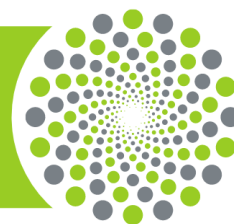


❖ Teens ❖ Best Books of 2023



⌈ We aim to provide a quality list featuring books of different genres, interests, maturity levels, and reading content for young adults. YOU are the best judge of what's appropriate for YOU! ⌋

Best Books lists from previous years may be obtained by request at the Youth Services desk.

**Additional formats available from other libraries and/or downloadable from Libby.*

Aberg-Riger, Ariel – *America Redux*

YA 973 Abe, Non-Fiction

Explores the themes that create our shared sense of American identity and interrogates the myths we've been telling ourselves for centuries. Beautifully illustrated, riveting, enraging, and empowering: a must-read.

Albertalli, Becky – *Imogen, Obviously*

YA Albertalli, Fiction*

Imogen is the token ally amongst her queer friend group. She knows the nuances of the culture, but she's confident in her heterosexuality. All of that changes when she stays with her best friend Lili at her new dorm in college.

Allen, Autumn – *All You Have to Do*

YA Allen, Fiction

Intertwining the stories of two Black students decades apart, this compelling novel follows Kevin and Gibran as they navigate similar forms of insidious racism while discovering who they want to be instead of what society says they are.

Armstrong, Kate J. – *Nightbirds (Series)*

YA Armstrong, Fiction

Flamenco dancer Zarela Zalvidar must work with a disgraced dragon hunter to learn the ways of a Dragador and save her ancestral home.

Arnold, Elana K. – *The Blood Years*

YA Arnold, Fiction; YA Arn Digital Audio Players*

Based on true experiences of her grandmother's childhood in Holocaust-era Romania, Arnold weaves an unforgettable tale of love and loss in the darkest days of the twentieth century—and one young woman's will to survive them.

Bakewell, Catherine – *Flowerheart*

YA Bakewell, Fiction*

Clara accidentally curses her father with wild magic. In order to save him, she makes a dangerous bargain with a local wizard, who happens to be her childhood best friend.

Benton-Walker, Terry J. – *Blood Debts (Series)*

YA Benton-Walker, Fiction*

Twins with a lineage of magic, and a family history stained by violent betrayal, pursue blood and justice in this bewitching contemporary fantasy. Riveting and relevant.

Boulley, Angeline – *Warrior Girl Unearthed*

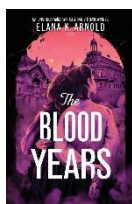
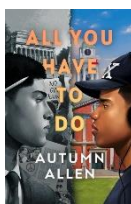
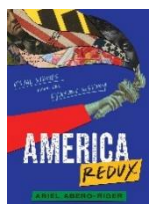
YA Boulley, Fiction; YA Bou Digital Audio Players*

With the rising number of missing Indigenous women, her family's involvement in a murder investigation, and grave robbers profiting off her Anishinaabe tribe, Perry takes matters into her own hands to solve a mystery.

Bow, Erin – *Simon Sort of Says*

+Bow, Fiction*

Simon is the only survivor of a school shooting. That story has followed him everywhere—everywhere except his new home in the National Quiet Zone, where the internet is banned so radio astronomers can listen for signs of life in space.

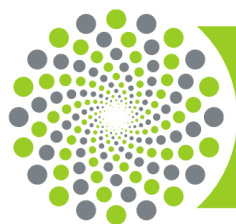


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❖ Teens ❖ Best Books of 2023



Bowles, David – *The Prince and the Coyote*

YA Bowles, Fiction

An intense and moving epic based on the life of Nezahualcoyotl, an influential and artistic Mesoamerican leader. Weaving history and fiction together, this is a story of political intrigue, battles, and the enduring hope of humanity.

Brooks, Nick – *Promise Boys*

YA Brooks, Fiction*

J.B., Ramón, and Trey, students of the Urban Promise Prep School, must follow the school's strict rules, but when their principal is murdered, the three boys must band together to track down the real killer before they are arrested.

Burton, Gabi – *Sing Me to Sleep (Series)*

YA Burton, Fiction*

Saoirse Sorkova, a murderous siren whose very existence is illegal, is forced to work with the prince she hates to hunt a deadly killer—herself.

