

THE CURRENT 2024

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Crime,

punishment,

and getting away with murder

A prison-turned-soft-play, an international crime competition, a series of menstrual-based murders, a deadly short story, and a catastrophic catfish; these are our picks for the most heart-pounding and thrilling reads for those who like their mysteries with plenty of murder.



This Book Kills - Ravenna Guron
ISBN 9781803705415 - Usborne - 2023
eBook available [www](#)

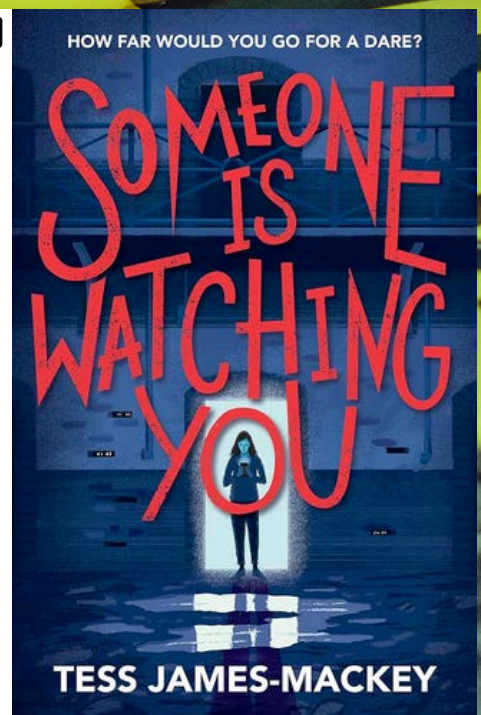


Heybuckle school is a painfully elite institution for the seriously wealthy, and scholarship girl Jess knows that her behaviour has to be beyond reproach if she is to keep her place. When a boy is killed and it looks as if the killer took inspiration from one of Jess' short stories, she knows that she has to track them down if she wants to remain in the school. Is the murder something to do with the Regia Club, a top secret society that allegedly runs the school? Jess needs to find out, but first she needs some allies, which is difficult when she is surrounded by entitled teenagers who barely acknowledge her existence.

Someone is Watching You -
Tess James-Mackey
ISBN 9781444967906 - Hodder - 2023



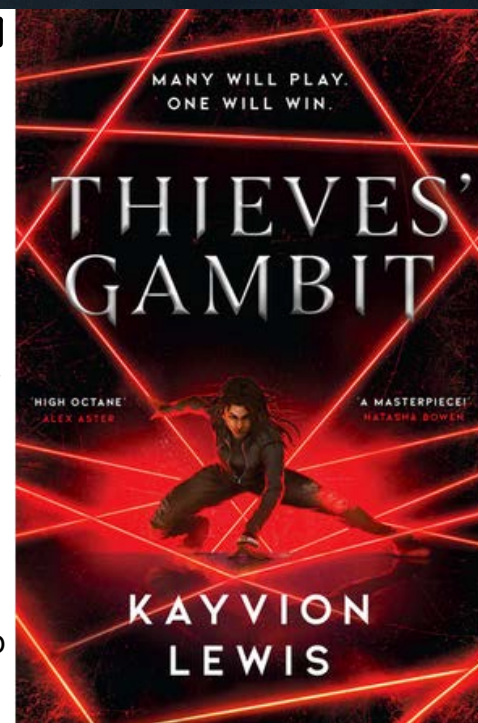
Taking place over the course of a single day, this tension-filled thriller keeps you gripped until the final pulse-pounding pages. Nia, desperate to be accepted by her new boyfriend's cool mates, decides to explore an abandoned prison all alone as part of a series of ever-escalating dares. Unbeknownst to her, her little sister has secretly followed after her and now they are both being watched... The twists and turns are around every corner as Nia delves deeper into the nightmarish building and is forced to confront some uncomfortable truths about what lurks in the darkest of places, and the darkest of people.



Thieves' Gambit - Kayvion Lewis
ISBN 9781398522121 - Simon & Schuster - 2023
eBook available [www](#)



Rosalyn Quest has just one more job to complete before she escapes from the dangerous and glamorous world of international thievery and gets to spend the summer being a regular teenager. However, these high-stake heists are a family affair and, when Ross' mother is captured by rival criminals and held for ransom, she has no choice but to enter the Thieves Gambit. This exclusive and secretive contest pits twelve young thieves against each other in a series of deadly challenges designed to test their felonious credentials while providing entertainment for the shadowy Organisation. With old rivalries resurfacing as family grudges are brought to light, Ross must do everything she can to win, without losing herself in the process.



Every Word a Lie - Sue Wallman
ISBN 9780702324062 - Scholastic - 2023
eBook available [www](#)

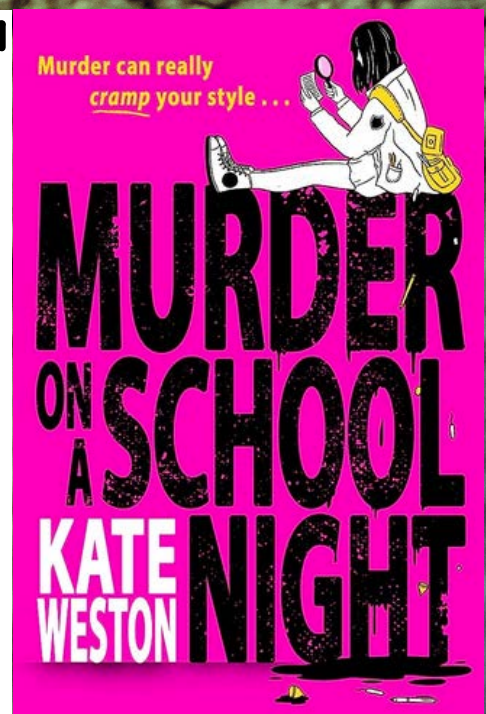


Amy and her friends love a prank. They are just harmless fun, right? So Amy has no qualms about setting her best friend Hollie up with a catfishing prank involving Hollie's crush. But to her horror the prank goes disastrously wrong and Hollie is murdered. With everyone blaming Amy for the death she finds herself ostracised at school and dumped by her boyfriend. Her only chance at redemption is to track down the killer herself before they strike again, but now someone is stalking her. Is Amy going to be the next victim?

