

# 2021 SUMMER READING

BMS GRADES 6-8



**Book excerpts from *Goodreads* and *School Library Journal***

DEAR BMS FAMILIES,

BMS READERS REPRESENT A WIDE RANGE OF READING ABILITIES, INTERESTS, MATURITY LEVELS, AND BACKGROUNDS. AS READERS, WE KNOW THAT NOT EVERY BOOK IS A GOOD FIT FOR EVERY READER. WHEN YOUR MIDDLE SCHOOL READERS CHOOSE BOOKS TO READ THIS SUMMER, TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CONTENT, READABILITY, FORMAT AND AUTHOR. OUR STUDENTS INDEPENDENTLY CHOOSE BOOKS TO READ ALL YEAR. SUMMER IS A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE IN THEIR BOOK CHOICE EXPERIENCES.

HAPPY READING!

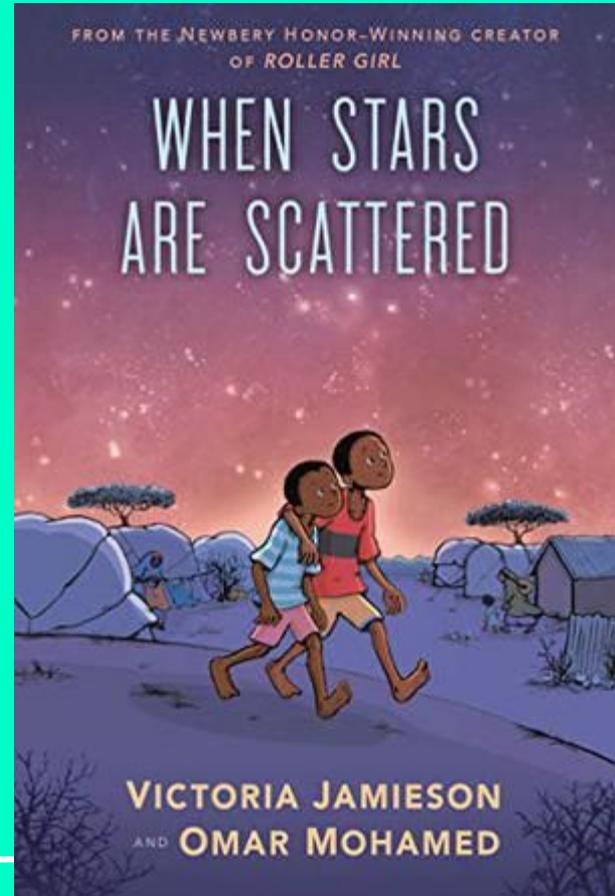
GRADE 6

# WHEN STARS ARE SCATTERED

BY VICTORIA JAMIESON AND OMAR MOHAMED

Omar and his younger brother, Hassan, have spent most of their lives in Dadaab, a refugee camp in Kenya. Life is hard there: never enough food, achingly dull, and without access to the medical care Omar knows his nonverbal brother needs. So when Omar has the opportunity to go to school, he knows it might be a chance to change their future . . . but it would also mean leaving his brother, the only family member he has left, every day.

