



READ FOR A LIFETIME 2023-2024 BOOKLIST

After Dark With Roxie Clark

Brooke Lauren Davis

352 Pages

Roxie Clark has seen more dead bodies than your average 17-year-old. As a member of the supposedly cursed Clark family, most of her ancestors have met tragic ends, including her own mother. Instead of fearing the curse, however, Roxie has combined her flair for performance and her gruesome family history into a successful ghost tour. But her tour never covers the most recent body she's seen — her sister Skylar's boyfriend, Colin Riley, found murdered in a cornfield. A year after the murder, Roxie's desperate to help Skylar find closure and start to heal. Instead, Skylar becomes fixated on finding the killer. As the sisters dig into what really happened, they discover that more than one person has been lying about that night. And the closer they get to the truth, the more Roxie starts to wonder if some scary stories might be better left untold.

The Agathas

Kathleen Glasgow

405 Pages

Welcome to Castle Cove — a town cursed with missing girls, bad boyfriends, family secrets and some very steep cliffs. Last summer, Alice Ogilvie's basketball-star boyfriend, Steve, dumped her. Then she disappeared for five days. Where she went and what happened to her is the biggest mystery in Castle Cove. Or at least it was. Because now, another one of Steve's girlfriends has vanished: Brooke Donovan, Alice's ex-best friend. And it doesn't look like Brooke will be coming back. Enter Iris Adams, Alice's tutor. Iris has her own reasons for wanting to disappear, though unlike Alice, she doesn't have the money or the means. That could be changed by the hefty reward Brooke's family is offering. The police are convinced Steve is the culprit, but Alice isn't so sure, and with Iris on her side, she just might be able to prove her theory. Luckily, Alice has exactly what they need to crack the case — the complete works of Agatha Christie. If there's anyone who can teach the girls how to solve a mystery, it's the master herself. But the town of Castle Cove holds many secrets, and Alice and Iris have no idea how much danger they're about to walk into.

Ain't Burned All the Bright

Jason Reynolds

384 Pages

Prepare yourself for something unlike anything: A smash-up of art and text for teens that viscerally captures what it is to be Black. In America. Right Now.

All My Rage

Sabaa Tair

384 Pages

Salahudin and Noor are more than best friends; they are family. Growing up as outcasts in the small desert town of Juniper, California, they understand each other the way no one else does. Until the fight, which destroys their bond with the swift fury of a star exploding. Now, Sal scrambles to run the family motel as his mother Misbah's health fails and his grieving father loses himself to alcoholism. Noor, meanwhile, walks a harrowing tightrope: working at her wrathful uncle's liquor store while hiding the fact that she's applying to college so she can escape him—and Juniper—forever. When Sal's attempts to save the motel spiral out of control, he and Noor must ask themselves what friendship is worth—and what it takes to defeat the monsters in their pasts and the ones in their midst.

Asylum

Madeleine Roux

317 Pages

For 16-year-old Dan Crawford, New Hampshire College Prep is more than a summer program—it's a lifeline. An outcast at his high school, Dan is excited to finally make some friends in his last summer before college. But when he arrives at the program, Dan learns that his dorm for the summer used to be a sanatorium, more commonly known as an asylum. And not just any asylum—a last resort for the criminally insane. As Dan and his new friends, Abby and Jordan, explore the hidden recesses of their creepy summer home, they soon discover it's no coincidence that the three of them ended up here. Because the asylum holds the key to a terrifying past. And there are some secrets that refuse to stay buried.