Murder on a School Night - Kate Weston
ISBN 9780008540968 - Electric Monkey - 2023
eBook available [www](#)



When Kerry goes looking for somewhere to have her first proper snog she stumbles across one of the most popular girls at school lying dead, with a menstrual cup stuffed in her mouth. The police think it's an accident but Kerry's joyously foul-mouthed and slightly demented best friend Annie is convinced that there has been a murder and enlists Kerry to help track down the killer. The clues soon start piling up but Kerry would rather spend some time getting to know her gorgeous new boyfriend to be honest. Then another body is found, and it is beginning to look as if the two teenage sleuths may be the killer's next target. Sometimes outrageous and often very funny, this is a feminist whodunnit for fans of 'Sex Education' and Louise Rennison.



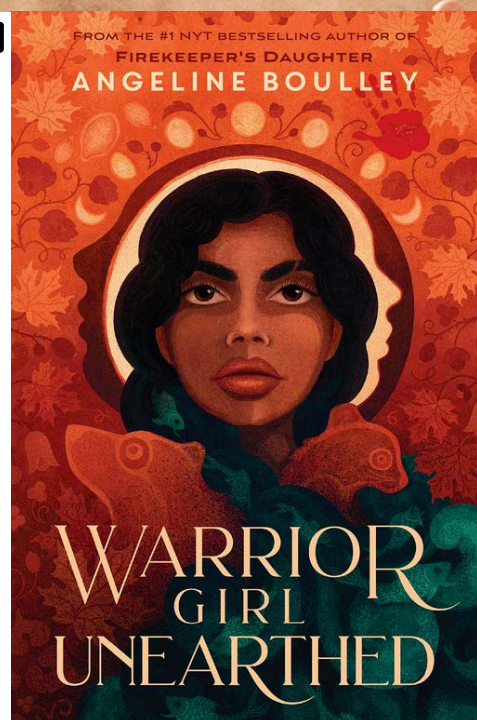
Rebellion

These reads are all about fighting back; whether it's against toxic masculinity, shady organisations, impossible beauty standards, censorship, or the theft of indigenous artefacts. Prepare to get angry.

Warrior Girl Unearthed - Angeline Boulley
ISBN 9780861544196 - Rock the Boat - 2023
eBook available [www](#)



There is nothing like a bit of injustice to get Perry Firekeeper-Birch fired up. When she is shown the remains of a young Native American woman languishing in a box in the local college, she realises that this is just the tip of the iceberg. Thousands of human remains and precious artefacts that should have been returned to their communities are being hoarded by collectors and institutions. Burning with righteous anger, she decides to act, even if it means taking some big risks. Set on Sugar Island and featuring characters from the author's hugely successful previous novel, this is a mystery thriller set in an Indigenous community with a gutsy but flawed central character.



holly bourne

**YOU
COULD
BE**

Beauty comes
at a price

And girls
must pay

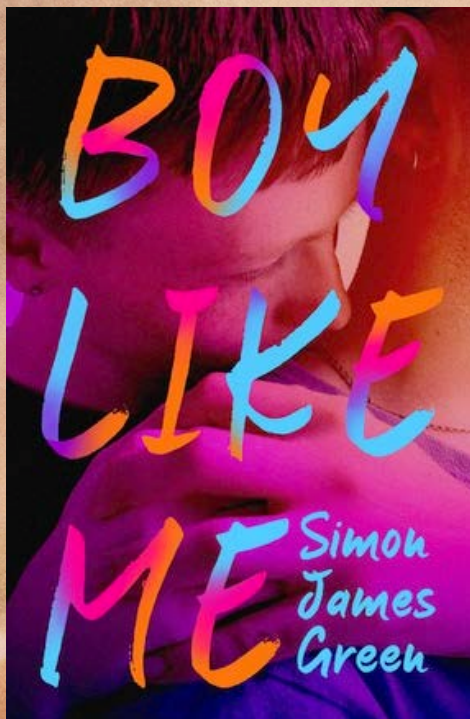


**SO
PRETTY**

You Could Be So Pretty - Holly Bourne
ISBN9781474966832 - Usborne - 2023
eBook available [www](#)



Prepare to feel uncomfortable. This dystopian novel focuses on a future in which The Doctrine says that women should feel empowered when they are catcalled, and girls are pressured into wearing a constant 'Mask' and starving themselves to look 'Just Right.' Meet Joni - an "Objectionable"- and Belle - the prettiest girl in school as they are thrown together after Belle is sexually harassed on the street. The pair are in competition for their place at "The Education," a university-like school that could be the answer to all their problems. Disturbing in so many ways, but mostly because it's all a little too real. Perfect for fans of The Handmaid's Tale.