Graphic novel, Memoir



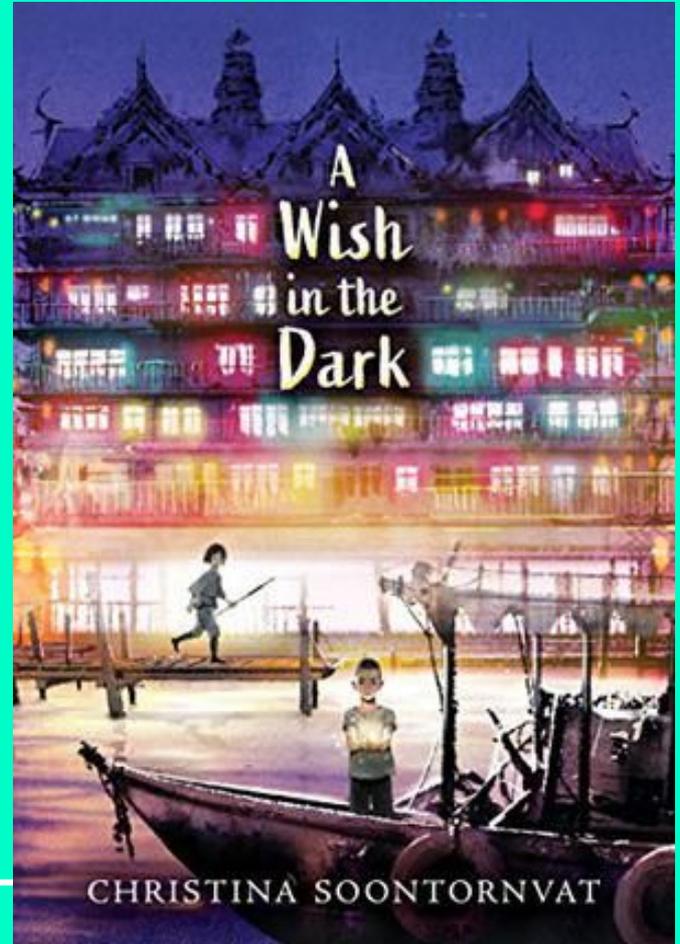
# A WISH IN THE DARK

BY CHRISTINA SOONTORNVAT

All light in Chattana is created by one man—the Governor, who appeared after the Great Fire to bring peace and order to the city. For Pong, who was born in Namwon Prison, the magical lights represent freedom, and he dreams of the day he will be able to walk among them. But when Pong escapes from prison, he realizes that the world outside is no fairer than the one behind bars. The wealthy dine and dance under bright orb light, while the poor toil away in darkness. Worst of all, Pong’s prison tattoo marks him as a fugitive who can never be truly free.

Nok, the prison warden’s perfect daughter, is bent on tracking Pong down and restoring her family’s good name. But as Nok hunts Pong through the alleys and canals of Chattana, she uncovers secrets that make her question the truths she has always held dear.

Fantasy



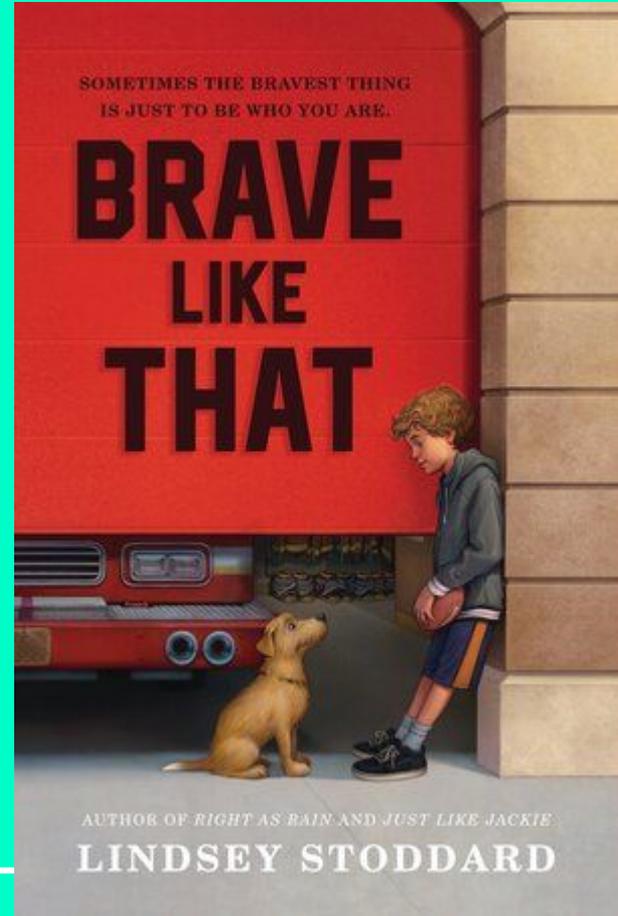
# BRAVE LIKE THAT

BY LINDSEY STODDARD

Cyrus Olson's dad is a hero—Northfield's former football star and now one of their finest firefighters.

Everyone expects Cyrus to follow in his dad's record-breaking footsteps, and he wishes they were right—except he's never been brave like that. But this year, with the help of a stray dog, a few new friends, a little bit of rhythm, and a lot of nerve, he may just discover that actually...he is.

