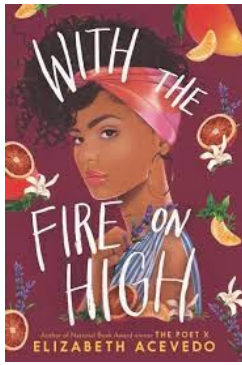




# KEEPING IT REAL

**Realistic Fiction for Teens**

**Some titles may contain mature content.**



*Acevedo, Elizabeth*

### **With the Fire on High**

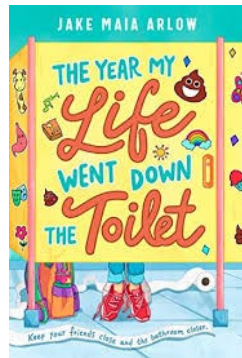
Teen mother Emoni Santiago struggles with the challenges of finishing high school and her dream of working as a chef.



*Anderson, Laurie Halse*

### **Wintergirls**

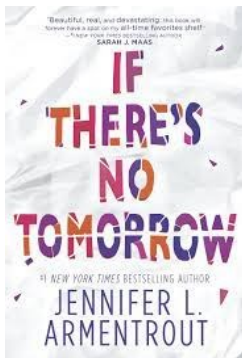
Eighteen-year-old Lia comes to terms with her best friend's death from anorexia as she struggles with the same disorder.



*Arlow, Jake Maia*

### **The Year My Life Went Down the Toilet**

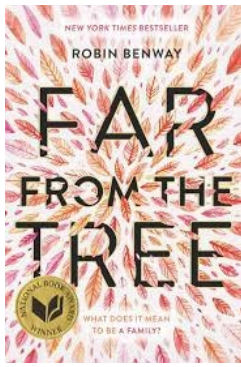
A middle schooler navigates an overprotective mother, growing apart from her best friend, and her first girl crush—all while her recent Crohn's diagnosis puts a knot in her stomach.



*Armentrout, Jennifer L.*

### **If There's No Tomorrow**

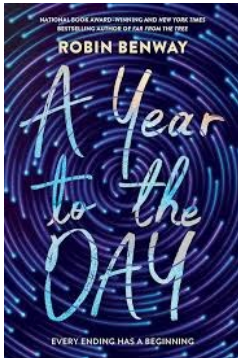
Beginning her senior year of high school determined to finish college applications and reveal to her best friend how she really feels about him, Lena is devastated by a terrible accident that leaves her overwhelmed with guilt.



*Benway, Robin*

### **Far From the Tree**

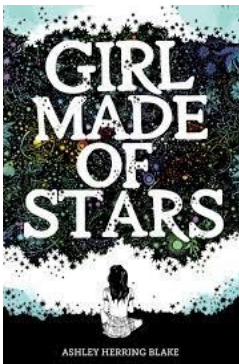
Feeling incomplete as an adopted child after placing her own baby up for adoption, Grace tracks down her biological siblings and struggles with the dynamics of being a middle child between an embittered brother and an outspoken sister.



*Benway, Robin*

### **A Year to the Day**

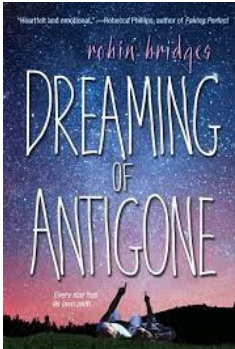
A year after her sister Nina's death and still unable to imagine a world without her, Leo forms a friendship with Nina's boyfriend East based on their shared grief, only to discover he knows more about the accident than he is letting on.



*Blake, Ashley Herring*

### **Girl Made of Stars**

When Mara's twin brother Owen is accused of rape by her friend Hannah, Mara is forced to confront her feelings about her family, her sense of right and wrong, a trauma from her past, and the future with her girlfriend, Charlie.



*Bridges, Robin*

### **Dreaming of Antigone**

Six months after her twin sister dies of a heroin overdose, Andria finds herself in a relationship with the boy she blames for her sister's death.