Boy Like Me - Simon James Green
ISBN 9780702313653 - Scholastic - 2023

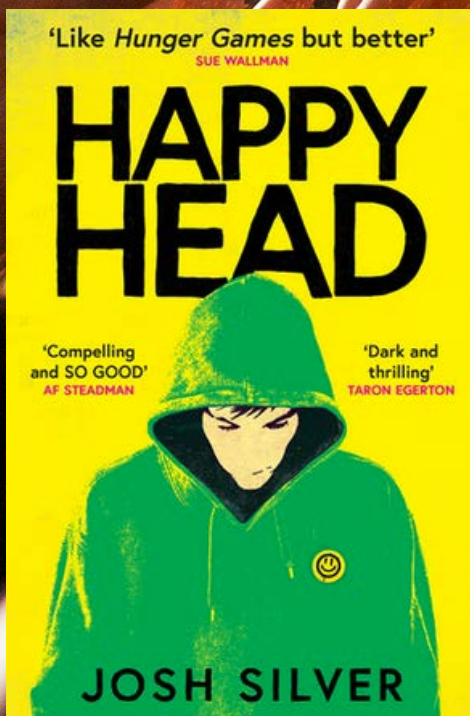
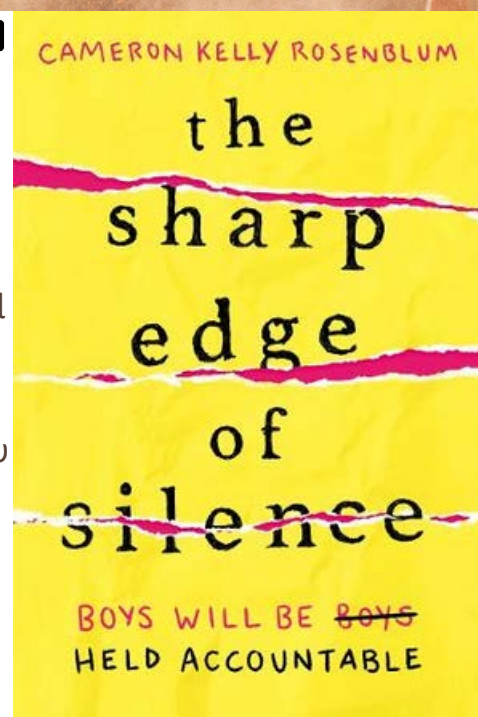


To Jamie Hamilton, struggling to understand his own sexuality, the innocuous-looking book in the school library is a revelation. The writer seems to understand exactly what he is going through, and from the scribbled notes in the margin it is clear that another pupil feels the same. As Jamie tries to track down the mystery note-writer he finds himself falling foul of a law that still bans books 'promoting homosexuality' from schools and has to make a decision: is he going to keep his head down and avoid trouble or is he going to be true to who he is, even if this means that he will have to face abuse and worse from the bigots around him? Luckily, Jamie is not alone. Set in Britain in 1994, this sweet romance with a quirky narrator at its heart also shows the many hurdles that gay men had to face to live their lives as they wanted until relatively recently.

The Sharp Edge of Silence - Cameron Kelly Rosenblum
ISBN 9781471413476 - Hot Key Books - 2023
eBook available [www](#)



Three students at the exclusive Lycroft Phelps Boarding School are forced to confront the dark realities that come with extreme wealth and inherited privilege in this rage-filled examination of toxic masculinity. Charlotte, Max and Quinn have all struggled to navigate the social dynamics at this brick-and-ivy institution but, after Quinn's assault by a fellow student, the delicately formed social hierarchies of Lycroft Phelps are poised to implode, with potentially devastating consequences. Though a thoughtful and sensitive read, this book does contain descriptions of sexual violence and its aftermath that may be distressing for readers.



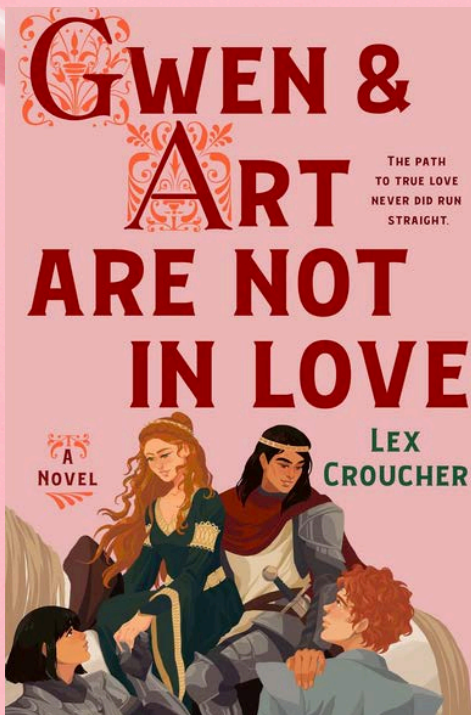
HappyHead - Josh Silver
ISBN 9780861545537 - Rock the Boat - 2023
eBook available [www](#)
eaudiobook available [www](#)



A wellness retreat aimed at troubled teens quickly reveals itself to be an exploitative experiment in this fast-paced dystopian thriller from debut author Josh Silver. When Seb arrives at HappyHead he is determined to be a success story and tries to embrace the program that claims to eradicate depression, even as the tests and challenges, often pitting the 100 teens against each other, become ever more sinister. As the days pass, a burgeoning friendship with the rebellious Finn and his own growing misgivings cause Seb to begin questioning what HappyHead's true motives are, and how far it will go to achieve them.

It's complicated

Roses are red, violets are blue - here are some romantic stories for you! The course of true love never did run smooth, whether in a medieval court or on a school field trip. These reads all deal with the bittersweet, and complicated, matters of the heart.



Gwen and Art are Not in Love - Lex Croucher
ISBN 9781526651792 - Bloomsbury - 2023
eBook available [www](http://www.bloomsbury.com)

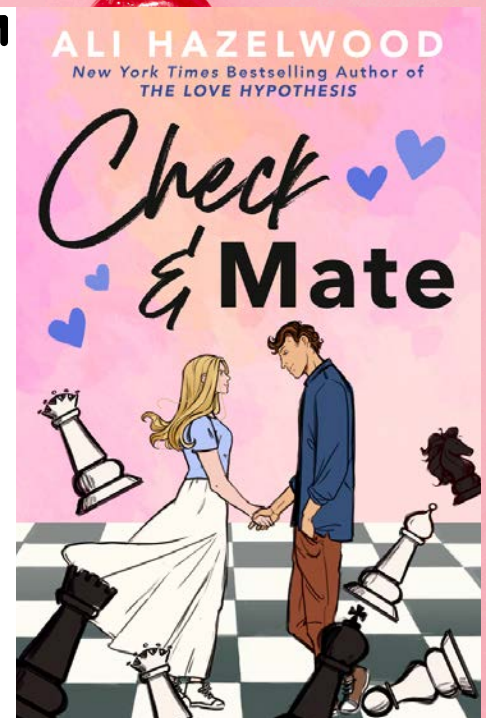


They might not be in love with each other, but they both have secret crushes. When Gwen and Art discover they share the same secret, they form an uneasy alliance to benefit them both and hopefully find love. It's not easy, Gwen's a princess with expectations piled sky high on her shoulders and Art has a less than perfect reputation, but perhaps, happily ever afters could be possible for the pair? Sweet and wholesome LGBTQ+ romances make this book a must read for anyone who enjoys a good love story. Perfect for fans of Casey McQuiston.

