Best of All Worlds
Written by Kenneth Oppel
Published by Penguin Teen Canada

Annotation
From award-winning author Kenneth Oppel comes a startling, can't-wait-to-talk-about-it-with-someone novel that defies genre to create a teen survival thriller unlike any you've read before. For fans of *Leave the World Behind*, A.S. King, M.T. Anderson, and Margaret Atwood.

Xavier Oaks doesn't particularly want to go to the cabin with his dad and his dad's pregnant new wife, Nia. But family obligations are family obligations, and it's only for a short time. So he leaves his mom, his brother, and his other friends behind for a week in the woods. Only . . . one morning he wakes up and the house isn't where it was before. It's like it's been lifted and placed . . . somewhere else.

When Xavier, his dad, and Nia go explore, they find they are inside a dome, trapped. And there's no one else around . . .

Until, three years later, another family arrives.

Is there any escape? Is there a reason they are stuck where they are? Different people have different answers — and those different answers inexorably lead to tension, strife, and sacrifice.

In this masterpiece, award-winning author Kenneth Oppel builds a heart-stopping story that feels very much of our moment, where our very human choices collectively lead to humanity's eventual fate.

Content/ Discussion Themes:

Mentions of racism, divorce, global warming, conspiracy theories, gun violence, references to sexual activity, loss of a loved one, childbirth, isolation

The Free Verse Society
Written by Delali Adjoa
Published by Peachtree Teen

Annotation
A tender hate-to-love YA romance about two teens who connect through their high school poetry club, where the power of the written word tears down the walls they've built around their hearts.

No one in Delray knows Jae A*ƒ*enyo's story—that she's a teen mom who placed her baby for adoption—and she intends to keep it that way. After moving in with her uncle, Jae is looking for a fresh start. But an accidental run-in with the school's delinquent, Derek Patel, is not exactly what she had in mind. She soon finds a haven in the poetry club—at least, until Derek joins.

Derek Patel is desperately clinging to his old life—where his dad was alive, his mom was healthy, and they lived in an oceanfront estate instead of a run-down pink bungalow. He'll do anything to hide his problems from his friends, including breaking into his old house to keep up the charade that he still lives there. But the house now belongs to the school's lit teacher, who offers him the chance to join the poetry club as a penance.

As the newest members of the club, Jae and Derek are tasked with planning the end-of-semester poetry reading. While Derek is hell-bent on keeping his broken family a secret, Jae is desperate to prove to her uncle that she's more than a walking statistic—which means guarding her heart against Derek, who her uncle thinks is no good.

A poignant exploration of love, loss, and the power of words to draw people together, *The Free Verse Society* announces the arrival of an important new voice in YA romance.

Perfect for readers who love Forced Proximity, Forbidden Love, Opposites Attract, Hate to Love, the Misunderstood Bad Boy, Opposite Sides of the Tracks, and Reading/Literature Club Bonding!

Content/ Discussion Themes:
Bullying; pregnancy; adoption; addiction and drug use; abusive relationships (physical and verbal); death of a parent; panic attacks; violence; racism; sexism; language

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He's So Possessed with Me
Written by Corey Liu
Published by Little, Brown Books for Young Readers

Annotation
***Jennifer's Body* meets *Heartstopper* in this terrifying, tender, and bitingly hilarious supernatural horror about a boy who must save his best friend from a demon that wants to steal his heart—literally.**

Ren says he's in love, but Colin knows better.

Sure, he can't remember much about how it all began. But he remembers dancing at a club he and Ren were too young to dance in. He remembers the boys who harassed them on their way home. He remembers a ghost emerging from the trees, and a white hand reaching for Ren through a thick fog. What Colin can't remember is what happened next. Only two things are clear to him: Ren is different now, and the new guy vying for his heart is not who he claims to be.

With the help of two unlikely allies and a cranky old medium, Colin must learn to conquer his self-doubt and save his best friend from a love that could cost him his life.

Equal parts campy and bewitching, Corey Liu's debut YA novel explores predation, isolation, and what happens when a childhood dream of fairytale romance turns into a deadly nightmare.

Content/ Discussion Themes:

Bullying; predation; isolation; abusive relationship; homophobia; racism; grooming; intersectionality

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Our Little Secret
Written by Edward Kay and Mikhael Klassen-Kay
Published by DCB Young Readers, an imprint of Cormorant Books Inc.

Annotation
When an English teacher turns up dead on school property one May morning, everyone at Ridgeview Alternative School is shocked.

Everyone, that is, except Jordan, Nick, and Chloe.