Fiction



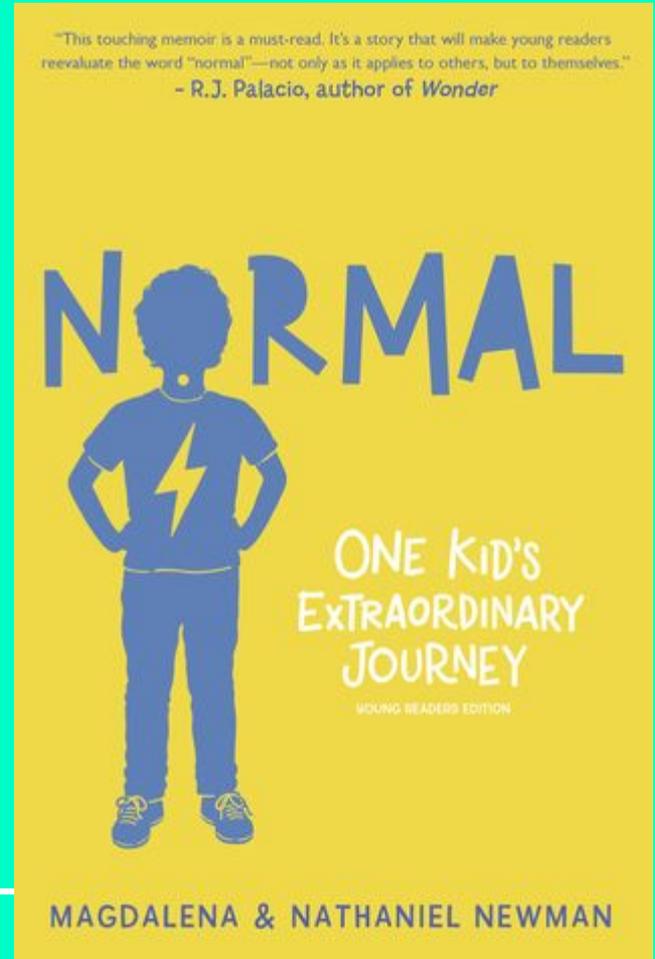
# NORMAL

BY MAGDALENA AND NATHANIEL NEWMAN

*Normal.* Who is to say what this word means? For Magda Newman, it was a goal. She wanted her son Nathaniel to be able to play on the playground, swim at the beach, enjoy the moments his friends took for granted. But Nathaniel's severe Treacher Collins syndrome--a craniofacial condition--meant that other concerns came first. Could he eat without the aid of a gastrointestinal tube? Could he hear? Would he ever be able to breathe effortlessly? But Nathaniel looks at "normal" from a completely different perspective.

In this uplifting and humorous memoir that includes black-and-white comic illustrations, mother and son tell the story of his growing up--from facing sixty-seven surgeries before the age of fifteen, to making friends, moving across the country, and persevering through hardships. How they tackle extraordinary circumstances with love and resilience is a true testament to Magda and Nathaniel's family, and to families everywhere who quietly but courageously persist.

Nonfiction Memoir

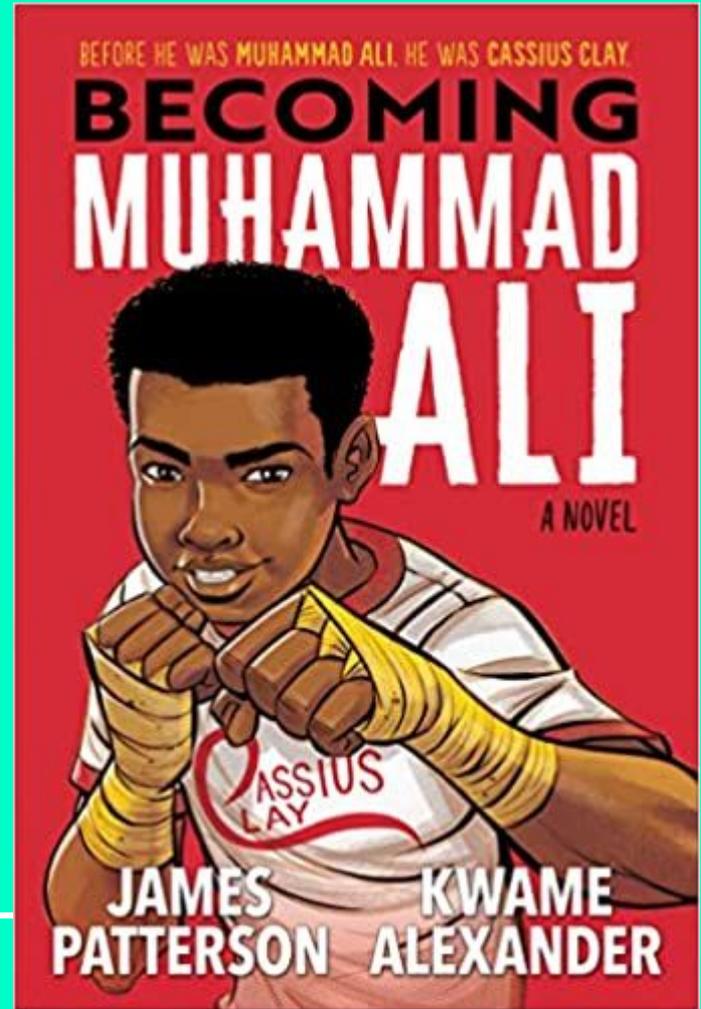


# BECOMING MUHAMMAD ALI

BY JAMES PATTERSON AND KWAME ALEXANDER

Before he was a household name, Cassius Clay was a kid with struggles like any other. Kwame Alexander and James Patterson join forces to vividly depict his life up to age seventeen in both prose and verse, including his childhood friends, struggles in school, the racism he faced, and his discovery of boxing. Readers will learn about Cassius' family and neighbors in Louisville, Kentucky, and how, after a thief stole his bike, Cassius began training as an amateur boxer at age twelve. Before long, he won his first Golden Gloves bout and began his transformation into the unrivaled Muhammad Ali.