Check & Mate - Ali Hazelwood
ISBN 9781408727614 - Sphere - 2023



Super swoony and cute, this chess themed romance is destined to make your heart pound. When Mallory gets an offer she can't refuse, she starts playing competitive chess for cash prizes in order to support her mum and little sisters. She tells herself it's just a job but can't help feeling part of the chess community. Nolan - a fellow chess prodigy - isn't helping matters. He's intense, intelligent, and impossible to read but Mallory can't help but feel drawn to him, and it's obvious (to everyone but her) that he feels the same way... Perfect for fans of The Queen's Gambit.



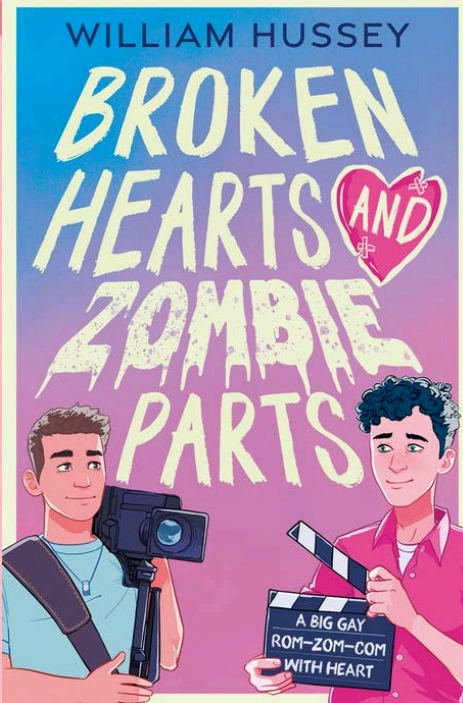
Highly Suspicious and Unfairly Cute -

Talia Hibbert

ISBN 9780349436937 - Piatkus - 2023



Ex-best friends-to-lovers story of teens who are forced together on an extra-curricular outdoor adventure. Bradley and Celine used to be best mates but now Celine feels left out of the cool kids' gang and is focused on her growing social media following for her conspiracy theories. Brad is struggling with his OCD and the loss of his and Celine's friendship, but could this be helped when they are thrown together on a school trip? Lots of banter, silliness and laugh out loud moments between this pair who are convinced they don't get along but are secretly pining.



Broken Hearts and Zombie Parts -

William Hussey

ISBN 9781803700038 - Usborne - 2023

eaudiobook available [www](#)



Horror-film fanatic Jesse needs open heart surgery, but he's convinced that afterwards his scar will mean he'll never find anyone to love him. So, in the three weeks before the operation, he wants to create a new horror movie with his best friends and find himself a boyfriend. But will he be lucky in love or does the universe have other plans for him?

Filled with supportive friendships, great family dynamics and zombies, this heart-warming and hilarious LGBTQ+ novel is perfect for fans of Simon James Green.

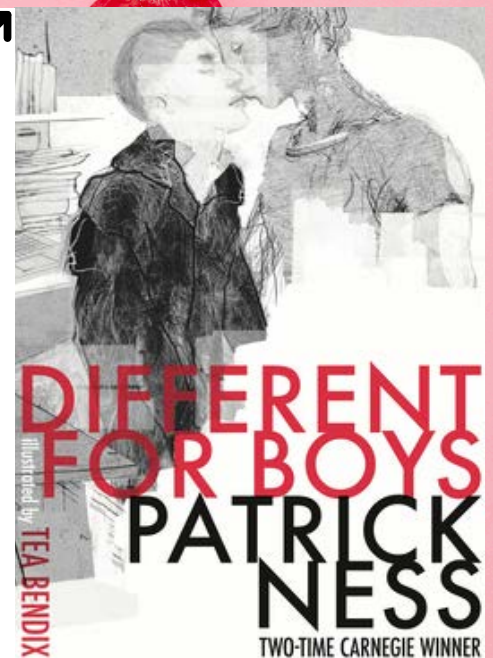
Different for Boys - Patrick Ness

ISBN 9781529509496 - Walker Books - 2023

eBook available [www](#)



With censored words and phrases, gorgeous illustrations and a compelling narrator, this super short novel is perfect for all teens navigating the challenges of adolescence. We meet Ant as he tries to work out if he's still a virgin, despite his sexual relationship with his homophobic best mate Charlie. A hard-hitting novel that makes you want to reach into the book and hug the main character. A unique and hard-hitting LGBTQ+ novel from the author of the Chaos Walking series, perfect for fans of gritty graphic novels.



Atmospheric Fantasy

Escape the everyday and find the fantastical in these epic tales of prophecy, witchcraft, ancient gods, mythical mysteries and rebellious romance. Cauldron and spellbook not provided.

'Kat Dunn has spun a love story both intimate and epic'
SAMANTHA SHANNON



Bitterthorn - Kat Dunn

ISBN 9781839132957 - Andersen Press - 2023

eBook available [www](#)



This slow-burn Sapphic romance takes elements from various fairy tales and weaves them into a beautiful coming-of-age tale where the repercussions of love and loss echo through time itself. When Mina volunteers to become the latest companion of the legendary Witch she isn't entirely selfless in her decision; having always felt like an outsider and unable to make connections with those around her. She feels that this exile may be what she deserves. But as these two lost souls begin to draw closer together and Mina discovers the truth behind the Witch's mysterious origins, she realises that loneliness is sometimes a choice and that true love and connection sometimes mean having the courage to risk everything.

