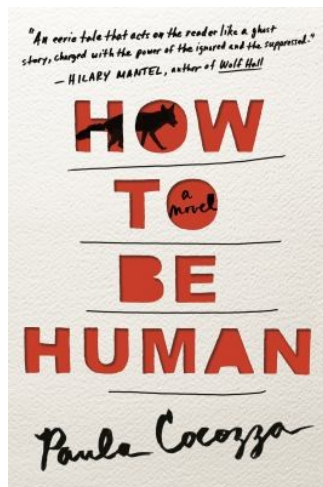
ADULT FICTION

How to be Human

By Paula Coccozza

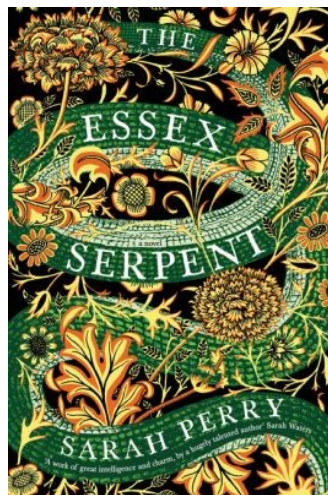
Mary, newly separated, barely keeping her head above water, with a tedious job and a ramshackle house, becomes enamored with a splendidly gorgeous wild fox. To Mary's horror, the neighbors want to bring in an exterminator.

This strange storyline made me a bit worried at times, wondering what might happen. But I loved the buildup of tension and claustrophobia, and finally, Mary's transformation. — Elizabeth



The Essex Serpent

By Sarah Perry



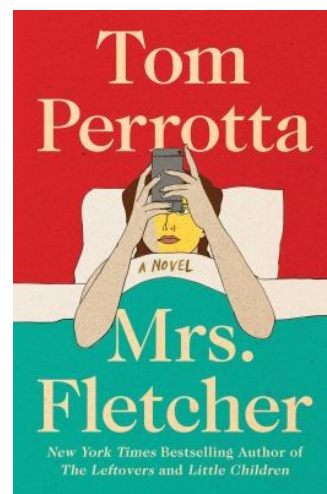
A strange Victorian tale of small village fears and superstitions. Is there a monster lurking in the fog and mist of Colchester? Add in a forbidden love story, a tragic case of consumption, religion, science, and feminism, and the result is intriguing.

My son called this audiobook "overwrought," but I loved performer Juanita McMahon's voice. Plus, the main character Cora, who wears men's clothes and tromps around in the bog studying nature, is certainly a woman ahead of her time. — Elizabeth

Mrs. Fletcher

By Tom Perrotta

Told from a variety of perspectives, Mrs. Fletcher follows the misadventures of a 46-year-old divorcee and her son, as the son adapts to college and the mom adapts to an empty nest.



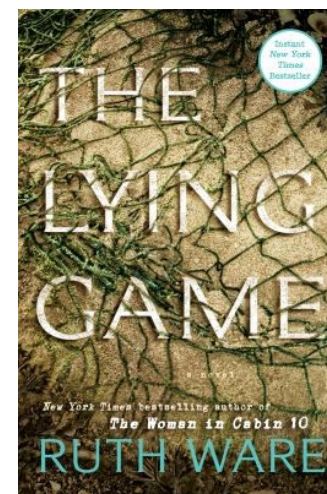
Perrotta (*Little children*, *Election*, and *The Leftovers*) returns with his first amusing, thought-provoking, character-driven novel in six years. As raunchy as it may be, it is far sweeter... and harder to put down. — Alan

The Lying Game

By Ruth Ware

The latest from the British mystery author of *In a Dark, Dark Wood* and *The Woman in Cabin 10* — this is another terrific thriller regarding teen best friends who carry a deadly secret into adulthood.

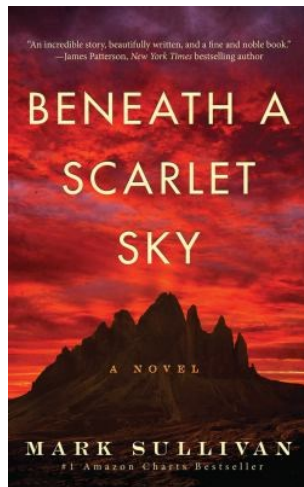
Chock full of twists and stunningly styled, *The Lying Game* is thrillingly engaging, especially as an audiobook performed by the incomparable Imogen Church. — Alan



ADULT FICTION

Beneath a Scarlet Sky

By Mark Sullivan



In 1940s Italy, teenager Pino Lella joins an underground railroad helping Jews escape over the Alps. He also falls for a beautiful widow and becomes the personal driver for one of the Third Reich's most powerful commanders.

This is a "can't put it down" book based on a true story. Totally loved it! — Leslie

Public Library and Other Stories

By Ali Smith

A paean both to the public library and the book, Scottish novelist Ali Smith's latest book blends true words from library lovers with short stories suffused with her trademark magical realism.



Ali Smith
author of *How to be both*
public library
and other stories

"Thank goodness for Ali Smith, for who else could write a short story collection about libraries and make it wild?" — *The Times (London)*

This book serves as a kind of literary activism. While it is known that Smith writes so beautifully, her reading of the audiobook is what really recommends this inspiring work. — Alan

ADULT GRAPHIC NOVELS

Motor Crush 01

By Brenden Fletcher

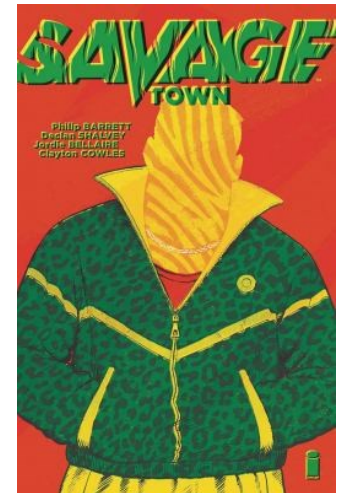
Domino Swift might be the best motorcycle racer alive, but her activity on the underground racing circuit is jeopardizing her official career. Domino's real trouble begins when she finds herself battling a gang over a mysterious illegal engine stimulant.

The Road Rash-style motorcycle racing would have been enough to get my interest, but the futuristic setting along with a slight Overdrive vibe to the artwork adds a layer of depth to the storytelling and completes the experience. — Zac



Savage Town

By Declan Shalvey



Jimmy Savage is a small time gangster in Ireland struggling to keep his small empire together with threats from outside, as well as from within.

The authentic-sounding dialogue brings this story to life and makes it more than just another gangster story. — Zac

ADULT NON-FICTION

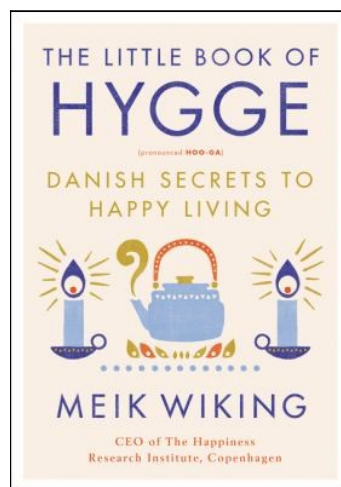
The Little Book of Hygge: Danish Secrets to Happy Living

By Meik Wiking

This book has recipes, decorating tips, and lifestyle advice about how the Danes incorporate *hygge* — meaning comfort or well-being — into their everyday lives, making them some of the happiest people in the world.