Fiction in Verse



GRADE 7

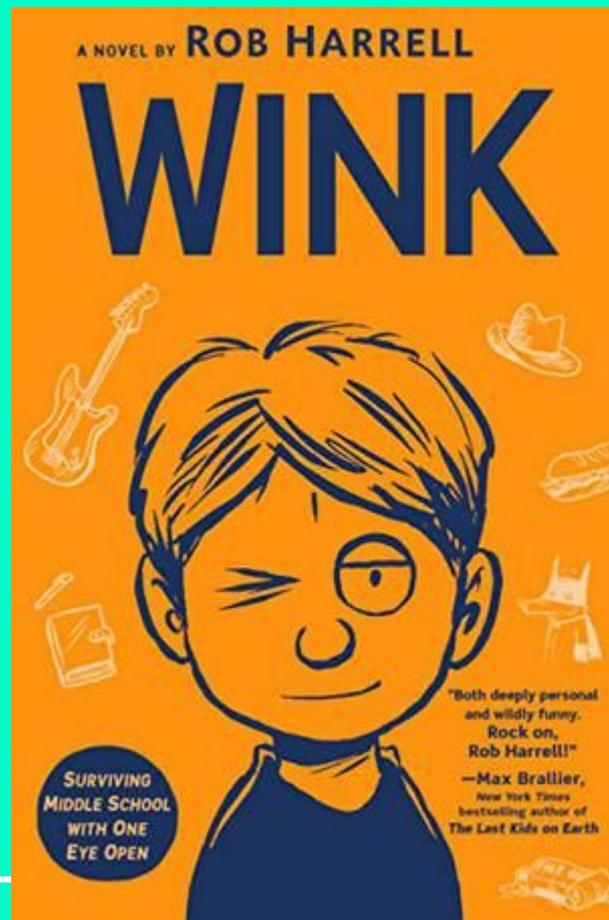
# WINK

BY ROB HARRELL

Twelve-year-old Ross Maloy just wants to be normal. Not to have a rare eye cancer, not to lose his hair, not to have to wear a weird hat or have a goopy eye full of ointment. Just *normal*. But with a sudden and horrifying diagnosis, Ross can't help standing out. His new life is medical treatments that feel straight out of a video game, vision loss in one eye, disappearing friends who don't know what to say to "the cancer kid," cruel bullying, and ultimately, friendships new and old that rise above everything.

Just when Ross starts to feel like he's losing his footing, he discovers how music, art, and true friends can change everything.

Fiction



# CLEAN GETAWAY

BY NIC STONE

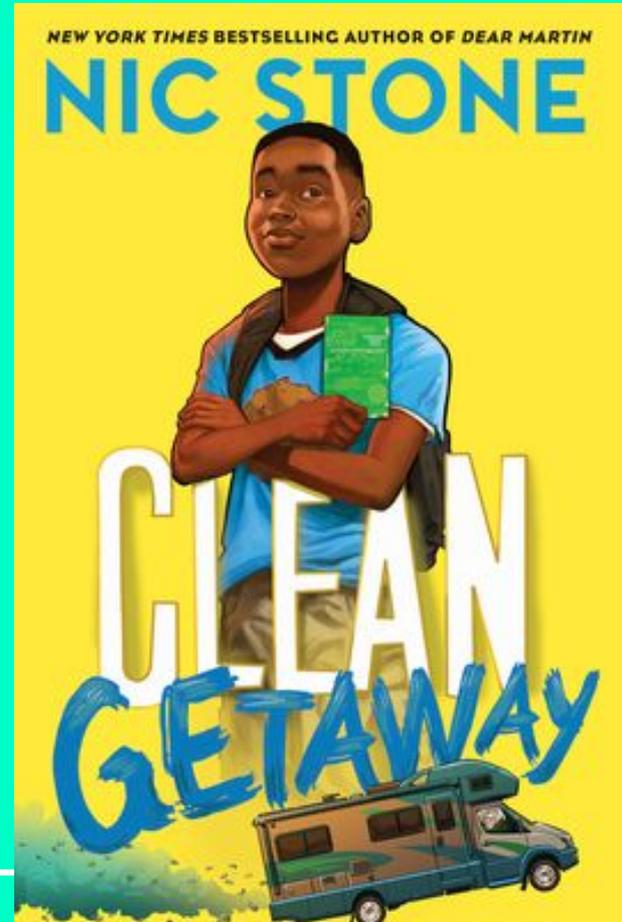
How to Go on an Unplanned Road Trip with Your Grandma:

- \* Grab a Suitcase: Prepacked from the big spring break trip that got CANCELLED.
- \* Fasten Your Seatbelt: G'ma's never conventional, so this trip won't be either.
- \* Use the Green Book: G'ma's most treasured possession. It holds history, memories, and, most important, the way home.