Black Heat - Bex Hogan

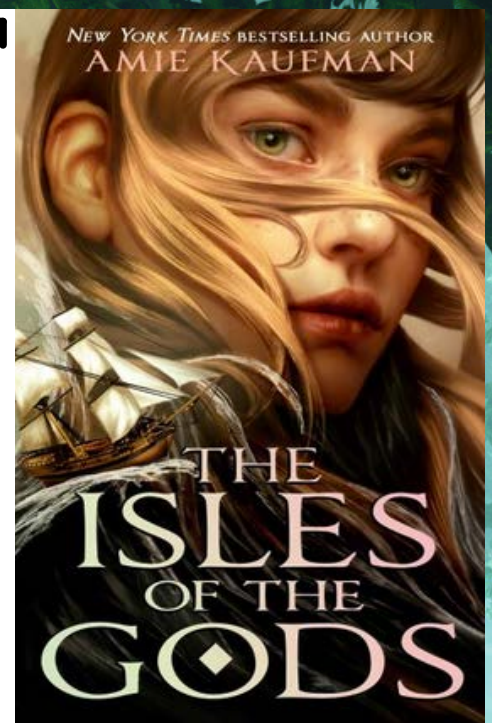
ISBN 9781510110960 - Orion - 2023



The Emperor of Nardone has been told that he is to die, and that his death will involve a child and a sword forged in blood. Three very different women hold his fate in their hands, although they don't know it yet. One is his least important daughter, concealing a cunning and manipulative nature behind a demure exterior. One is a female blacksmith, physically tough and courageous, who is fighting with Nardone's enemies. And one is a young midwife, unsure of her skills but certain about what is right, who finds herself the custodian of a very valuable parcel. This fast-moving and occasionally brutal fantasy adventure has a satisfyingly convoluted plot, full of duplicity and unexpected twists, as it moves towards an exciting climax from which almost nobody escapes with their life.

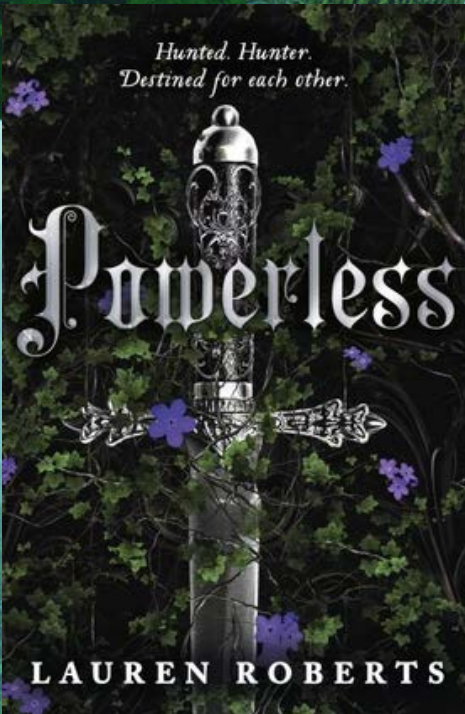


The Isles of the Gods - Amie Kaufman
ISBN 9780861545810 - Rock the Boat - 2023
eBook available [www](#)



Prince Leander of Alinor is lazy, insufferably smug and relies too much on his charm. He is also the only person with the power to prevent the slumbering gods from waking once again and wreaking havoc. Unfortunately, there are others who want the gods to return and who would go to any lengths to stop him.

Leander's life, and the fate of nations, depends on the skill and bravery of a young female sailor, as they race to outwit their pursuers across the oceans that link their countries. Acclaimed Sci-fi and fantasy writer Amie Kaufman has produced a nail-biting adventure.



Powerless - Lauren Roberts
ISBN 9781398529489 - Simon & Schuster - 2023
eBook available [www](#)
eaudiobook available [www](#)



Perfect for fans of The Hunger Games, this fantasy romance, set in a dystopian future, is sure to grip you from the first chapter. Paedyn is an Ordinary, someone who did not develop an ability after the Plague, and is therefore an outcast from society. Whilst the King has ordered the removal and murder of Ordinaries, Pae manages to disguise her status by acting as a psychic. But when she's embroiled in the Purging Trials, a competition in which the Elite use their powers for victory, she has to hide her lack of abilities and her growing feelings for Prince Kai, whose own ability means that he can sense that Pae doesn't have powers...

Song of Silver, Flame like Night -
Amelie Wen Zhao
ISBN 9780008521363- Harper Voyager - 2023
eBook available [www](#)

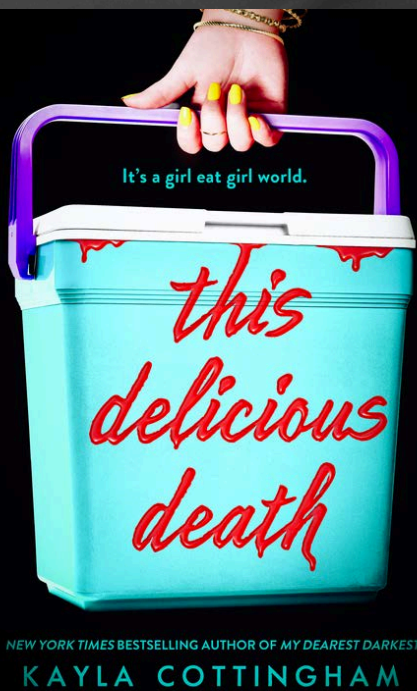


Set in an imagined world and based on traditional Chinese myths, this book is perfect for high fantasy lovers. Lan's mother left an invisible mark on her wrist as she died, and for the rest of her life, Lan has been dedicated to figuring out what it means. When she meets Zen, he finally might have the answers she's been searching for. Their adventure leads to travels through magical lands, a stay at a school for those who channel qi and demons who will give you anything you could desire in exchange for souls...

CREATURE FEATURES

& HAUNTING TALES

Put down the ouija board, grab your stash of SynFlesh, avoid the icy lake and turn off your smart devices: it's time to face your demons and see what really goes bump in the night. These five books are sure to have you leaving the light on...



