

# High Interest Books for High School Students - 2014

Waiver Day Session  
Zach Wilkerson



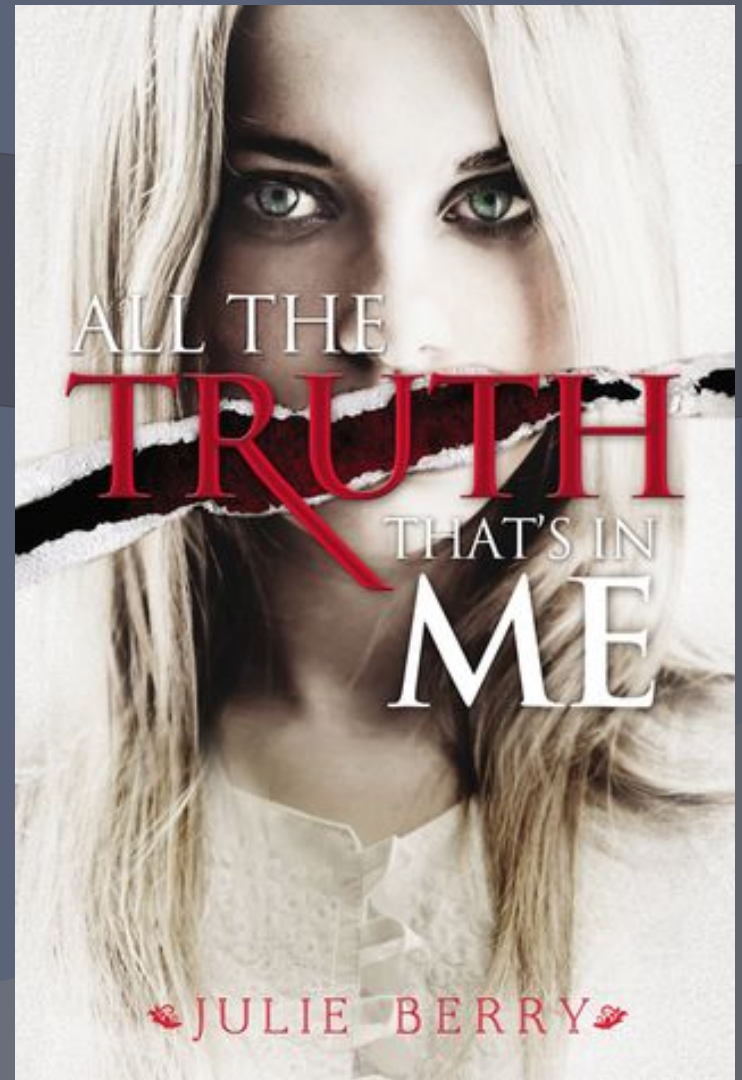
# Approach

- Interest—not necessarily literary value
- Only books I've read in the two years
- Preference given to newer titles
- Not exhaustive

# All the Truth That's In Me

## Julie Berry

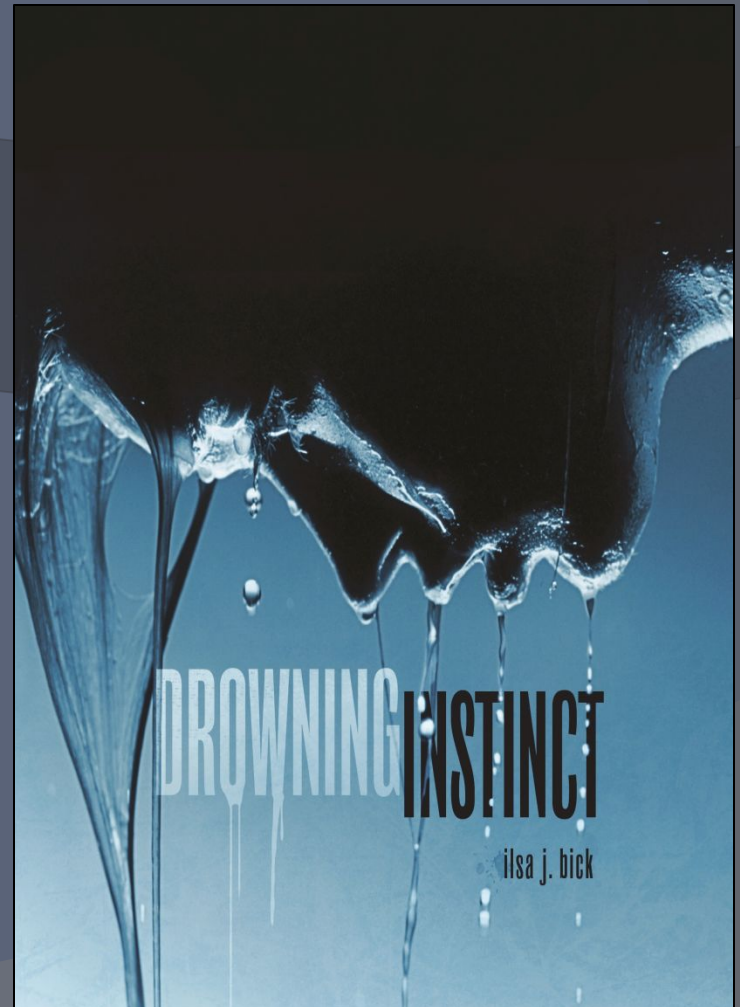
Four years ago, Judith and her best friend disappeared from their small town of Roswell Station. Two years ago, only Judith returned, permanently mutilated, reviled and ignored by those who were once her friends and family. Unable to speak, Judith lives like a ghost in her own home, silently pouring out her thoughts to the boy who's owned her heart as long as she can remember—even if he doesn't know it—her childhood friend, Lucas. But when Roswell Station is attacked, long-buried secrets come to light, and Judith is forced to choose: continue to live in silent, or recover her voice, even if it means changing her world, and the lives around her, forever.



# Drowning Instinct

Ilsa Bick

Jenna Lord's first sixteen years were not exactly a fairy tale. Her father is a controlling psycho and her mother is a drunk. She used to count on her older brother—until he shipped off to Iraq. And then, of course, there was the time she almost died in a fire. There are stories where the monster gets the girl, and everyone cries for his innocent victim. And there are stories where it's hard to be sure who's a prince and who's a monster, who is a victim and who should live happily ever after.

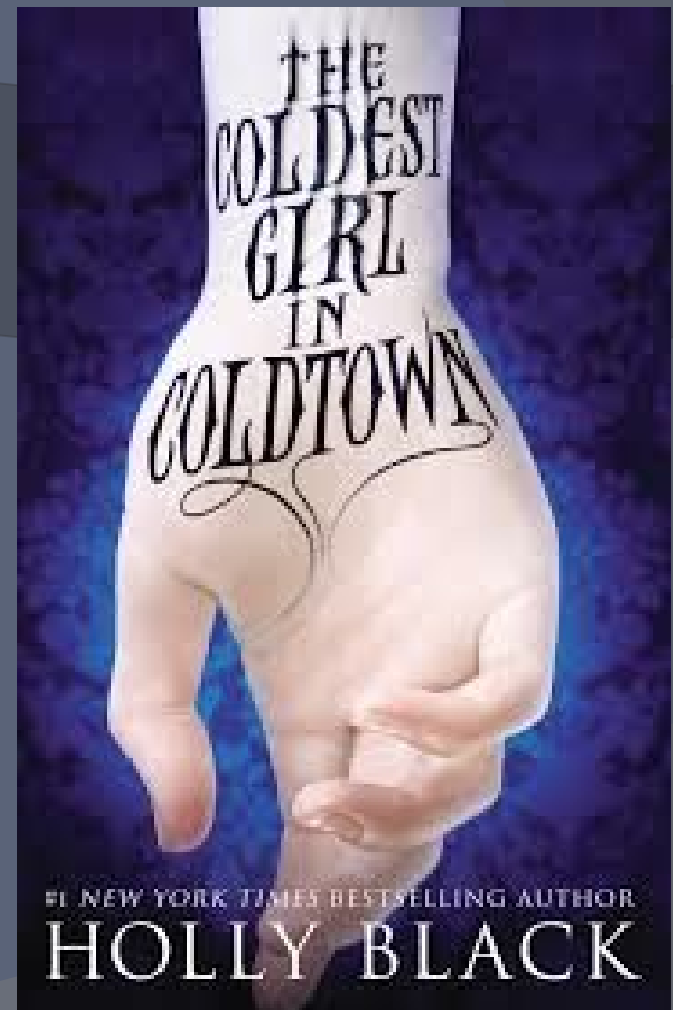


# The Coldest Girl in Coldtown

Holly Black

Tana lives in a world where walled cities called Coldtowns exist. In them, quarantined monsters and humans mingle in a decadently bloody mix of predator and prey. The only problem is, once you pass through Coldtown's gates, you can never leave. One morning, after a perfectly ordinary party, Tana wakes up surrounded by corpses. The only other survivors of this massacre are her exasperatingly endearing ex-boyfriend, infected and on the edge, and a mysterious boy burdened with a terrible secret. Shaken and determined, Tana enters a race against the clock to save the three of them the only way she knows how: by going straight to the wicked, opulent heart of Coldtown itself.

**Warning: VERY SCARY READ!**



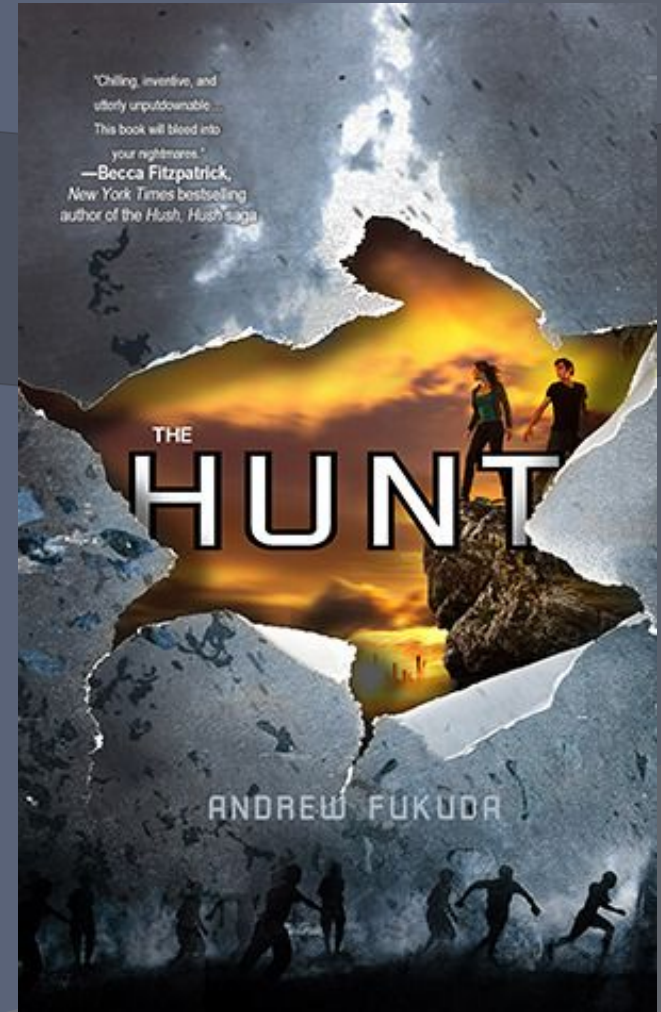
# The Hunt

Andrew Fukuda

Don't Sweat. Don't Laugh. Don't draw attention to yourself.

Gene is different from everyone else around him. He can't run with lightning speed, sunlight doesn't hurt him and he doesn't have an unquenchable lust for blood. Gene is a human, and he knows the rules. Keep the truth a secret. It's the only way to stay alive in a world of night—a world where humans are considered a delicacy and hunted for their blood.

When he's chosen for a once in a lifetime opportunity to hunt the last remaining humans, Gene's carefully constructed life begins to crumble around him.