Beartown

Fredrik Backman

432 Pages

People say Beartown is finished. A tiny community nestled deep in the forest; it is slowly losing ground to the ever-encroaching trees. But down by the lake stands an old ice rink, built generations ago by the working men who founded this town. And in that ice rink is the reason people in Beartown believe tomorrow will be better than today. Their junior ice hockey

team is about to compete in the national semi-finals, and they actually have a shot at winning. All the hopes and dreams of this place now rest on the shoulders of a handful of teenage boys. Being responsible for the hopes of an entire town is a heavy burden, and the semi-final match is the catalyst for a violent act that will leave a young girl traumatized and a town in turmoil. Accusations are made and, like ripples on a pond, they travel all throughout Beartown, leaving no resident unaffected. Beartown explores the hopes that bring a small community together, the secrets that tear it apart and the courage it takes for an individual to go against the grain.

Chaos Theory

Nic Stone

288 Pages

Scars exist to remind us of what we've survived. Since Shelbi enrolled at Windward Academy as a senior and won't be there very long, she hasn't bothered making friends. What her classmates don't know about her can't be used to hurt her — you know, like it did at her last school. Andy Criddle is not okay. At all. He's had far too much to drink. Again. Which is bad. And things are about to get worse. When Shelbi sees Andy at his lowest, she can relate. So she doesn't resist reaching out. And there's no doubt their connection has them both seeing stars . . . but the closer they get, the more the past threatens to pull their universes apart. It's about living with grief, prioritizing mental health and finding love amid the chaos.

Daughter of the Deep

Rick Riordan

352 Pages

Ana Dakkar is a freshman at Harding-Pencroft Academy, a five-year high school that graduates the best marine scientists, naval warriors, navigators and underwater explorers in the world. Ana's parents died while on a scientific expedition two years ago, and the only family she's got left is her older brother, Dev, also a student at HP. Ana's freshman year culminates with the class' weekend trial at sea, the details of which have been kept secret. She only hopes she has what it'll take to succeed. All her worries are blown out of the water when, on the bus ride to the ship, Ana and her schoolmates witness a terrible tragedy that will change the trajectory of their lives. But wait, there's more. The professor accompanying them informs Ana that their rival school, Land Institute, and Harding-Pencroft have been fighting a cold war for 150 years. Now that cold war has been turned up to a full broil, and the freshmen are in danger of becoming fish food. In a race against deadly enemies, Ana will make amazing friends and astounding discoveries about her heritage as she puts her leadership skills to the test for the first time.

The Davenports

Krystal Marquis

379 Pages

In 1910, the Davenports are one of the few Black families of immense wealth and status in a changing United States, their fortune made through the entrepreneurship of William Davenport, a formerly enslaved man who founded the Davenport Carriage Company years ago. Now the Davenports live surrounded by servants, crystal chandeliers and endless parties, finding their way and finding love—even where they're not supposed to. There is Olivia, the beautiful elder Davenport daughter, ready to do her duty by getting married. . . until she meets the charismatic civil rights leader Washington DeWight and sparks fly. The younger daughter, Helen, is more interested in fixing cars than falling in love—unless it's with her sister's suitor. Amy-Rose, the childhood friend turned maid to the Davenport sisters, dreams of opening her own business—and marrying the one man she could never be with, Olivia and Helen's brother, John. But Olivia's best friend, Ruby, also has her sights set on John Davenport, though she can't seem to keep his interest . . . until family pressure has her scheming to win his heart, just as someone else wins hers. Inspired by the real-life story of C.R. Patterson and his family, it's the tale of four determined and passionate young Black women discovering the courage to steer their own path in life—and love.

Five Total Strangers

Natalie D. Richards

302 Pages

A hitched ride home in a snowstorm turns sinister when one of the passengers is plotting for the ride to end in disaster. When Mira flies home to spend Christmas with her mother in Pittsburgh, a record-breaking blizzard results in a cancelled layover. Desperate to get to her grief-ridden mother in the wake of a family death, Mira hitches a ride with a group of friendly college kids who were on her initial flight. As the drive progresses and weather conditions become more treacherous, Mira realizes that the four other passengers she's stuck in the car with don't actually know one another. Soon, they're not just dealing with heavy snowfall and ice-slick roads, but the fact that somebody will stop at nothing to ensure their trip ends in a deadly disaster.