This Delicious Death - Kayla Cottingham
ISBN 9781728236445
Sourcebooks Fire - 2023
eBook available [www](#)

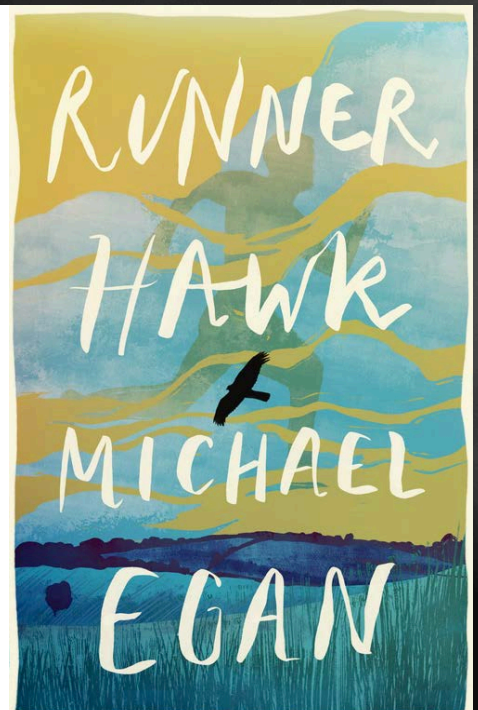


This gruesome yet darkly funny ride through a monster-infested music festival takes place two years after the events of *The Hollowing*, an apocalypse-scale event that turned a percentage of the population into flesh-craving ghouls. Thankfully, a synthetic human meat is now available, and this means best friends Zoey, Celeste, Valeria, and Jasmine can enjoy a weekend of great tunes without fear of going feral and tearing into their fellow attendees. However it appears that someone has other plans and, after Val is drugged and accidentally eats a semi-famous musician, it becomes clear that this fun-filled festival is about to turn into a blood bath.

Runner Hawk - Michael Egan
ISBN 9781911427360
Everything with Words - 2023



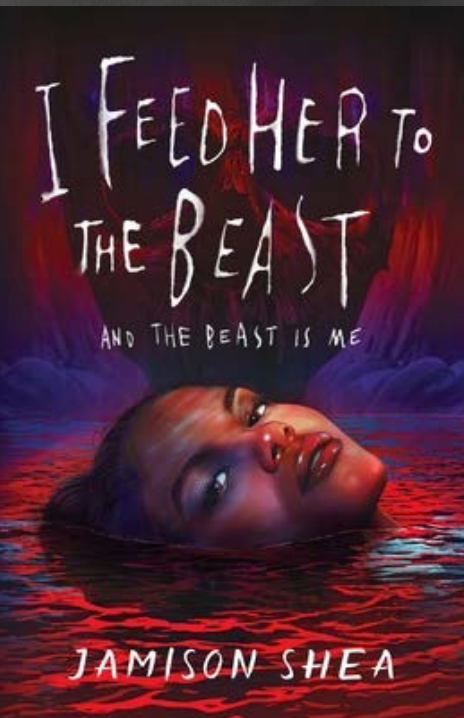
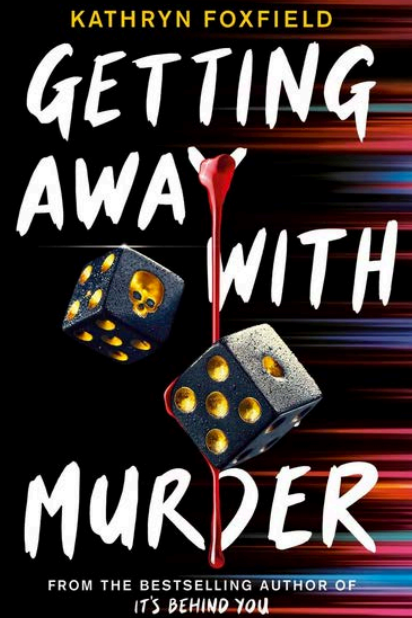
Darkly atmospheric and unsettling from its opening pages, *Runner Hawk* is a uniquely eerie novel that plays with the notions of identity, memory, and time itself. Like many seventeen year-olds Leo Roslin feels adrift from those around him and unsure of what his future holds. But, as this novel slowly reveals its secrets, we, along with Leo, learn the horrifying truth behind his feelings of disconnection. Not quite a ghost story, not quite science fiction; this novel uses its unreliable narrator to weave a dream-like world with a poignant message about what it means to be human.



Getting Away with Murder - Kathryn Foxfield
ISBN 9780702312847 - Scholastic - 2023
eBook available [www](#)



This action-packed thriller features both a villain and setting that are decidedly modern, yet convincingly disturbing, a rogue AI in charge of a deadly escape room. Once the gang of misfit teens are in place, with enough mysterious and secretive connections amongst them to satisfy any Agatha Christie fans, the dark and twisted games begin. Is the geek smart enough to crack the code? Will the cool kids win the day, or the weirdos survive the carnage? With some interesting reflections on how we view stereotypes (in life and YA fiction) this tightly plotted tale contains plenty of twists and turns as we follow our protagonists' bloody path to freedom.



I Feed Her to the Beast and the Beast is Me - Jamison Shea
ISBN 9781471414862 - Hot Key - 2023
eBook available [www](#) eaudiobook available [www](#)

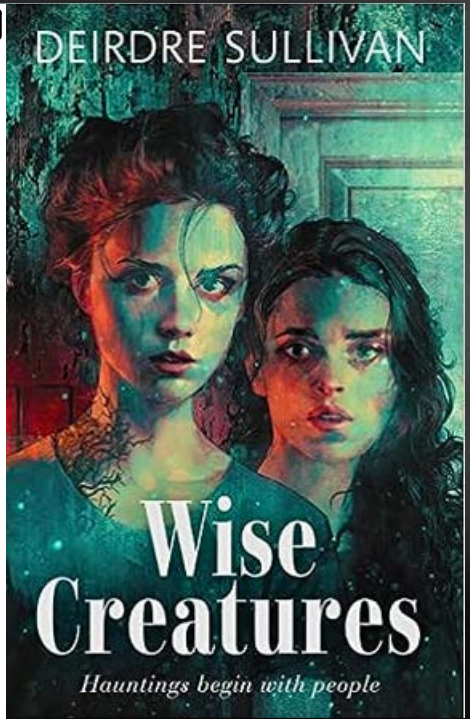


Laure Mesney, an exceptionally gifted dancer, has always struggled to be accepted into the cut-throat world of professional ballet. Racism, classism, and an environment where everyone is in constant competition has left her feeling insignificant. When Josephine, a rising star within the company, offers her the chance to experience true power deep within the Parisian catacombs, Laure's desperation and ambition lead her to make a deal with a devil. This novel has been described as a villain origin story but, as Laure wrecks revenge on those who have wronged her, it's hard not to cheer on this chaotic protagonist as her powers grow, finally putting the life she's earned within her bloody grasp.