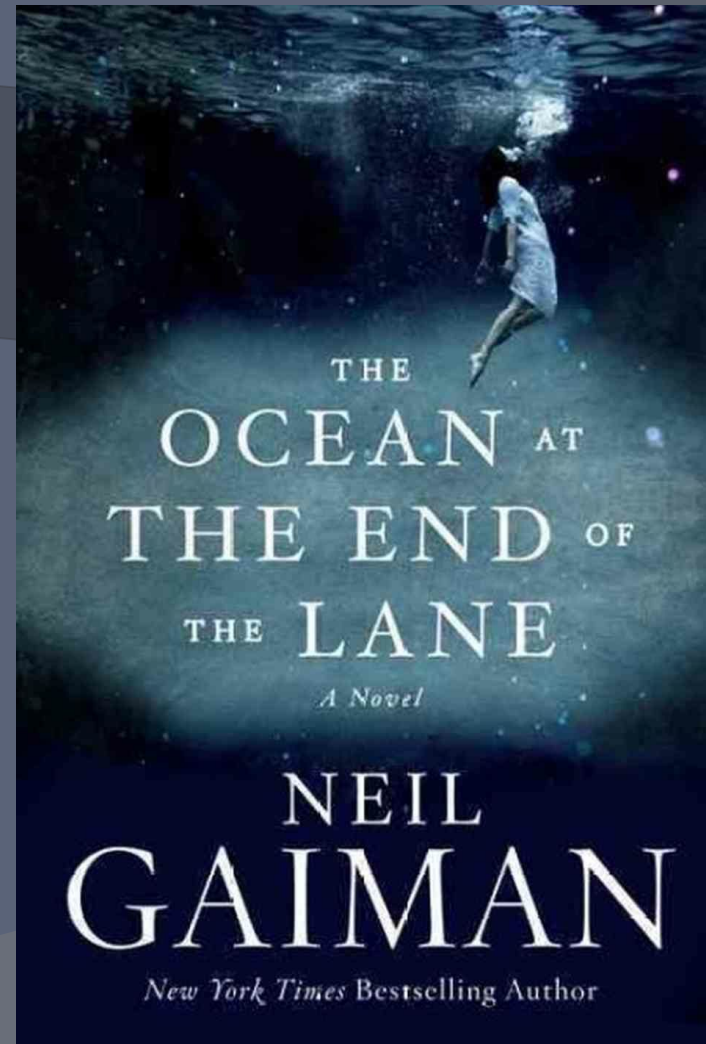
**Lots of action!**

Student  
Favorite

# The Ocean at the End of the Lane

Neil Gaiman

A middle-aged man returns to his childhood home to attend a funeral. Although the house he lived in is long gone, he is drawn to the farm at the end of the road, where, when he was seven, he encountered a most remarkable girl, Lettie Hempstock, and her mother and grandmother. He hasn't thought of Lettie in decades, and yet as he sits by the pond (a pond that she'd claimed was an ocean), the unremembered past comes flooding back. Forty years earlier, a man committed suicide in a car at this farm at the end of the road. His death lit a touchpaper and resonated in unimaginable ways. The darkness was unleashed, something scary and thoroughly incomprehensible to a little boy.



Student  
Favorite

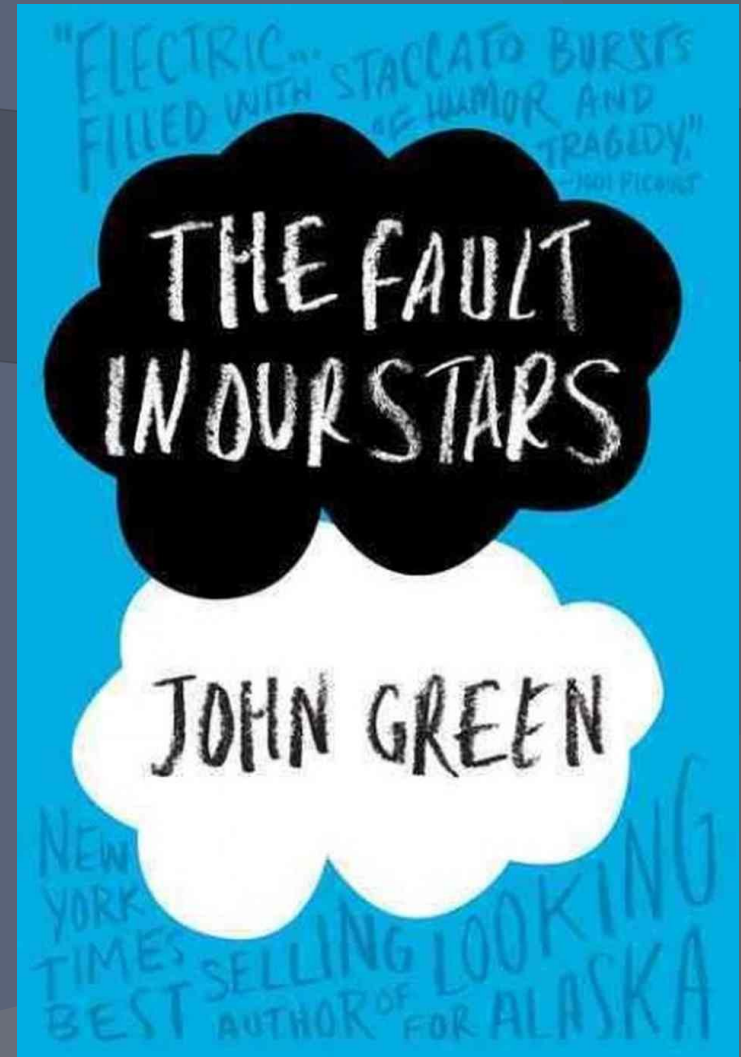
# \*The Fault in Our Stars\*

## John Green

At 16, Hazel Grace Lancaster, a three-year stage IV–cancer survivor, is clinically depressed. To help her deal with this, her doctor sends her to a weekly support group where she meets Augustus Waters, a fellow cancer survivor, and the two fall in love.

Both kids are preternaturally intelligent, and Hazel is fascinated with a novel about cancer called *An Imperial Affliction*. Most particularly, she longs to know what happened to its characters after an ambiguous ending. To find out, the enterprising Augustus makes it possible for them to travel to Amsterdam, where *Imperial's* author, an expatriate American, lives.

What happens when they meet him must be left to readers to discover.



Movie released Spring 2014

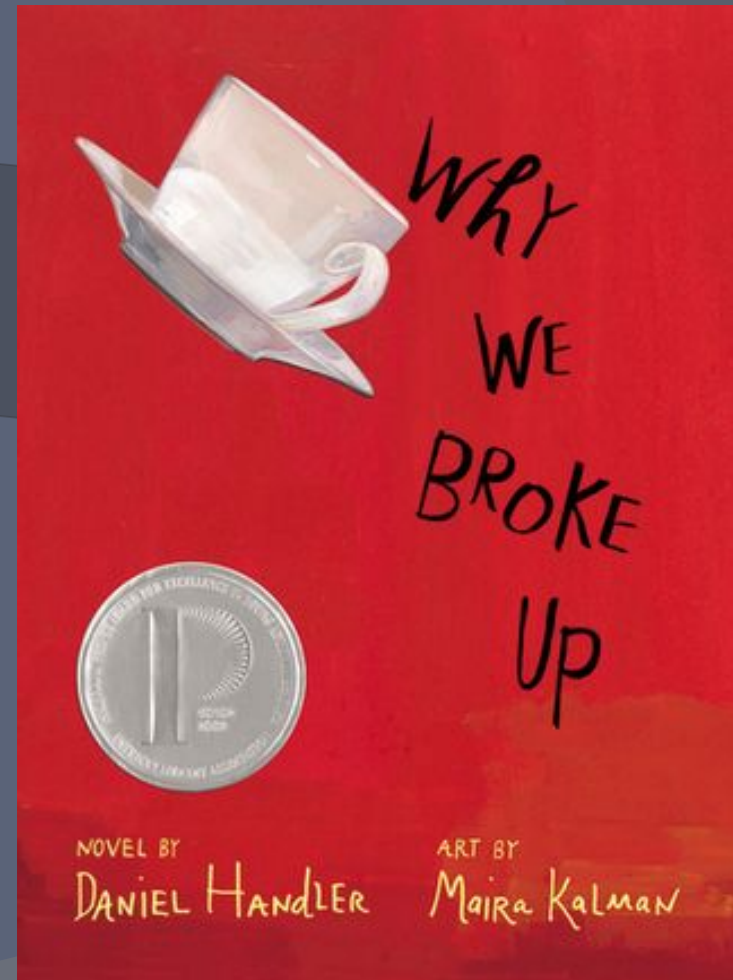


# Why We Broke Up

## Daniel Handler

Min Green and Ed Slaterton are breaking up, so Min is writing Ed a letter and giving him a box. Inside the box is why they broke up.

Two bottle caps, a movie ticket, a folded note, a box of matches, a protractor, books, a toy truck, a pair of ugly earrings, a comb from a motel room, and every other item collected over the course of a giddy, intimate, heartbreaking relationship. Item after item is illustrated and accounted for, and then the box, like a girlfriend, will be dumped.

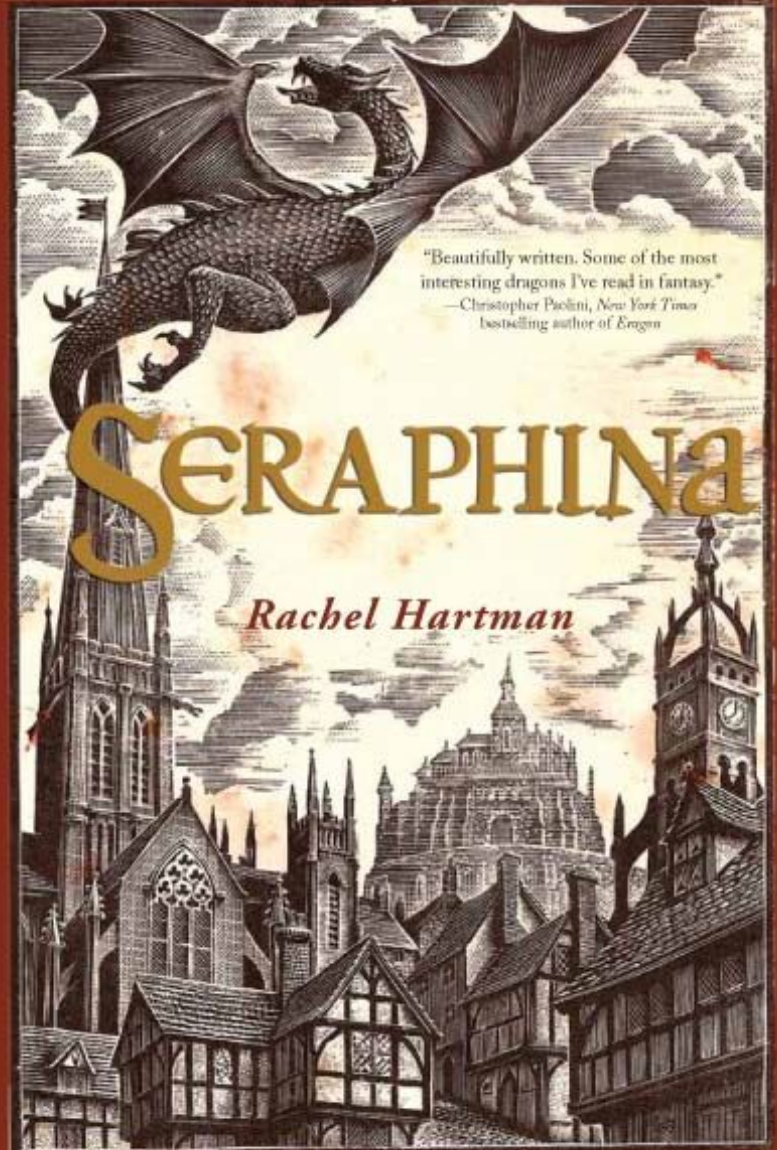


# \*Seraphina\*

Rachel Hartman

Four decades of peace have done little to ease the mistrust between humans and dragons in the kingdom of Goredd. **Folding themselves into human shape, dragons attend court as ambassadors**, and lend their rational, mathematical minds to universities as scholars and teachers. As the treaty's anniversary draws near, however, tensions are high.

