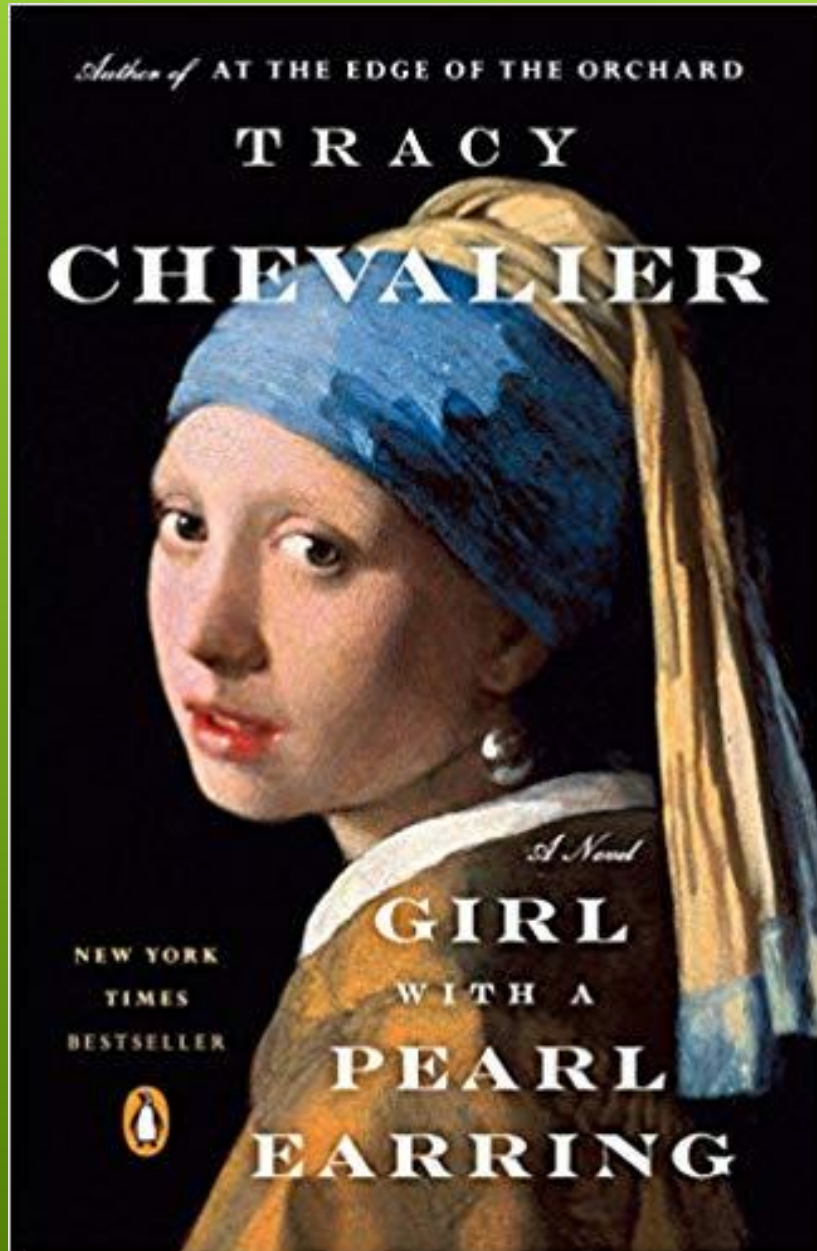


Collingswood High School Summer Reading

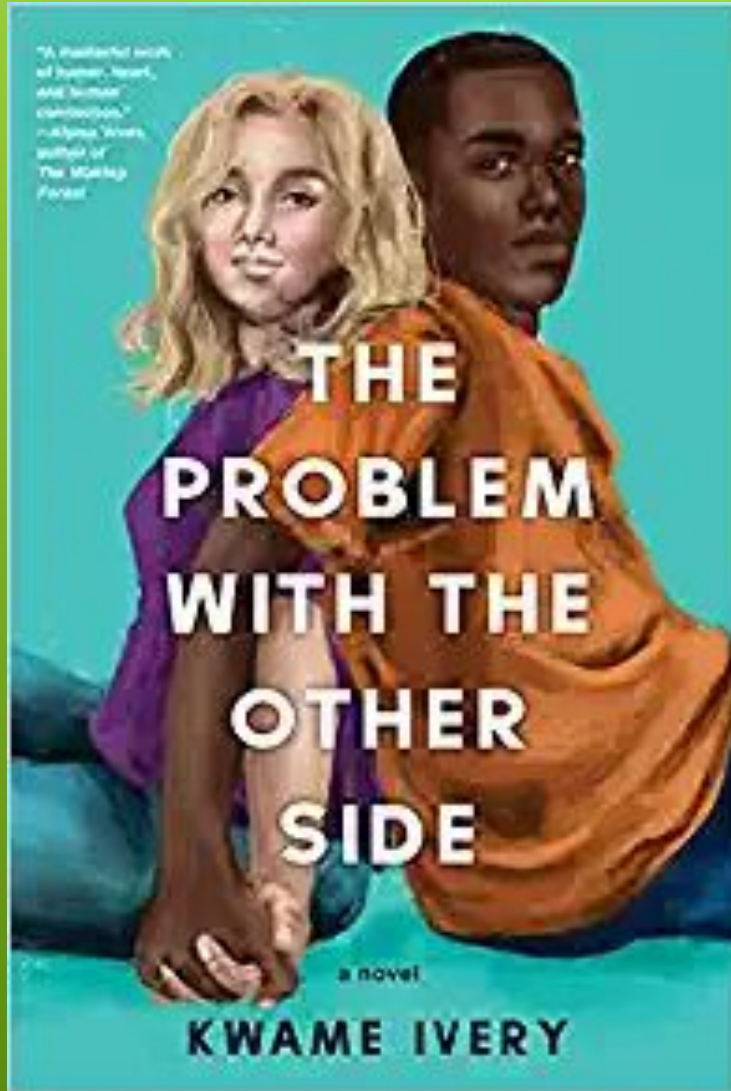


2023



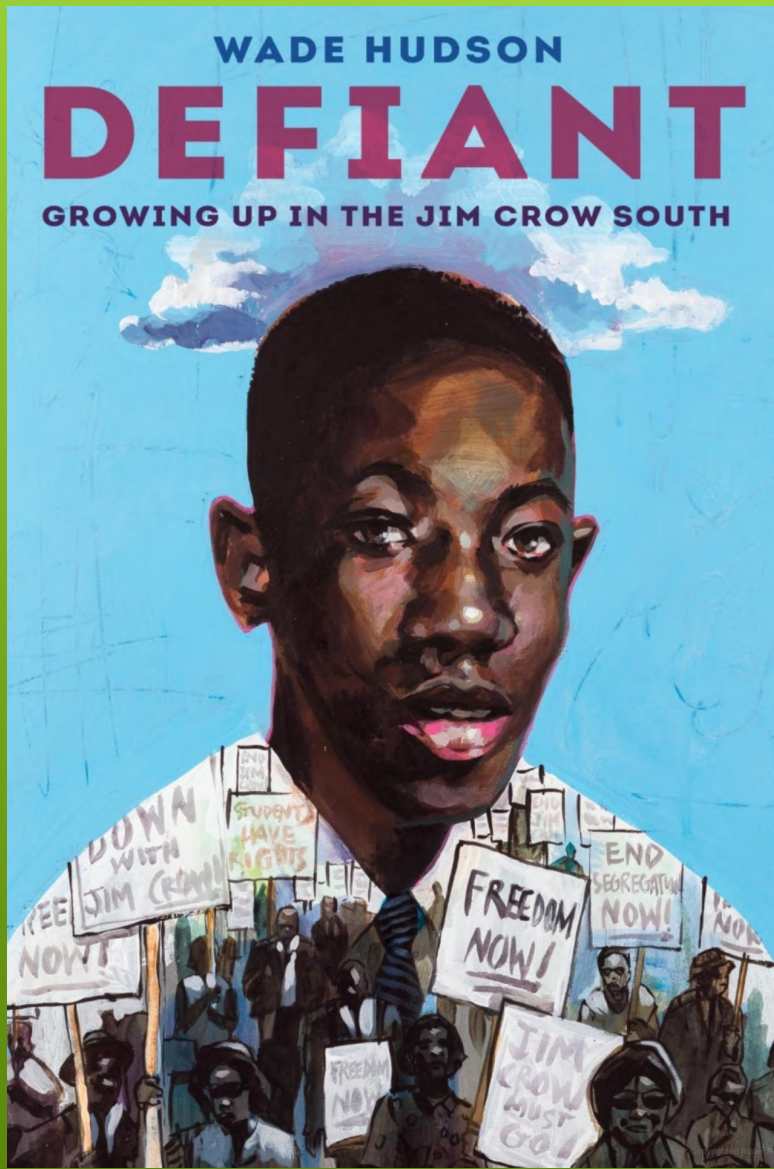
A fictional account of how the Dutch artist Vermeer painted his masterpiece. In this splendid novel, the girl in the painting is Griet, the 16-year-old servant of the Vermeer household. The relationship between her and Vermeer is elusive. Is she more than a model? Is she merely an assistant? Is the artist's interest exaggerated in her eyes? The details found in this book bring 17th-century Holland to life. Everyday chores are described so completely that readers will feel Griet's raw, chapped hands and smell the blood-soaked sawdust of the butcher's stall. They will never view a Dutch painting again without remembering how bone, white lead, and other materials from the apothecary shop were ground, and then mixed with linseed oil to produce the rich colors. YAs will also find out how a maid from the lower class, whose only claim to pearls would be to steal them, becomes the owner of the earrings.