Months earlier, these three ambitious twelfth graders land in Clifford “Call Me Cliff” Lowell’s Comparative Literature classroom with big dreams of university scholarships and rewarding careers, only to discover that the well-respected educator is actually a sexual predator with a long list of victims — a list that’s about to include two of them.

Facing a manipulative monster, a complacent administration, and grim futures, the trio hatches a desperate plot: plan a murder so perfect that maybe, just maybe, they can get away with it …

Content/ Discussion Themes:

Sexual abuse and assault; gaslighting; grooming; bullying; harassment; violence; murder; suicide themes; language

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Ramin Abbas Has MAJOR Questions
Written by Ahmad Saber
Published by Atheneum Books for Young Readers/ Caitlyn Dlouhy Books, an imprint Simon & Schuster

Annotation
An intensely brave, gorgeously written story about a gay Muslim teen who has to choose between being true to himself or his faith—and his realization that maybe they aren’t as separate as he thought.

Ramin Abbas has spent his whole life obeying his parents, his Imam, and, of course, Allah—no questions asked. But when he starts crushing on the ridiculously handsome captain of the soccer team, so many things he’d always been so sure about are becoming questions:

1. Music is haram. But what if the Wicked soundtrack is the only thing keeping you sane because you’re being forced to play on the soccer team? With Captain Handsome?!

2. A boy crush is double haram, and Ramin’s parents will never accept it. But can he really be the only Muslim on Earth who feels this way?

3. Allah is merciful and makes no mistakes. Then isn’t Ramin just the way Allah intended him to be?

And so why should living your truth but losing everything—or living a lie and losing yourself—have to be a choice?!

Content/ Discussion Themes:

Religious trauma, Questioning religion/faith, Family financial instability, Homophobia, Bullying, Grief and family trauma, Blackmail, Sexism, Lack of belief in/treatment for mental health, Unsupportive parents

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The Rebel Girls of Rome
Written by Jordyn Taylor
Published by HarperCollins

Annotation
Part historical mystery, part sweeping romance, *The Rebel Girls of Rome* brings the stories of two young women to brilliant life: Lilah, a college student looking to understand her grandfather's mysterious past, and Bruna, a queer Jewish woman who joins the resistance during World War II.

From Jordyn Taylor, author of *The Paper Girl of Paris*, this dual-contemporary and historical tale—where heartbreak, hope, and finding light in times of darkness are inevitably intertwined—is perfect for readers of Ruta Sepetys and Monica Hesse.

Now:
Grieving the loss of her mother, college student Lilah is hoping to reconnect with a grandfather who refuses to talk about his past. Then she receives a mysterious letter from a fellow student, Tommaso, claiming he's found a lost family heirloom, and her world is upended.

Soon Lilah finds herself in Rome, trying to unlock her grandfather's history as a Holocaust survivor once and for all. But as she and Tommaso get closer to the truth—and their relationship begins to deepen into something sweeter—Lilah realizes that some secrets may be too painful to unbury…

Then:
It's 1943, and nineteen-year-old Bruna and her family are doing their best to survive in Rome's Jewish quarter under Nazi occupation. Until the dreaded knock comes early one morning, and Bruna is irrevocably separated from the rest of her family.

Overcome with guilt at escaping her family's fate in the camps, she joins the underground rebellion. When her missions bring her back to her childhood crush, Elsa, Bruna must decide how much she's willing to risk—when fully embracing herself is her greatest act of resistance.

In a city of secrets, what will two young women risk for love, family, and freedom?

Content/ Discussion Themes:
violence; death of a parent; genocide; war; antisemitism; addiction (alcoholism); cancer; police brutality; civil unrest; gun violence; estrangement; alienation; emotional abuse; generational trauma

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Small Ceremonies
Written by Kyle Edwards
Published by McClelland & Stewart

Annotation
Part coming-of-age novel, part searing examination of a community finding itself, Small Ceremonies is a tantalizing and heartbreaking debut.

"I fear for our friendship, for the day it will end, wondering when that day will be..."

Tomahawk Shields (a.k.a. Tommy) and Clinton Whiteway are on the cusp of adulthood, imagining a future rife with possibility and greatness. The two friends play for their high school's poor-performing hockey team, the Tigers, who learn at the start of the new season that the league wants them out. Their annual goal is now more important than ever: to win their first game in years and break the curse.

As we follow these two Indigenous boys over the course of a year, we are given a panoptic view of Tommy and Clinton's Winnipeg, where a university student with grand ambitions chooses to bottle her anger when confronted with numerous micro- (and not so micro-) aggressions; an ex-convict must choose between protecting or exploiting his younger brother as he's dragged deeper into the city's criminal underbelly; a lonely rink attendant is haunted by the memory of a past lover and contemplates rekindling this old flame; and an aspiring journalist does everything she can to uncover why the league is threatening to remove the Tigers. These are a sampling of the chorus of voices that depicts a community filled with individuals searching for purpose, leading them all to one fateful and tragic night.