Seraphina Dombegh has reason to fear both sides. An unusually gifted musician, she joins the court just as a member of the royal family is murdered—in suspiciously draconian fashion. Seraphina is drawn into the investigation, partnering with the captain of the Queen's Guard, the dangerously perceptive Prince Lucian Kiggs. While they begin to uncover hints of a sinister plot to destroy the peace, Seraphina struggles to protect her own secret, the secret behind her musical gift, one so terrible that its discovery could mean her very life.



**Sequel: Shadow Scale soon to be released**

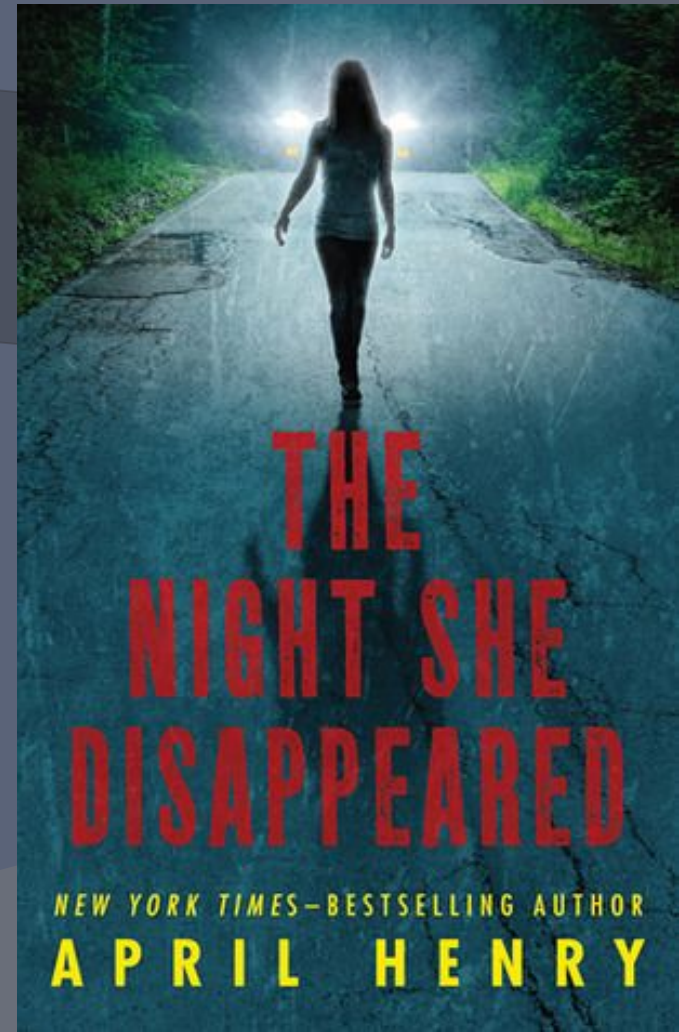
# MYSTERY - THRILLER

## The Night She Disappeared

April Henry

Gabie drives a Mini Cooper. She also works part-time as a delivery girl at Pete's Pizza. One night, Kayla—another delivery girl—goes missing. To her horror, Gabie learns that the supposed kidnapper had asked if the girl in the Mini Cooper was working.

Gabie can't move beyond the fact that Kayla's fate was really meant for her. She becomes obsessed with finding Kayla and teams up with Drew, who also works at Pete's. Together they set out to prove that Kayla isn't dead—and hopefully to find her before she is.



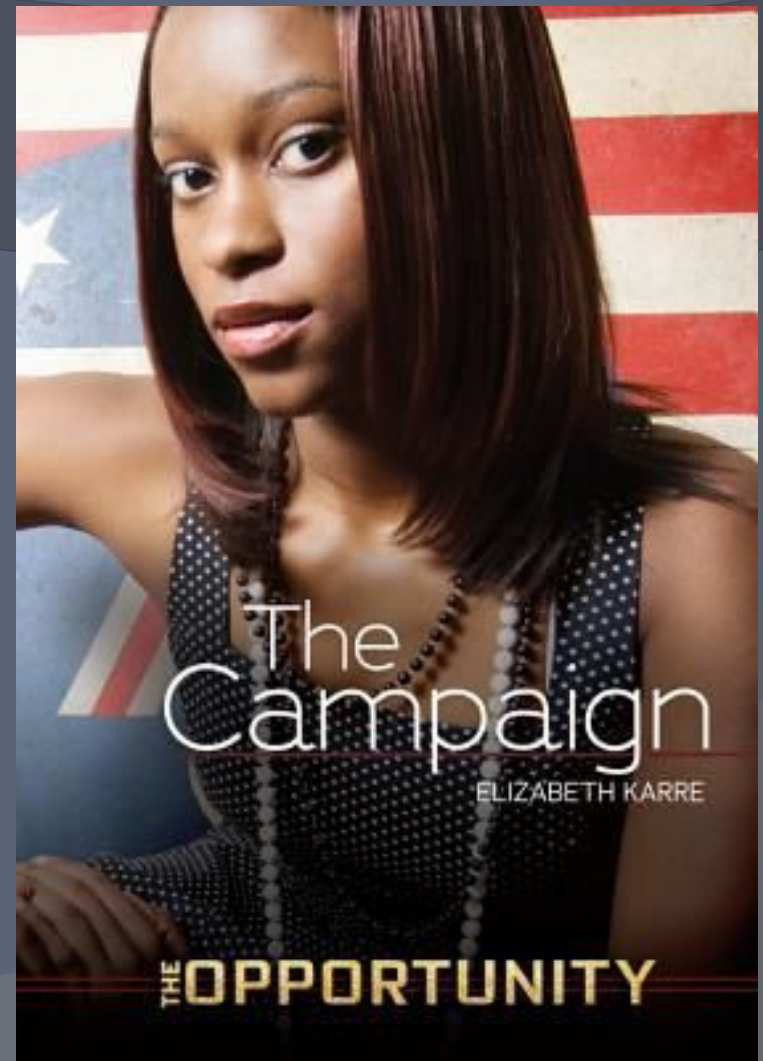
# The Campaign

*Similar to Bluford Series*

## Elizabeth Karre

Harmon Holt always gets what he wants—and since he's a billionaire, what he's got includes music, movie, and TV studios, news networks, and a football team. Yeah, he's got everything, but he hasn't forgotten where he came from. Every year he picks one student from his old high school—no interview, no application—to be a paid intern at one of his companies. The money's good and the perks are great, but the opportunity is once in a lifetime.

Destiny Davis never imagined being an investigative reporter, but her sixth sense for drama and backstabbing caught Mr. Holt's attention. Now she's an intern at Chatter, his new blog syndicate, and she's knee-deep in sleazy politics. Can she rise above and seize her opportunity?

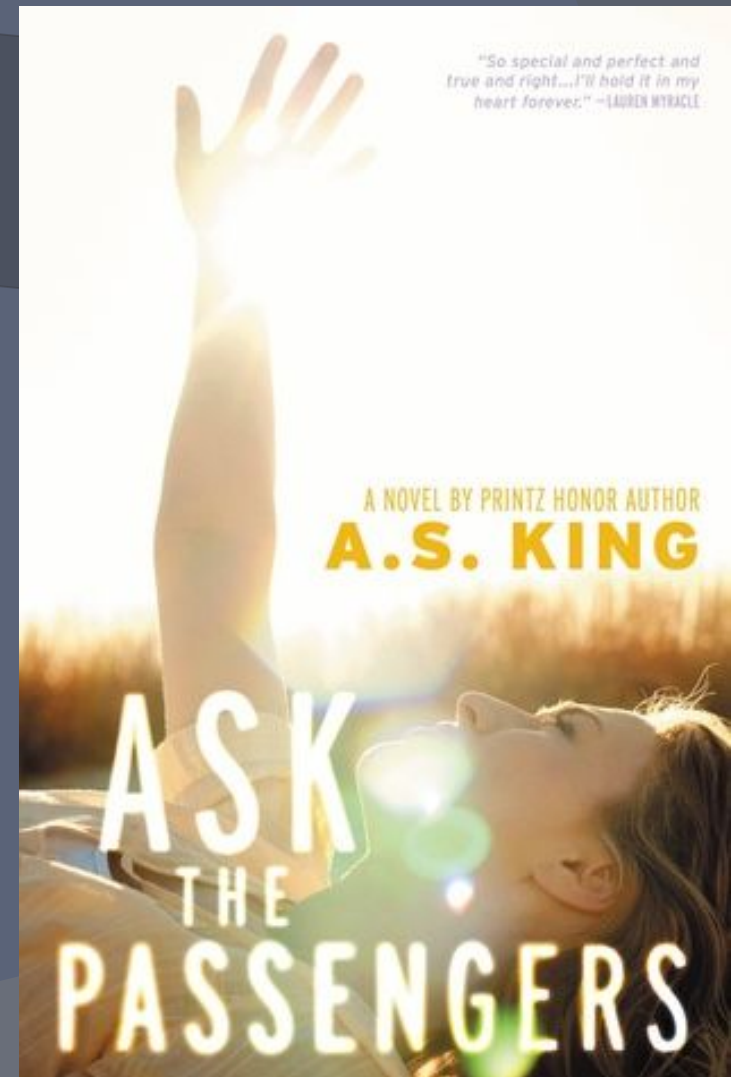


# \*Ask the Passengers\*

## AS King

Astrid Jones desperately wants to confide in someone, but her mother's pushiness and her father's lack of interest tell her they're the last people she can trust. Instead, Astrid spends hours lying on the backyard picnic table watching airplanes fly overhead. She doesn't know the passengers inside, but they're the only people who won't judge her when she asks them her most personal questions . . . like what it means that she's falling in love with a girl.

As her secret relationship becomes more intense and her friends demand answers, Astrid has nowhere left to turn. She can't share the truth with anyone except the people at thirty thousand feet, and they don't even know she's there. But little does Astrid know just how much even the tiniest connection will affect these strangers' lives--and her own--for the better.



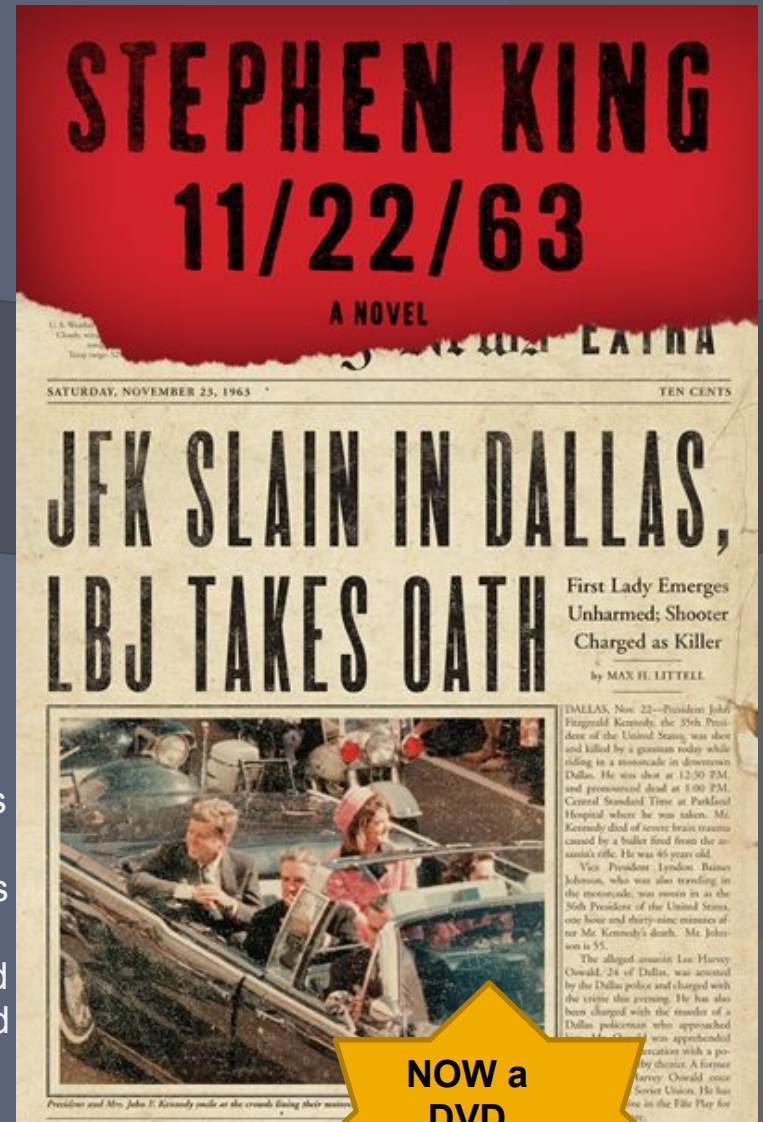
Student  
Favorite

# 11/22/63

## Stephen King

If you had the chance to change the course of history, would you? Would the consequences be what you hoped?