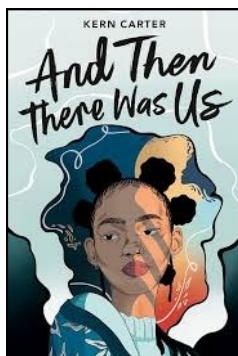




*Browne, Mahogany L.*

### **Chlorine Sky**

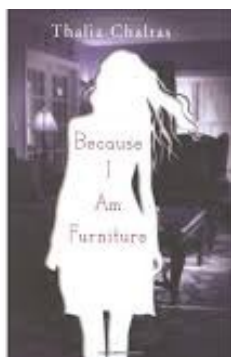
Picked on at home, criticized for talking trash while beating boys at basketball, and always seen as less than her best friend, a girl struggles to like and accept herself.



*Carter, Kern*

### **And Then There Was Us**

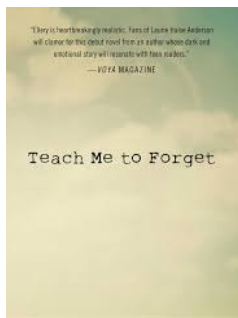
After years of physical and verbal abuse from her mother, fourteen-year-old Coi moved in with her father, and together they created a peaceful life. But now, four years later, that peace is shattered when her mother dies.



*Chaltas, Thalia*

### **Because I Am Furniture**

The youngest of three siblings, fourteen-year-old Anke feels both relieved and neglected that her father abuses her brother and sister but ignores her, but when she catches him with one of her friends, she finally becomes angry enough to act.



*Chapman, Erica M.*

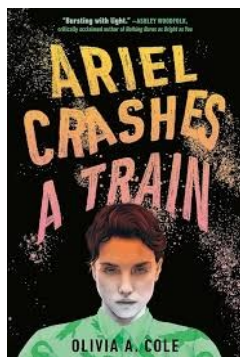
### **Teach Me to Forget**

After a failed suicide attempt, Ellery tries to return the gun she bought to the store and runs into Colter Sawyer, a boy from her school, who does everything he can to prevent her from trying to take her life again.

*Cole, Olivia A.*

### **Ariel Crashes a Train**

Ariel grapples with her fear of her own mind and violent fantasies, driven by her desire to meet her parents' expectations and societal norms, until a summer job at a carnival leads her to new friends who help her discover her struggle with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and find acceptance and support for her true self.



*Cole, Olivia A.*

### **Dear Medusa**

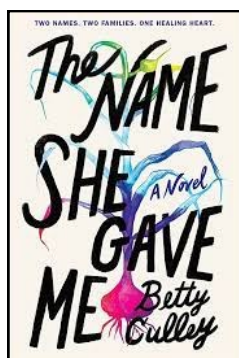
This intense and intimate novel-in-verse follows sixteen-year-old Alicia, who feels isolated and alone after being sexually abused by a teacher then cast as the slut who asked for it, until she receives mysterious letters hinting at another victim, forcing her to face her trauma and fight back.



*Culley, Betty*

### **The Name She Gave Me**

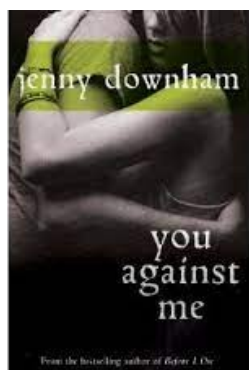
In this deeply emotional story, sixteen-year-old Rynn secretly decides to search for her biological family, learning that she has a younger sister in foster care two towns away, a discovery that could tear her adoptive family apart.

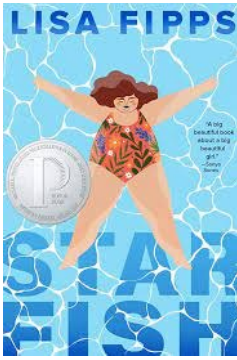


*Downham, Jenny*

### **You Against Me**

When Mikey's younger sister claims to have been raped and he seeks to avenge the crime, he meets Ellie, the sister of the accused. They soon become friends which complicates the situation for everyone.