I really love all the information about making your home more comfortable and your lifestyle more relaxed in order to fully appreciate the important things in life such as family and friends.

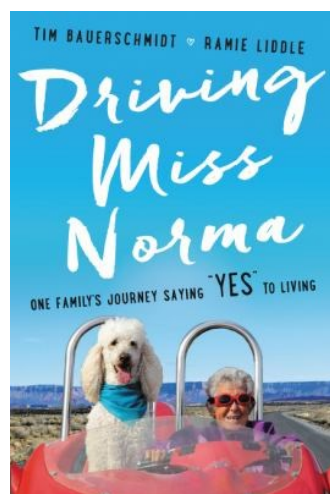
— Liz



Driving Miss Norma: One Family's Journey Saying "Yes" to Living

By Tim Bauerschmidt

Recently widowed nonagenarian Norma opts out of cancer treatment and goes on an adventure of a lifetime in an RV with her son, daughter-in-law, and a large poodle. This book



chronicles their journey and shares the warmth, wisdom, and kindness they encountered every step of the way.

Driving Miss Norma teaches us to embrace life and adventure. We are never too old to try new things. — Julie

The Magnolia Story

By Chip and Joanna Gaines



A husband and wife team shares their personal story, from humble beginnings to their current careers as home improvement experts and television personalities.

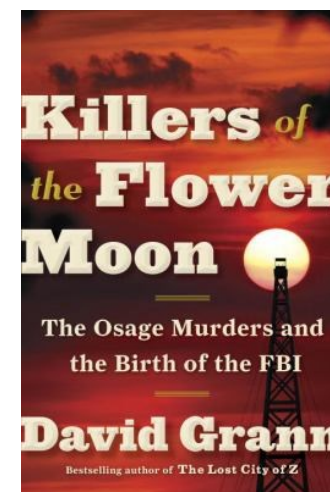
These two have a remarkably strong relationship, four kids, work really hard in all aspects of life, and are amazing at home remodel and design. This is a fascinating story that reveals the couple behind the popular TV show, *Fixer Upper*. — Margaret

Killers of the Flower Moon: the Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI

By David Grann

Osage Indians in Oklahoma were among the wealthiest people in America in the 1920s, thanks to the discovery of oil beneath their land. And then, one by one, dozens of tribal members were murdered, as were the local law enforcement officials who dared investigate the killings. The fledgling FBI picked up the case and bungled it badly.

This is one of the most chilling conspiracies in American history and a very good read. — Leslie

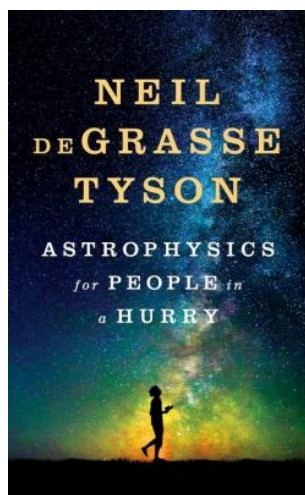


ADULT NON-FICTION

Astrophysics for People in a Hurry

By Neil deGrasse Tyson

What is the nature of space and time? How do we fit within the universe? How does the universe fit within us? Acclaimed astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson guides readers through these questions in this compact and contemplative guide to the cosmos.



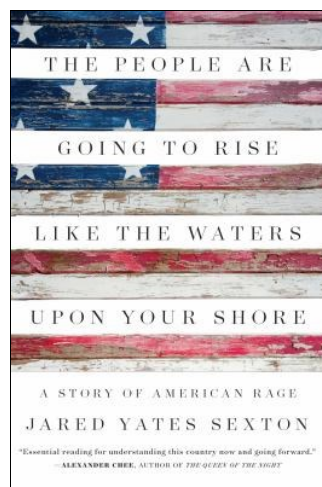
Tyson brings the universe down to earth succinctly and clearly, with sparkling wit, in tasty chapters consumable anytime and anywhere in your busy day.
— Leslie

The People Are Going to Rise Like the Waters Upon Your Shore: A Story of American Rage

By Jared Yates Sexton

Featuring in-the-field reports as well as deep analysis, Sexton's book is a sobering chronicle of our polarization and a firsthand account of the 2016 presidential election and the cultural forces that powered Trump's victory.

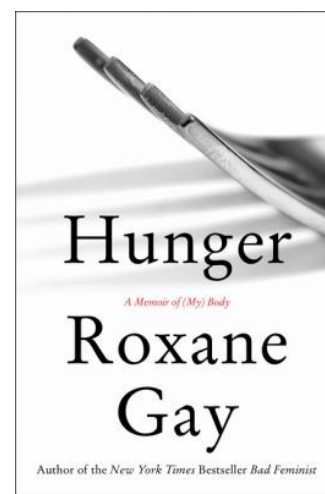
Sexton grapples with the lies, news, ugly debate, social media echo chambers...and tells us how we got here. One critic called it "A leftist counterweight to Hillbilly Elegy with shots of Hunter S. Thompson." — Alan



Hunger: A Memoir of (My) Body

By Roxane Gay

Roxane Gay delves into one of the most painful and deeply personal aspects of herself: her body. This is her story of how a major trauma

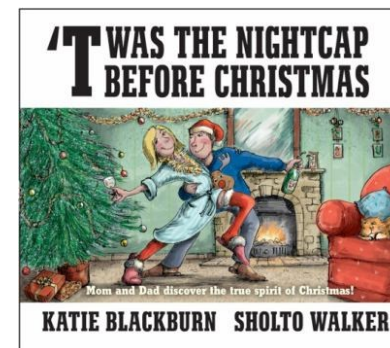


from her adolescence played out and manifested itself through her body.

This book touches on an issue that almost every woman can relate to in our country. Gay's honesty and vulnerability show the interrelatedness of trauma and disordered eating. — Serena

'Twas the Nightcap before Christmas

By Katie Blackburn, Sholto Walker



A new version of an old tale — absolutely adorable and relatable! Any parents who have been up until the wee hours of Christmas Eve will wonder why it took until now for someone to write this. I loved it, and can't wait to buy my own copy!

The story and artwork were both fun! — Linda

VIDEOS

Captain Underpants: the First Epic Movie

Directed by David Soren

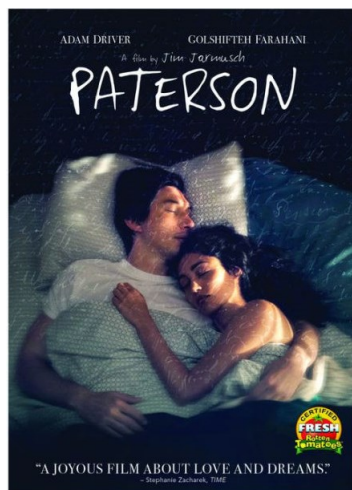
Two overly imaginative pranksters, George and Harold, hypnotize their principal so that he thinks he's a ridiculously enthusiastic, incredibly dimwitted superhero named Captain Underpants.