What Not to Bring:

- \* A Cell Phone: Avoid contact with Dad at all costs. Even when G'ma starts acting stranger than usual.

Fiction

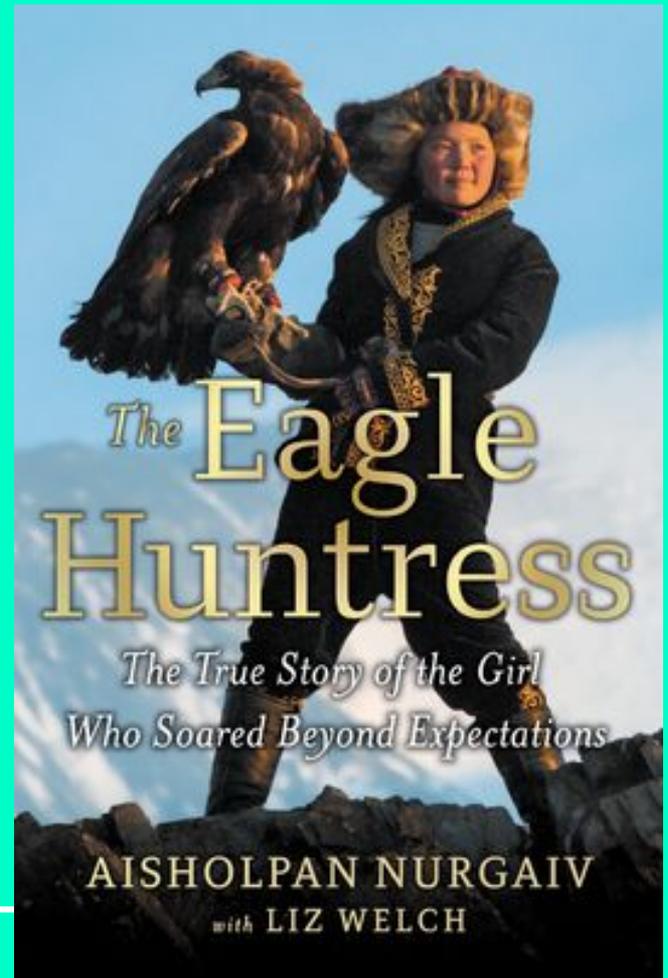


# THE EAGLE HUNTRESS

BY: AISHOLPAN NURGAIV

In this compelling memoir, teenaged eagle hunter Aisholpan Nurgaiv tells her own story for the first time, speaking directly with award-winning and *New York Times* bestselling author Liz Welch (*I Will Always Write Back*), who traveled to Mongolia for this book. Nurgaiv's story and fresh, sincere voice are not only inspiring but truly magnificent: with the support of her father, she captured and trained her own golden eagle and won the Ölgii eagle festival. She was the only girl to compete in the festival.

Nonfiction Memoir



# SHOW ME A SIGN

BY ANN CLARE LAZOTTE

Mary Lambert has always felt safe and protected on her beloved island of Martha's Vineyard. Her great-grandfather was an early English settler and the first deaf islander. Now, over a hundred years later, many people there - including Mary - are deaf, and nearly everyone can communicate in sign language. Mary has never felt isolated. She is proud of her lineage.

But recent events have delivered winds of change. Mary's brother died, leaving her family shattered. Tensions over land disputes are mounting between English settlers and the Wampanoag people. And a cunning young scientist has arrived, hoping to discover the origin of the island's prevalent deafness. His maniacal drive to find answers soon renders Mary a "live specimen" in a cruel experiment. Her struggle to save herself is at the core of this novel.