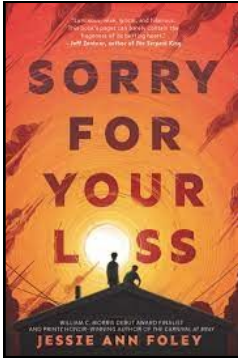




*Fipps, Lisa*

### **Starfish**

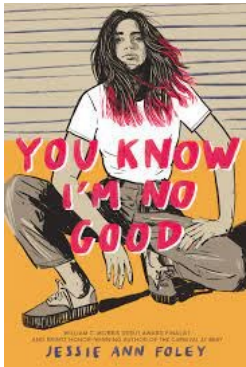
Bullied and shamed her whole life for being fat, twelve-year-old Ellie finally gains the confidence to stand up for herself, with the help of some wonderful new allies.



*Foley, Jessie Ann*

### **Sorry For Your Loss**

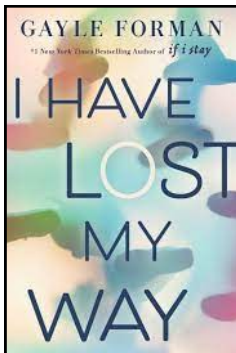
Pup Flanagan routinely settles for less and since his brother, the only one who made him think he could be more, dies, he basically sleepwalks through life, until a photography assignment changes his view of things.



*Foley, Jessie Ann*

### **You Know I'm No Good**

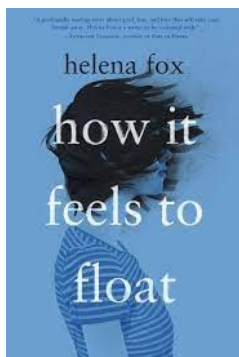
When troubled teen Mia gets sent to Road Oak Academy, a therapeutic girls boarding school, she is forced to confront her painful past.



*Forman, Gayle*

### **I Have Lost My Way**

Three teenagers, Freya, Harun, and Nathaniel feel lost in various ways, and when they collide in Central Park, they begin to find purpose in their lives.



*Fox, Helena*

### **How it Feels to Float**

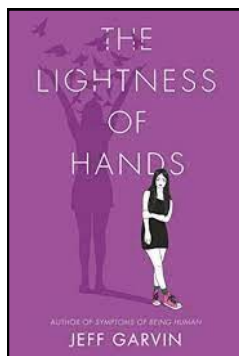
Biz's world turns from balance to grief and depression when her father, whom she has been seeing since his death when she was seven, suddenly stops appearing to her, and she must find a new normal.



*Gardner, Faith*

### **Girl on the Line**

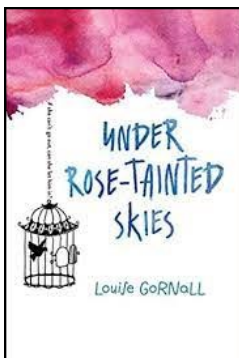
After an attempted suicide and bipolar diagnosis, Journey decides to volunteer at a crisis center and discovers a community of people that may help her find the light within herself that she did not know existed.



*Garvin, Jeff*

### **The Lightness of Hands**

A teen with bipolar II signs her father up to perform his legendary but infamously failed illusion on live television in the hope of making enough money to pay for desperately needed medication.



*Gornall, Louise*

### **Under Rose-Tainted Skies**

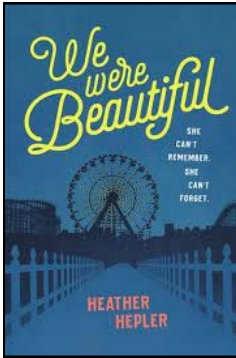
Will teenaged Norah, who is struggling with agoraphobia and OCD, accept that she could be the right one for sweet, funny Luke?



*Hammonds, Jas*

### **We Deserve Monuments**

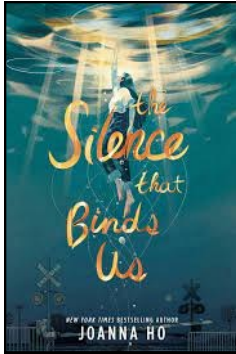
When seventeen-year-old Avery moves to rural Georgia to live with her ailing grandmother, she encounters decade-old family secrets and a mystery surrounding the town's racist past.