- Lexile - 770
- Age range - 14+
- Fiction: AP Art History



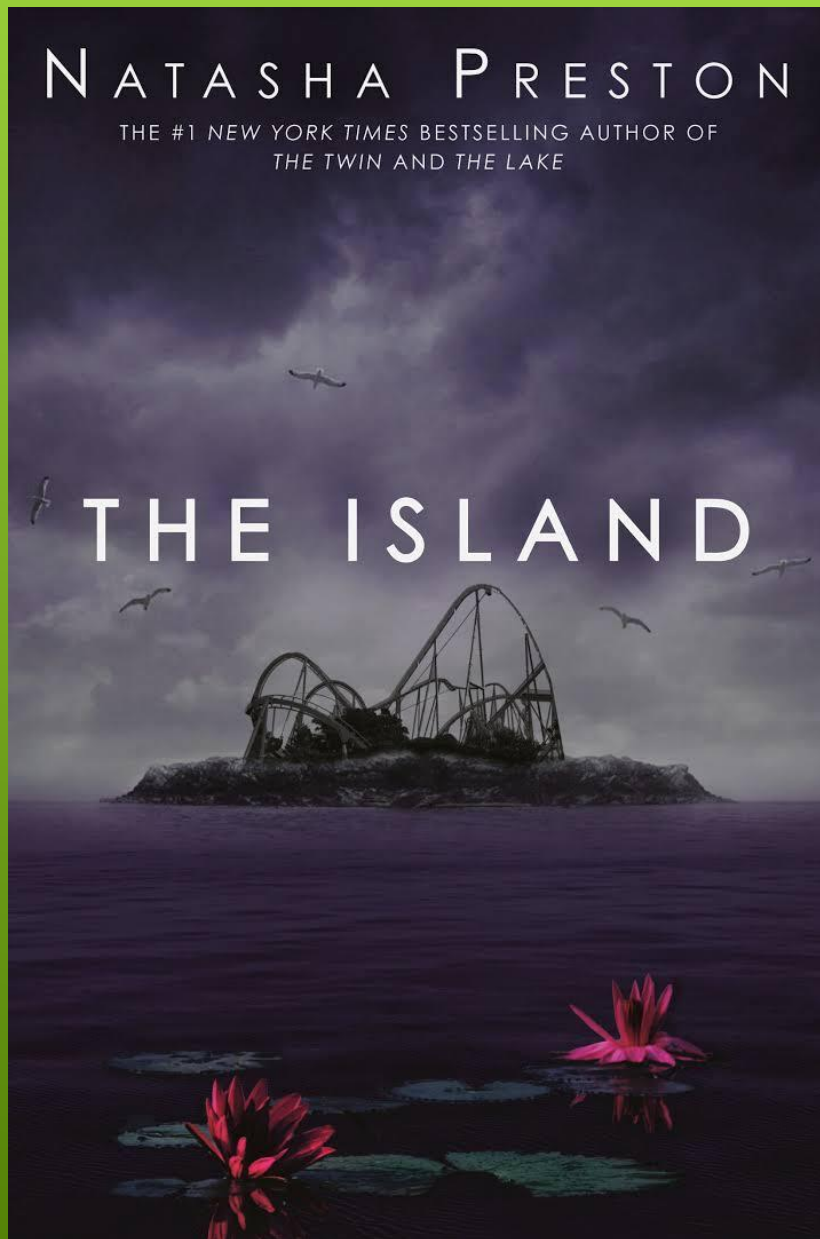
A racially charged school presidential election leads to disaster on inauguration day for the students of Knight High School. Ulysses Gates, a Black teenager, and Sallie Walls, a white teenager, meet while acting in a play and quickly fall in love. What starts as a dream quickly turns into a nightmare as both of their sisters make them their respective campaign managers in the election for school president. The primary objective of Sallie's sister Leona's campaign is to block the Black and Latinx students from the neighboring town from coming to Knight High School as they have for the past 40 years. Ulysses's sister, Regina, aims to combat racism in the school and have everyone feel like they belong. As the campaign intensifies, Ulysses and Sallie wonder if their love can survive in an atmosphere of hate. Hate speech, gun violence, and racism are not shied away from in the work. Knight High School is a microcosm for a variety of issues found in the real world. An author's note prefacing the book states that the story was written as a way to process the events of the 2016 presidential election. A romance that raises uncomfortable yet very necessary questions, this is an excellent book for discussion and purchase in young adult collections. (authored by one of our English teachers)

- Lexile - Unknown
- Age range - 16+
- Fiction: Social Awareness, Romance



In this absorbing, conversational memoir, writer and cofounder of Just Us Books Hudson (b. 1946) begins in media res, starting with his jailing over fabricated evidence “a little more than five years” after moving from Mansfield, La., to attend Southern University in Baton Rouge, where he and fellow community activists attempt to “deal with conditions in the Black community caused principally by racism and discrimination.” From there, Hudson jumps further back to his youth, detailing childhood “shenanigans” with his close-knit family as well as personal reflections on significant events, such as how the successes of Jackie Robinson and other Black athletes encouraged Black youth to consider sports stardom a viable dream. The colloquial narrative effectively offers a glimpse into a segregated civil rights–era Southern experience, while gently surveying figures in Hudson’s community. On his father serving in WWII, Hudson writes gracefully, “My father had risked his life for democracy, but, for him, freedom remained just a stale hope, a wishful thought, an unfulfilled dream.” Adroitly providing cultural references and historical context, Hudson traces his life through young adulthood, discussing his education and involvement in the civil rights movement within a powerful framework and conclusion.

- Lexile - 875
- Age range - 15+
- Non-Fiction: Memoir



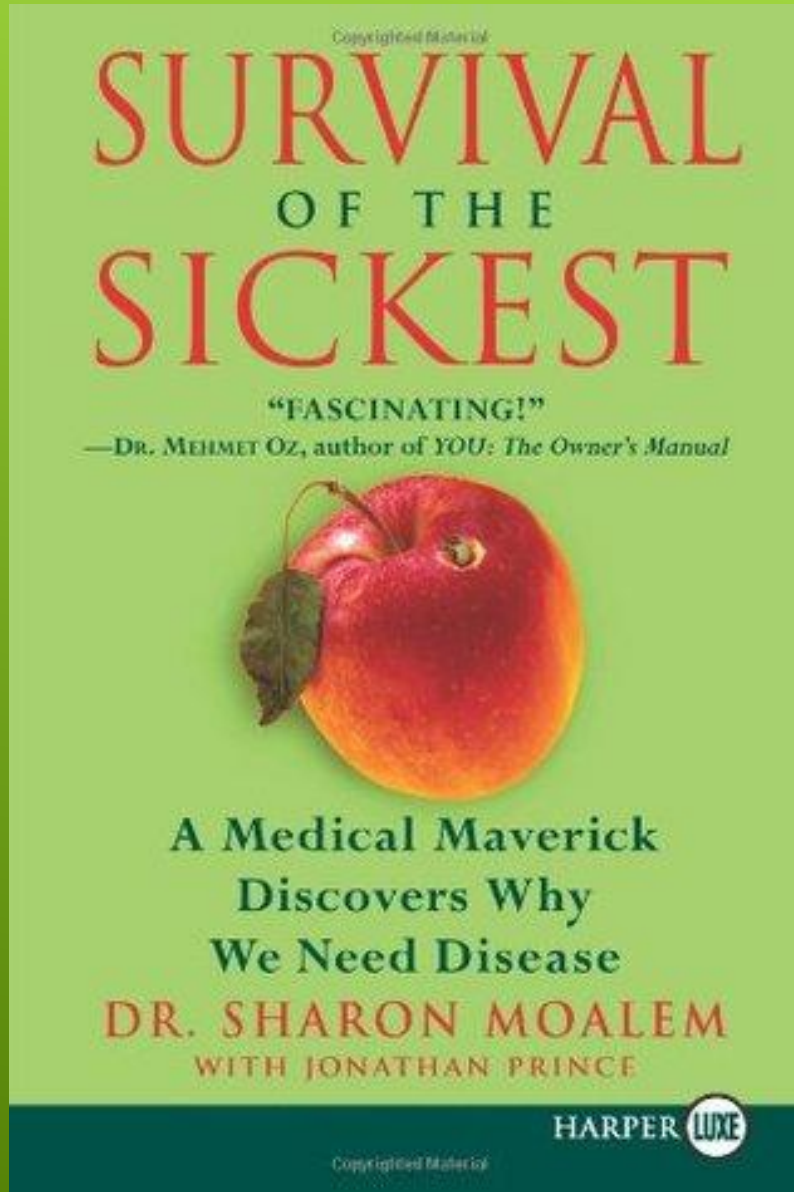
A gothic-inspired theme park on a remote island serves as the eerie setting of this high-octane thriller by Preston (*The Fear*). Sixteen-year-old true crime vlogger Paisley, alongside five other teen social media influencers, is invited to an exclusive first look at a new amusement park situated on an artificially built island. Upon arrival, the teens meet the island's eccentric billionaire owner Malcolm, a seemingly gracious host, who requests that they post about their visit for their respective online followings. Though the park itself is jam-packed with exciting rides, there are few staff members to be found, prompting Paisley to feel uneasy. With a storm approaching, Paisley realizes that Will, one of the influencers, has gone missing; the only boat off the island has disappeared; and cell service is mysteriously jammed. When Will's slashed corpse is found in an ice cream cart, Paisley and the rest of the attendees must work together to ensure collective survival. Though the premise is standard fare, Preston utilizes the uniqueness of the human-made island setting to great effect, providing an impish playfulness to the steadily escalating stakes and body count. Most characters cue as white; one influencer and an island employee are Black.