Jake Epping, 35, teaches high-school English in Lisbon Falls, Maine, and cries reading the brain-damaged janitor's story of childhood Halloween massacre by their drunken father. On his deathbed, pal Al divulges a secret portal to 1958 in his diner back pantry, and enlists Jake to prevent the 11/22/1963 Dallas assassination of American President John F. Kennedy. Under the alias George Amberson, our hero joins the cigarette-hazed full-flavored world of Elvis rock'n'roll, Negro discrimination, and freeway gas-guzzlers without seat belts. Will Jake lurk in impoverished immigrant slums beside troubled loner Lee Harvey Oswald, or share small-town friendliness with beautiful high school librarian Sadie Dunhill, the love of his life?

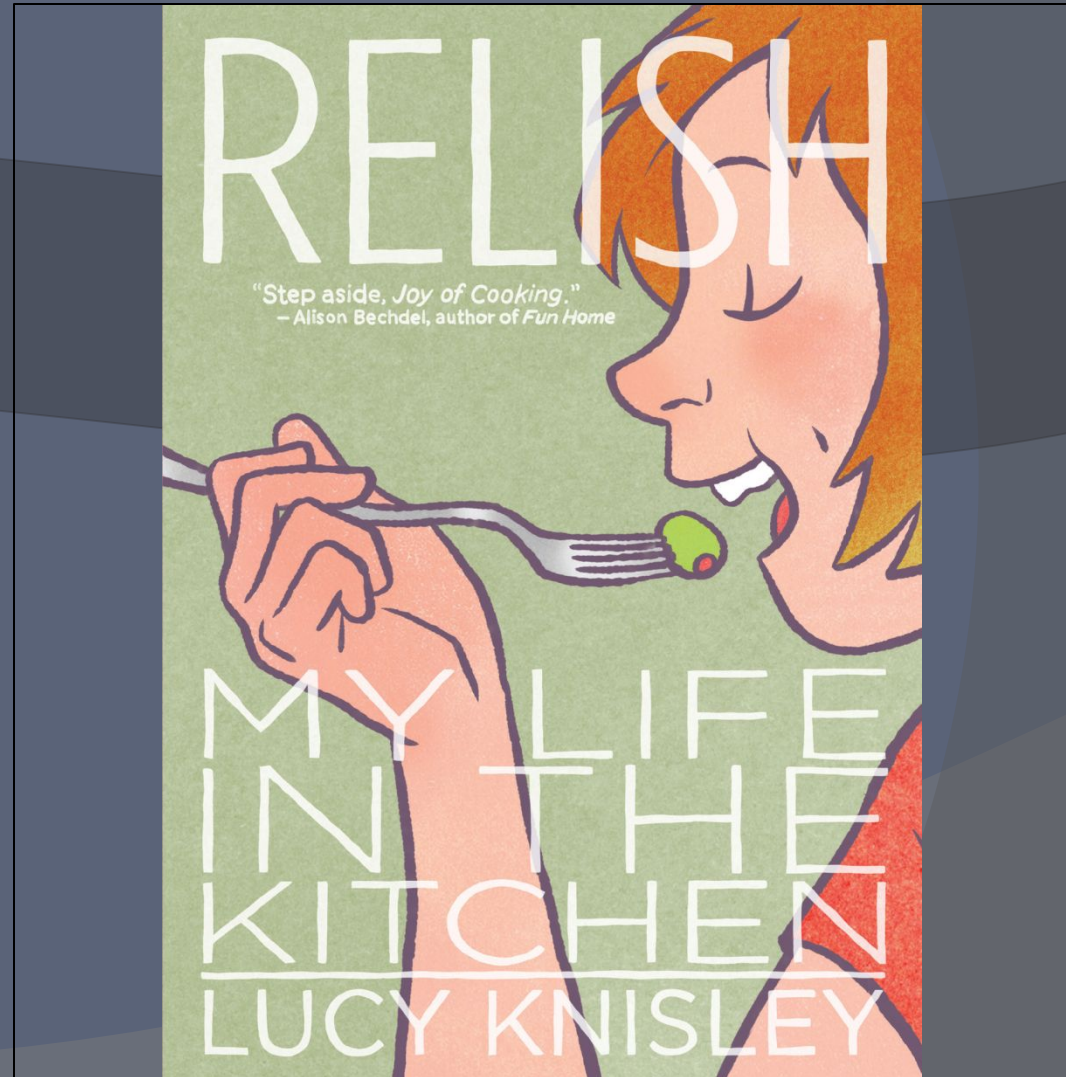


NOW a  
DVD  
mini--series

# Relish: My Life in the Kitchen

Lucy Kinsler

Lucy Knisley loves food. The daughter of a chef and a gourmet, this talented young cartoonist comes by her obsession honestly. In her forthright, thoughtful, and funny memoir, Lucy traces key episodes in her life thus far, framed by what she was eating at the time and lessons learned about food, cooking, and life. Each chapter is bookended with an illustrated recipe—many of them treasured family dishes, and a few of them Lucy's original inventions.

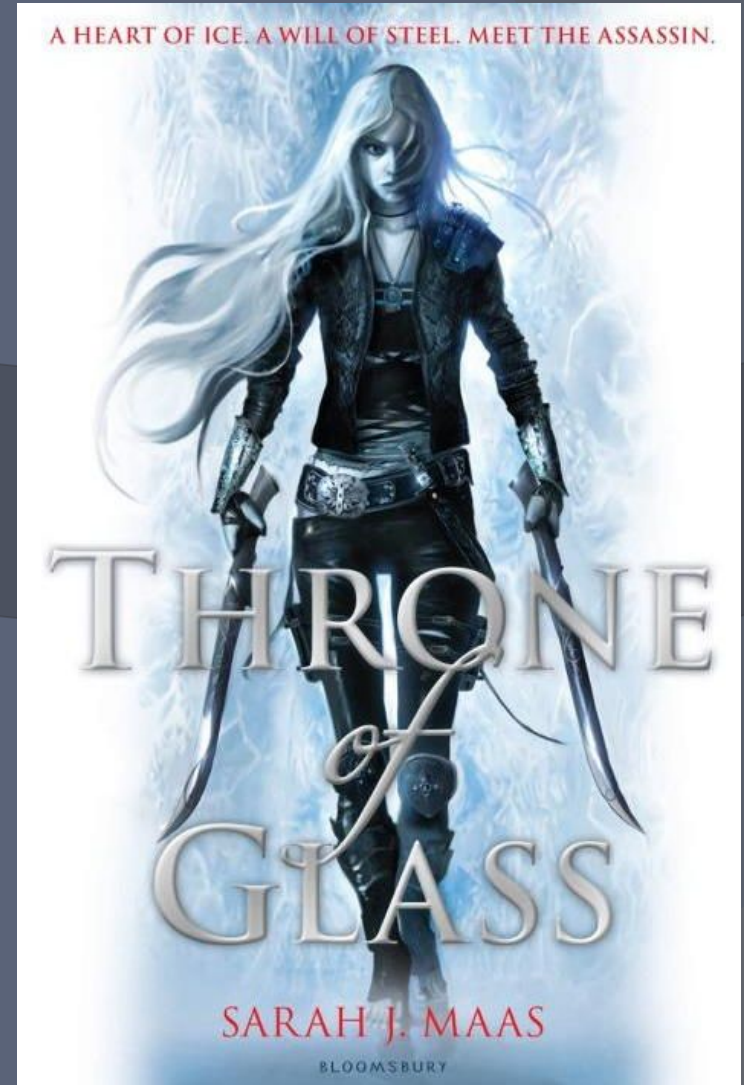


# Throne of Glass

Sarah Maas

In a land without magic, where the king rules with an iron hand, an assassin is summoned to the castle. She comes not to kill the king, but to win her freedom. If she defeats twenty-three killers, thieves, and warriors in a competition, she is released from prison to serve as the king's champion. Her name is Celaena Sardothien.

The Crown Prince will provoke her. The Captain of the Guard will protect her. But something evil dwells in the castle of glass--and it's there to kill. When her competitors start dying one by one, Celaena's fight for freedom becomes a fight for survival, and a desperate quest to root out the evil before it destroys her world.



**Sequel: Crown of Midnight**

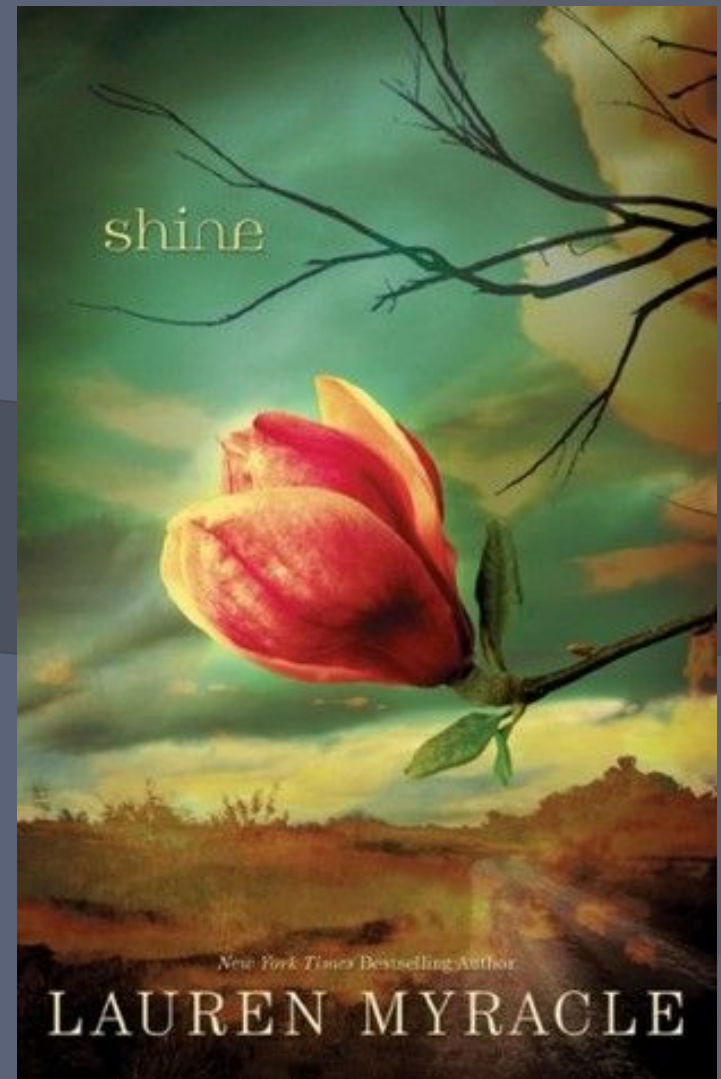


# Shine

Lauren Myracle

When her best guy friend falls victim to a vicious hate crime, sixteen-year-old Cat sets out to discover who in her small town did it. Richly atmospheric, this daring mystery mines the secrets of a tightly knit Southern community and examines the strength of will it takes to go against everyone you know in the name of justice.

