

COVER STORY 2025 - 2026

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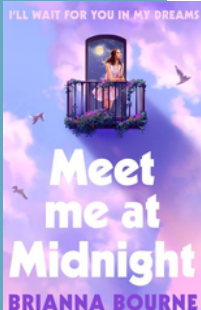
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The singular life of Aria Patel **Samira Ahmed**



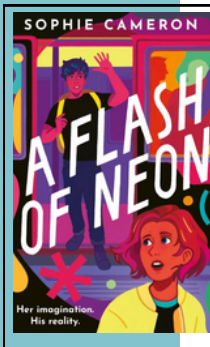
Aria loves science because it makes sense, and it gives life order. But when she's transported to an alternate reality just as her mum is involved in an accident, logic flies out the window. Each time she gets transported to a new reality she must figure out how to behave and adapt to fit in with her eerily similar surroundings. All while she searches for a way back to her original life to save her mum. It doesn't help that her ex-boyfriend keeps turning up and she can't quite resist him... Perfect for sci-fi and multiverse fans!



Meet me at midnight **Brianna Bourne**



Set in a world where memory removal is a common procedure, this is a complicated love story. Aria and her identical twin sister Cady are inseparable, but whilst Cady is in a coma, all Aria wants to do is escape. Her dreams offer her new worlds, filled with spectacular landscapes, beautiful music, and a boy she finds herself drawn to. Then Aria discovers that the boy, Strat, is real, and something clicks. She realises that she's had memories of him removed from her brain. But the memories aren't supposed to come back, and they aren't supposed to be sharing dreams...



A flash of Neon

Sophie Cameron

Laurie's imagination runs wild—especially when she spins tales for her friends about Neon, her unforgettable first kiss... Except Neon isn't real... right?! When her fictional boyfriend literally steps off a train and into her world, Laurie is forced to confront the impossible. As Neon ignites chaos during his week-long visit and even more fantastical beings arrive in town (including a very cute unicorn) Laurie must grapple with fantasy vs reality. Friendship, magic, family, and independent bookshops are all celebrated in this fun and feel-good tale.



Mismatched

Anne Camlin

This modern retelling of Jane Austen's Emma follows Evan as he tries (and fails!) to set up his classmates from the Gender and Sexuality Alliance. Evan tries his best to be a matchmaker, but he just can't seem to get it right. A fun, light-hearted story about first loves, embracing who you are, and supporting the friends around you, no matter what. This heartwarming graphic novel is perfect for fans of Heartstopper and Jane Austen.



Not that kind of hero

Alexia Casale

Orla is a side character in her own story. Drowned out by her rowdy siblings and spending her days doing laundry, cooking, and childminding, Orla pushes her own dreams down the list of priorities. But when her stepsister/best friend submits an application on Orla's behalf for drama school, she can finally start to put her own dreams first. A sweet novel about found family, healing from the past and finding yourself. With a little romance thrown in.



Stealing happy

Brian Conaghan

Desperate to save their home, Sonny's mum borrowed money from local criminal Chick Lennon, and now the debt is due... Sonny knows he has to find a way to get the cash, but how can one 13-year-old wannabe comedian with Tourettes go up against a notorious loan-shark?! Sonny might not be the smartest kid in Scotland, but he does have good mates and a plan that might be crazy enough to work. A funny and gritty novel – perfect for fans of Nathanael Lessor.





Find me after

A. Connors

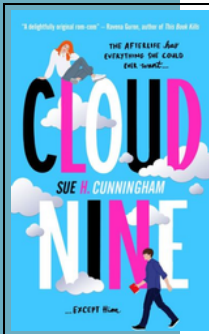
After Kyle has an epileptic seizure in the middle of the street and no one even notices, he realises something is not right. Then he bumps into the last person he wanted to see: the girl who rejected him, Farah. Together they realise they are stuck in an in-between; not alive, but not yet dead. But the outside world feels strange and dangerous, and they sense they are being watched... This book is the perfect blend of mystery and horror that will have you totally gripped!



The Vulpine

Polly Crosby

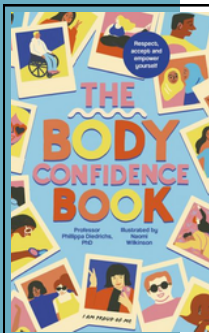
Set in a future where the government claims to have eliminated sickness, anyone with a physical difference is labelled "imperfect" and either sent to the mysterious Hospital or kidnapped in the night by the terrifying Vulpines; monstrous beasts that eat children. Ora has always accepted this truth, until it is revealed that her parents have hidden her own imperfection from their idealist society and Ora herself. Learning that, rather than being evil creatures, The Vulpine are actually a rebel group living beneath the earth, Ora must choose to join them or risk a terrifying fate above ground.



Cloud nine

Sue H. Cunningham

In 1899, Evvy steps in front of a knife meant for her brother and saves his life. Unfortunately, she dies in the process. Luckily for her this sacrifice granted her a place in the afterlife penthouse – Cloud Nine. Over a century later, Evvy is desperate to find her brother, so she takes a job as a celestial guide. Responsible for collecting the dead and taking them to the afterlife, she hopes that she might bump into her brother along the way. But, when she discovers a boy who is not dying anytime soon can see her, her plan begins to crumble. Especially when she realises she's falling for him...