- Lexile - Unknown
- Age range - 13+
- Fiction: Thriller



The magic happens here on every page, the perfection personified by debut author/artist Nguyen's autobiographical homage to the infinite power of storytelling. The opening page ingeniously distinguishes three interwoven narratives with three color palettes: red is the urgent now, about young Tin and his mother learning to communicate through the language of fairy tales when difficult conversations can't yet be uttered; brown is the older past, of Tin's mother's cleaving journey from war-torn Vietnam to become a U.S. citizen; blue are the stories we tell to help understand, shape, and even save our very lives. Tin has a secret he desperately needs to declare, especially to his mother, but she's suddenly called back to Vietnam when her own mother dies. Three parallel stories bind the generations together: mother and son read aloud Alera, a Cinderella-esque story of cross-dressing true love; mother-in-mourning and her elderly aunt recall the fairy godparent-like magic fish; mother-returned and son-in-waiting share a different magic fish, a voiceless mermaid who learns to speak through dance. Such are the stories that will reveal the truth.

- Lexile - 400
- Age range - 13+
- Fiction: Graphic Novel, LGBTQ+



Joining the ranks of modern myth busters, Dr. Sharon Moalem turns our current understanding of illness on its head and challenges us to fundamentally change the way we think about our bodies, our health, and our relationship to just about every other living thing on earth. Through a fresh and engaging examination of our evolutionary history, Dr. Moalem reveals how many of the conditions that are diseases today actually gave our ancestors a leg up in the survival sweepstakes. But *Survival of the Sickest* doesn't stop there. It goes on to demonstrate just how little modern medicine really understands about human health, and offers a new way of thinking that can help all of us live longer, healthier lives.

- Lexile - Unknown
- Age range - 16+
- Non-Fiction: AP Biology

#1 New York Times bestselling author of the Three Dark Crowns series

KENDARE BLAKE



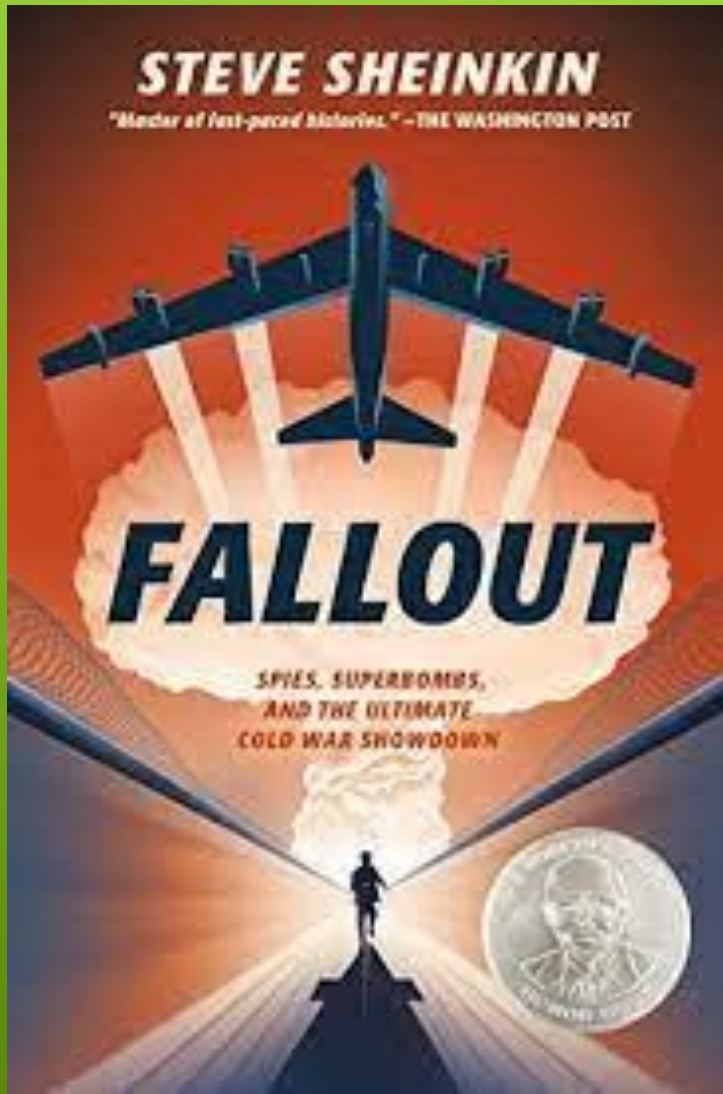
Through an assured voice and a vividly wrought small-town atmosphere, Blake (the Three Dark Crowns series) swiftly draws readers into this tense historical thriller inspired by a real-life murder spree. In the summer of 1958, the Bloodless Murders, so dubbed for the string of human victims found drained of their blood, strikes fear in the Midwest. When the bodies of the Carlson family are discovered in Black Deer Falls, Minn., there's a break in the case in the form of Marie Catherine Hale, 15 and white, who's found covered in blood at the scene of the crime. As the public pressure for answers mounts, Marie—in custody at the local jail—will only speak with 17-year-old Michael Jensen, a white aspiring journalist who's also the sheriff's son. After she offers up an impossible-seeming explanation, truth-obsessed Michael must determine whether she's being honest or exploiting his trust in her. Though the duo's taut back-and-forth can feel repetitive, the prosecutor's push to try Marie in a state where she's eligible for the death penalty keeps the stakes high throughout this well-crafted mystery for fans of *In Cold Blood* and *None Shall Sleep*.

- Lexile - 775
- Age range - 15+
- Fiction: Thriller



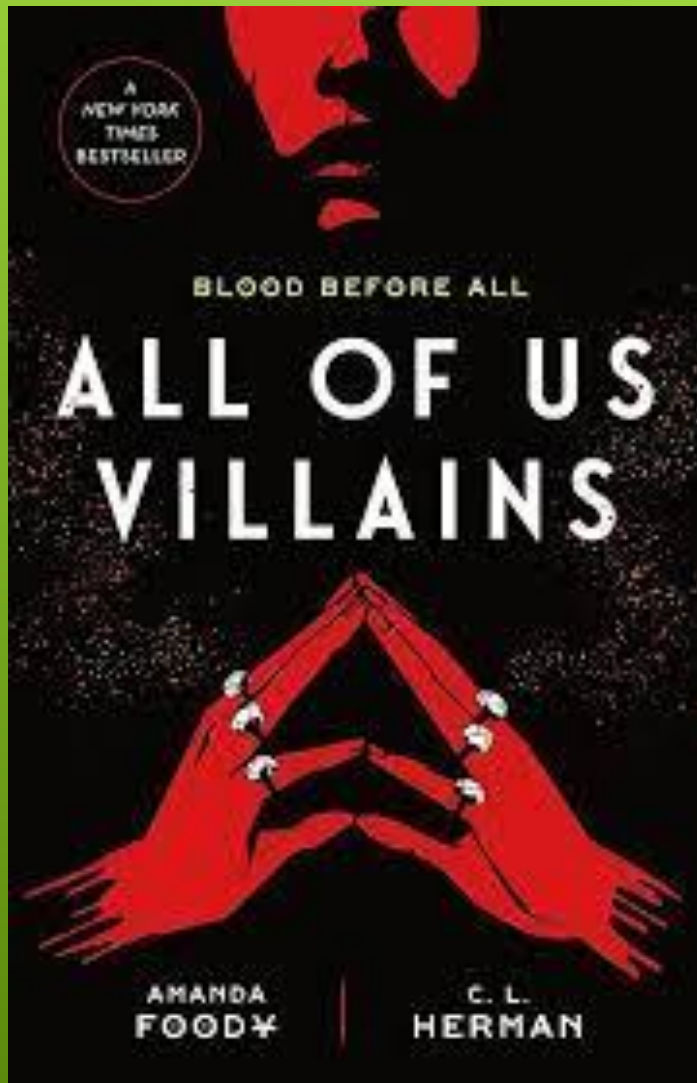
A week after graduating from high school, Quinn Berkowitz is unsure what to do with her life. Quinn's Jewish family runs a wedding planning business in Seattle called Borrowed + Blue, and they assume that, after earning a business degree in college, she will join them. For years, Quinn has gone along with this, partly because she wonders whether leaving the business would mean losing her connection to her parents and her sister, Asher, who sometimes feel more like colleagues than family. But her future career isn't the only thing Quinn is confused about. Working at weddings all summer means that she will be in constant contact with Tarek Mansour, the Egyptian American son of her parents' favorite caterers. Before he left for college, Quinn sent Tarek an email confessing that she had a crush on him—an email he never answered. Although Quinn tells herself that they were never meant to be—Tarek is a hopeless romantic whereas she doesn't believe in love—her feelings won't go away. As the summer progresses, Quinn must make some tough choices about her future, her family, and a boy who might very well be her first love. Quinn's narratorial voice is engaging and clever, deftly balancing humor and sincerity, and her OCD is woven naturally into a story with characters who are layered enough to keep readers interested. An entertaining romance that explores deeper themes of trust and expectations.