Historical Fiction

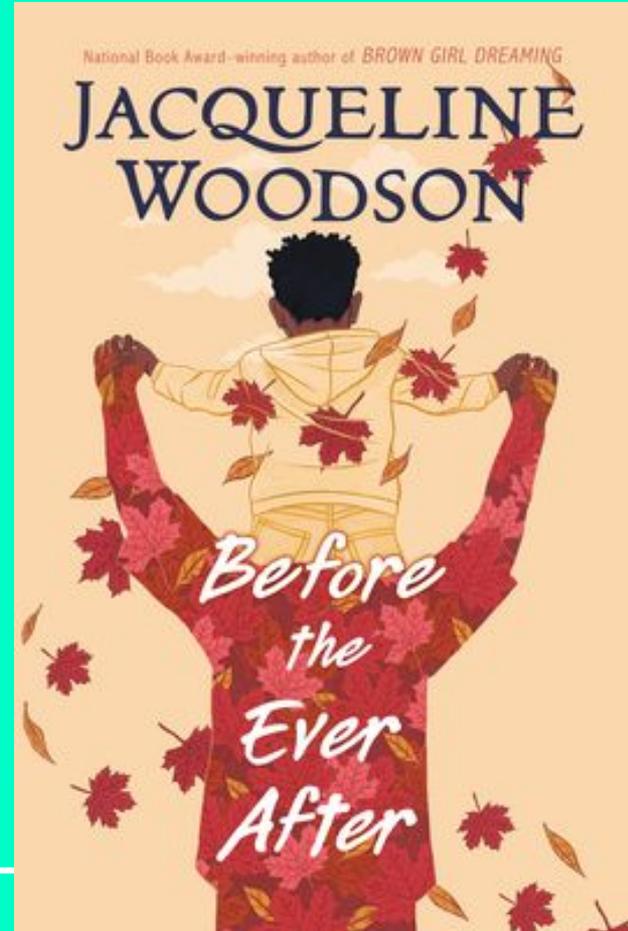


# BEFORE THE EVER AFTER

BY JACQUELINE WOODSON

For as long as ZJ can remember, his dad has been everyone's hero. As a charming, talented pro football star, he's as beloved to the neighborhood kids he plays with as he is to his millions of adoring sports fans. But lately life at ZJ's house is anything but charming. His dad is having trouble remembering things and seems to be angry all the time. ZJ's mom explains it's because of all the head injuries his dad sustained during his career. ZJ can understand that--but it doesn't make the sting any less real when his own father forgets his name. As ZJ contemplates his new reality, he has to figure out how to hold on tight to family traditions and recollections of the glory days, all the while wondering what their past amounts to if his father can't remember it. And most importantly, can those happy feelings ever be reclaimed when they are all so busy aching for the past?

Fiction in Verse



GRADE 8

# DRAGON HOOPS

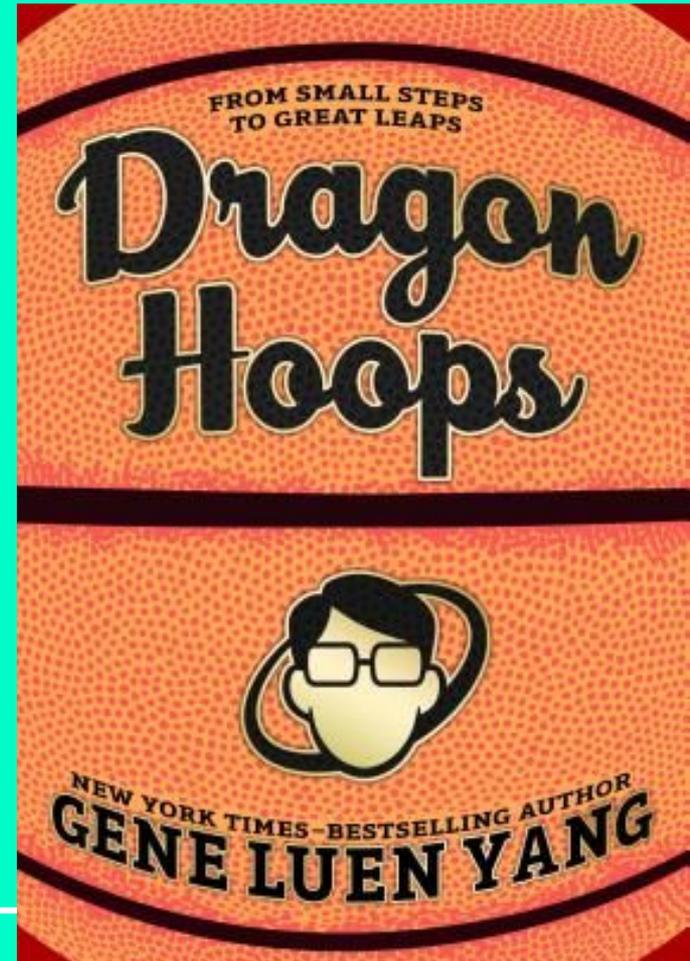
BY GENE LUEN YANG

Gene understands stories—comic book stories, in particular. Big action. Bigger thrills. And the hero *always* wins.

But Gene doesn't get sports. As a kid, his friends called him "Stick" and every basketball game he played ended in pain. He lost interest in basketball long ago, but at the high school where he now teaches, it's all anyone can talk about. The men's varsity team, the Dragons, is having a phenomenal season that's been decades in the making. Each victory brings them closer to their ultimate goal: the California State Championships.