Tra-la-laaa! The funniest of kids' book series leaps to the screen! The adaptation is visually and thematically faithful, and quite hilarious. If naively crude humor is your thing, this is your movie.
— Alan

Paterson

Directed by Jim Jarmusch



Paterson is a bus driver in Paterson, New Jersey. His daily routine: driving his route, observing the city and overhearing fragments of conversation; writing poetry in a notebook; drinking one beer at his bar. And he loves his wife.

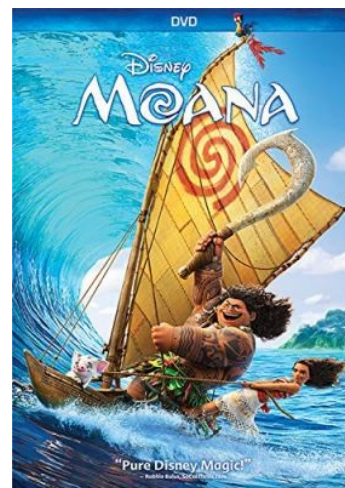
Paterson is a celebration of life. The creative impulses of the title character and his wife rest in us all. Jarmusch's style delights in the minutiae as well. A love story of man, his wife, art, city, and humanity in general. Utterly satisfying. — Alan

Moana

Directed by Ron Clements, John Musker

A young girl sails across the ocean to return the Heart of Te Fiti and save her island.

I loved Moana because it showed that girls do not have to wait around for someone to rescue



them. The musical numbers were amazing and heart-wrenching. Moana also told the story of a young girl following her heart.
— Feylin

Moonlight

Directed by Barry Jenkins

A young black man struggles to find his place in the world while growing up in a rough neighborhood of Miami.

This surprise best picture winner at the Academy Awards deserves all accolades and more. With sensitivity and sumptuous style, director Barry Jenkins explores issues of race, gender, class, and the difficult business of maturing.
— Alan



VIDEOS

La La Land

Directed by Damien Chazelle



A jazz pianist falls for an aspiring actress in Los Angeles. This original musical about everyday life explores the joy and pain of pursuing dreams.

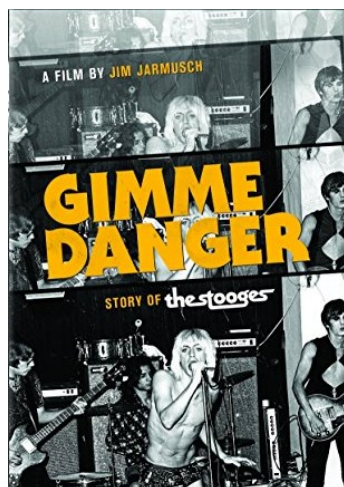
Ignore the haters, *La La Land*'s blend of hyper expressive routines (for when emotion becomes too big for mere words) and follow-your-dream plotline is not only a perfect merging of form and content, but also absolutely exhilarating. — Alan

Gimme Danger

Directed by Jim Jarmusch

An in-depth look at the legendary punk band, The Stooges.

Jim Jarmusch doesn't usually make documentaries, and there's never been a good film on the band that



started punk. So while this is not a perfect film, it's a long-overdue tribute to one of the greats, by a master filmmaker. — Alan

The Eagle Huntress

Directed by Otto Bell

A 13-year-old Mongolian girl becomes the first female Golden Eagle huntress following 12 generations of male relatives before her.

A truly amazing and gorgeous documentary of the strong and brave Aisholpan, a daughter in a family who have hunted small mammals using golden eagles for many generations. She is remarkable as the first female to become a huntress among her people. — Margaret



Chasing Shadows

Directed by Nelson Quan

Follow professional photographer Geoff Sims as he tracks and photographs solar eclipses.

I can't say it compares to the "real deal" like many experienced this past summer, but for those of us who missed it or didn't snag a photo, this film could be the next best thing. — Zac



VIDEOS

Fire at Sea

Directed by Gianfranco Rosi

Set on the once peaceful Lampedusa Island in the Mediterranean youthful innocence is portrayed through the life of an average 12-year-old boy, while just off its coast African refugees in overcrowded boats float under a scorching sun awaiting their fate.

This documentary's stark contrast was thought provoking and gave me a greater empathy for the refugee crisis. — Margo



JUVENILE FICTION

The Princess and the Page

By Christina Farley

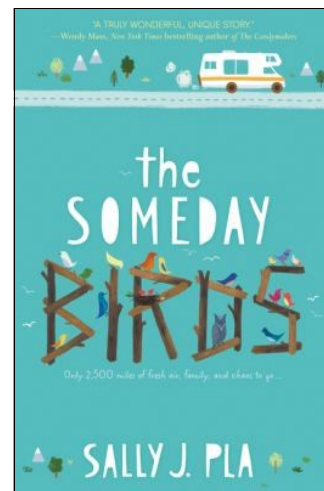
Keira used a magic pen to write a story and win a trip. Keira was mad at her mom, and wrote an "unhappily ever after" story. Now she has to try to change the story to save herself, her friend Bella, and her mom.



I really like fantasies and fairy tales, so this was a fun book. It had just enough twists and turns to keep me wondering what would happen next. — Linda

The Someday Birds

By Sally J. Pla



Charlie is a boy with autism and obsessive compulsive disorder who loves birds and struggles with life. He must leave the comforts of home on a road trip to see his father, a journalist who suffered brain injuries while on assignment in Afghanistan. Charlie, his siblings, and their caregiver set off on a mission in this road trip story about war, peace, birds, family, loss, and hope.

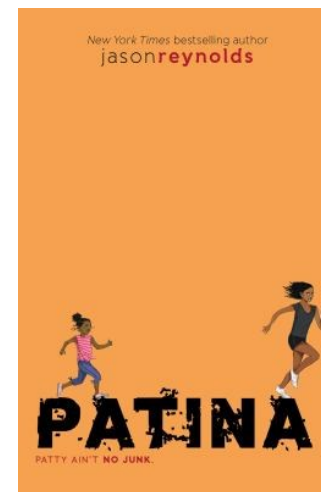
I picked up this book because I am a birder, and I love road trips. I stayed because the characters are all so real and human. — Julie

Patina

By Jason Reynolds

As a newbie to the track team, Patina "Patty" Jones must learn to rely on her family and teammates as she tries to outrun her personal demons.

Last year I recommended *Ghost*, about a boy trying to outrun his troubles. *Patina* is the second book in this series, and it focuses on his teammate. With too heavy



a burden for any person, Patty's story is heartfelt and well-written. Teamwork, trust, and friendship are key. — Andrea

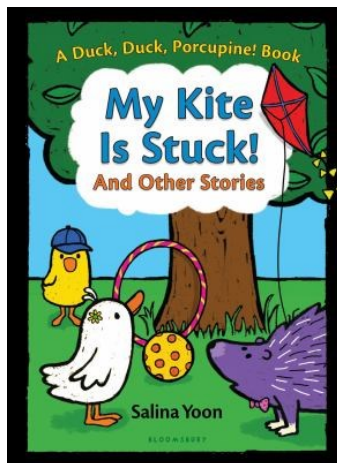
JUVENILE FICTION

My Kite is Stuck! and Other Stories

By Salina Yoon

Loud and in-charge Big Duck, quiet and clever Little Duck, and friendly and gentle Porcupine are back in another charming trio of stories.