- Lexile - 790
- Age range - 16+
- Fiction: Mental health



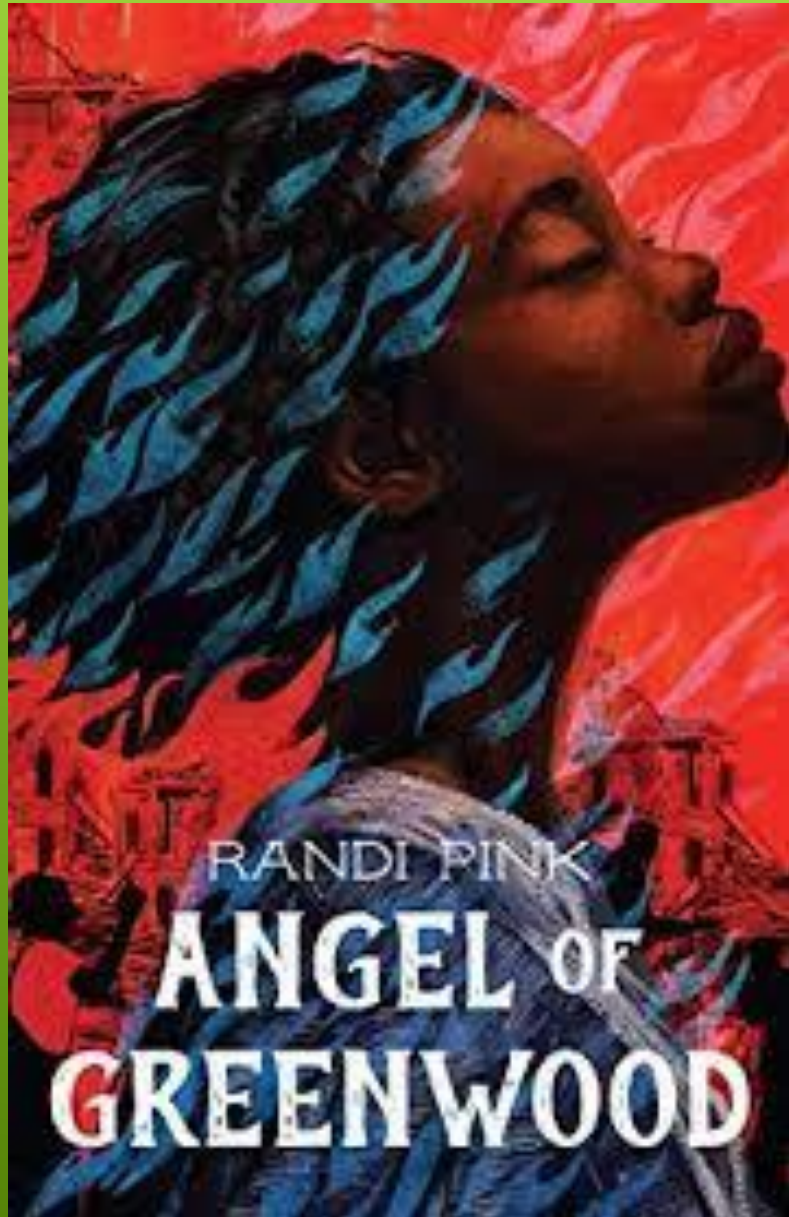
This twisty spy story interweaves tautly paced political drama to document the perilous Cold War period and escalating conflict between the United States and Soviet Union. Newbery Honoree Sheinkin immediately hooks readers with an account of how a 1953 chance exchange of two hollow coins with film hidden inside tipped the CIA off to a Soviet spy ring; eventually, the lens extends to the Cuban Missile Crisis and the standoff between U.S. president John F. Kennedy and Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev. In addition to spies and political machinations, Sheinkin skillfully describes the science behind the race to develop fission bombs and conquer space, the nuclear threat and mutually assured destruction, and how the fear, bomb shelters, and classroom drills infused everyday life. Throughout, the highly charged narrative maintains a strong perspective and keen attention to detail, rounding out the figures involved—such as the American pilot Gary Powers, who flew U-2 jets to spy on Russia—with character and personality. The midsection can sometimes lag as it details the intricate chess game between Kennedy and Khrushchev, but b&w photographs heighten the tension in this dramatic and informative chronicle.

- Lexile - 890
- Age range - 14+
- Non-Fiction: Cold War



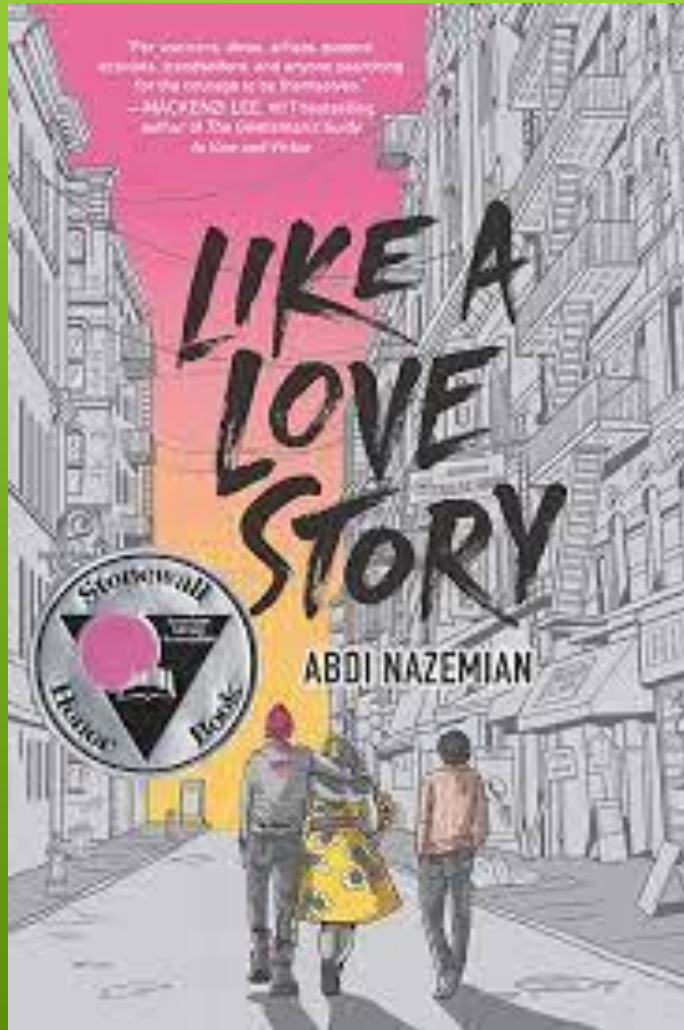
Centuries ago, seven families battled one another for control over Ilvernath city's secret wellspring of rare and "frighteningly powerful" high magick. The conflict ended in compromise: a curse stipulating that every two decades, under a blood-red sky, a teen from each clan must participate in a tournament to the death using only common magick; the victor's bloodline secures exclusive access to Ilvernath's high magick for the next 20 years. What was once a clandestine competition is now famous thanks to a recently published anonymous tell-all, increasing the already unbearable pressure on this year's participants. But while most are focused on winning, one is determined to break the curse and save them all—provided she can survive long enough to figure out how. A shifting perspective follows contenders Alistair Lowe, Isobel Macaslan, Briony Thorburn, and Gavin Grieve (all white, one queer) in this high-stakes duology opener from Foody (the Shadow Game trilogy) and Herman (the Devouring Gray duology), which endorses self-determination over destiny. Nuanced, exceptionally well-drawn characters and a carefully considered mythology add dimension to the sturdy Hunger Games-meets-Harry Potter premise, while unexpected attractions and shifting alliances add drama..

- Lexile - 790
- Age range - 15+
- Fiction: Fantasy



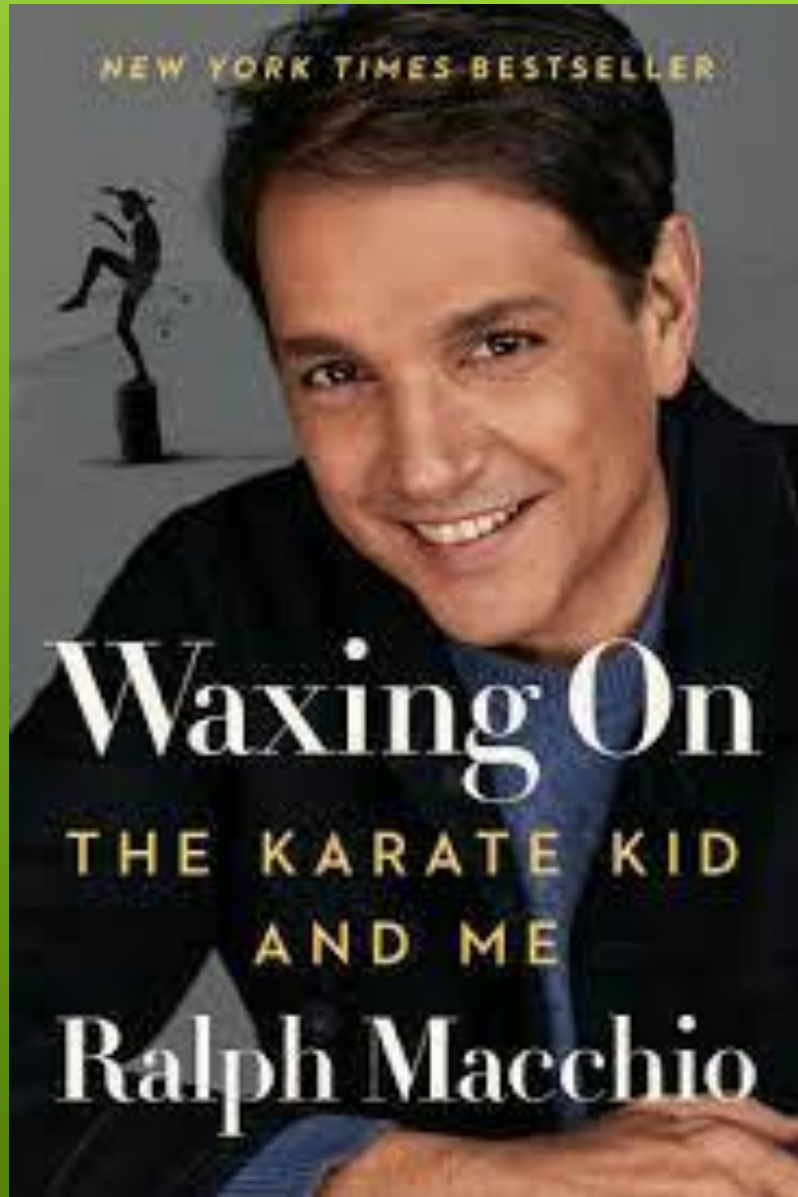
This harrowing fictional account of Black community action centers the eve of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre. Angel Hill, 16, is a quiet churchgoing dancer with a passion for helping others and a love for Booker T. Washington. Beneath his mischievous exterior, 17-year-old Isaiah Wilson is a poet who admires W.E.B. Du Bois. Angel is beloved by all of Greenwood, a town of Black excellence across the Frisco tracks from white Tulsa, Okla., while Isaiah is known for hanging out with the wrong crowd. Paired together for a summer job manning a mobile library, the two immediately begin debating the philosophies of “tolerant” Washington and more “active” Du Bois. They also instantly fall in love: Isaiah with Angel’s dance and compassion, she with his poetry and exuberance, and both with the other’s undying devotion to Greenwood, America’s Black Wall Street. Life is disrupted, though, when white Tulsans invade Greenwood and set the town ablaze. Rich in its discussion of Black literature, this novel brilliantly juxtaposes a lighthearted story of young Black love with a deft reminder that such beauty has often been violently seized from Black people, and that these instances deserve remembrance.