Hide: The Graphic Novel**Kiersten White****240 Pages**

What would you do for \$50,000? For Mack, the prize money would be life changing. She knows her time at the women's shelter is already up. And she's good at hiding. At least this time, her life doesn't depend on it — or so she thinks. The challenge is simple. All 14 competitors must spend seven days hiding in an abandoned amusement park from dawn to dusk. There's only one rule: don't get caught. But as the people around her begin disappearing one by one, Mack realizes this competition is more dangerous than she'd imagined, and that together might be the only way to survive.

Hollow Fires**Samira Ahmed****404 Pages**

Safiya Mirza dreams of becoming a journalist. And one thing she's learned as editor of her school newspaper is that a journalist's job is to find the facts and not let personal biases affect the story. But all that changes the day she finds the body of a murdered boy. Jawad Ali was 14 years old when he built a cosplay jetpack that a teacher mistook for a bomb. A jetpack that got him arrested, labeled a terrorist—and eventually killed. But he's more than a dead body, and more than "Bomb Boy." He was a person with a life worth remembering. Driven by Jawad's haunting voice guiding her throughout her investigation, Safiya seeks to tell the whole truth about the murdered boy and those who killed him because of their hate-based beliefs.

I Kissed Shara Wheeler**Casey McQuiston****356 Pages**

Chloe Green is so close to winning. After her moms moved her from SoCal to Alabama for high school, she's spent the past four years dodging gossipy classmates and a puritanical administration at Willowgrove Christian Academy. The thing that's kept her going: winning valedictorian. Her only rival: prom queen Shara Wheeler, the principal's perfect progeny. But a month before graduation, Shara kisses Chloe and vanishes. On a furious hunt for answers, Chloe discovers she's not the only one Shara kissed. There's also Smith, Shara's longtime quarterback sweetheart, and Rory, Shara's bad boy neighbor with a crush. The three have nothing in common except Shara and the annoyingly cryptic notes she left behind, but together they must untangle Shara's trail of clues and find her. It'll be worth it, if Chloe can drag Shara back before graduation to beat her fair-and-square. Thrown into an unlikely alliance, chasing a ghost through parties, break-ins, puzzles, and secrets revealed on monogrammed stationery, Chloe starts to suspect there might be more to this small town than she thought. And maybe—probably not, but maybe—more to Shara, too.

Instructions for Dancing**Nicola Yoon****304 Pages**

Evie Thomas doesn't believe in love anymore. Especially after the strangest thing occurs one otherwise ordinary afternoon: she witnesses a couple kiss and is overcome with a vision of how their romance began . . . and how it will end. After all, even the greatest love stories end with a broken heart, eventually. As Evie tries to understand why this is happening, she finds herself at La Brea Dance Studio, learning to waltz, fox-trot and tango with a boy named X. X is everything that Evie is not: adventurous, passionate, daring. His philosophy is to say yes to everything — including entering a ballroom dance competition with a girl he's only just met. Falling for X is definitely not what Evie had in mind. If her visions of heartbreak have taught her anything, it's that no one escapes love unscathed. But as she and X dance around and toward each other, Evie is forced to question all she thought she knew about life and love. In the end, is love worth the risk?

Manmade Monsters**Andrea Rogers****320 Pages**

Horror fans will get their thrills in this collection — from werewolves to vampires to zombies — all the time-worn horror baddies are there. But so are predators of a distinctly American variety — the horrors of empire, of intimate partner violence, of dispossession. Following one extended Cherokee family across the centuries, from the tribe's homelands in Georgia in the 1830s to World War I, the Vietnam War, our own present and well into the future, each story delivers a slice of a particular time period that will leave readers longing for more.