This is a collection of stories for early readers, focusing on friendship and cooperation. The three characters' personalities



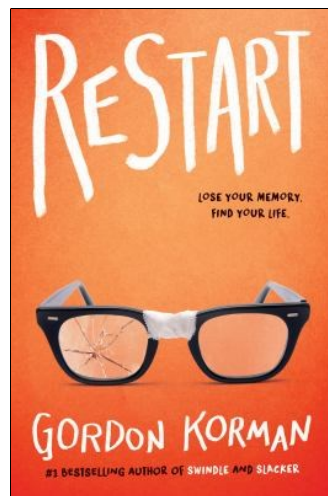
shine brighter than ever. I found myself laughing out loud while reading! — Andrea

Restart

By Gordon Korman

Chase does not remember falling and hitting his head, in fact he does not remember anything about himself. He begins to learn who he was through the reactions of the others — trouble is, he really is not sure he likes the Chase that is being revealed.

This book shows that it may not be too late to define who you are and who you will become. Korman does a beautiful job of creating plausible characters and laugh-out-loud scenes while dealing with the serious subject of bullying. — Andrea



The War I Finally Won

By Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

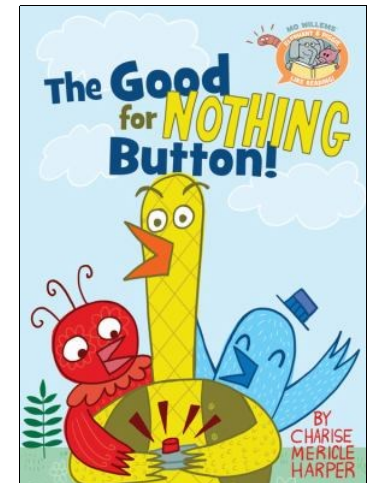
This is the sequel to *The War That Saved My Life*. Eleven-year-old Ada is still adapting to her new life during World War II.



These books would make a wonderful movie or television series, in the style of *Downton Abbey* or *Homefires*. — Julie

The Good For Nothing Button!

By Charise Harper



Yellow Bird has found a button and wants to share it with Red Bird and Blue Bird. This is just an ordinary button. It does not do anything when you press it. But, yes it does!

From the *Elephant and Piggie Love Reading* series, this easy reader is funny and fun. — Leslie

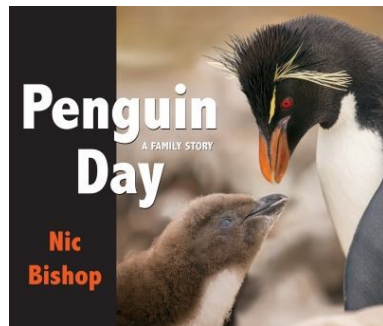
JUVENILE NON-FICTION

Penguin Day: A Family Story

By Nic Bishop

A story in photographs featuring a family of three Rockhopper penguins. The penguins are followed through a day in their life.

Beautifully photographed and accompanied by brief, concise text

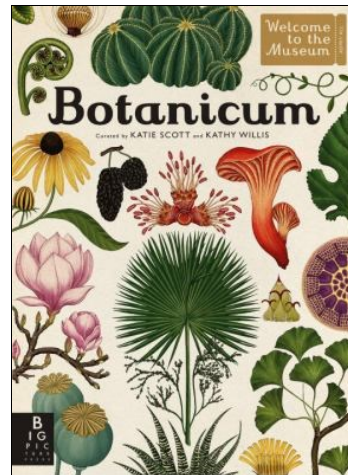


explaining how the mother penguin gets food for the baby and how the father penguin saves the baby from danger.

— Margaret

Botanicum

By Katie Scott, Kathy Willis



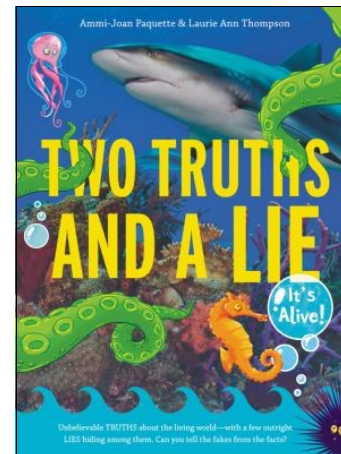
This book showcases dozens of full-color plants from around the world in a gallery format. Images are complemented by identifying information and brief descriptions.

This is a fascinating and gorgeous book. — Leslie

Two Truths and a Lie: it's Alive!

By Ammi-Joan Paquette, Laurie Ann Thompson

Each chapter presents three stories of truly bizarre and befuddling natural phenomena. The catch is: two stories are true and one is (mostly) make believe. Readers must use critical thinking



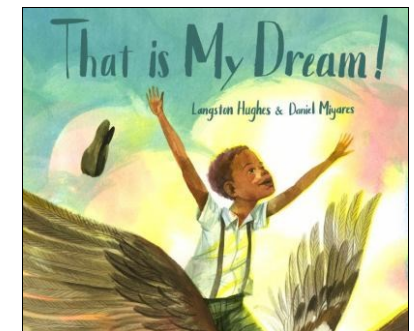
skills to figure out the truth. My son and I loved reading this together. We learned about many weird and intriguing things, and we enjoyed talking about why we thought each story was true or false. — Mindy

That is my dream! : a picture book of Langston Hughes's "Dream variation"

By Langston Hughes, Daniel Miyares

This picture book is an illustrated version of Langston Hughes's poem *Dream Variation*. A young boy lives the words written by Hughes, contrasting the boy's day in a segregated town with a day of true freedom from oppression.

This beautifully illustrated book does a masterful job presenting Hughes's vision. The message is delivered with subtlety, allowing discussion with a young reader to develop as the reader grows. — Jesse



JUVENILE PICTURE BOOKS

Emma and the Whale

By Julie Chase



Emma, a young girl with an affinity for the ocean, finds a baby whale beached on the shore and tries to save her.

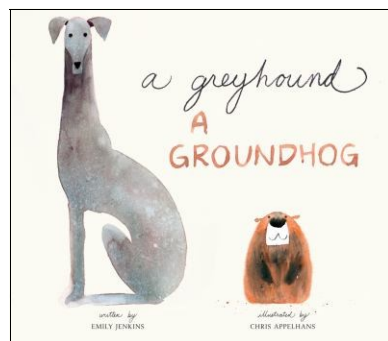
Absolutely beautiful painted illustrations adorn a touching tale of conservation and empowerment. Highly recommended. — Alan

A Greyhound, A Groundhog

By Emily Jenkins

A groundhog and a greyhound meet each other and decide to be friends as they play and run around together.

The words are slightly tongue twisty, and the unlikely friendship between these animals grabbed my attention. The illustrations are cute, simple and tell the story well. — Margaret



If I had a little dream

By Nina Laden

Children and parents alike will delight in the simple cadence of this whimsical book depicting a young child's dream wishes.