Against a backdrop of poverty, clannishness, drugs, and intolerance, Myracle has crafted a harrowing coming-of-age tale couched in a deeply intelligent mystery. Smart, fearless, and compassionate, this is an unforgettable work from a beloved author.



Warning: Difficult read. Bigotry, violence, and mature topics

Student  
Favorite

# More Than This

## Patrick Ness

A boy named Seth drowns, desperate and alone in his final moments, losing his life as the pounding sea claims him. But then he wakes. He is naked, thirsty, starving. But alive. How is that possible? He *remembers* dying, his bones breaking, his skull dashed upon the rocks. So how is he here? And where is this place? It looks like the suburban English town where he lived as a child, before an unthinkable tragedy happened and his family moved to America. But the neighborhood around his old house is overgrown, covered in dust, and completely abandoned. What's going on? And why is it that whenever he closes his eyes, he falls prey to vivid, agonizing memories that seem more real than the world around him? Seth begins a search for answers, hoping that he might not be alone.

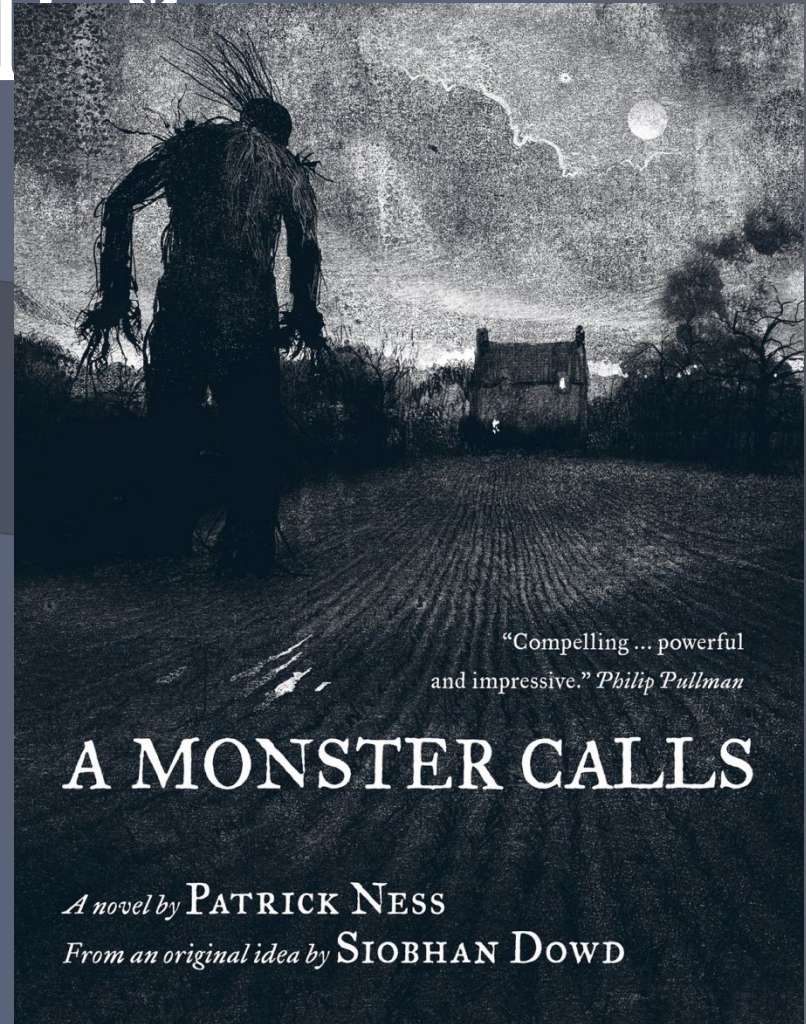


# \*A Monster Calls\*

Patrick Ness

**An unflinching, darkly funny, and deeply moving story of a boy, his seriously ill mother, and an unexpected monstrous visitor.**

At seven minutes past midnight, thirteen-year-old Conor wakes to find a monster outside his bedroom window. But it isn't the monster Conor's been expecting-- he's been expecting the one from his nightmare, the nightmare he's had nearly every night since his mother started her treatments. The monster in his backyard is different. It's ancient. And wild. And it wants something from Conor. Something terrible and dangerous. It wants the truth.



**WARNING:** Do not finish reading in public! This one is a tear-jerker.

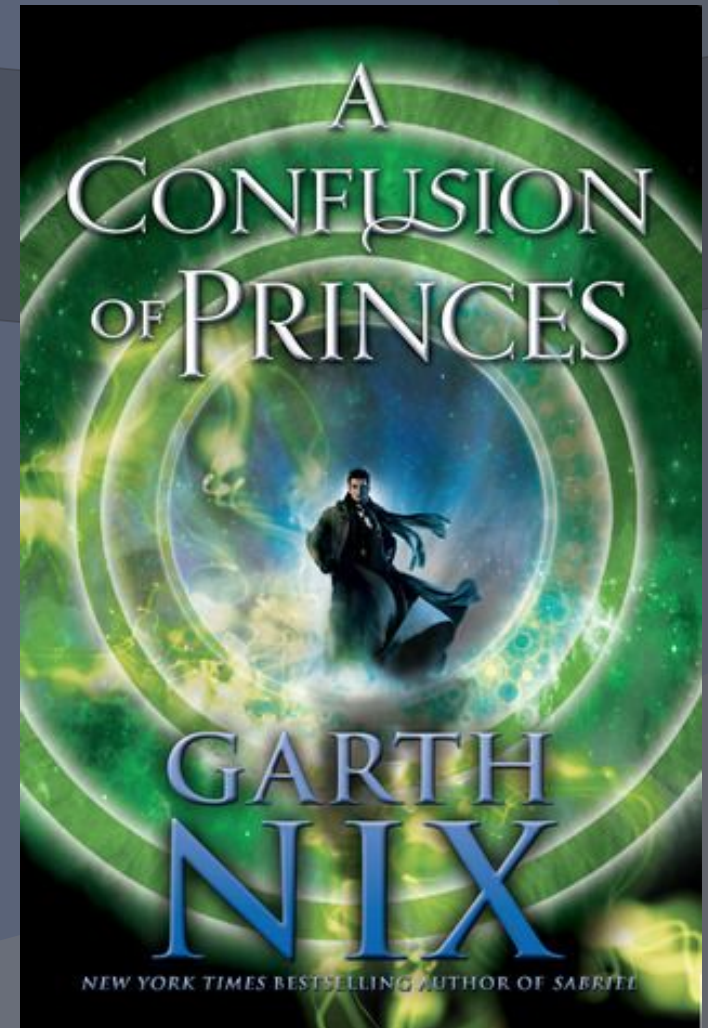
# A Confusion of Princes

## Garth Nix

Superhuman. Immortal. Prince in a Galactic Empire. There has to be a catch....

Khemri learns the minute he becomes a Prince that princes need to be hard to kill—for they are always in danger. Their greatest threat? Other Princes. Every Prince wants to become Emperor and the surest way to do so is to kill, dishonor, or sideline any potential competitor. There are rules, but as Khemri discovers, rules can be bent and even broken.

There are also mysteries. Khemri is drawn into the hidden workings of the Empire and is dispatched on a secret mission. In the ruins of space battle, he meets a young woman, called Raine, who challenges his view of the Empire, of Princes, and of himself.



# Dirty Little Secrets

CJ Omololu

Everyone has a secret. But Lucy's is bigger and dirtier than most. It's one she's been hiding for years—that her mom's out-of-control hoarding has turned their lives into a world of garbage and shame. She's managed to keep her home life hidden from her best friend and her crush, knowing they'd be disgusted by the truth. So, when her mom dies suddenly in their home, Lucy hesitates to call 911 because revealing their way of life would make her future unbearable—and she begins her two-day plan to set her life right.

## *DIRTY* LITTLE *SECRETS*



*You can only hoard  
your troubles  
for so long.*

*c. j. omololu*

# The Knife and the Butterfly

Ashley Hope Perez

After a marijuana-addled brawl with a rival gang, 16-year-old Azael wakes up to find himself surrounded by a familiar set of concrete walls and a locked door. Juvie again, he thinks. But he can't really remember what happened or how he got picked up. He knows his MS13 boys faced off with some punks from Crazy Crew. There were bats, bricks, chains. A knife. But he can't remember anything between that moment and when he woke behind bars.

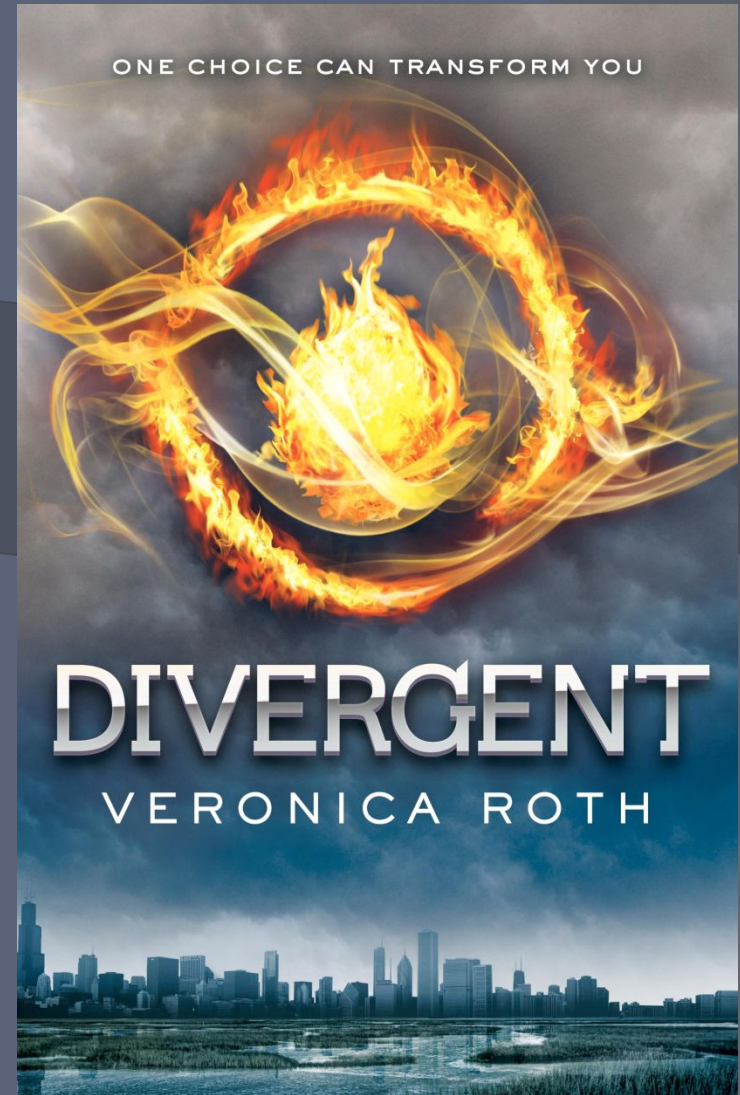
Azael knows prison, and something isn't right about this lockup. No phone call. No lawyer. No news about his brother or his homies. The only thing they make him do is watch some white girl in some cell. Watch her and try to remember.



# Divergent

## Veronica Roth

In Beatrice Prior's dystopian Chicago world, society is divided into five factions, each dedicated to the cultivation of a particular virtue—Candor (the **honest**), Abnegation (the **selfless**), Dauntless (the **brave**), Amity (the **peaceful**), and Erudite (the **intelligent**). On an appointed day of every year, all sixteen-year-olds must select the faction to which they will devote the rest of their lives. For Beatrice, the decision is between staying with her family and being who she really is—she can't have both. So she makes a choice that surprises everyone, including herself. During the highly competitive initiation that follows, Beatrice renames herself Tris and struggles alongside her fellow initiates to live out the choice they have made.