Wise Creatures - Deirdre Sullivan
ISBN 9781471411205 - Hot Key - 2023
eBook available [www](#)
eaudiobook available [www](#)

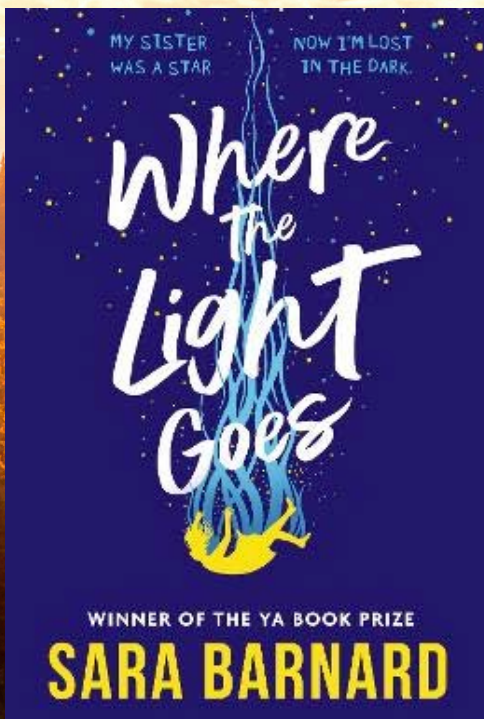


A unique ghost story that lingers long after the final pages. Through its unusual narrative we are told the story in three voices; Daisy's narrative, her innermost thoughts and fears, and the voice of the Wise Creatures themselves - the name Daisy gave to the supernatural presence that haunted her early childhood. Daisy has attempted to leave her traumatic past behind, but the ghosts of her past have begun to creep into her new life and her beloved cousin Nina has become their latest target. Daisy must untangle her earliest memories to separate truth from fiction, and to free Nina from her own dark secrets that threaten to swallow them both. An atmospheric meditation on growing-up and the choices we make to protect the ones we love.



COMING OF AGE

Growing-up is never easy, but these five tales of adolescent obstacles hit harder than most. Struggles with identity, the devastation left after family suicide, the trappings of poverty, racially motivated violence, and a world on the brink of war form the backdrops for these five stories whose protagonists are attempting to navigate the uncertain landscape between childhood and maturity.



Where the Light Goes - Sara Barnard
ISBN 9781529509137 - Walker - 2023
eBook available [www](#)



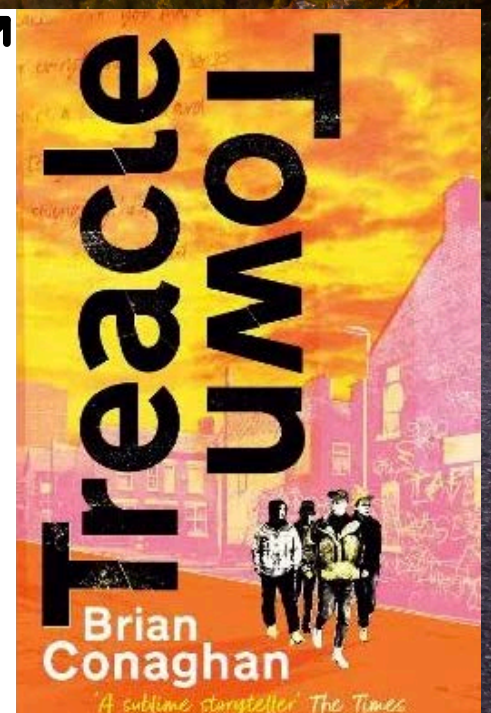
Beth was Emmy's funny, blunt, charismatic sister, who she loved more than anyone else. To the rest of the world Beth was Lizzie Beck, lead singer of the Jinks, whose exploits seemed to be a permanent fixture in the tabloids. When Beth commits suicide Emmy finds that she has to cope not only with her own searing grief but also with media intrusion, online trolling, public hysteria, and people she thought she could trust who want to exploit her sister's death for their own ends.

A powerful, emotional, and wholly believable look at what it is like to be caught up in the aftermath of a sudden death and to confront the downsides of celebrity.

Treacle Town - Brian Conaghan
ISBN 9781839133619
Andersen Press - 2023
eBook available [www](#)



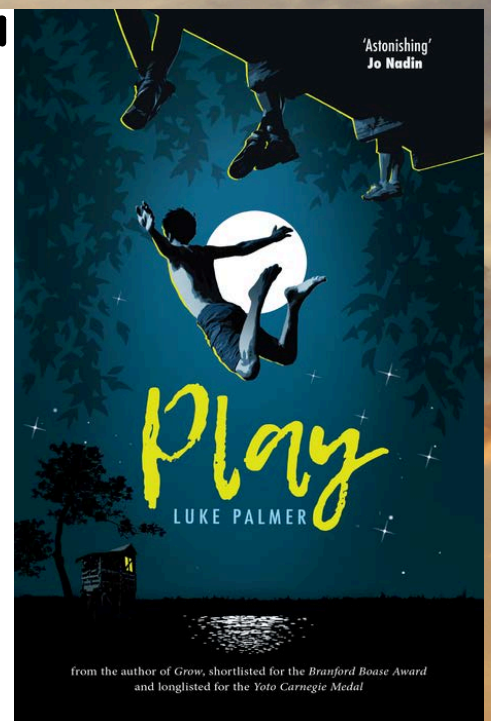
Set in an impoverished town just outside of Glasgow, Treacle Town follows the life of Con O'Neill immediately after the death of his best friend and a few years after the death of his mother. Whilst his mates want to seek revenge on the gang who killed their mate, Biscuit, Con is more interested in maintaining the peace, watching Slam poetry, and escaping the town unscathed. But will his friends allow him this freedom, or will he yet again be embroiled in the violence he's trying so hard to escape? The perfect read for fans of Kevin Brooks and Melvin Burgess.