Cadow, Kenneth M. – *Gather*

YA Cadow, Fiction

Ian's pup is good company now that Ian has to quit basketball, find a job, and take care of his mom as she tries to overcome her opioid addiction. However, an unforeseen tragedy results in Ian and his dog taking off on the run.

Caletti, Deb – *Plan A*

YA Caletti, Fiction

Ivy's cross-country road trip to get an abortion becomes a transformative journey of vulnerability, strength, and choice.

Cameron, Sharon – *Artifice*

YA Cameron, Fiction

Art, lies, and Nazis. Part historical thriller, part portrait of a life played out against a turbulent backdrop, this engrossing read inserts fictional Isa into the true stories of two fascinating historical figures.

Caprara, Rebecca – *Spin*

YA Caprara, Fiction

Archne turns to weaving for solace, but when word spreads of her skill she is confronted by the goddess Athena and the two enter a weaving contest that results in transformation and redemption.

Carter, Aimée – *Royal Blood (Series)*

YA Carter, Fiction

As the King of England's illegitimate daughter, Evan knows a thing or two about secrets. Royalty, murder, and scandal combine in this thrilling new series about an American girl who becomes the British Monarchy's greatest nightmare.

Castle, Jennifer – *When We Had Summer*

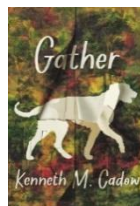
YA Castle, Fiction

When Summer Sisters, Daniella, Alaina, and Penelope are about to be separated for the summer after the death of their friend Carly, they vow to complete the bucket list she wrote before she passed.

Chao, Gloria – *When You Wish Upon a Lantern*

YA Chao, Fiction*

A romance about teens who devote themselves to granting other people's wishes, but are too afraid to let themselves have their own hearts' desires—each other.

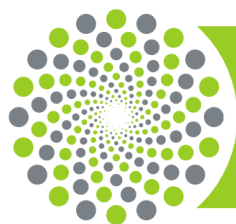


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❖ Teens ❖ Best Books of 2023

**Cole, Olivia A. – *Dear Medusa*****YA Cole, Fiction***

Alicia survives her junior year of high school despite a sexually abusive teacher, vicious whispers from her classmates, and the splintering of her family. Illuminating.

DasGupta, Sayantani – *Rosewood: A Midsummer Meet Cute***YA DasGupta, Fiction**

The works of Jane Austen and William Shakespeare blend well in this contemporary love story starring two Bengali American teens. Rollicking, romantic, and relevant fun.

Dean, Benjamin – *The King is Dead***YA Dean, Fiction**

Heavy is the crown James has been born to wear, especially as the first Black heir to the British throne. But with his father's passing, and a new boyfriend to hide, James is woefully unprepared for the sudden shine of public scrutiny.

Dimaline, Cherie – *Funeral Songs for Dying Girls***YA Dimaline, Fiction***

After inadvertently starting rumors of a haunted cemetery, an Indigenous teen befriends a ghost in this novel exploring grief and belonging.

Fay, Cayla – *Ravensong (Series)***YA Fay, Fiction***

Stuck in high school until her eighteenth birthday, demi-god Neve is eager to join her sisters in their fight against evil, but when she meets Alexandria, a girl with a dark secret, Neve must choose between duty and love.

Gibney, Shannon – *The Girl I Am, Was, and Never Will Be***YA Gibney, Fiction**

A tale of two girls on two different timelines occasionally bridged by a mysterious portal. Part memoir, part speculative fiction, this novel explores the often surreal experience of growing up as a mixed-Black transracial adoptee.

Goo, Maurene - *Throwback***YA Goo, Fiction**

Samantha, a Gen Z Korean American teen butting heads with her mother, Priscilla, finds herself barreling through time back to the 1990s, where she meets her mother as a 17-year-old cheerleader.

Hassan, Rochelle – *The Buried and the Bound (Series)***YA Hassan, Fiction**

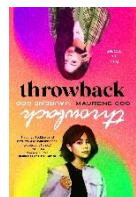
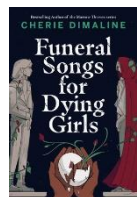
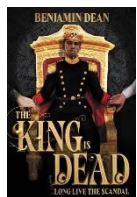
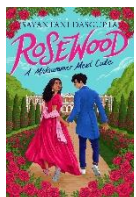
Aziza El-Amin, the only hedgewitch in Blackthorn, Massachusetts, teams up with a cursed boy looking for answers and a young necromancer in order to eradicate a new threat in the woods and take back her hometown.