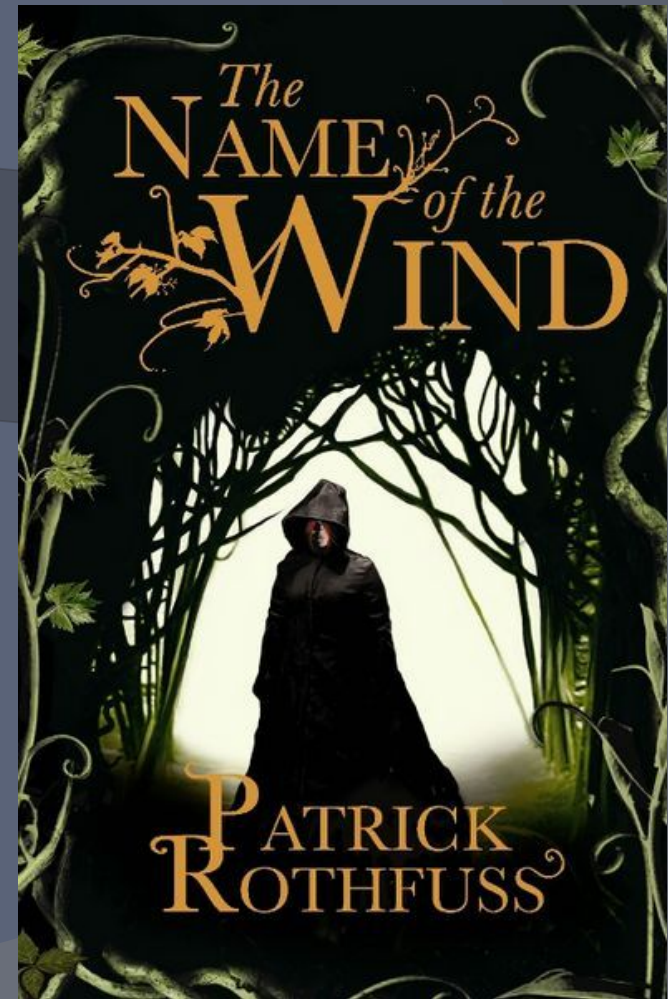


Now a Major Motion Picture

# The Name of the Wind

Patrick Rothfuss

The riveting first-person narrative of a young man who grows to be the most notorious magician his world has ever seen. From his childhood in a troupe of traveling players, to years spent as a near-feral orphan in a crime-ridden city, to his daringly brazen yet successful bid to enter a legendary school of magic, *The Name of the Wind* is a masterpiece that transports readers into the body and mind of a wizard. It is a high-action novel written with a poet's hand, a powerful coming-of-age story of a magically gifted young man, told through his eyes: to read this book is to be the hero.

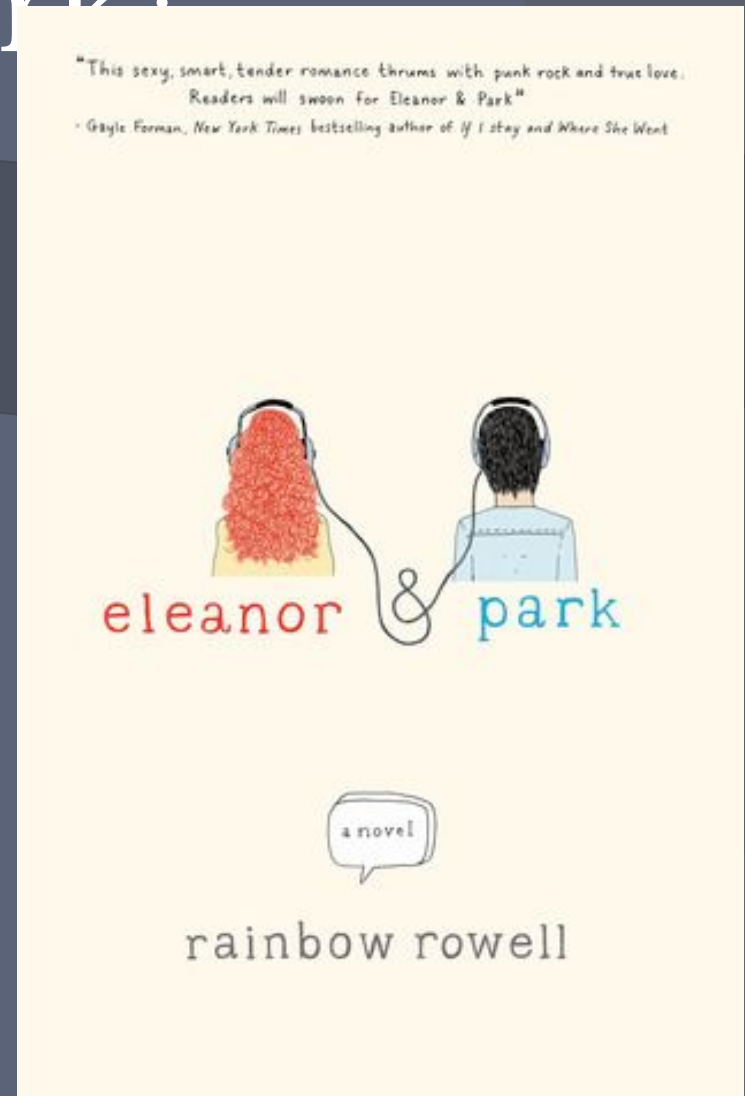




# \*Eleanor and Park\*

Rainbow Rowell

Eleanor is the new girl in town and her wild red hair and patchwork outfits are not helping her blend in. She ends up sitting next to Park on the bus, whose tendencies towards comic books don't jibe with the rest of his family's love of sports. They sit in awkward silence every day until Park notices that Eleanor is reading his comics over his shoulder; he begins to slide them closer to her side of the seat and thus begins their love story. Their relationship grows gradually—making each other mix tapes (it is 1986) and discussing X-Men characters until they both find themselves looking forward to the bus ride more than any other part of the day. Things aren't easy: Eleanor is bullied at school and then goes home to a threatening family situation; Park's parents do not approve of Eleanor's awkward ways.



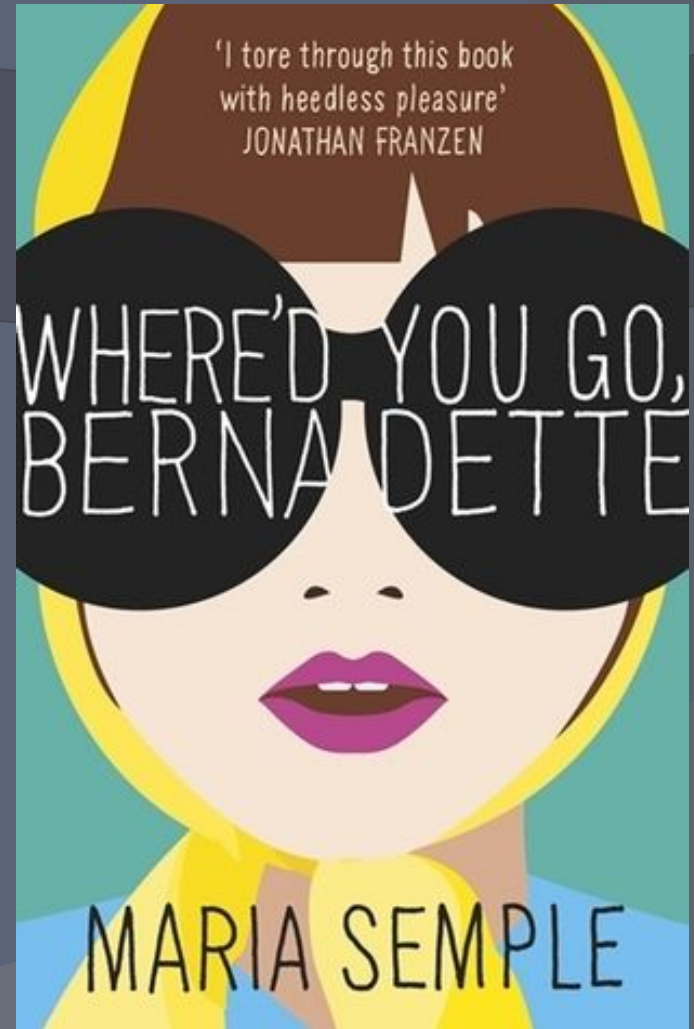
# Where'd You Go, Bernadette

Maria Semple

Bernadette Fox is notorious. To her Microsoft-guru husband, she's a fearlessly opinionated partner; to fellow private-school mothers in Seattle, she's a disgrace; to design mavens, she's a revolutionary architect, and to 15-year-old Bee, she is a best friend and, simply, Mom.

Then Bernadette disappears. It began when Bee aced her report card and claimed her promised reward: a family trip to Antarctica. But Bernadette's intensifying allergy to Seattle--and people in general--has made her so agoraphobic that a virtual assistant in India now runs her most basic errands. A trip to the end of the earth is problematic.

To find her mother, Bee compiles email messages, official documents, secret correspondence--creating a compulsively readable and touching novel about misplaced genius and a mother and daughter's role in an absurd world.

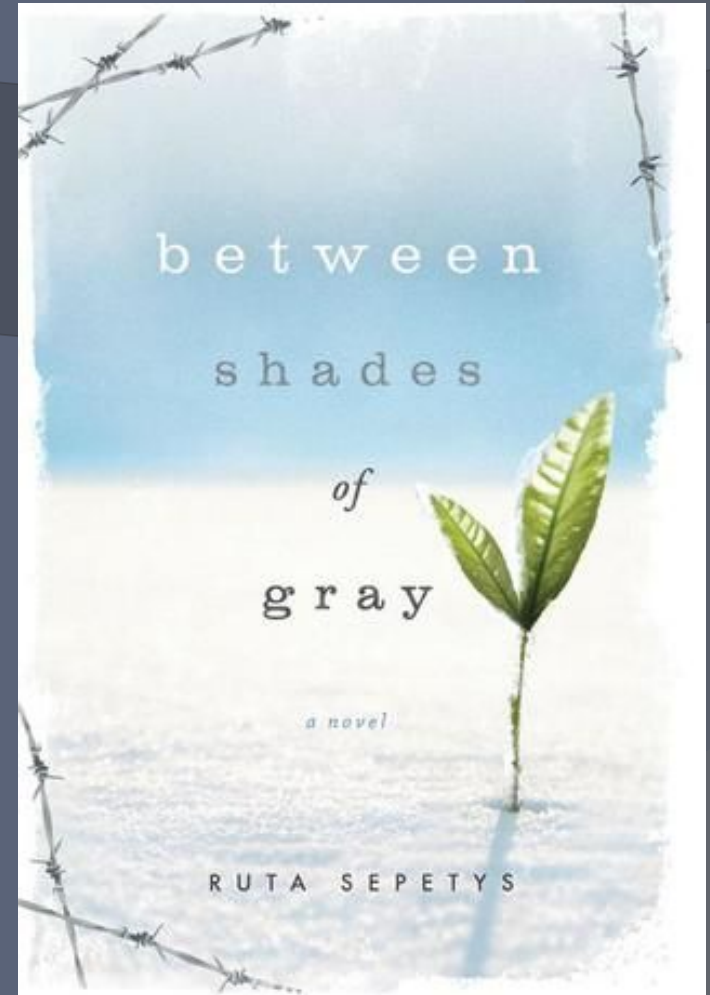


# Between Shades of Gray

## Ruta Sepetys

Lina is just like any other fifteen-year-old Lithuanian girl in 1941. She paints, she draws, she gets crushes on boys. Until one night when Soviet officers barge into her home, tearing her family from the comfortable life they've known. Separated from her father, forced onto a crowded and dirty train car, Lina, her mother, and her young brother slowly make their way north, crossing the Arctic Circle, to a work camp in the coldest reaches of Siberia. Here they are forced, under Stalin's orders, to dig for beets and fight for their lives under the cruelest of conditions.

Lina finds solace in her art, meticulously--and at great risk--documenting events by drawing, hoping these messages will make their way to her father's prison camp to let him know they are still alive.