*Hepler, Heather*

### **We Were Beautiful**

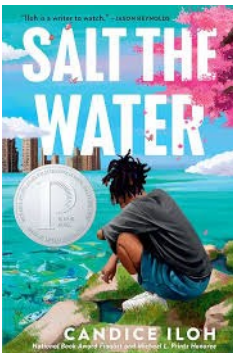
Mia's scarred face is a constant reminder of the car crash that killed her sister, but a summer at her grandmother's Manhattan apartment and new friends help her find happiness again.



*Ho, Joanna*

### **The Silence that Binds Us**

When her brother's suicide results in racial accusations being hurled against her parents for putting too much "pressure" on him, Maybelline Chen challenges these ugly stereotypes through her writing and decides to speak out despite the consequences.



*Iloh, Candace*

### **Salt the Water**

A confrontation with a teacher and a family crisis force high school senior Cerulean Gene to drop out of twelfth grade derailing their dreams of moving cross-country and living off the grid.

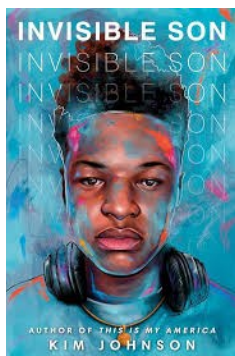




*Johnson, Abigail*

### **Every Time You Go Away**

Knowing each other for eight years, when they were troublemaking kids sharing secrets and first kisses, Ethan and Rebecca, kept apart by grief and tragedy, will discover whether their hardships have torn them apart or will bring them closer than ever.



*Johnson, Kim*

### **Invisible Son**

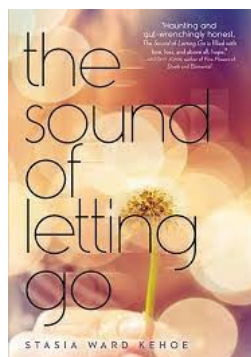
After spending two months in a juvenile detention center for a crime he did not commit, seventeen-year-old Andre Jackson returns home and tries to adapt to a Covid-19 world and find his missing best friend.



*Kara, Jessica*

### **Don't Ask If I'm Okay**

A year after the tragic death of his best friend, Gage tries to move on, but the longer he ignores his grief, the more it warps from sadness into uncontrollable anger, undermining everything he is trying to do and to be.



*Kehoe, Stasia Ward*

### **The Sound of Letting Go**

At seventeen, Daisy feels imprisoned by her brother Steven's autism. Her only escape is into the world of jazz through her trumpet playing, but when her parents decide to send Steven to an institution she is not ready to let him go.



*Krischer, Hayley*

### **Something Happened to Ali Greenleaf**

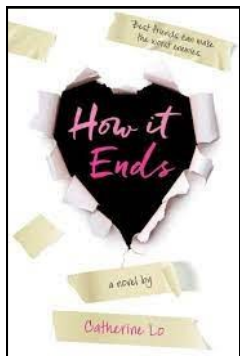
Blythe promises to fix things after her best friend rapes naive Ali at a party, drawing her into the ruthless popular crowd while Ali is still reeling.



*Levithan, David*

### **Take Me With You When You Go**

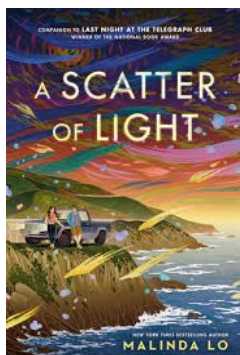
Ezra Ahern wakes up one day to find his older sister, Bea, gone. No note, no sign, nothing but an email address hidden somewhere only he would find it. Ezra never expected to be left behind with their abusive stepfather and their neglectful mother--how is he supposed to navigate life without Bea?



*Lo, Catherine*

### **How it Ends**

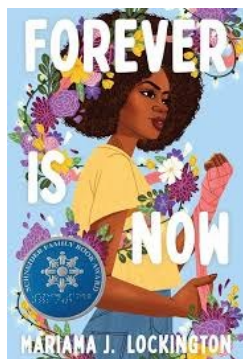
When new girl Annie befriends Jessica on the first day of tenth grade and defends her from bullying, they begin a friendship that both girls need, but it is one based on assumptions and misunderstandings that ultimately threaten to drive them apart.