Once Gene gets to know these young all-stars, he realizes that their story is just as thrilling as anything he's seen on a comic book page. He knows he has to follow this epic to its end. What he doesn't know yet is that this season is not only going to change the Dragons's lives, but his own life as well.

Nonfiction Graphic Novel



# EVERYTHING SAD IS UNTRUE

BY DANIEL NAYEN

At the front of a middle school classroom in Oklahoma, a boy named Khosrou (whom everyone calls "Daniel") stands, trying to tell a story. His story. But no one believes a word he says. To them he is a dark-skinned, hairy-armed boy with a big butt whose lunch smells funny; who makes things up and talks about poop too much.

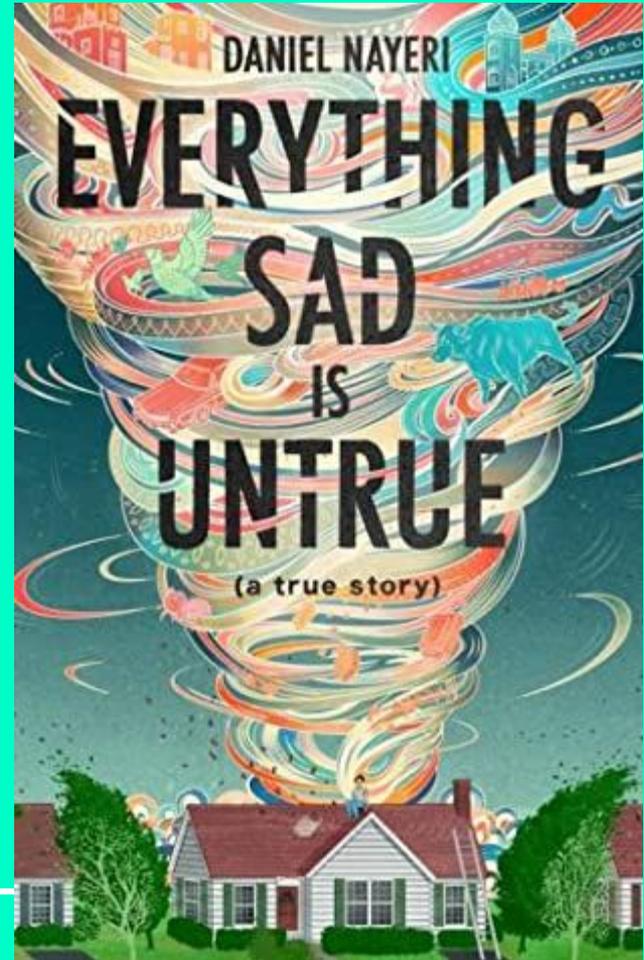
But Khosrou's stories, stretching back years, and decades, and centuries, are beautiful, and terrifying, from the moment he, his mother, and sister fled Iran in the middle of the night, stretching all the way back to family tales set in the jasmine-scented city of Isfahan, the palaces of semi-ancient kings, and even the land of stories.

We bounce between a school bus of kids armed with paper clip missiles and spitballs, to the heroines and heroes of Kosrou's family's past, who ate pastries that made them weep, and touched carpets woven with precious gems.

Like Scheherazade in a hostile classroom, author Daniel Nayeri weaves a tale of Khosrou trying to save his own life: to stake his claim to the truth. And it is (a true story).

It is Daniel's.