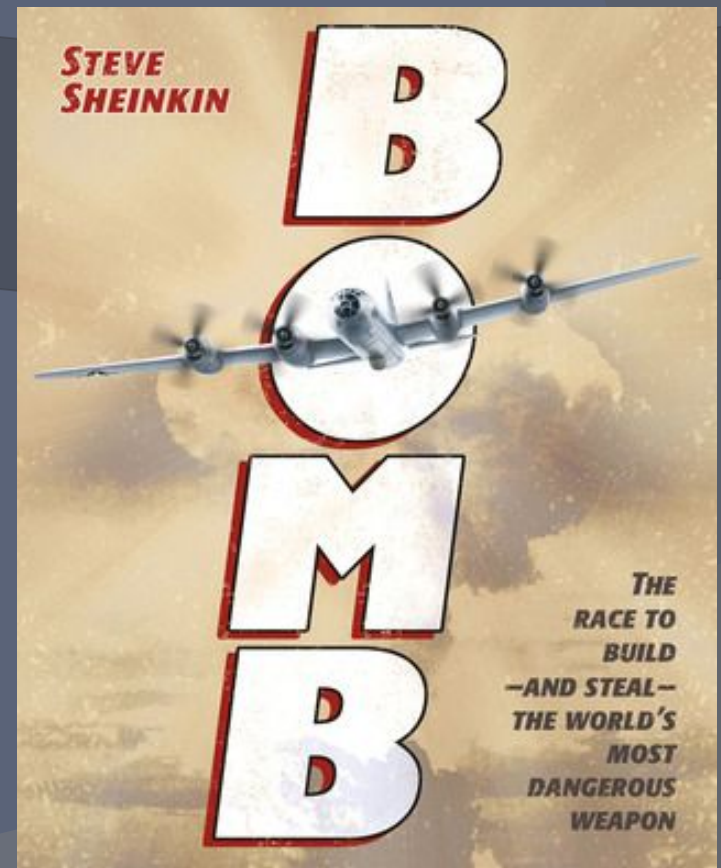


Historical Fiction: Baltic Cleansing  
Stalin sent people to concentration camps.

# Bomb: The Race to Build—and Steal—the World's Most Dangerous Weapon

Steve Sheinkin

In December of 1938, a chemist in a German laboratory made a shocking discovery: When placed next to radioactive material, a Uranium atom split in two. That simple discovery launched a scientific race that spanned 3 continents. In Great Britain and the United States, Soviet spies worked their way into the scientific community; in Norway, a commando force slipped behind enemy lines to attack German heavy-water manufacturing; and deep in the desert, one brilliant group of scientists was hidden away at a remote site at Los Alamos. This is the story of the plotting, the risk-taking, the deceit, and genius that created the world's most formidable weapon. This is the story of the atomic bomb.



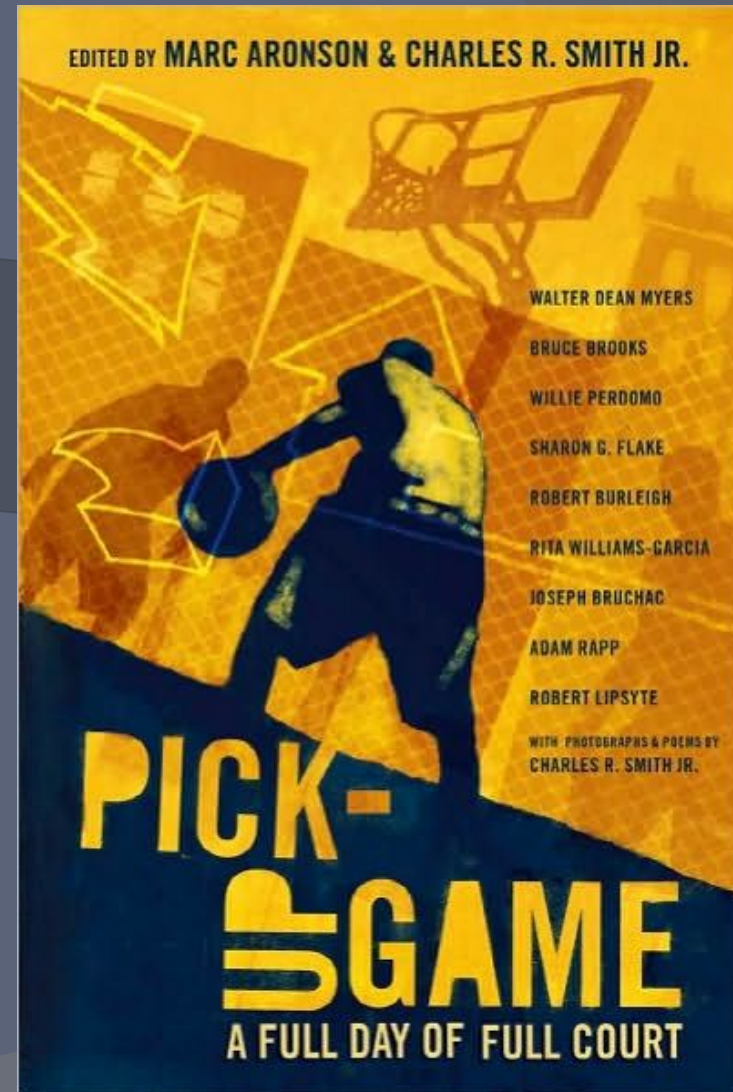
**Reads like a SPY NOVEL!**

# Pick Up Game

## Charles R Smith

It's one single steamy July day at the West 4th Street Court in NYC, otherwise known as the Cage. Hotshot baller ESPN is wooing the scouts, Boo is struggling to guard the weird new guy named Waco, a Spike Lee wannabe has video rolling, and virgin Irene is sizing up six-foot-eight-and-a-half-inch-tall Chester.

Nine of YA literature's top writers reveal how it all goes down in this searing novel in **short stories that ingeniously pick up where the last one ends.**



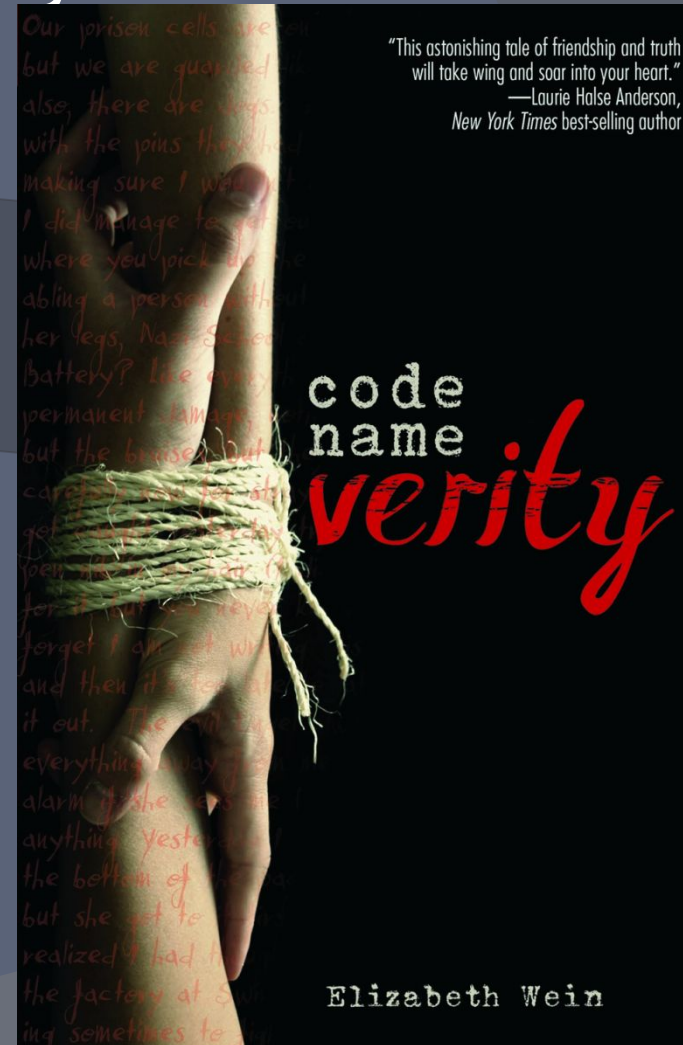
# Code Name Verity

## Elizabeth Wein

Oct. 11th, 1943-A British spy plane crashes in Nazi-occupied France. Its pilot and passenger are best friends. One of the girls has a chance at survival. The other has lost the game before it's barely begun.

When "Verity" is arrested by the Gestapo, she's sure she doesn't stand a chance. As a secret agent captured in enemy territory, she's living a spy's worst nightmare. Her Nazi interrogators give her a simple choice: reveal her mission or face a grisly execution.

As she intricately weaves her confession, Verity uncovers her past, how she became friends with the pilot Maddie, and why she left Maddie in the wrecked fuselage of their plane. On each new scrap of paper, Verity battles for her life, confronting her views on courage, failure and her desperate hope to make it home. But will trading her secrets be enough to save her from the enemy?

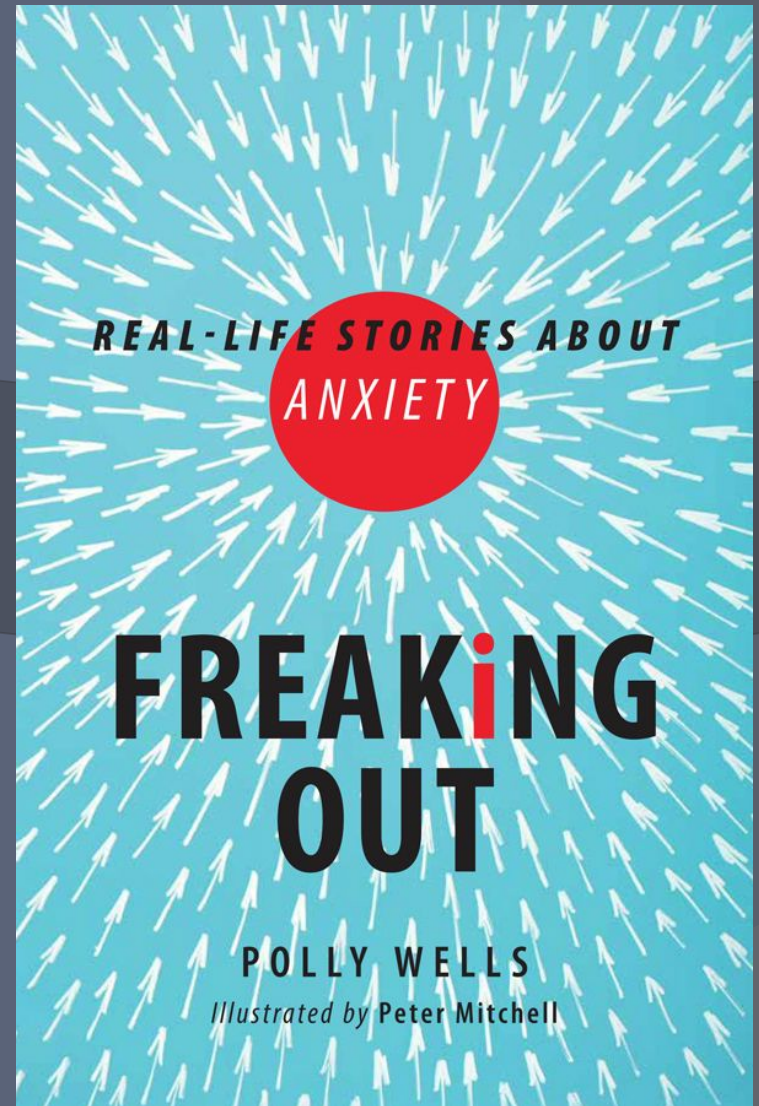


# Freaking Out

Polly Wells

That sweaty, gut-clenching, suffocating, racing-heart feeling. That dull, never-ending sense that something's wrong. Anxiety affects millions of young adults. From phobias to compulsiveness to post traumatic stress disorder, *Freaking Out* chronicles the many guises of excessive anxiety in teens' lives and the havoc it can wreak.