- Lexile - 770
- Age range - 13+
- Fiction: Historical, Tulsa Massacre



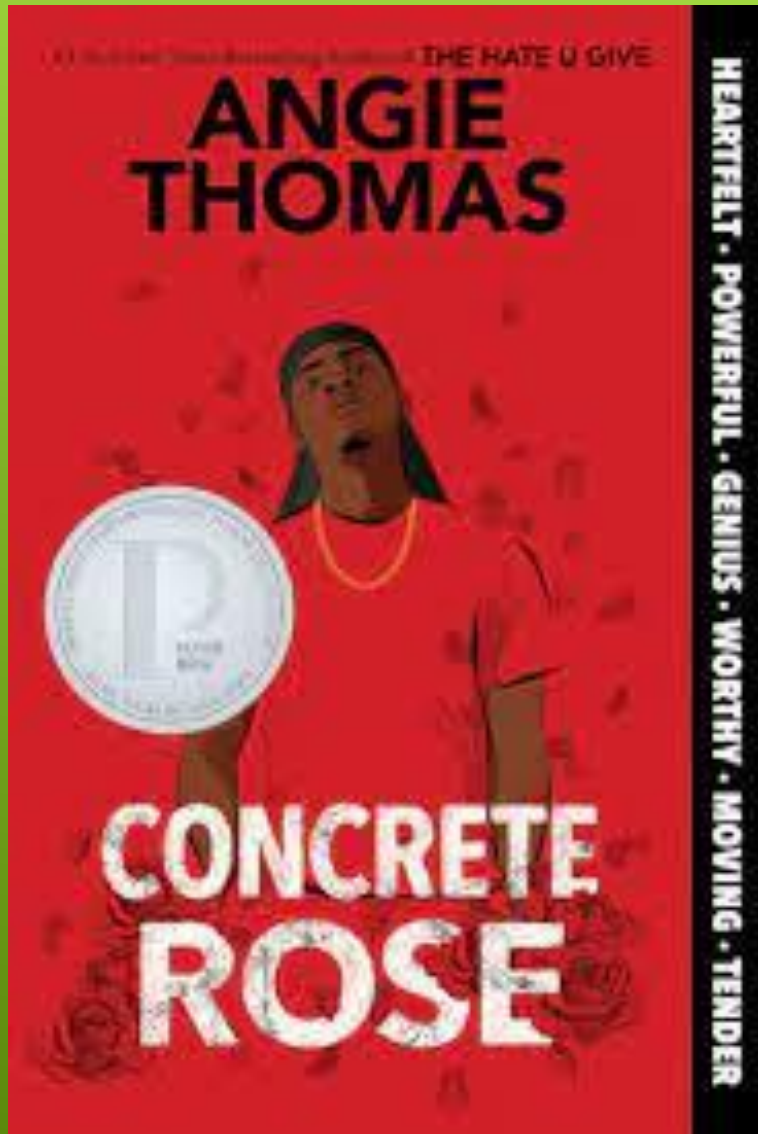
When Reza, a closeted teen, moves from Toronto to New York City (“by way of Tehran”) in 1989, the city feels like the epicenter of the AIDS crisis. In a heart-wrenching and bittersweet unfolding of events, he gravitates toward Art, the only openly gay student at his school, and to Art’s best friend, Judy, who represents everything he feels that he should desire. Though Reza tries his hardest to keep his attractions secret, dating Judy despite his chemistry with Art, he finds that he can’t live a lie, whatever that might cost him. A first-person narrative moves among the three characters as they discover their inner truths at a time that sometimes feels apocalyptic for their community and loved ones. Under the nurturing guidance of Judy’s gay activist uncle, the characters subtly investigate different family dynamics. The intense and nuanced emotions evoked by the characters’ journeys help to give this powerful novel by Nazemian (The Authentics) a timeless relevance.

- Lexile - 750
- Age range - 15+
- Fiction: Historical, Middle-Eastern, Romance



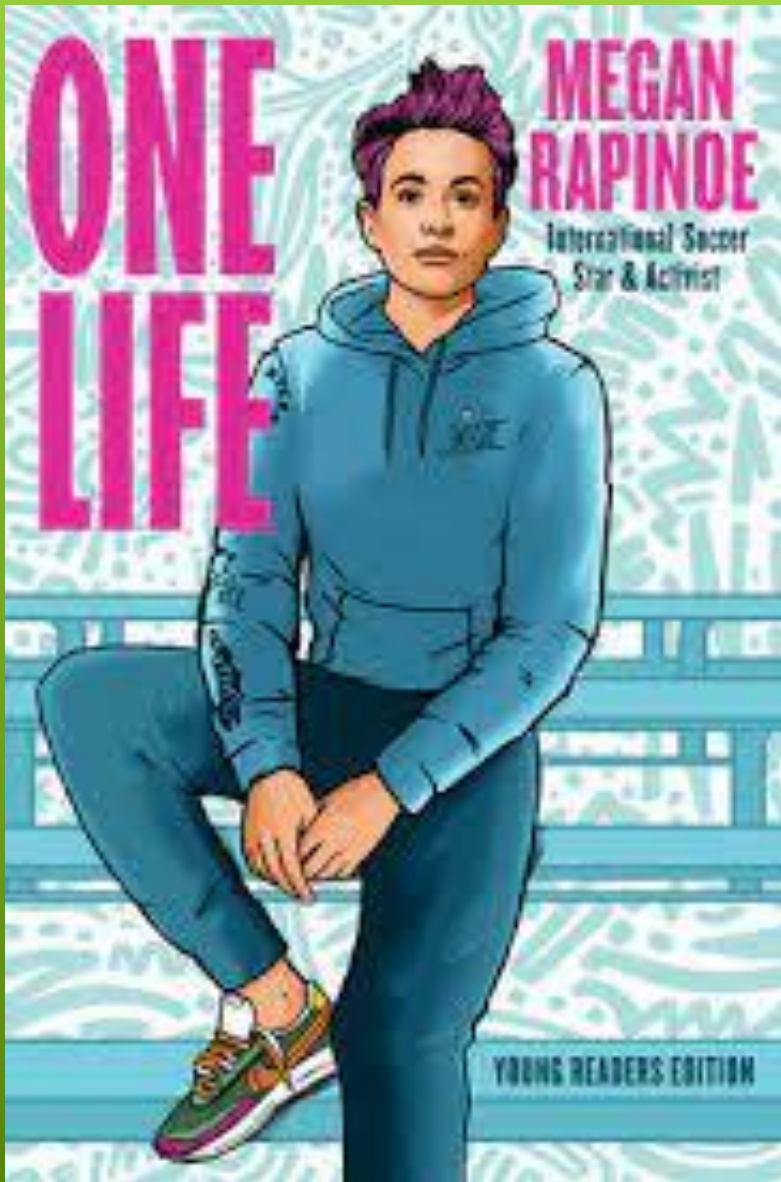
Since *The Karate Kid* first crane-kicked its way into the pop culture stratosphere in June 1984, there hasn't been a week Ralph Macchio hasn't heard friendly shouts of "Wax on, wax off" or "Sweep the leg!" Now, with Macchio reprising his role as Daniel LaRusso in the #1 ranked Netflix show *Cobra Kai*, he is finally ready to look back and celebrate the legacy of *The Karate Kid* in cinema, pop culture, and his own life. The result, *Waxing On*, is a comprehensive look at the film that shaped Macchio as much as it influenced the world. He shares an insider's perspective of the untold story behind the scenes—the innocence of the early days; the audition process; his experiences working with Pat Morita, Elisabeth Shue, and William Zabka; and so much more. He also takes readers through the birth of some of the film's most iconic moments, including the creation of the famous crane kick and the touching scenes that revealed Mr. Miyagi's intriguing backstory.