Fiction

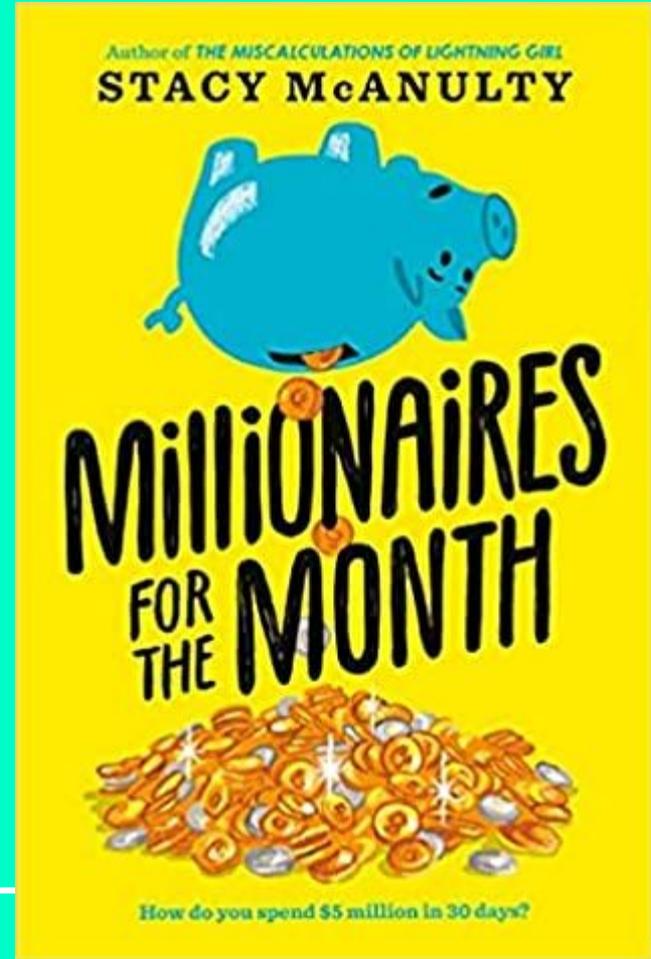


# MILLIONAIRES FOR THE MONTH

BY STACY McANULTY

The saying "money can't buy happiness" has been tested time and again, but what about spending money—specifically five million dollars? While on a school field trip, the unlikely duo Felix Rannells and Benji Porter discover the lost wallet of tech mogul and billionaire Laura Friendly. As the teen boys failed to return the wallet without spending \$20 on lunch first, Friendly offers them a challenge: spend five million dollars in 30 days in order to receive a penny doubled each day, meaning \$5,368,709.12! From private trips to Disney World, whole school pizza lunches everyday, to a personal driver, the teens rake up quite the bill—but what will they lose as they gain? With specific rules such as preventing purchases for anyone else, the boys risk looking like (or becoming) selfish jerks.

Fiction



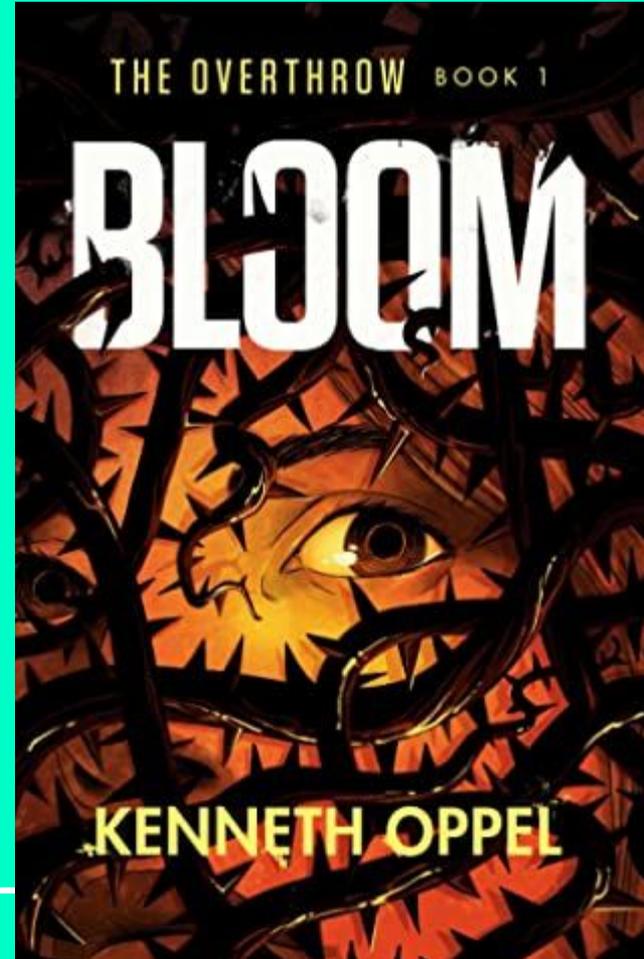
# BLOOM

BY KENNETH OPPEL

The invasion begins--but not as you'd expect. It begins with rain. Rain that carries seeds. Seeds that sprout--overnight, everywhere. These new plants take over crop fields, twine up houses, and burrow below streets. They bloom--and release toxic pollens. They bloom--and form Venus flytrap-like pods that swallow animals and people. They bloom--everywhere, unstoppable.

Or are they? Three kids on a remote island seem immune to the toxic plants. Anaya, Petra, Seth. They each have strange allergies--and yet *not* to these plants. What's their secret? Can they somehow be the key to beating back this invasion? They'd better figure it out fast, because it's starting to rain again....

Science Fiction



# PUNCHING THE AIR

BY IBI ZOBOI AND YUSEF SALLAM

Amal Shahid has always been an artist and a poet. But even in a diverse art school, he's seen as disruptive and unmotivated by a biased system. Then one fateful night, an altercation in a gentrifying neighborhood escalates into tragedy. "Boys just being boys" turns out to be true only when those boys are white.

*The story that I think*

*will be my life*

*starts today*

Suddenly, at just sixteen years old, Amal's bright future is upended: he is convicted of a crime he didn't commit and sent to prison. Despair and rage almost sink him until he turns to the refuge of his words, his art. This never should have been his story. But can he change it?

Fiction in Verse