The swirly blue cover art and gold embossed lettering instantly attracted me. This wonderful story of a young child gives voice to universal dreams full of hope, joy, and contented relationships. I guarantee you will smile the whole way through! — Margo



Be Quiet!

By Ryan T. Higgins

A silly and fun picture book, with cartoonish mice discussing and writing a wordless book with funny dialog.



Such creativity and silliness, it made me giggle and laugh out loud. Another favorite to add to my list of special kids' books. — Margaret

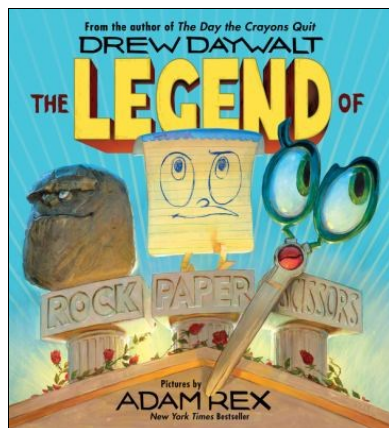
JUVENILE PICTURE BOOKS

The Legend of Rock, Paper, Scissors

By Drew Daywalt

From the Kingdom of the Backyard, Rock searches for an adversary that might best him, meanwhile Paper and Scissors set off on their own quests for competitors.

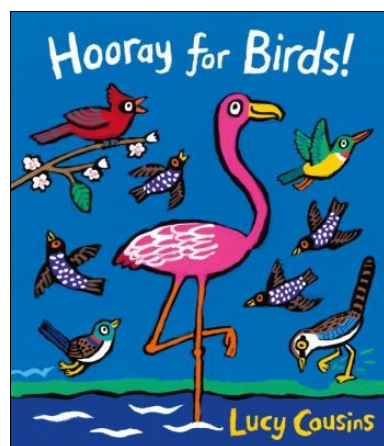
This hilarious picture book is from the author of *The Day the Crayons Quit*. It will entertain young ones and even elementary school age kids. — Leslie



Hooray for Birds

By Lucy Cousins

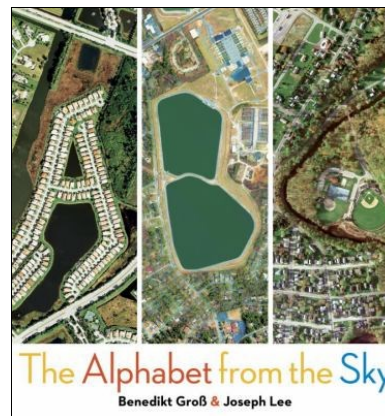
In an exuberant display of color, Lucy Cousins invites little ones to imagine themselves as brilliant birds. Birds of all feathers flock together in a fun, rhyme-filled offering by the creator of *Maisy*.



I love the artwork and the rhythm of the text. A wonderful picture book. — Leslie

The Alphabet from the Sky

By Benedikt Groß, Joey Lee



The whole family will be totally fascinated by this book! Using aerial photography, the authors ask you to identify accidentally or naturally occurring letters of the alphabet. Each photo is labeled with its location including latitude and longitude.

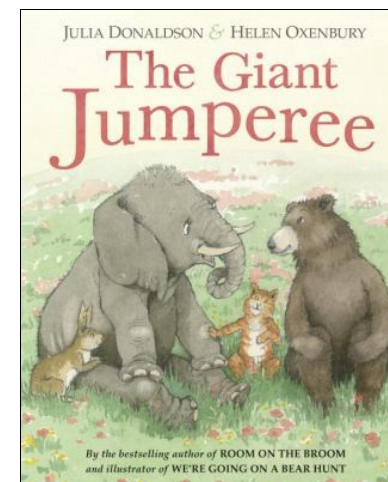
It's like a real life "Where's Waldo" with letters. Awesome! — Mona

The Giant Jumperee

By Julia Donaldson

There's something in Rabbit's burrow and all of his friends try to help him get it out.

I love this new picture book. It has everything going for it: animals, rhymes and a surprise ending. — Leslie



JUVENILE PICTURE BOOKS

Reach for the Moon, Little Lion

By Hildegard Muller

A little lion is teased by animals who tell him that real lions are so big that they can touch the moon with their paws, a claim that saddens the little lion until a wise raven helps him fool his tormentors.



Beautiful painted faux-naïve art that appeals to young eyes, a message of perseverance and pride, and minimalist poetry for the text. What's not to love?

— Alan

Now

By Antoinette Portis

With words and art that are simple, yet eloquent, this book illustrates how children feel their favorite thing is whatever they are doing at that exact moment. Or, in other words, now.

The art and the story are touching and sweet. — Mona

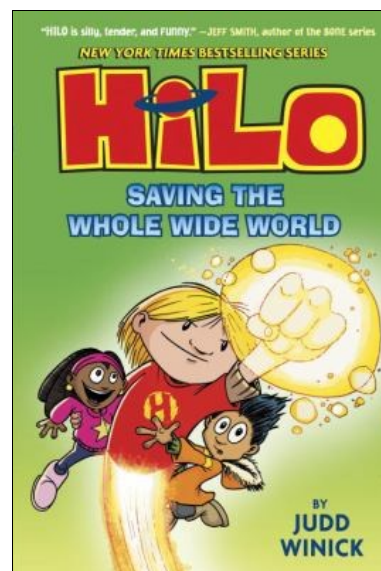


JUVENILE GRAPHIC NOVELS

Hilo 2: Saving the Whole Wide World

By Judd Winick

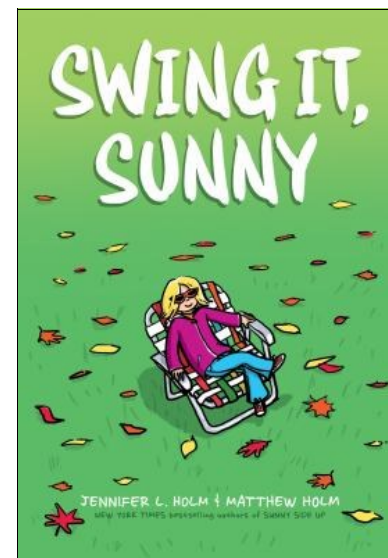
The extraterrestrial robot boy is back, with his human friends by his side. As usual, the adults have no clue Earth is about to be wiped out by beings from another dimension.



Funny dialog, running gags, puns, and visual humor will appeal to fans of *Captain Underpants*. Adults may appreciate that there is less potty talk than in Dav Pilkey's books. — Emily

Swing it, Sunny

By Jennifer Holm



Sunny is back, adjusting to life with her brother away at a strict military school. Letters and calls to her cool grandpa in Florida don't tell the entire truth. Her new neighbor is a great mentor who teaches her more than just flag twirling.