*Lo, Malinda*

### **A Scatter of Light**

The summer of 2013 in the Bay is a momentous one for eighteen-year-old Aria Tang West, for the working-class queer community she finds herself in, and for her artist grandmother.



*Lockington, Mariama J.*

### **Forever is Now**

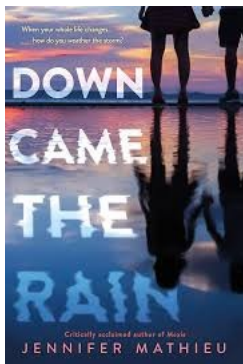
When sixteen-year-old Sadie, a Black bisexual recluse, develops agoraphobia the summer before her junior year, she relies on her best friend, family, and therapist to overcome her fears.



*Longo, Jennifer*

### **What I Carry**

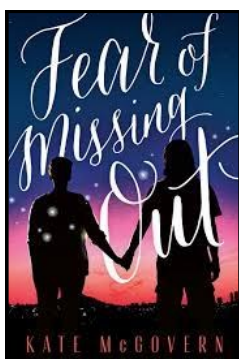
In her final year in foster care, seventeen-year-old Muir tries to survive her senior year before aging out of the system.



*Mathieu, Jennifer*

### **Down Came the Rain**

Becoming an environmental activist after her home is destroyed by a hurricane, Eliza meets Javi and is finally able to connect with someone over the devastating mental effects of ecological disaster.



*McGovern, Kate*

### **Fear of Missing Out**

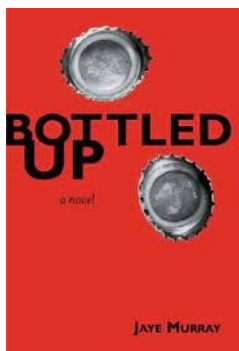
Learning that her cancer has returned, a teen who is determined not to miss out on anything investigates a radical cryopreservation procedure that will keep her in frozen hibernation but alive until a future cure becomes available.



*McInnes, Nicole*

### **100 Days**

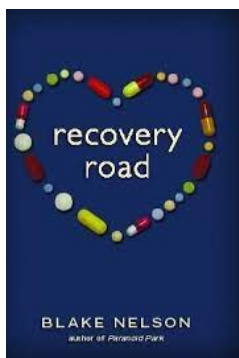
A teen girl suffers from progeria, a rare disease that causes her to age rapidly. This is the story of three unlikely friends learning to live life to its fullest before ultimately letting it go.



*Murray, Jaye*

### **Bottled Up**

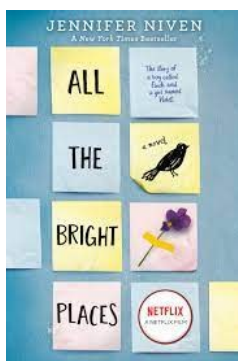
A high school boy comes to terms with his drug addiction, life with an alcoholic father, and a younger brother who looks up to him.



*Nelson, Blake*

### **Recovery Road**

While she is in a rehabilitation facility for drug and alcohol abuse, seventeen-year-old Maddie meets Stewart, who is also in treatment, and they begin a relationship, which they try to maintain after they both get out.

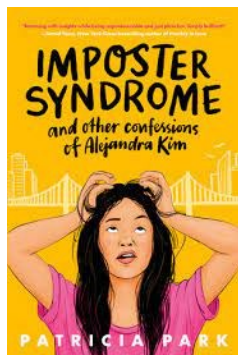


*Niven, Jennifer*

### **All the Bright Places**

Meeting on the ledge of their school's bell tower, misfit Theodore Finch and suicidal Violet Markey find acceptance and healing that are overshadowed by Finch's fears about Violet's growing social world.





*Park, Patricia*

### **Imposter Syndrome and Other Confessions of Alejandra Kim**

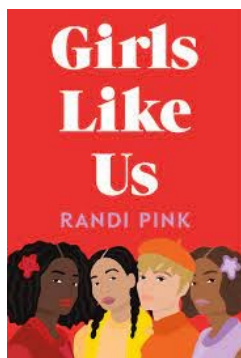
When a microaggression at her wealthy Manhattan high school thrusts her into the spotlight, half-Latinx/half-Korean Alejandra Kim, who feels like an outcast, must carve out a place for herself while dealing with the loss of her father.