Play - Luke Palmer
ISBN 9781915444318 - Firefly Press - 2023
eBook available [www](#)



What does it mean to be a boy? Or a man? Four boys, very different in personalities and interests, try to work this out for themselves as they grow from building dens and smashing things up in Year 8 to substance-fuelled tragedy in year 11. For Luc, the journey involves trying to win his overbearing father's affection by being a mirror image of him, a path that leads to bigotry and misogyny. In Matt's case he has to come to terms with his sexuality. Mark has grown up in poverty and the allure of the money he can make by working for a drug dealer is too much to resist, although things turn sour very quickly. And intertwined with them all is Johnny; crazy, mercurial, perceptive, brilliant, and ultimately doomed. This story about male friendship is gripping, sad and totally convincing.



A Sudden Storm - Bali Rai
ISBN 9781800902534
Barrington Stoke - 2023
eBook available [www](#)



A difficult and heart-breaking read that packs a punch in only sixty pages. Inspired by true events, this novel follows Arjan, a Sikh teen who faces extreme racism on his birthday due solely to the colour of his skin and the turban on his head.

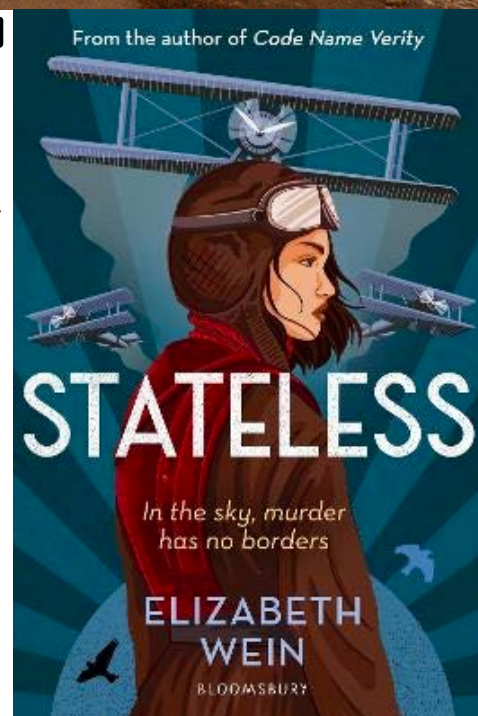
Harrowing and affecting, a book that can be read in a short time but will stick with you forever.

This accessible Barrington Stoke novel would appeal to fans of *The Hate U Give* and books by Malorie Blackman or Kwame Alexander.

Stateless - Elizabeth Wein
ISBN 9781526601681 - Bloomsbury - 2023
eBook available [www](#)



1937. With war looming a small group of pilots from across Europe gather to take part in an air race. Stella North, the British pilot, soon notices that there are old rivalries and enmities just beneath the surface and some competitors evidently have things that they wish to hide. When disaster strikes and a pilot dies during what should have been an uneventful first leg, Stella is convinced that there has been foul play. Is it something to do with Antoine Robert, the French pilot with the terrible French accent and the truculent manner? Or the aloof German, Major Rosengart? It will need all Stella's resourcefulness to find out, and Nazi Germany lies ahead, which proves to be dangerous for several of the pilots. A period whodunnit with a courageous and intelligent central character.



THE CURRENT

Full List

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Where the Light Goes	Sarah Barnard	Coming of Age
Warrior Girl Unearthed	Angeline Boulley	Rebellion
You Could Be so Pretty	Holly Bourne	Rebellion
Treacle Town	Brian Conaghan	Coming of Age
This Delicious Death	Kayla Cottingham	Creature Feature
Gwen and Art are Not In Love	Lex Croucher	It's Complicated
Bitterthorn	Kat Dunn	Atmospheric Fantasy
Runner Hawk	M C Egan	Creature Feature
Getting Away with Murder	Kathryn Foxfield	Crime, punishment & getting away with murder
Boy Like Me	Simon James Green	Rebellion
This Book Kills	Ravena Guron	Crime, punishment & getting away with murder
Check & Mate	Ali Hazelwood	It's Complicated
Highly Suspicious and Unfairly Cute	Talia Hibbert	It's Complicated
Black Heat	Bex Hogan	Atmospheric Fantasy
Broken Hearts and Zombie Parts	William Hussey	It's Complicated

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Someone is Watching You	Tess James-Mackey	Crime, punishment & getting away with murder
The Isle of the Gods	Amie Kaufman	Atmospheric Fantasy
Thieves' Gambit	Kayvion Lewis	Crime, punishment & getting away with murder
Different for Boys	Patrick Ness	It's Complicated
Play	Luke Palmer	Coming of Age
A Sudden Storm	Bali Rai	Coming of Age
Powerless	Lauren Roberts	Atmospheric Fantasy
The Sharp Edge of Silence	Cameron Kelly Rosenblum	Rebellion
I Feed Her to the Beast and the Beast is Me	Jamison Shea	Creature Feature
HappyHead	Josh Silver	Rebellion
Wise Creatures	Deidre Sullivan	Creature Feature
Every Word A Lie	Sue Wallman	Crime, punishment & getting away with murder
Stateless	Elizabeth Wein	Coming of Age
Murder on a School Night	Kate Weston	Crime, punishment & getting away with murder
Song of Silver, Flame Like Night	Amelie Wen Zhao	Atmospheric Fantasy

THE CURRENT 2024

The Current

The Current is an annual list of our favourite YA novels published in the previous twelve months. Available to reserve and borrow across the borough, many of these titles are also available via our Digital Library.

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