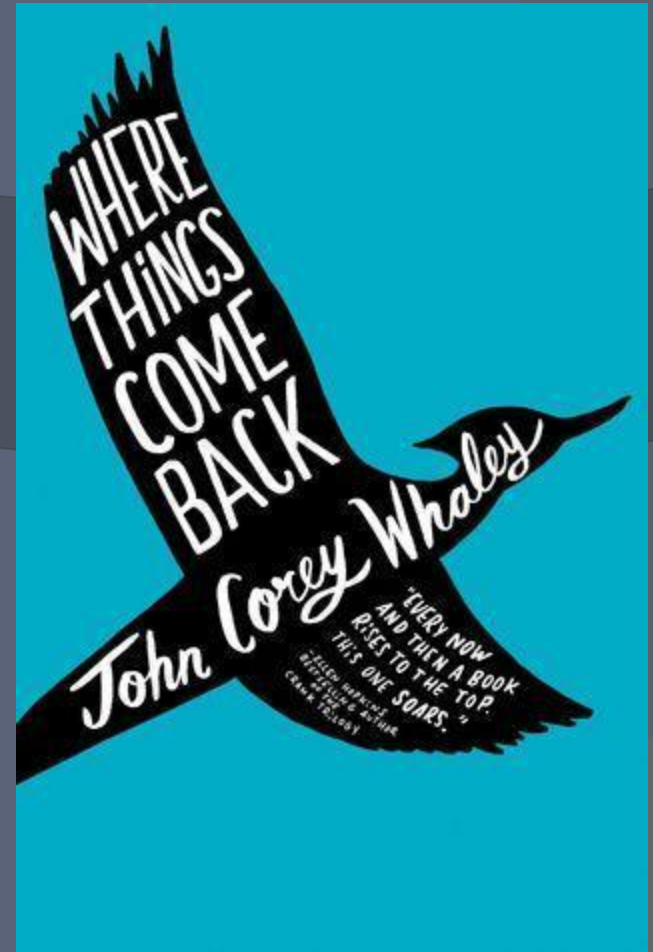
These 13 true stories span the anxiety spectrum, from heightened adolescent angst to full-blown disorders. The triggers for the teens in this book range from the stress of getting into college, to the loss of a parent, to day-to-day social encounters. Their stories explore the different ways each learned to unshackle themselves from the weight of overwhelming worry.



# \*Where Things Come Back\*

## John Corey Whaley

In the remarkable, bizarre, and heart-wrenching summer before Cullen Witter's senior year of high school, he is forced to examine everything he thinks he understands about his small and painfully dull Arkansas town. His cousin overdoses; his town becomes absurdly obsessed with the alleged reappearance of an extinct woodpecker; and most troubling of all, his sensitive, gifted fifteen-year-old brother, Gabriel, suddenly and inexplicably disappears.



Based on a true story



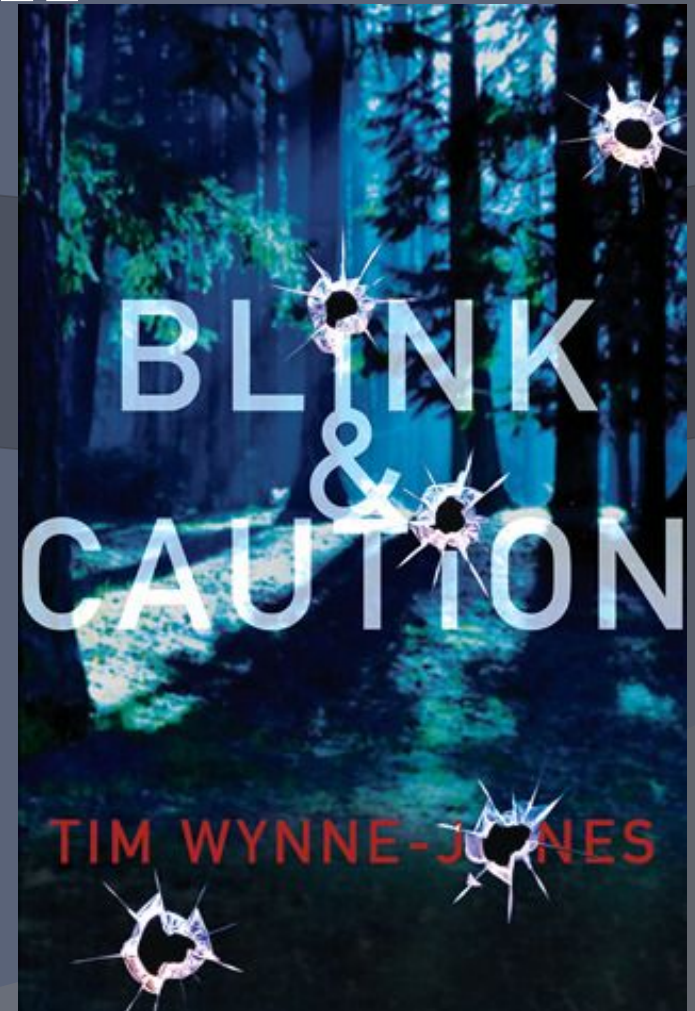
# Blink and Caution

Tom Wynne-Jones

Blink and Caution are two teenage runaways in Toronto. Blink is getting by day to day by stealing breakfast leftovers from room-service in a fancy hotel when he accidentally observes a faked kidnapping of a wealthy CEO.

Caution is on the run from an abusive and possessive drug-dealer boyfriend when she meets Blink. She falls in with him at first because she thinks he will be an easy mark, but finds herself strangely drawn to him.

Blink, however, is obsessed with the kidnapping he witnessed and the media storm surrounding it. To solve the mystery, the teens travel to a remote cabin, where they are in over their heads, and it will take all of their cunning and street smarts to make it out alive.

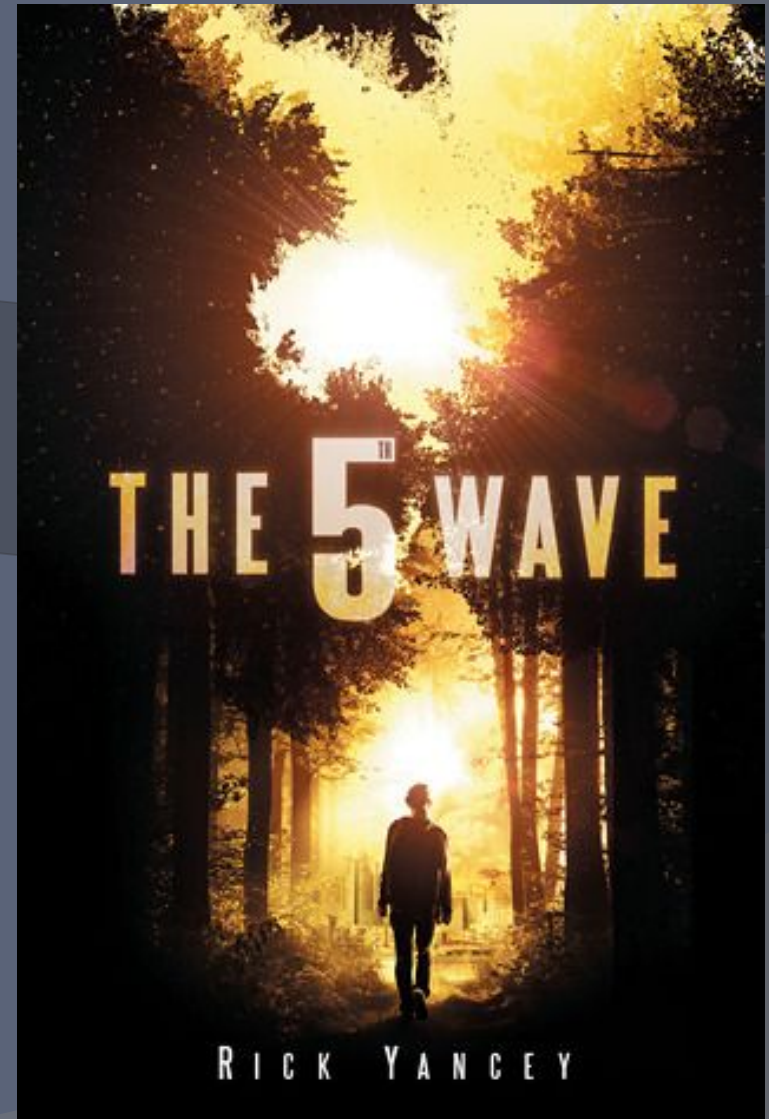


# The 5<sup>th</sup> Wave

Rick Yancey

After the 1st wave, only darkness remains. After the 2nd, only the lucky escape. And after the 3rd, only the *unlucky* survive. After the 4th wave, only one rule applies: trust no one.

Now, it's the dawn of the 5th wave, and on a lonely stretch of highway, Cassie runs from Them. The beings who only look human, who roam the countryside killing anyone they see. Who have scattered Earth's last survivors. To stay alone is to stay alive, Cassie believes, until she meets Evan Walker. Beguiling and mysterious, Evan Walker may be Cassie's only hope for rescuing her brother--or even saving herself.

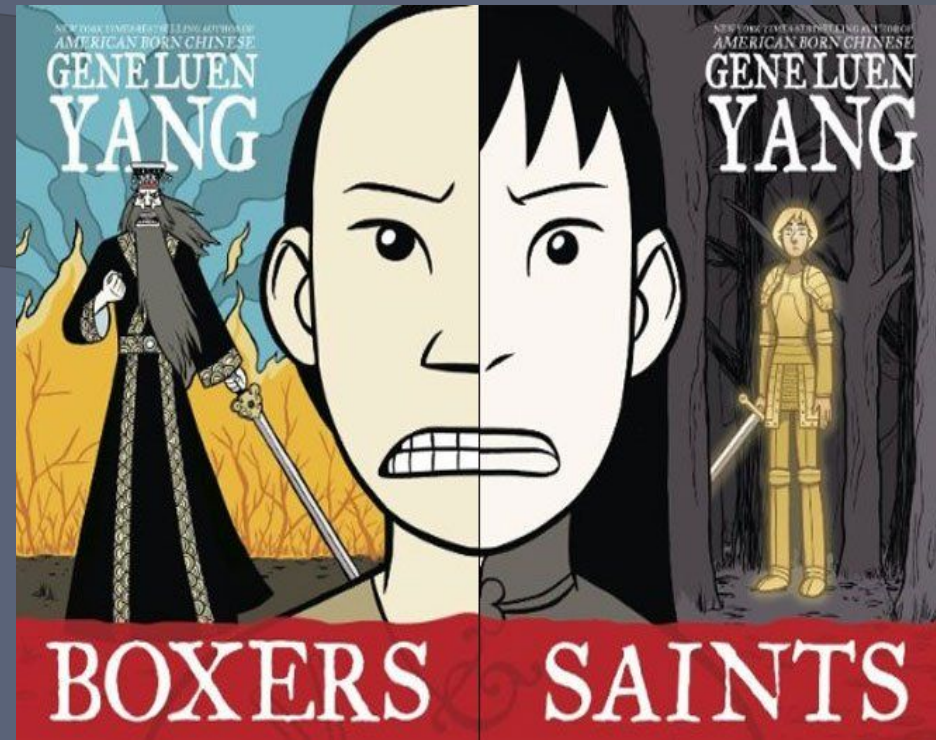


# Boxers and Saints

## Gene Luen Yang

China, 1898. Bands of foreign missionaries and soldiers roam the countryside, bullying and robbing Chinese peasants.

Little Bao has had enough. Harnessing the powers of ancient Chinese gods, he recruits an army of Boxers - commoners trained in kung fu who fight to free China from "foreign devils." Against all odds, this grass-roots rebellion is violently successful. But nothing is simple. Little Bao is fighting for the glory of China, but at what cost? So many are dying, including thousands of "secondary devils" - Chinese citizens who have converted to Christianity.



# Questions? Great Titles I Missed?

- [wilkersz@wcsoh.org](mailto:wilkersz@wcsoh.org)
- Ext. 6246