*Peters, Julie Anne*

### **By the Time You Read This, I'll be Dead**

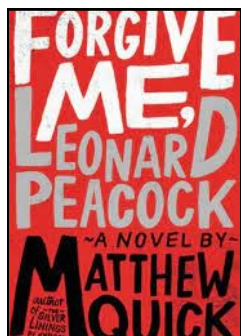
Daelyn Rice, who has been bullied throughout her school career and has more than once attempted suicide, again makes plans to kill herself, in spite of the persistent attempts of an unusual boy to draw her out.



*Pink, Randi*

### **Girls Like Us**

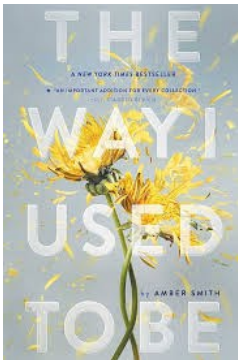
In the summer of 1972, three girls from very different backgrounds struggle to come to terms with being pregnant.



*Quick, Matthew*

### **Forgive Me Leonard Peacock**

A day in the life of a suicidal teen boy saying good-bye to the four people who matter most to him.



*Smith, Amber*

### **The Way I Used to Be**

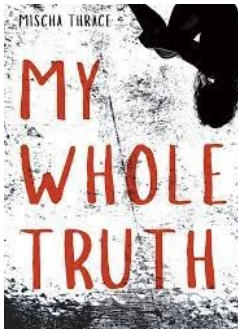
After fourteen-year-old Eden is raped by her brother's best friend, she knows she'll never be the way she used to be.



*Stewart, Erin*

### **The Words We Keep**

When sixteen-year-old Lily Larkin's older sister, Alice, begins to struggle with her mental health, Lily attempts to keep everything together and perfect, despite her own growing anxiety.



*Thrace, Mischa*

### **My Whole Truth**

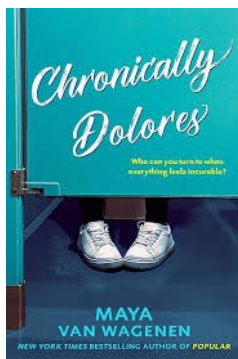
After killing her attacker, seventeen-year-old Seelie must prove in court and in the hallways of her high school that she acted in self-defense.



*Underhill, Edward*

### **This Day Changes Everything**

When fate throws queer teens Abby and Leo together during their high school marching band's trip to NYC, they become lost in the middle of Manhattan and embark on an epic adventure that turns into a day that changes everything, for both of them.



*Van Wagenen, Maya*

### **Chronically Dolores**

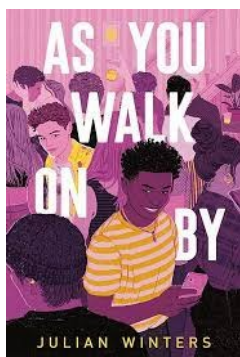
Dolores Mendoza is not thriving. She was recently diagnosed with a chronic bladder condition called interstitial cystitis. The painful disease isn't life threatening, but it is threatening to ruin her life.



*Vivian, Siobhan*

### **The List**

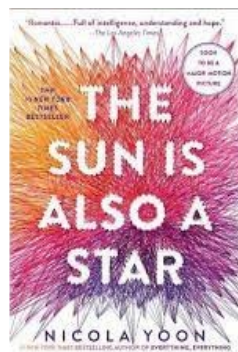
Every year at Mount Washington High School somebody posts a list of the prettiest and ugliest girls from each grade-- this is the story of eight girls, freshman to senior, and how they are affected by the list.



*Winters, Julian*

### **As You Walk On By**

After a disastrous promposal at a party, Theo has an existential crisis in an empty bedroom, but as the night progresses, various classmates also seek refuge from the party, and Theo finds he is not as alone as he thinks he is.



*Yoon, Nicola*

### **The Sun is Also a Star**

Natasha is a girl who believes in science and facts. Daniel has always been a good son and good student. But when he sees Natasha he forgets all that and believes there is something extraordinary in store for both of them.



Compiled by Suzie Gregorovius  
June 2024

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