The body confidence book

Philippa Diedrichs, PhD.

Honest, funny, and frank; this colourfully illustrated non-fiction book is perfectly pitched for when you find yourself feeling self-conscious or insecure. With chapters about social media, the problem with comparison and appearance ideals, this book not only encourages you to challenge your attitude towards your own body, but suggests real and positive changes you can make in your community. Scientific studies and real-world statistics meet with sensitive and thoughtful advice in this uplifting and accessible read, perfect for every body.



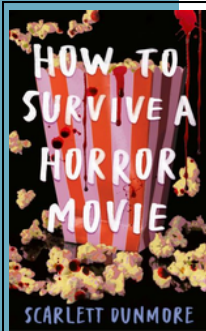


Brielle and Bear: Once upon a time...

Salomey Doku



A sweet and wholesome modern fairytale! Brielle has always dreamed of starring in her own fairytale and, now that she's working in a bookshop and attending Once Upon a Time University, her dream might finally come true. Enter Bear, a shy rugby player/cinnamon roll who loves to read fairytales, too. With their friends determined to set them up, a happily ever after might well be on the horizon... With a diverse cast and gorgeous art style, this graphic novel is perfect for lovers of all things romance.



How to survive a horror movie

Scarlett Dunmore



Charley is haunted, by her past, but also by the literal ghosts of her recently murdered classmates. At first everyone believes these deaths to be freak accidents or suicides but Charley, with her extensive knowledge of *all things horror*, realises that they are in the middle of a slasher movie, and no one is safe. Mixing graphic gore with dark humour, this book is packed-full of horror references as Charley and her roommate Olive attempt to figure out who at their boarding school is the killer, while being followed around by an ever-increasing number of angsty teenage ghosts.



Exit stage death

Ava Eldred



Livi is ecstatic to be back at Camp Chance; singing, dancing, and acting her way to the final showcase where she'll prove to everyone that she has what it takes to be a professional performer. But her dreams of a perfect summer are dashed when one of her fellow-campers is discovered dead. What appears to be a tragic accident soon turns into a hunt for a killer as Livi and her triple-threat-friends try to solve the mystery, while still making it to rehearsals. This book is fast-paced, fun and packed-full of musical theatre references.



Somadina

Akwaeke Emezi



At fifteen, Somadina and her twin Jayaike are still waiting for their magical gifts to materialise. While their peers gain powers like invisibility and super strength, the twins' long-delayed abilities arrive with god-like force that neither can control. When Somadina accidentally kills a boy, her community turns against her out of anger and fear. Then Jayaike is kidnapped by a mysterious entity, forcing Somadina to confront the true nature of her power in order to save him. Enchanting and romantic, this story explores difference, destiny, and the unbreakable bonds of family.



Tomorrow we begin

Matt Goodfellow

From the author of *The Final Year*, this poetry collection is perfect for ages 11-16. Each poem stands alone, but the collection unfolds best when read from beginning to end—an immersive journey through the highs, lows, and sheer chaos of secondary school. From the scent of Lynx Africa in crowded corridors to the slammed doors of teenage frustration, this book captures it all: the awkwardness of parent-teacher evenings, the bafflement of career days, first crushes, mischievous pranks, and all the gloriously messy moments that are part of growing-up.



This dark heart

Zeena Gosrani

One night at the palace, when her father is attacked, Princess Thiya discovers she has dark magic, powerful enough to destroy the daayan; demon-like creatures who possess humans. Although her family refuse to accept that she is a mage, Thiya knows her power can be used for good. When Amara, the girl she loves, is taken to the frontlines, Thiya must leave everything behind and master her magic so that she can fight for Amara and save her kingdom. A sapphic romantasy inspired by Indian folktales.



Mondays are murder

Ravena Guron

An exciting thriller set in a quiet British town. Kay has just come back to Longrove a year after her best friend and her aunt died. Not long after she arrives, she receives a message: figure out the identity of the sender or her murder will be on Monday. At first Kay thinks it's a joke, but when her cousin Nikki admits that she's been receiving notes too, Kay realises that the anonymous note sender is serious. Together she and Nikki must figure out who they're dealing with, before it's too late. Perfect for fans of *A Good Girl's Guide to Murder* and *One of us is Lying*.



Nettle

Bex Hogan

After Nettle accidentally stumbles into the realm of the fae, she is desperate to return to her ailing Grandma. Desperate enough to strike a bargain with the fearsome Fae King... She must complete three seemingly simple tasks in order to earn her freedom but, in this perilous and bewildering land, nothing is as it appears. Charming stableboy Conor and enigmatic shadow Fae Ellion offer their help, but Nettle must stay sharp and outsmart the ancient as she battles for her freedom—and uncovers the truth of her own existence.