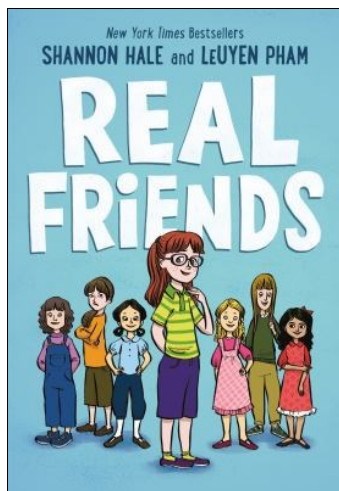
Set in the 1970s, Sunny and I have a shared past and present. But she is way cooler than I ever was. — Julie

JUVENILE GRAPHIC NOVELS

Real Friends

By Shannon Hale

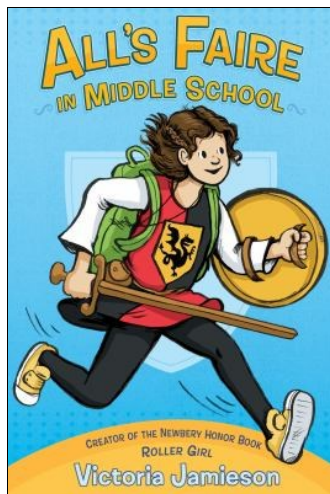
Calling all Raina Telgemeier fans! A young Shannon traverses the difficult friendships she has at school and home. Shannon learns about true friendship and what it means to be a friend.



I enjoyed this book for many reasons: the honest depiction of friendship between girls, the poignant yet imperfect relationships Shannon has at home and the integration of her Mormon upbringing. — Serena

All's Faire in Middle School

By Victoria Jamieson



Imogene has always been homeschooled, but this year she will go to middle school. Not only has she been homeschooled, but her family actively participates in the town's local Renaissance faire and refers to themselves as Rennies.

This story perfectly captures the difficulties of navigating friendship, bullying and popularity during the middle school years. — Serena

MUSIC

Last Place

By Granddaddy

Lo-fi analog synth-fuzz space group returns after a ten year hiatus with gorgeous tunes of protest and despair.

Jason Lytle plays and produces the entirety of *Last Place*, and



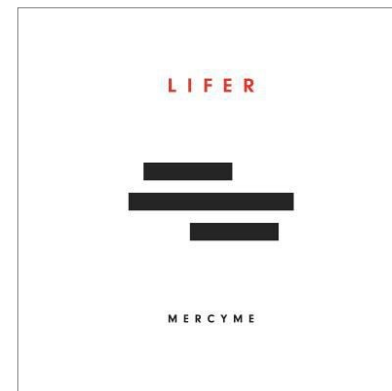
alongside his plaintive vocals, creates such sonic beauty and complexity that lines like "I just moved here, and / I don't want to live here anymore" go down easy. — Alan

Lifer

By MercyMe

This album is a variety of upbeat songs, like "Lifer" and "Happy Dance" mixed with hauntingly beautiful songs such as "Hello Beautiful" and "Ghost," and the hit song "Even If."

The tempo, harmonies, and affirming lyrics had me playing this CD over and over. — Margo



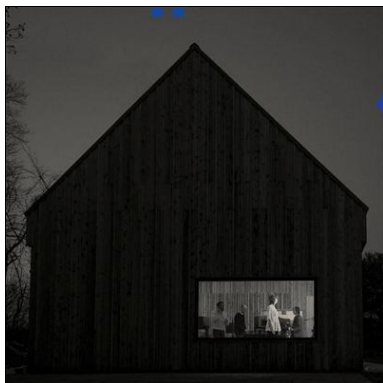
MUSIC

Sleep Well Beast

By The National

This is The National's seventh album and it is one of their best. The songs touch on the challenges of existence in our daily lives and how we endure.

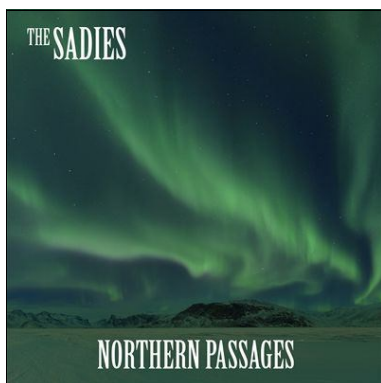
The lyrics, the sounds and the voice of lead singer Matt Berninger draw me to this album again and again. — Serena



Northern Passages

By The Sadies

Recorded in a home basement in Toronto over the winter of 2015, the familiar surroundings and lack of distractions resulted in an album with a consistent feel from the

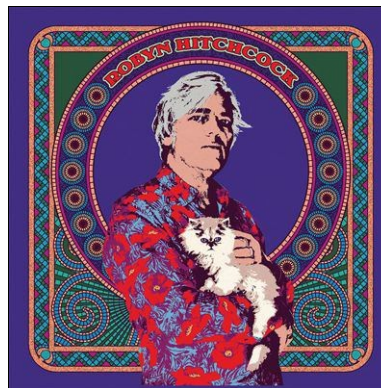


Sadies. Kurt Vile also makes an appearance.

The Good brothers have been cranking out Byrds-tinged garage alt-country rock for over 20 years in backing Neko Case, Jon Langford, and others, but this solo recording is the pure magic of their live performance captured. True lightning in a bottle! — Alan

Robyn Hitchcock

By Robyn Hitchcock



Masterful psychedelic pop/rock gems from the master himself.

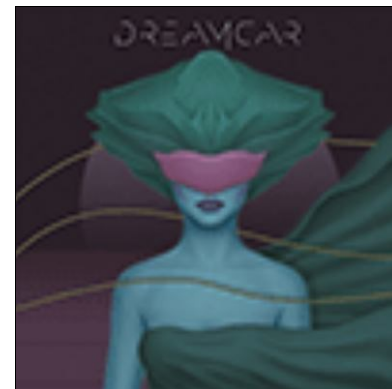
Infectious, clever, catchy and amusing. — Ron

Dreamcar

By Dreamcar

80s New Wave synth pop from the present!

It's nice to see synth pop making a comeback. — Ron



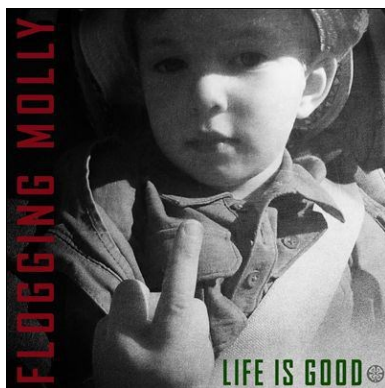
MUSIC

Life Is Good

By Flogging Molly

Celtic punk at its best.

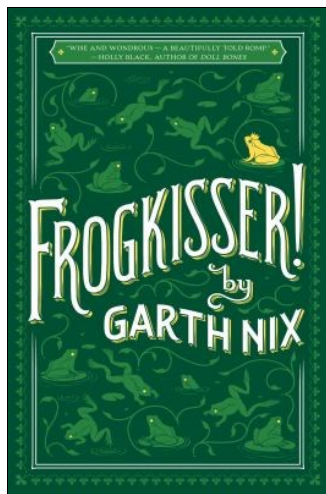
Nice combination of aggressive and catchy music. — Ron



YOUNG ADULT FICTION

Frogkisser!