Messy Roots: A Graphic Memoir of a Wuhanese American**Laura Gao****272 Pages**

After spending her early years in Wuhan, China, riding water buffalos and devouring stinky tofu, Laura immigrates to Texas, where her hometown is as foreign as Mars — at least until 2020, when COVID-19 makes Wuhan a household name. Messy Roots, tells the story of the girl who simply wants to make the basketball team, escape Chinese school and figure out why girls make her heart flutter.

Nothing More to Tell**Karen M. McManus****358 Pages**

Four years ago, Brynn left Saint Ambrose School following the shocking murder of her favorite teacher—a story that made headlines after the teacher’s body was found by three Saint Ambrose students in the woods behind their school. The case was never solved. Now that Brynn is moving home and starting her dream internship at a true-crime show, she’s determined to find out what really happened. The kids who found Mr. Larkin are her way in, and her ex–best friend, Tripp Talbot, was one of them. Without his account of events, the other two kids might have gone down for Mr. Larkin’s murder. They’ve never forgotten what Tripp did for them that day. Just like he hasn’t forgotten that everything he told the police was a lie. Digging into the past is bound to shake up the present, and as Brynn begins to investigate what happened in the woods that day, she begins to uncover secrets that might change everything—about Saint Ambrose, about Mr. Larkin and about her ex-best friend, Tripp Talbot. Four years ago, someone got away with murder. The most terrifying part is that they never left.

Parachutes**Kelly Yang****496 Pages**

They’re called parachutes: teenagers dropped off to live in private homes and study in the U.S. while their wealthy parents remain in Asia. Claire Wang never thought she’d be one of them, until her parents pluck her from her privileged life in Shanghai and enroll her at a high school in California. Suddenly she finds herself living in a stranger’s house, with no one to tell her what to do for the first time in her life. She soon embraces her newfound freedom, especially when the hottest and most eligible parachute, Jay, asks her out. Dani De La Cruz, Claire’s new host sister, couldn’t be less thrilled that her mom rented out a room to Claire. An academic and debate team star, Dani is determined to earn her way into Yale, even if it means competing with privileged kids who are buying their way to the top. When her debate coach starts working with her privately, Dani’s game plan veers unexpectedly off course. Desperately trying to avoid each other under the same roof, Dani and Claire find themselves on a collision course, intertwining in deeper and more complicated ways, as they grapple with life-altering experiences.

Promise Boys**Nick Brooks****304 Pages**

The prestigious Urban Promise Prep School might look pristine on the outside, but deadly secrets lurk within. When the principal ends up murdered on school premises and the cops come sniffing around, a trio of students—J.B., Ramón and Trey—emerge as the prime suspects. They had the means, they had the motive—and they may have had the murder weapon. But with all three maintaining their innocence, they must band together to track down the real killer before they are arrested. Or, is the true culprit hiding among them?

Roxy**Neal Shusterman****384 Pages**

The freeway is coming. It will cut the neighborhood in two. Construction has already started, pushing toward this corridor of condemned houses and cracked concrete with the momentum of the inevitable. Yet there you are, in the fifth house on the left, fighting for your life. The victim of the bet between two manufactured gods: the seductive and lethal Roxy (Oxycontin), who is at the top of her game, and the smart, high-achieving Addison (Adderall), who is tired of being the helpful one, and longs for a more dangerous, less wholesome image. The wager—a contest to see who can bring their mark to “the party” first—is a race to the bottom of a rave that has raged since the beginning of time. And you are only human, dazzled by the lights and music. Drawn by what the drugs offer—tempted to take that step past helpful to harmful...and the troubled places that lie beyond. But there are two I. Rameys—Isaac, a soccer player thrown into Roxy’s orbit by a bad fall and a bad doctor and Ivy, his older sister, whose increasing frustration with her untreated ADHD leads her to renew her acquaintance with Addy. Which one are you?