- Lexile - Unknown
- Age range - 17+
- Non-Fiction: Autobiography



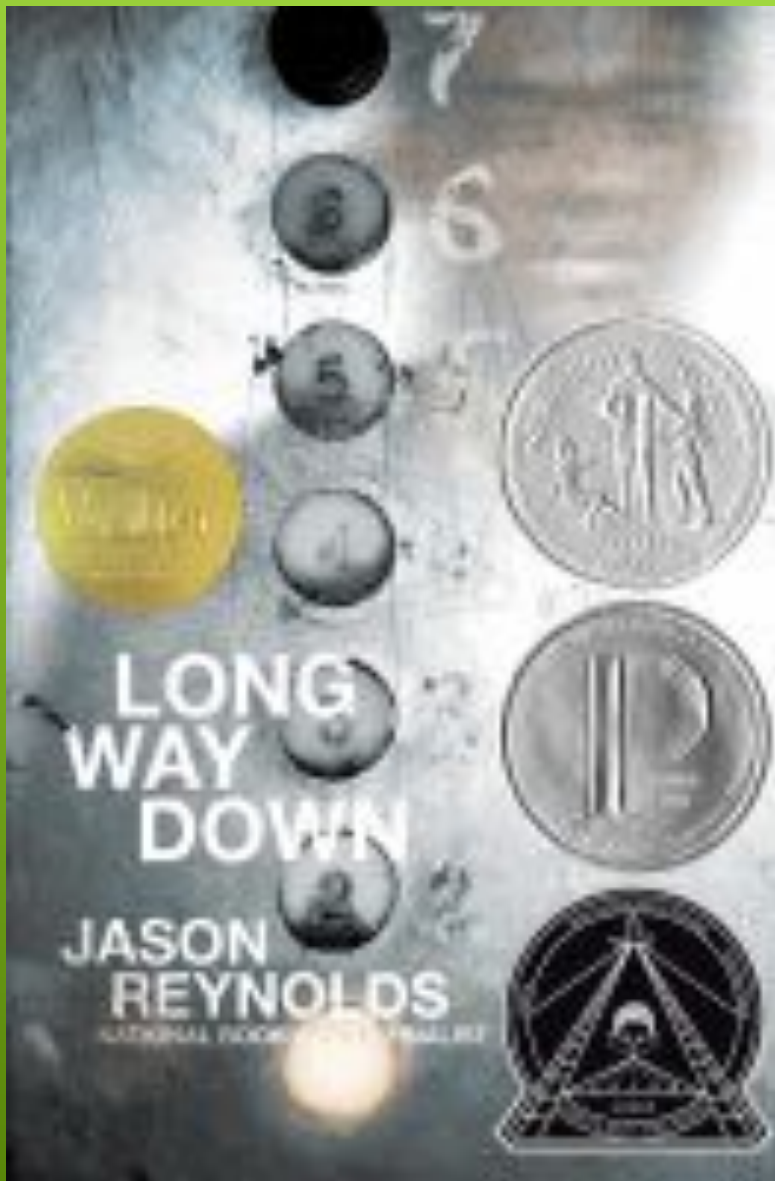
In this prequel to *The Hate U Give*, Thomas delves into the upbringing of Maverick Carter, the father of *THUG*'s protagonist, Starr. Mav is one of the subordinates ("li'l homies") of neighborhood gang the King Lords and the son of one of the gang's incarcerated OGs. At 17, Mav and his hotheaded best friend, King—both responsible for recruiting and initiating new members and dealing weed for the King Lords—have begun slinging harder drugs on the side, under the gang leaders' noses. Risking hard time like his father or death like King's dad by leading a double life, Mav soon finds himself in over his head when he discovers he's fathered a child by King's off-and-on girlfriend, who promptly abandons the baby to his care. Convincingly detailing the journey of a young Black man growing into fatherhood, Thomas brings her trademark wit, nostalgic love of the 1990s and all things R&B and hip-hop, and her penchant for heartfelt characterization to this first-person exploration of Maverick Carter's coming-of-age. Through its portrayal of loss and upheaval, this story acts as a tender love letter to a close Black family and community—one that isn't without problems but is always full of love.

- Lexile - 500
- Age range - 15+
- Fiction: Historical



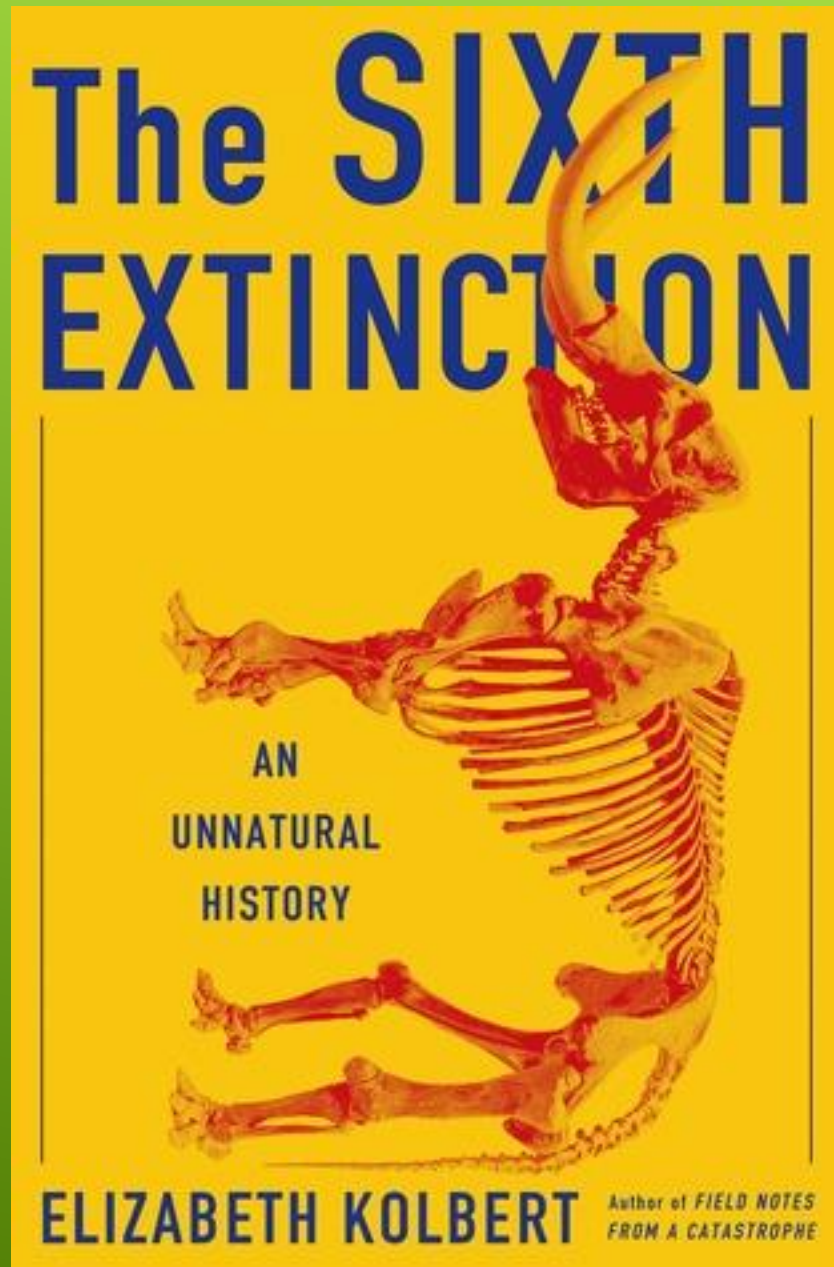
Soccer star Rapinoe commands attention both on and off the field. In this memoir adapted for young readers, Rapinoe reflects on facing adversity and discovering what she's made of over the course of her illustrious career. Rapinoe and her twin sister began playing soccer as children, joining a competitive boys' team since there was no girls' option in their small California town. Recognizing their potential, Rapinoe's parents supported the girls through long drives, early mornings, and financial sacrifice. After the twins earned full soccer scholarships to the University of Portland, Rapinoe found new opportunities at the national and international levels and quickly made a name for herself. She discusses her growing understanding of her sexuality and racial politics and how this awareness led to her using her celebrity to champion causes from marriage equality to gender-based pay inequality in professional soccer. Rapinoe gained notoriety for kneeling during the national anthem, in alignment with her strong belief that White people have a responsibility to draw attention to systemic racism. Backlash against her activism has dogged her career, but Rapinoe challenges readers to use their voices to speak up for what they believe in, emphasizing that issues, just like people's lives, are interconnected. Soccer fans will appreciate the game details and photos, from family snaps to moments from iconic matches. However, even the nonsporty will find much to appreciate in this inspiring and engagingly written book.

- Lexile - 975
- Age range - 14+
- Non-Fiction: Memoir, Sports, LGBTQ+



Will, 15, is following his neighborhood's well-established rules—don't cry, don't snitch, but do get revenge "if someone you love/ gets killed"—when he leaves his apartment, intent on killing whoever murdered his older brother, Shawn. He's emboldened by the gun tucked into his waistband: "I put my hand behind my back/ felt the imprint/ of the piece, like/ another piece/ of me/ an extra vertebra,/ some more/ backbone." As Will makes his way to the ground floor of his building, the elevator stops to accept passengers, each an important figure from his past, all victims of gun violence. Are these ghosts? Or is it Will's subconscious at work, forcing him to think about what he intends to do and what it will accomplish? The story unfolds in the time it takes for the elevator to descend, and it ends with a two-word question that hits like a punch to the gut. Written entirely in spare verse, this is a tour de force from a writer who continues to demonstrate his skill as an exceptionally perceptive chronicler of what it means to be a black teen in America

- Lexile - 720
- Age range - 14+
- Fiction: Novel in verse



Over the last half a billion years, there have been five mass extinctions, when the diversity of life on earth suddenly and dramatically contracted. Scientists around the world are currently monitoring the sixth extinction, predicted to be the most devastating extinction event since the asteroid impact that wiped out the dinosaurs. This time around, the cataclysm is us. In *The Sixth Extinction*, two-time winner of the National Magazine Award and *New Yorker* writer Elizabeth Kolbert draws on the work of scores of researchers in half a dozen disciplines, accompanying many of them into the field: geologists who study deep ocean cores, botanists who follow the tree line as it climbs up the Andes, marine biologists who dive off the Great Barrier Reef. She introduces us to a dozen species, some already gone, others facing extinction, including the Panamanian golden frog, staghorn coral, the great auk, and the Sumatran rhino. Through these stories, Kolbert provides a moving account of the disappearances occurring all around us and traces the evolution of extinction as concept, from its first articulation by Georges Cuvier in revolutionary Paris up through the present day. The sixth extinction is likely to be mankind's most lasting legacy; as Kolbert observes, it compels us to rethink the fundamental question of what it means to be human.