Ferociously piercing the heart of an Indigenous city, Kyle Edwards's sparkling debut is a heartbreaking yet humour-flecked portrayal of navigating identity and place, trauma and recovery, and growing up in a land that doesn't love you.

Content/ Discussion Themes:

Gun violence; police brutality; systemic racism; racial slurs; bullying; hate crime; suicide/suicidal thoughts; self harm; murder; mental illness; schizophrenia and psychosis; grief; abandonment; colonization; generational trauma; MMIW; child abuse; child death; domestic abuse; emotional abuse; violence; addiction; alcoholism; drug use, abuse, and selling; cancer

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This Place Kills Me
Written by Mariko Tamaki & Illustrated by Nicole Goux
Published by Abrams Fanfare, an imprint of Abrams Books

Annotation
A compelling, propulsive YA graphic novel mystery from the author of *Laura Dean Keeps Breaking Up With Me*, Mariko Tamaki, and illustrator Nicole Goux.

At Wilberton Academy, few students are more revered than the members of the elite Wilberton Theatrical Society—a.k.a. the WTS—and no one represents that exclusive club better than Elizabeth Woodward.

Breathtakingly beautiful, beloved by all, and a talented thespian, it's no surprise she's starring as Juliet in the WTS's performance of Shakespeare's classic tragedy. But when she's found dead the morning after opening night, the whole school is thrown into chaos.

Transfer student Abby Kita was one of the last people to see Elizabeth alive, and when local authorities deem the it-girl's death a suicide, Abby's not convinced. She's sure there's more to Wilburton and the WTS than meets the eye. As she gets tangled in prep school intrigues, Abby quickly realizes that Elizabeth was keeping secrets. Was one of those secrets worth killing for?

Content/ Discussion Themes:

Murder, Homophobia, Adult having a sexual relationship with multiple minors, Adultery, Bullying & ostracism, Suspected suicide, Drugs/overdosing, Unsupportive parents

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Thornbird
Written by E. Kennedy
Published by Random House Children's Books - Delacorte Press

Annotation
The daughter of a notorious serial killer races to solve the crimes of her family's twisted past—before it's too late—in this highly anticipated young adult thriller from the pen name of Elle Kennedy, *New York Times* bestselling author of the Off Campus series!

The deadliest secrets are the ones you inherit.

Ten years after her father—the infamous serial killer Gabriel Thorn—was caught, Ryan Shipley is back in Starling, Tennessee, trying to lay low. No one can know who she really is. No one can know the truth about her past.

But as fresh eyes dig deeper into the case, old secrets refuse to stay buried. Cryptic texts, eerie coincidences, and a chilling note leave everyone wondering—does Ryan know more than she's letting on? As the truth unravels, one thing becomes clear: in a town full of secrets, Ryan might be the biggest mystery of them all.

The world is hunting for answers. Now get ready for a thriller packed with twists you won't see coming.

Content/ Discussion Themes:

Sex; language; violence and murder; graphic descriptions of murder; drinking, drugs, and smoking; trespassing; stealing; death of loved ones; bullying; grief; kidnapping; confinement; infidelity; child abuse

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The Vacation Shift
Written by Lily Chu
Published by HarperCollins Quill Tree Books

Annotation

***Gilmore Girls* meets a reverse *Parent Trap* in this swoony and hilarious YA rom-com from popular adult romance author Lily Chu, following a teen who, while on a group tour to Japan, teams up with a fellow traveler to keep their parents from falling in love with each other.**

Ivy Yu is cursed. Her parents separated six months ago, and she's fallen into a fog. To help, her mother books an impulsive trip to Japan (cool) on a bus tour (very uncool). Ivy should be grateful, but this summer is her last chance to get her situationship, Connor, to fall in love with her.

When they arrive in Tokyo, it's even worse than she imagined. Ivy and her Mom are the youngest of a group of seniors. Make that two of the youngest: there's brooding Matteo, with his single dad, Keith.

Then Ivy discovers her mother and Keith are getting close, and her crush back home is hooking up with someone else. Desperate for some semblance of control and a distraction from the heaviness she can't seem to shake off, she makes a deal with Matteo to keep their parents apart. Luckily, he agrees—and their devious plans begin.

Dodging nosy old ladies on the bus ride through Japan, their strange partnership begins to blossom into something unexpected and exciting—but can their romantic spark survive the journey?

Content/ Discussion Themes:

Mental health (depression), parental death (mentioned), racism, family separation

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