By Garth Nix



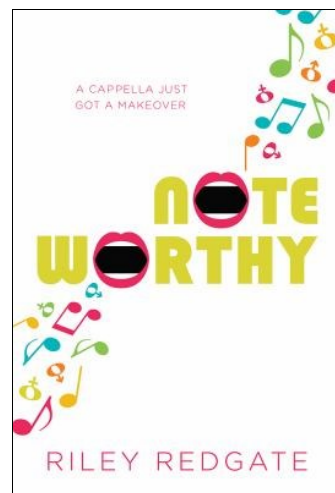
Princess Anya is an orphan and second in line to the throne. Her stepstepfather is an evil wizard, the frog population in the moat is growing, and visiting princes keep vanishing. The royal dogs send Anya on a quest for a potion to reverse her stepstepfather's spells.

A bitingly funny fractured fairy tale that doesn't take itself too seriously and even pokes gentle fun at the genre. — Emily

Noteworthy

By Riley Redgate

After learning that her deep voice is keeping her from being cast in plays at her exclusive performing arts school, Jordan Sun, junior, disguises herself as a boy and auditions for an all-male octet hoping for a chance to perform internationally.



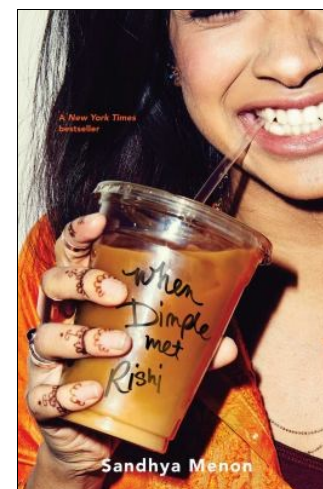
What I thought would be a quick romp or just a comedy of errors was surprisingly insightful and at times a total gut-punch. As they discovered and explored new truths about themselves, these characters kept me up all night reading. — Carol

When Dimple Met Rishi

By Sandhya Menon

When Dimple Shah and Rishi Patel meet at a Stanford University summer program, Dimple is avoiding her parents' obsession with "marriage prospects," but Rishi hopes to woo her into accepting arranged marriage with him.

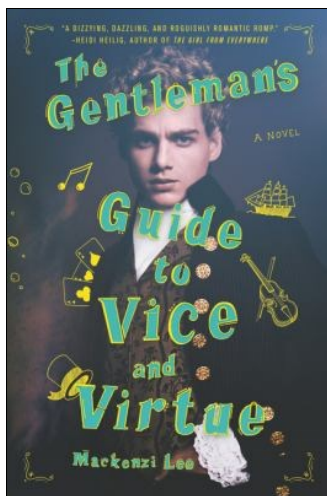
The best romantic comedy of the summer, and also a book I want to read over and over again. Adorable, quirky, and full of heart: this book will have you cheering out loud, and maybe swooning. Fantastic debut from a talented new Indian-American voice. — Carol



YOUNG ADULT FICTION

The Gentleman's Guide to Vice and Virtue

By Mackenzi Lee

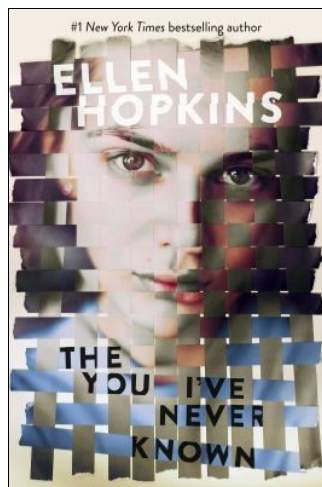


A historical action/adventure/comedy/romance. When a reckless decision turns his Grand Tour of Europe into a harrowing manhunt, it calls into question everything Monty knows, including his relationship with the boy he adores.

Spoiler: Monty is completely horrible for the first couple hundred pages (the vice). Get through it and be rewarded with his redemption story (the virtue)! Monty's struggle with being bisexual in a time that doesn't allow for it made me cry and cheer. — Carol

The You I've Never Known

By Ellen Hopkins



Plenty of drama and dysfunction, along with strong characters, keep readers engrossed. A parallel story of a woman and her troubled marriage sometimes seemed out of place until the stories intertwine. — Elizabeth

The Whole Thing Together

By Ann Brashares

A summer house is carefully shared by a bitterly divided family, assuring the two groups never meet. Ray and Sasha, both children of second marriages, take turns occupying a room, and for many years have wondered about each other.

You know they are going to meet up, you can't wait for it to happen, but how and when, and what will they think of each other? The anticipation coupled with a compelling story of family love, hate, and the possibility of healing make for a great read.

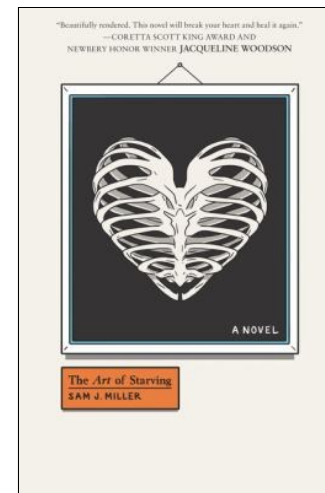
— Elizabeth



The Art of Starving

By Sam Miller

Sixteen-year-old Matt is gay and friendless in a small, backward town. To add to that misery, his beloved sister has just left mysteriously, his mom may lose her job, and he has a serious eating disorder. He believes starving enhances his perceptions.



While things are looking pretty bad for Matt, he finds love in the most unexpected place. Despite major struggles, I felt strangely hopeful for his outcome.

— Elizabeth

YOUNG ADULT FICTION

Midnight at the Electric

By Jodi Lynn Anderson

Before Adri launches on a one-way trip to the experimental Mars colony, she's told to say her goodbyes and find closure. As an orphan who never knew her family, she assumes this won't be necessary. She is wrong.

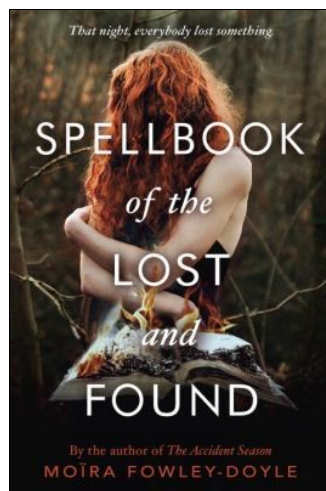
This story combines two of my favorite genres in one book: sci-fi and historical fiction. Adri meets a long-lost cousin and discovers letters and diaries from pioneering young women in the early 1900s.
— Emily



Spellbook of the Lost and Found

By Moira Fowley-Doyle

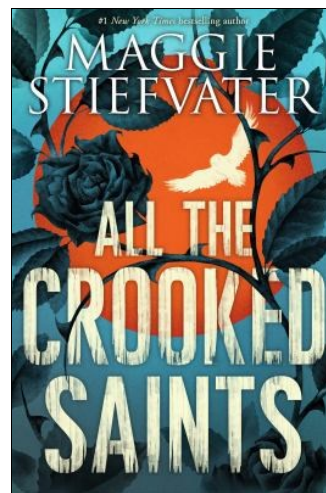
Six teenagers from a small town in Ireland are having a typical summer. Drunken parties. Hooking up. Breaking up. The discovery of a spell book and mysterious pages from a stranger's journal turns everything upside down.