- Lexile - Unknown
- Age range - 16+
- AP Environmental Science
- Non-Fiction

60TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION



FAHRENHEIT

451

RAY BRADBURY

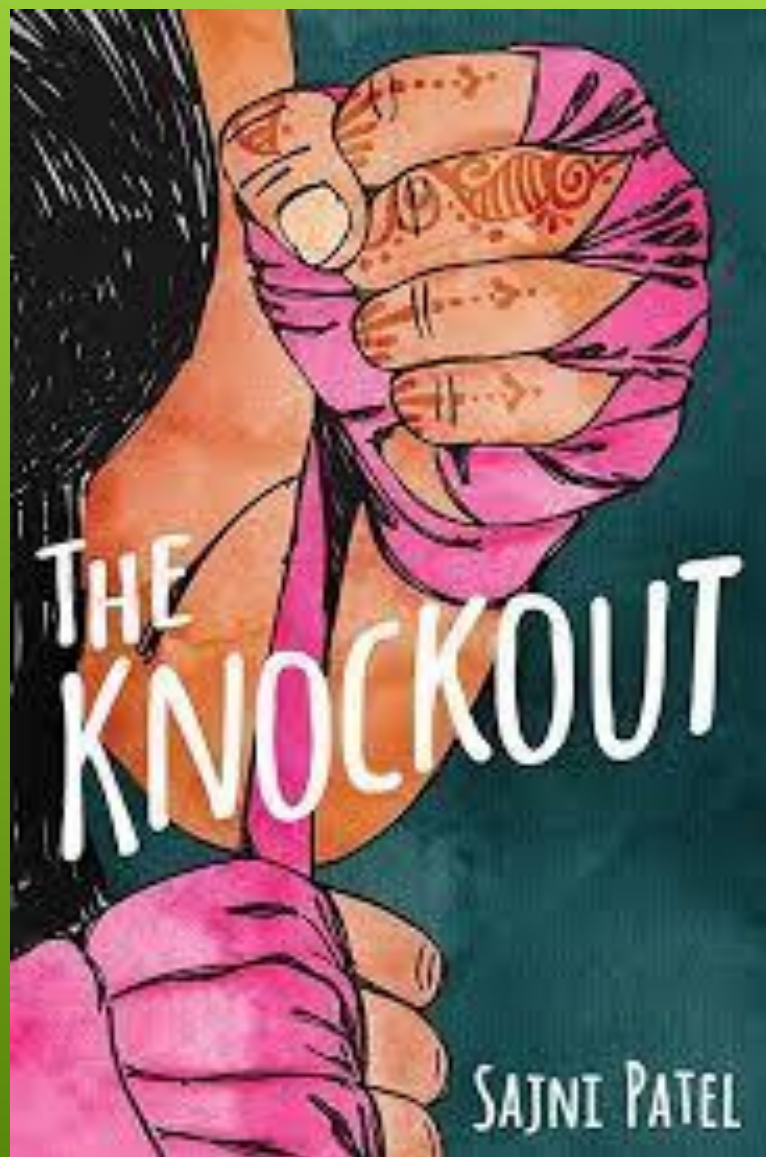
A bookburner official in a future fascist state finds out books are a vital part of a culture he never knew. He clandestinely pursues reading, until he is betrayed. Guy Montag is a fireman. His job is to destroy the most illegal of commodities, the printed book, along with the houses in which they are hidden. Montag never questions the destruction and ruin his actions produce, returning each day to his bland life and wife, Mildred, who spends all day with her television “family.” But when he meets an eccentric young neighbor, Clarisse, who introduces him to a past where people didn’t live in fear and to a present where one sees the world through the ideas in books instead of the mindless chatter of television, Montag begins to question everything he has ever known.

- Lexile - 890
- Age range - 16+
- Fiction: Classic, Dystopian



Reynolds's breathtakingly poetic prose melds seamlessly with Griffin's effective multimedia images to capture a story of our time that should be read by everybody. Written in just a few lengthy sentences over the space of a few hundred pages of artwork, the book follows a Black family during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic. The family's young protagonist captures the very real confusion and fear of 2020 in two interwoven narratives: his family's experience with the pandemic, including his father's battle with COVID-19, and his reaction to the persistent violence and systemic racism on the news. Reynolds has the talent of conveying so much in very few words, and along with Griffin's stunning images of fire throughout the book, powerfully conveys the overall theme of oxygen and being unable to breathe. The reminder to breathe in and breathe out throughout carries so much weight as memories from early 2020 resurface, from patients in hospital beds fighting for a good breath to pleading for one breath while under the weight of police to watching the news with the feelings of helplessness and suffocation. Although reminiscent of heartbreaking and tumultuous times, this novel is permeated with so much comfort and hope as it leaves readers with the solace that togetherness brings. VERDICT For everyone who has felt the weight of grief and fear or the comfort of love and family in the last two years, this is a must read.

- Lexile - 825
- Age range - 14+
- Fiction: Poetry



Thanks in part to her dedicated study of Muay Thai, 17-year-old Kareena and her family feel ostracized by their local Indian community, leading her to question her own identity and cultural validity. As Kareena pursues “passion over practicality,” she keeps her Muay Thai commitment secret; when her ill father’s relapse coincides with an important competition, she must make a difficult choice—complicated by her growing feelings for “model” Indian Amit—with \$50,000, international recognition, and a chance at the Olympics on the line. This compelling #OwnVoices young-adult debut challenges gender roles and racial stereotypes through a hardworking-athlete protagonist crafted with such nuance that readers will wholeheartedly cheer for her, through trivial stressors like AP Comp-Sci II to deeper conflicts like teenage heartbreak. As Patel explores what it means to pursue your dreams against the judgment, criticism, and bullying of those intimidated by your success, the Pan-Asian representation make this work relatable to readers of immigrant parents or any marginalized community, addressing what it means to be part of different communities—cultural, religious, athletic—and to struggle with reconciling one’s identities. The beauty and power of being a high-school girl, an Indian woman, and a female athlete are all showcased in this triumphant novel.

- Lexile - Unknown
- Age range - 15+
- Fiction: Sports



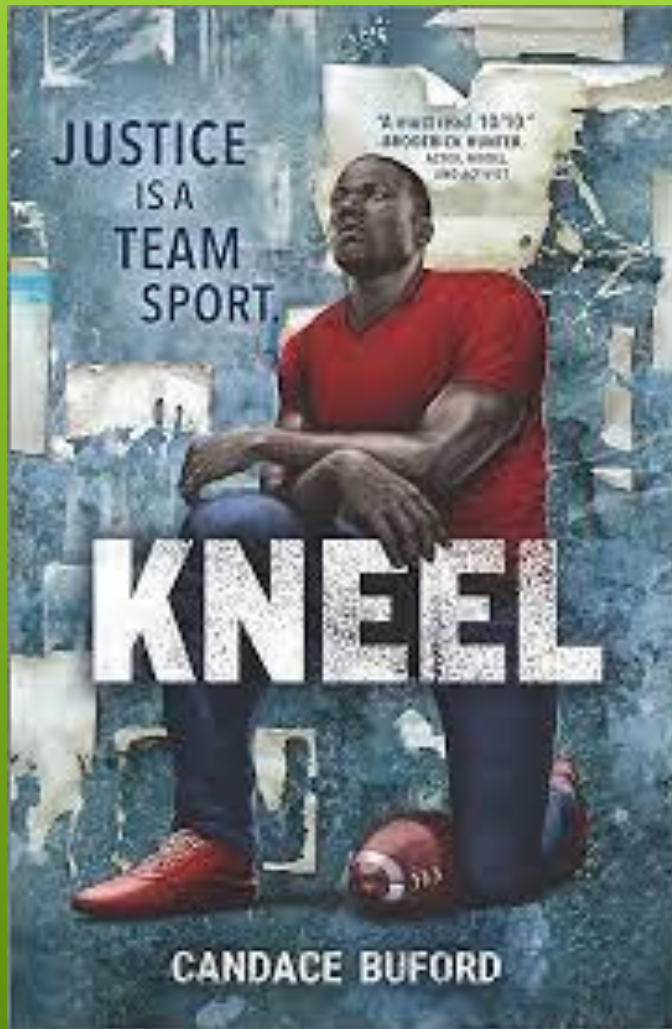
Welcome back to the post-mortal utopia of the Arc of a Scythe series. In the original trilogy, Shusterman posited that even a true utopia is imperfect thanks to human nature. Here, he returns to the Thunderhead's world with a collection of shorter works that explore moments before, during, and after the end of the Scythedom. While some stories need only basic contextual knowledge of the world, most are directly related to Citra's and Rowan's experiences: prequel tales of teenage Scythe Marie Curie (gleaning the last corrupt politicians) and Carson Lusk (later Scythe Goddard and unpleasant from the start); stories focused on Citra's brother, Ben, and on the sister of the first gleaning Rowan attends in Scythe (2016); and even one from the perspective of the Cirrus, the multifaceted AI offspring of the Thunderhead. The always accomplished, straightforward writing is at its best when it moves away from the larger Scythe-Thunderhead politics and instead focuses on humanity, art, and love in a world without natural or accidental death. Standouts include "The Mortal Canvas," focused on the first (and maybe last) post-mortal artist, and the slyly humorous "Meet Cute and Die," about the niece of a domineering and needy Scythe in Britannia. One for the legions of fans of this world.