Solito**Javier Zamora****384 Pages**

Javier's adventure is a 3,000-mile journey from his small town in El Salvador, through Guatemala and Mexico, and across the U.S. border. He will leave behind his beloved aunt and grandparents to reunite with a mother who left four years ago and a father he barely remembers. Traveling alone except for a group of strangers and a coyote hired to lead them to safety, Javier's trip is supposed to last two short weeks. At nine years old, all Javier can imagine is rushing into his parents' arms, snuggling in bed between them and living under the same roof again. He does not see the perilous boat trips, relentless desert treks, pointed guns, arrests and deceptions that await him; nor can he know that those two weeks will expand into two life-altering months alongside a group of strangers who will come to encircle him like an unexpected family.

They'll Never Catch Us**Jessica Goodman****284 Pages**

Stella and Ellie Steckler are only a year apart, but their different personalities make their relationship complicated. Stella is single-minded, driven and keeps to herself. Cross-country running is her life, and she won't let anything get in the way of being the best. Her sister Ellie is a talented runner too, but she also lets herself have fun. She has friends. She goes to parties. She has a life off the course. The sisters do have one thing in common, though: the new girl, Mila Keene. Both Stecklers' lives are upended when Mila comes to town. Mila was the top runner on her team back home and at first, Ellie and Stella view her as a threat. But soon Ellie can't help but be drawn to her warm, charming personality. After her best friend moved away and her first boyfriend betrayed her, Ellie's been looking for a friend. In a moment of weakness, she even shares her darkest secret with Mila. For her part, Stella finds herself noticing the ways she and Mila are similar. Mila is smart and strong — she's someone Stella can finally connect with. As the two get closer, Stella becomes something she vowed she'd never be: distracted. With regionals approaching and college scouts taking notice, the pressure is on. Each girl has their future on the line and they won't let friendships get in their way. But then, suddenly, Mila goes out on a training run and never returns. No one knows what happened, but all eyes are on the Steckler sisters.

Three Girls from Bronzeville**Dawn Turner****336 Pages**

They were three Black girls. Dawn, tall and studious; her sister, Kim, younger by three years and headstrong; and her best friend, Debra, already prom queen pretty by third grade. They bonded as they roamed the concrete landscape of Bronzeville, a historic neighborhood on Chicago's South Side, the destination of hundreds of thousands of Black folks who fled the ravages of the Jim Crow South. These third-generation daughters of the Great Migration come of age in the 1970s, in the warm glow of the recent civil rights movement. It has offered them a promise that they will have more opportunities, rights and freedoms than any generation of Black Americans in history. But the girls have much more immediate concerns: hiding under the dining room table and eavesdropping on grown folks' business, collecting secret treasures and daydreaming about their futures. And then fate intervenes, sending them careening in wildly different directions. There's heartbreak, loss, displacement and even murder.

Victory. Stand! Raising My Fist for Justice**Tommie Smith, Derrick Barnes, Daud Anyabwile****208 Pages**

On Oct. 16, 1968, during the medal ceremony at the Mexico City Olympics, Tommie Smith, the gold medal winner in the 200-meter sprint, and John Carlos, the bronze medal winner, stood on the podium in black socks and raised their black-gloved fists to protest racial injustice inflicted upon African Americans. Both men were forced to leave the Olympics, received death threats, and faced ostracism and continuing economic hardships. In his first-ever memoir for young readers, Tommie Smith looks back on his childhood growing up in rural Texas through to his stellar athletic career, culminating in his historic victory and Olympic podium protest.

We Are All So Good at Smiling**Amber McBride****304 Pages**

Whimsy is back in the hospital for treatment of clinical depression. When she meets a boy named Faerry, she recognizes they both have magic in the marrow of their bones. And when Faerry and his family move to the same street, the two start to realize that their lifelines may have twined and untwined many times before. They are both terrified of the forest at the end of Marsh Creek Lane. The forest whispers to Whimsy. The forest might hold the answers to the part of Faerry he feels is missing. They discover the forest holds monsters, fairy tales and pain that they have both been running from for 11 years.