Untwisting this story is like unraveling a tangled mass of yarn. The middle must be unknotted to figure out the end and the beginning. — Emily

All the Crooked Saints

By Maggie Stiefvater



On a desolate ranch, there lives a saint. It's a strange place, where pilgrims receive the miracle they deserve, not necessarily the miracle they want. The teens growing up on the ranch start a pirate radio station, hoping for a miracle of their own.

Set in the early 1960s, the author weaves together strands of folklore, fable, legend, and historical fiction. The language and imagery is reminiscent of authors such as Clive Barker, Tom Robbins, Terry Pratchett and Neil Gaiman. — Emily

One of Us is Lying

By Karen M. McManus

When the creator of a high school gossip app mysteriously dies in front of four high-profile students, all four become suspects. It's up to them to solve the case.



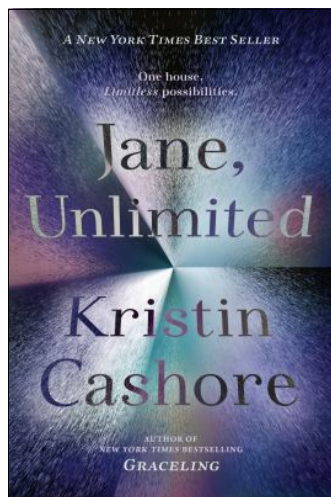
Part *Breakfast Club*, part Agatha Christie, part *Gossip Girl*, this ridiculously entertaining whodunit will keep you guessing to the end. The audiobook is especially well-performed by an ensemble cast. — Alan

YOUNG ADULT FICTION

Jane, Unlimited

By Kristin Cashore

It begins like a traditional "orphan sent to grand manor house, discovers mystery" story. But this one has five endings. Did one ending actually happen? Or did all of them?



The five scenarios touch on just about every genre: contemporary realism, romance, mystery, fantasy, and science fiction. But with a twist or two. — Emily

The Hate U Give

By Angie Thomas

Starr Carter lives in two worlds: the underserved neighborhood she lives in and the affluent prep school she attends. These worlds clash when Starr is the sole witness to the death of an old friend, an unarmed young black man shot by the police.

Thomas has written a book that is both timely and compelling. Starr Carter's narrative gives the reader an important view into the life of a young black woman navigating a treacherous world. — Jesse



YOUNG ADULT GRAPHIC NOVELS

One-Punch Man Vols 10, 11, 12

By ONE

The mis-adventures of the "hero for fun" keep getting better with each volume, and the overall story arc across volumes is finally starting build beyond Saitama questing for recognition as the world's greatest hero.

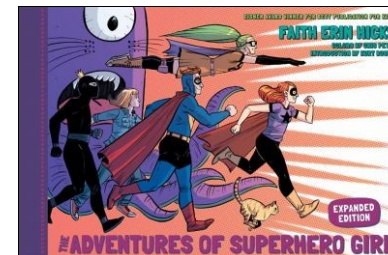
I can't stop giggling at the contrast of unassuming Saitama's



appearance and his overwhelming strength. The development of top-level nemeses in these later volumes rewards returning readers and makes now the best time to start this series! — Zac

The Adventures of Superhero Girl

By Faith Erin Hicks



In this new expanded edition based off of a web series, this comic follows Superhero Girl, a young woman with extraordinary powers and extraordinarily annoying problems, from her all-too-perfect brother to incompetent nemeses AND BEYOND!

Superhero Girl's adventures are clever, hilarious, and delightfully illustrated. This book does an incredible job of capturing both the wonderful silliness of many superhero stories and the crippling angst of teenage life. — Jesse

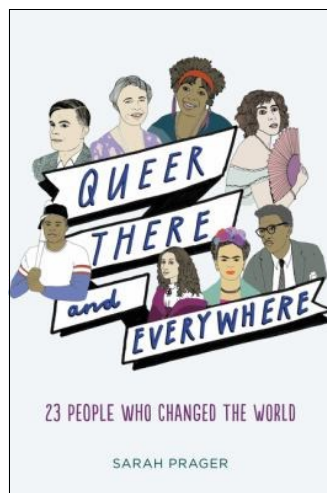
YOUNG ADULT NON-FICTION

Queer, There, and Everywhere: 23 People Who Changed the World

By Kristin Cashore

This book is a collection of 23 mini-biographies of LGBTQ people throughout history, including a Roman Emperor, a First Lady, artists, actors, and many more. Perfect for activist, allies, and anyone curious about hidden history.

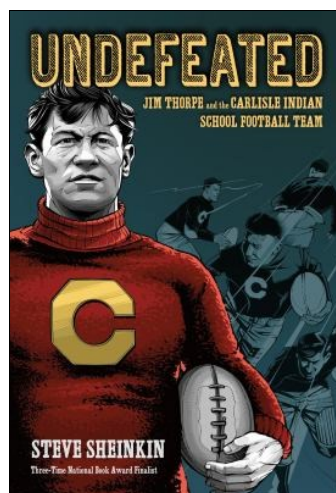
Many of these stories are inspiring



accounts of public figures who were out and helped shape their time, but I was even more delighted to learn more about the surprising private lives of well-known individuals. — Jesse

Undeclared : Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football team

By Steve Sheinkin



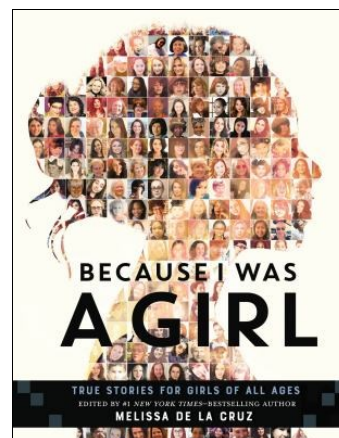
Jim Thorpe and Pop Warner are two towering figures of the sports world. This book finds them before they were household names, when Thorpe, a young Native American, and Warner revolutionized football and humbled the sport's powerhouse teams.

Sheinkin manages to weave an incredible underdog sports story together with an account of the unforgivably shameful ways Native Americans have been maltreated by the United States. — Jesse

Because I was a Girl: True Stories for Girls of All Ages

Edited by Melissa De La Cruz

This volume features nearly forty stories told by successful women between the ages of 10 and 87. By taking the reader on their journeys, these incredible figures reveal their thoughts as they overcame obstacles to achieve great things.



These accounts are fascinating, inspiring and include impactful figures with lesser known stories. I also love the presentation of this volume, with full page quotes, beautiful photos, and decade by decade summaries of important achievements by women. — Jesse

A Dog in the Cave: The Wolves Who Made Us Human

By Kay Frydenborg

Frydenborg dives deep into the thousand plus year relationship between canines and humans, exploring not just how humans have influenced the evolution of the dog, but also how dogs have slowly changed us.

As a dog lover, it was fascinating to gain insight into our shared history with canines. Frydenborg also does a masterful job connecting the distant past to our current dynamic with these animals, showing how our relationship evolved along with us. — Jesse