- Lexile - Unknown
- Age range - 17+
- Fiction: Short Stories



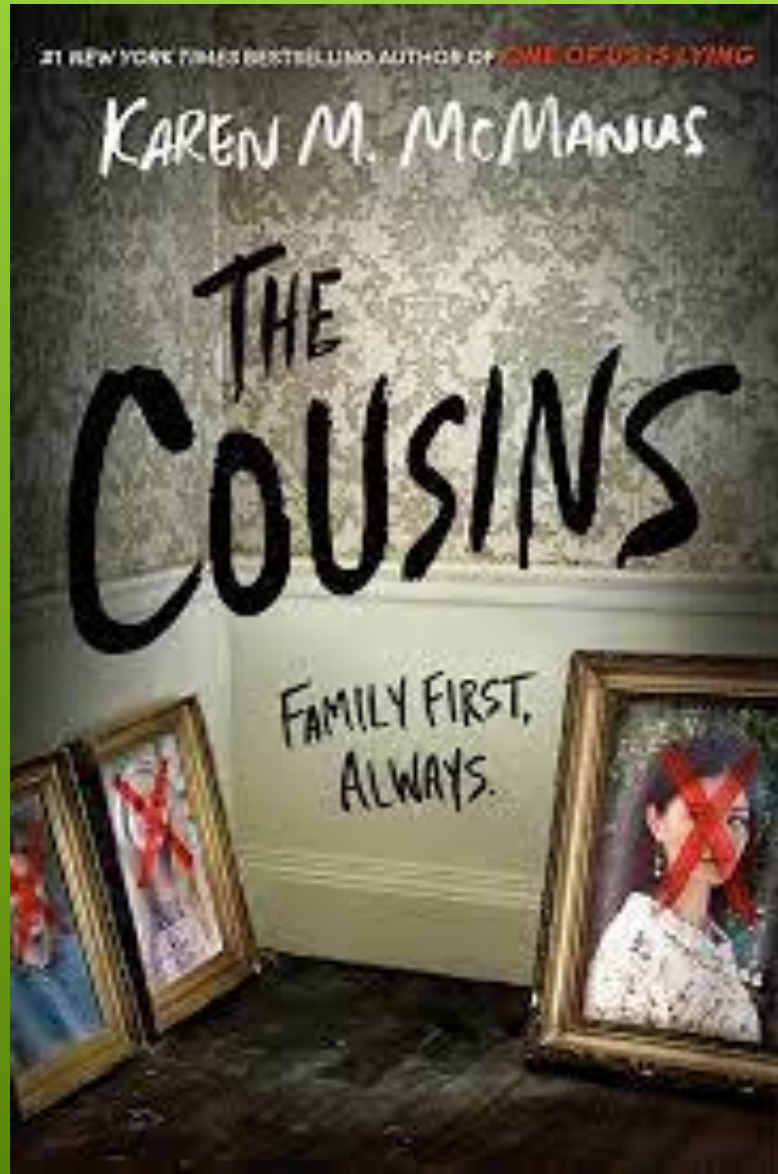
Authors Albertalli (*Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda*) and Silvera (*They Both Die at the End*) team up for a charming, sweet-natured love story between two very different boys. Arthur (written by Albertalli) is in New York for the summer while his lawyer mother works a big case. His family's affluent and Jewish, and he's a Broadway geek and a virgin with good grades. Native New Yorker Ben (Silvera) is Puerto Rican. His family's on a tight budget, he's just out of a relationship, and he's stuck in summer school. Arthur believes in love at first sight; Ben's not even sure he believes in love. After they bump into each other at a post office, then are separated by a flash mob, Arthur searches the New York haystack to find one adorable high school junior. But the course of meet-cute never did run smooth: complications include friends, Ben's ex, cultural differences, and the difficult and confusing nature of love. The authors—one known for happy endings, the other for breaking hearts—split the difference believably, and it's impossible not to root for Arthur and Ben and their many do-overs.

- Lexile - 610
- Age range - 14+
- Fiction: Realistic LGBTQ+



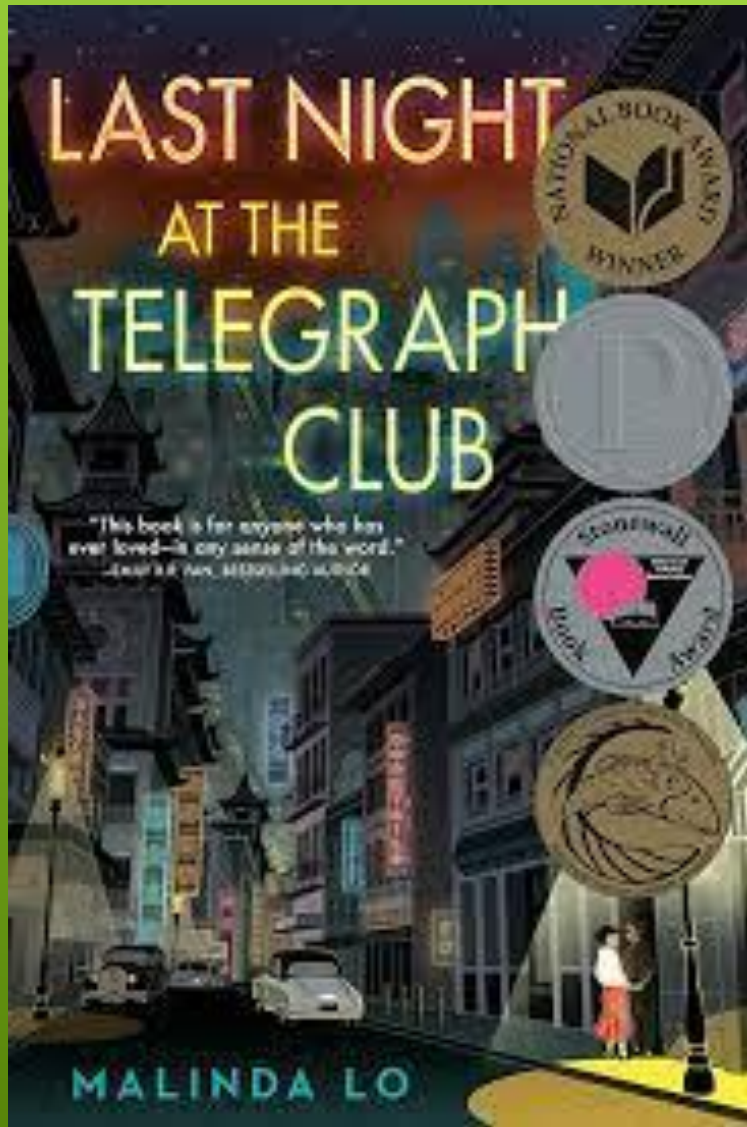
Black high school football captains Russell (Rus) Boudreaux and Marion LaSalle are painfully aware of the racially divided towns of Westmond and Monroe in Louisiana. They are antagonized by two white rival players, Bradley Simmons and Lawrence Perkins, at a game at Westmond High. Marion is arrested by Officer Reynaud on trumped-up charges and kicked off the team. Rus takes a knee during the national anthem at the following game in an act of solidarity; is kicked off the team by his coach; and is villainized by the media, his teammates, and his parents. Rus also starts falling for old friend Gabby Dupre. He questions his political stance when his and Marion's futures are on the line. A mystery person leaves protest fliers demanding police accountability in Westmond and the culprit is closer to home than Rus realizes. A peaceful protest in Westmond turns ugly and the lives of Rus, Marion, and Gabby forever change. Buford's YA novel will bring to mind Colin Kaepernick's political stance against police brutality and his censure by the NFL. Readers will be on the edge of their seats wondering about the teens' fates. Young people will also appreciate the discussions of food justice, vegetarianism, and green urban spaces in lower-income African American communities through the characterization of Gabby, who is a Black vegetarian. Buford has created relatable characters who will resonate with readers.

- Lexile - 825
- Age range - 15+
- Fiction: Sports



McManus (*One of Us Is Lying*) once again crafts a taut, multilayered mystery, this time focusing on the fallout of family estrangement on the next generation. When Mildred “Milly” Story-Takahashi is summoned to a dinner with her mother, she expects bad news, not a mysterious invitation to work at her wealthy maternal grandmother’s resort on Gull Cove Island. Milly and her cousins Jonah and Aubrey will be the first Storys to be welcomed back after a 24-year estrangement that their abruptly disinherited parents claim not to understand—one that began with a lawyer’s note stating “You know what you did.” Forced to spend the summer on Gull Cove Island, the cousins are startled to find both that they were not, after all, expected and that at least one party wants them gone. As the three piece together what happened to their family, they begin to reveal their own secrets as well. Narrating her thriller through multiple perspectives that encompass both generations of Storys, McManus weaves past and present to take readers on a well-paced, twisty ride that will hold readers rapt till the last page.

- Lexile – 760
- Age range - 15+
- Fiction: Mystery



It's 1954 San Francisco, and 17-year-old Lily Hu is the epitome of a "good Chinese girl": She's modest, respectful of her parents, and her most outlandish interest is rocket science. Then she finds a magazine ad for Tommy Andrews, male impersonator at the Telegraph Club, and everything changes. Lo's historical novel is a meditative exploration of a young gay Chinese American girl in the 1950s. While there are many compelling tenets woven throughout Lily's journey (racism, anti-Communism, her Chinese family's relationship to their American identity), an abundance of detail weighs down the plot. The focus on world-building is at times heavy-handed, causing repetitiveness and rendering Lily and Kath's relationship the slowest of burns. Lo's prose comes alive when describing Lily's blossoming awareness of desire; readers will be enthralled with her breathless, confusing experience of seeing the long-awaited Tommy Andrews and finally expressing her feelings for Kath. The ending is devastatingly realistic for its time, but an epilogue shimmers with a gloss of hope. VERDICT A pensive, rich work of queer historical fiction that will reward patient readers.

- Lexile - 925
- Age range - 14+
- Fiction: Historical, Romance, LGBTQ+



Questions surrounding summer reading should be addressed to
Mr. Olivieri... dolivieri@collsk12.org