Hazelwood, Ali – *Check and Mate***YA Hazelwood, Fiction***

When Mallory agrees to return to chess in one last charity tournament, her surprise upset against Nolan, the reigning world champ and bad boy of the chess world, sets her on an adventure as she rediscovers her passion for the game.

Hicks, Faith Erin – *Hockey Girl Loves Drama Boy***YA Hicks, Graphic Novels**

Alix needs to learn how to control her anger, and she is sure Ezra, the popular and poised theater kid from her grade is the answer. As they hang out and start to get closer, Alix learns that there is more to Ezra than the front he puts on.

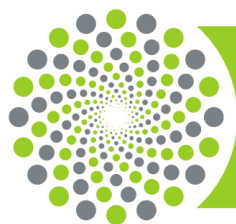


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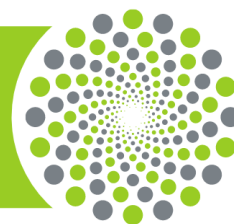


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❖ Teens ❖ Best Books of 2023

**Ibañez, Isabel – *Secrets of the Nile: What the River Knows (Series)*****YA Ibañez, Fiction***

Set in 1884, Inez travels to Egypt after the sudden death of her parents to uncover the truth about their deaths, and as she attempts to unravel the mysteries her parents sought, she becomes a pawn in a game that threatens to kill her.

Ibrahim, Maiya – *Spice Road (Series)***YA Ibrahim, Fiction; YA Ibr Digital Audio Players***

When she learns that her brother is spreading the nation's secret spice magic to outsiders, Shield warrior Imani sets out on a dangerous mission to find him, discovering secrets that lie beyond the Forbidden Wastes and in her own heart.

Ishihara, Yu – *Doomsday with My Dog (Series)***YA Ishihara, Graphic Novels**

A high school girl, the last human on Earth, and her loyal canine companion make their way through post-apocalyptic Japan, taking in the spectacular sights and meeting the locals—from the furry to the intimidating to the outright bizarre!

Kaufman, Amie – *The Isles of the Gods (Series)***YA Kaufman, Fiction***

Magic, romance, and slumbering gods clash in the start of this riveting fantasy series that spans gangsters' dens, forgotten temples, and the high seas. When gods go to war, the world lies barren in their wake.

King, A. S. – *The Collectors: Stories***YA Collectors SC, Fiction**

Ten acclaimed YA authors explore the artistry and emotion behind the human instinct to collect. An eclectic, poignant, and introspective treasure trove.

Kirby, Matthew J. – *Star Splitter***YA Kirby, Fiction**

Crash-landed on a desolate planet light years from Earth, Jessica must unravel the mystery of the bloody destruction all around her and the questionable intentions of a familiar stranger.

Klise, James – *I'll Take Everything You Have***YA Klise, Fiction**

While running a con in 1934 Chicago, Joe splits his time between Eddie, a handsome flirt, and Raymond, a rich kid who shows Joe the queer life of the city, but as danger closes in, Joe must decide who he wants to be before disappearing.

Kraus, Daniel – *Whalefall***YA Kraus, Fiction***

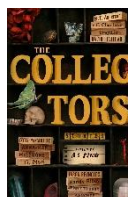
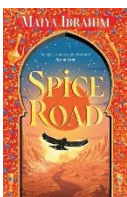
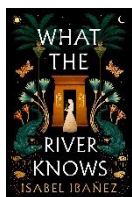
A troubled young man is burdened by guilt after the death of his estranged father. Jay hopes to redeem himself by diving to recover his father's remains in the ocean off the California coast; instead, he is swallowed whole by a whale.

Krause, Autumn – *Before the Devil Knows You're Here***YA Krause, Fiction**

In 1836 Wisconsin, Catalina's determination to keep her family alive is tested when a bark-covered man abducts her brother, prompting her to delve into a world of strange beasts and tormented spirits.

La Sala, Ryan – *Beholder***YA La Sala, Fiction**

Something evil is waking up, and compelling victims toward violence and chaos. Bound to him by a mysterious power, Athan has felt this evil hiding behind his reflection his entire life, watching him and waiting to take over.

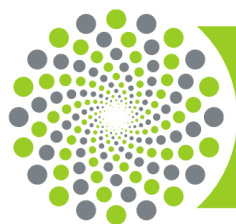


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❖ Teens ❖ Best Books of 2023



Lee, Deborah (Deb JJ Lee) – *In Limbo*

YA 305.9 Lee, Graphic Novels

Caught with nowhere to go, Deb finds her mental health plummeting, resulting in a suicide attempt. She is resilient and heals through art and self-care, guiding her to a deeper understanding of her Korean American heritage and herself.

Lewis, Kayvion – *Thieves Gambit (Series)*

YA Lewis, Fiction; YA Lew Digital Audio Players*

Seventeen-year-old Ross Quest, a master thief, enters the Thieves' Gambit, a competition consisting of dangerous, international heists, in order to save her mother's life.

Lukens, F. T. – *Spell Bound*

YA Lukens, Fiction*

Two nonbinary teens apprenticed to rival sorcerers start to fall for each other as the world around them implodes. A delightful novel about magic and belonging.

Magoon, Kekla – *The Minus-One Club*

YA Magoon, Fiction

Joining a secret group whose members have all suffered the tragic loss of someone they loved, Kermit finds his crush Matt's headstrong approach to life helps to relieve his constant despair.

Marquis, Krystal – *The Davenports (Series)*

YA Marquis, Fiction; YA Mar Digital Audio Players*

The Davenports are one of the few Black families of immense wealth and status in 1910 Chicago. Their two daughters, Olivia and Helen, are finding their way and finding love, even where they are not supposed to.

Marshall, Kate Alice – *The Narrow*

YA Marshall, Fiction

A deliciously terrifying novel about a ghost who uncovers a teen girl's best-kept secrets while haunting her boarding school. Secrets, lies, and loyalty—perfect for fans of *The Haunting of Bly Manor*.

McBride, Amber – *We Are All So Good at Smiling*

YA McBride, Fiction*

When hospitalized for depression, Whimsy connects with Faerry, who also suffers from the traumatic loss of a sibling, and together they work to unearth buried memories and battle the fantastical physical embodiment of their depression.

McCauley, Kyrie – *All the Dead Lie Down*

YA McCauley, Fiction

Newly orphaned Marin accepts a nanny position for an acclaimed horror writer and her mother's childhood friend, but she soon realizes all is not well at Lovelace House and must unravel its secrets before they consume her.

McCullough, Joy – *Enter the Body*

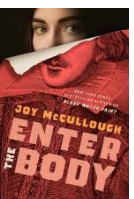
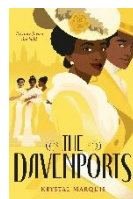
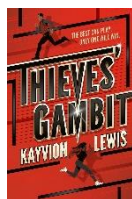
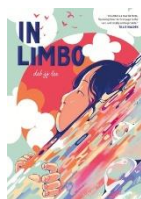
YA McCullough, Fiction

In the room beneath a theater stage, ghosts of Juliet, Ophelia, and more teen girls who died tragically in Shakespeare's plays share their experiences and trauma and get the chance to retell the stories of their lives in their own terms.

Meade, Lily – *The Shadow Sister*

YA Meade, Fiction*

A biracial high school student questions the truth surrounding her sister's disappearance and unexplained return. A gripping portrait of fractured sisterhood, reverberating traumas, and the triumphs of omniscient ancestors.

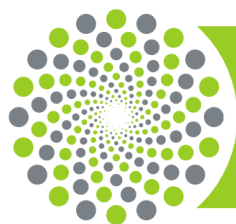


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❖ Teens ❖ Best Books of 2023



Mills, Emma – *Something Close to Magic*

YA Mills, Fiction*

Seventeen-year-old Aurelie, a baker's apprentice, reluctantly agrees to assist a bounty hunter named Iliana and finds herself on an adventure full of magic, danger, and the thrill of first love.

Mitsuboshi, Tama – *Call the Name of the Night (Series)*

YA Mitsuboshi, Graphic Novels

Mira suffers from an illness that causes her world to be drowned in night whenever she is feeling anxious or depressed. Mira lives with a magical teacher who protects her and is looking for a way to combat her affliction.

Montoya, Angela – *Sinner's Isle*

YA Montoya, Fiction

A spellbinding romantic fantasy about a powerful witch who will do anything to escape the remote island she's being held captive on, including blackmail a notorious, charming pirate who washes up on shore.

Morris, Brittney – *The Jump*

YA Morris, Fiction

The stress of an oil refinery being built in their backyard, threatening their families' livelihood, prompts four working-class teens to join a dangerous scavenger hunt where the reward of power could change their families' fates and city.

Nazemian, Abdi – *Only This Beautiful Moment*

YA Nazemian, Fiction*

Openly gay Moud is traveling to Iran for the first time and is concerned about hiding his sexuality, for his safety and because of what his family may think. An emotionally impactful story about 3 generations of boys in an Iranian family.

Neil, Haley – *Planning Perfect*

YA Neil, Fiction*

Summer vacation quickly becomes complicated for Felicity Becker as she tries to plan a perfect wedding for her mom, figure out her feelings for her friend Nancy, and wonder what dating will look like for her as an asexual person.

Nott, Dan – *Hidden Systems*

YA 509 Not, Graphic Novels

This graphic novel provides a guided tour through the science of the past, and how the decisions people made while inventing and constructing early technology still affect the way people use it today.

Oshiro, Mark – *Into the Light*

YA Oshiro, Fiction

Queer adoptee Manny, now homeless, sets out to find his sister Elena, who is still enmeshed in Christ's Dominion, the community that abandoned him, but the journey is fraught, as he must confront the religious trauma from his past.

Pearsall, Kate – *Bittersweet in the Hollow*

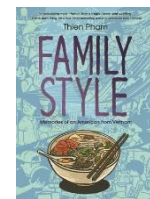
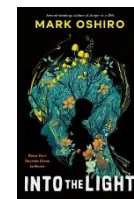
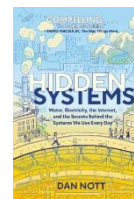
YA Pearsall, Fiction*

When a girl goes missing, Linden, who can taste other's emotions, recovers haunting memories of her own experience and explores the legend of the Moth-Winged Man, leading her to wonder if there are some secrets best left buried.

Pham, Thien – *Family Style*

YA 959.704 Pha, Graphic Novels

After the Pham family arrives at a refugee camp in Thailand, they struggle to survive. Things don't get much easier once they resettle in California. Through each chapter of their lives, food takes on a new meaning.

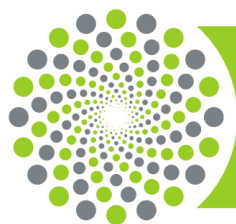


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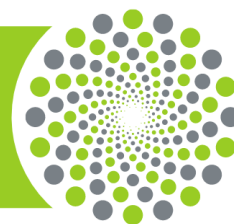


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❖ Teens ❖ Best Books of 2023



Reintgen, Scott – *A Door in the Dark* (Series)

YA Reintgen, Fiction*

Follows six teenage wizards as they fight to make it home alive after a malfunctioning spell leaves them stranded in the wilderness. Truly fantastic.

Rosen, Lev AC – *Emmett*

YA Rosen Lev AC, Fiction

Perfect Highbury Academy senior Emmett, a gay teen heartthrob, plays cupid for everyone but himself in this adaptation of Jane Austen's Emma. Delightful and downright swoon worthy.

Ross, Rebecca – *Divine Rivals* (Series)

YA Ross, Fiction; YA Ros Digital Audio Players*

When two young rival journalists find love through a magical connection, they must face the depths of hell, in a war among gods, to seal their fate forever.

Saito, Sakae – *Touring After the Apocalypse* (Series)

YA Saito, Graphic Novels

All alone after the end of days, two girls ride through the desolate ruins of Japan. They're not about to let the collapse of civilization interrupt their sightseeing, as they've got the run of the country's most popular tourist spots to themselves.

Sambury, Liselle – *Delicious Monsters*

YA Sambury, Fiction*

Told in alternating timelines, Daisy and her mother move into her uncle's mansion, only to find horrors waiting inside, and ten years later, Brittney investigates the mystery behind the Miracle Mansion that turned her mother's life around.

Santat, Dan – *A First Time for Everything*

+305.23 San, Graphic Novels*

A 1989 summer trip to Europe changes Caldecott Medal winner Santat's life in this graphic memoir. Full of laughter and sentiment, this is a nudge for readers to dare to try new things.

Schaeffer, Rebecca – *City of Nightmares* (Series)

YA Schaeffer, Fiction

After a con goes wrong, Ness finds herself at the center of a criminal syndicate conspiracy, in a city where dreaming means waking up as your worst nightmare.

Schmidt, Gary D. – *The Labors of Hercules Beal*

YA Schmidt, Fiction; YA Sch Digital Audio Players*

An ancient hero's feats and foibles echo through a modern middle schooler's life. At once an epic journey toward self-discovery and a wonderfully entertaining yarn.

Shukairy, Ream – *The Next New Syrian Girl*

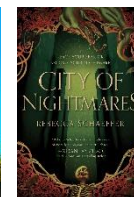
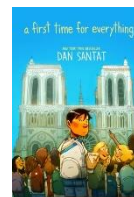
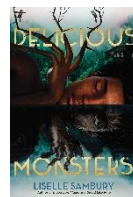
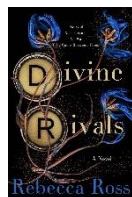
YA Shukairy, Fiction

The unlikely friendship between Syrian American boxer Khadija and Syrian refugee Leene reveals the pressures and expectations of the perfect Syrian daughter and the repercussions of the Syrian Revolution both at home and abroad.

Smith, Cynthia Leitich – *Harvest House*

YA Smith, Fiction*

A creepy man is stalking Indigenous women, dogs are fretful, and wild animals are behaving strangely. While Hughie weighs how to speak up about a bigoted legend, he and his friends begin to investigate whether they are really haunted.

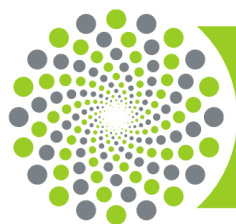


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❖ Teens ❖ Best Books of 2023

**Tison, Ari – *Saints of the Household*****YA Tison, Fiction**

Jay and Max, both in their senior year of high school, don't want to end up like their abusive and alcoholic father who physically hurts their mother, but when they hear their cousin Nicole in trouble in the woods, instinct takes over.

Tran, Trang Thanh – *She is a Haunting***YA Tran, Fiction***

Jade Nguyen is spending the summer in Vietnam at the French colonial house her estranged father is fixing up as a vacation rental, but unbeknownst to her family, the house and its ghosts have other plans.

Utomi, Moses Ose – *Daughters of Oduma***YA Utomi, Fiction***

Dirt, a retired elite female fighter, must enter the South God Bow tournament to protect her found family of younger sisters and their beloved Mud Fam.

Wellington, Joelle – *Their Vicious Games***YA Wellington, Fiction***

A teenager enrolls in a lethal competition to salvage her reputation and repair her broken future. A twisty chronicle, filled with equal parts glory and gore, of an outlier who transforms into a modern “final girl.”

White, Andrew Joseph – *The Spirit Bares Its Teeth***YA White, Fiction; YA Whi Digital Audio Players***

Set in an alternate Victorian England where mediums control the dead, Silas, an autistic transgender boy must expose a power-hungry secret society while confined to a cruel finishing school designed to turn him into the perfect wife.

Winters, Julian – *As You Walk On By***YA Winters, Fiction**

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.

Wood, Jennie – *Paper Planes***YA Wood, Graphic Novels***

After a life-altering incident, Dylan and Leighton are sent to a summer camp for troubled youth. Can they save their friendship and protect their future while trying to survive camp?

Xu, Wendy – *The Infinity Particle***YA Xu, Graphic Novels**

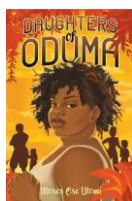
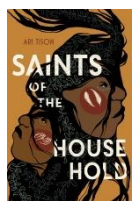
It's the 26th century, and humans have colonized Mars with the help of artificial intelligence. Aspiring teenage inventor Clementine needs a fresh start, so she books a one-way ticket to the Red Planet, where she has scored her dream job.

Yero, Lauren – *Under This Forgetful Sky***YA Yero, Fiction**

When rebels infect his father with a fatal virus, Rumi ventures beyond his city's protected walls and meets Paz, who offers to guide him on his search for a cure, but may have an agenda of her own.

Zhang, Amy – *The Cartographers***YA Zhang, Fiction**

Abandoned by her roommates and stuck on a subway platform during a blackout, Ocean Sun can't quite shake the feeling that she has died and this is the afterlife.



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