The boy I love William Hussey



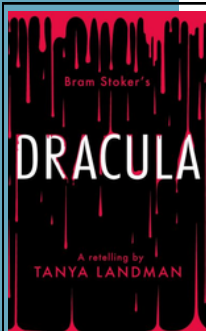
Summer, 1916: as the Battle of the Somme looms closer, Stephen and Danny—two boys burdened by duty and surrounded by danger—find themselves caught between survival and something even more precarious—their love for one another. In a time when discovery means devastation, their romance is a risk as deadly as the trenches. Yet, this seemingly doomed love story unfolds with aching beauty, ultimately offering a hopeful, if bittersweet, resolution that speaks to the enduring power of connection—even in the darkest of hours.



The twelve Liz Hyder



Kit's sister, Libby, has disappeared. And not just physically; all her stuff has gone, and their mum has no memory of her younger daughter... It all has something to do with the winter solstice, a strange wolf-woman, ancient stone circles, and a boy named Story. Libby has been trapped in the past, and the present is suffering as a result; Kit and Story must venture through time itself to restore the natural order and save Libby's life. Part mystery, part folklore, and a rousing celebration of nature, this book is a unique and atmospheric read.



Bram Stoker's Dracula: a retelling Tanya Landman



Grab your garlic and wooden stakes, it's time to head to Transylvania! Young Jonathan Harker has been hired by the mysterious Count Dracula to assist him with his move to London – but it soon becomes clear that Dracula is not your average client. Follow the iconic tale of Jonathan, his fiancé Mina, and the legendary vampire-hunter Van Helsing in this accessible adaptation. Landman has kept all the meat of the story and condensed it down to a bite-sized chunk of a book, perfect to read when the moon is full and the wolves are howling...



What happens online Nathaniel Lessor



Fred has a secret. At school, he's a nobody: quiet, awkward, always alone in the library. But online? He's Existor; a gaming legend with thousands of fans hanging on his every word. The wild part? His biggest fans are the same classmates who ignore him IRL. When Existor starts dropping secrets about people at school—some true, some less so—Fred gets hooked on the rush. Fame, power, control... it's all just a click away. But the more he posts, the messier things get. To get the life he truly wants, it's time to log-off and face reality.

Twice Carnegie-winning author
GERALDINE McCAUGHREAN



Under a fire-red sky

Geraldine McCaughrean



With Britain on the brink of war, four evacuees decide to jump off a train bound for the safety of the countryside to stay behind in London. As bombs fall and the city darkens, these unlikely friends forge a bond that helps them survive and find joy amid chaos and tragedy. Inspired by the author's father, a firefighter during the Blitz, this story brims with heroism, heart, and hope. As 'The Meridians' navigate a city on the edge of destruction, they discover that courage isn't just found in battle—it's built in friendship, resilience, and the light we share in dark times.



Ditching Saskia

John Moore & Neetols



When Damian uses a spirit flower to summon his mum's ghost, it doesn't quite go to plan. Instead, he's stuck with the ghost of a young girl named Saskia, and she won't leave Damian alone. But perhaps Saskia is exactly what he needs to push him out of his comfort zone at his new school, and talk to people other than his best friend. Maybe he'll finally gather the courage to talk to his crush and ask his grandfather the truth about his mother. An adorable graphic novel, think Heartstopper but with ghosts!

TOMI OYEMAKINDE



We are hunted

Tomi Oyemakinde



A week at an exclusive island resort with his long-time crush should be a dream for Femi, even if it means being stuck with his dad and brother. Darlenia seems idyllic; with incredible technology and fantastical, exotic creatures like glass dragons roaming the island. But nothing is as perfect as it seems, and there is something violent lurking beneath the surface of this manufactured paradise... something hungry. Fast-paced and thrilling, this book is also impressively gory - queasy readers beware!

CAN SHE CATCH A KILLER BEFORE
HER LIFE GOES UP IN FLAMES?



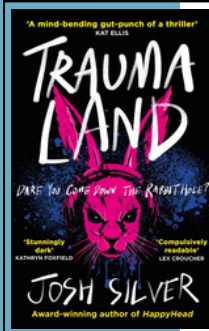
MK PAGANO

Girls who burn

MK Pagano



A year ago, Addie's sister, Fiona, was killed. Addie's convinced that her murderer was Thatcher Montgomery, part of the wealthy family who spend their summers in Addie's town. But when she and Seth Montgomery find Thatcher dead, the mystery deepens. Addie doesn't trust Seth at first, but she can't help being drawn to him. Quickly she realises that she has no choice but to work with him to figure out what happened to her sister and his cousin, before the killer strikes again. An exciting murder mystery with romance threading through the story.



TraumaLand

Josh Silver



Since the car crash that nearly killed him, Eli feels completely numb and is suffering memory loss. In a desperate attempt to feel something he visits TraumaLand: an underground club where a VR headset transports users to scenes of intense violence and terror to make them feel alive. While experiencing one of these scenarios, Eli recognises someone through the goggles: himself. What follows is a thrilling journey to uncover the truth and remember his past. Though sensitively written, this book has some dark themes so check the trigger warnings before heading down the rabbit hole.

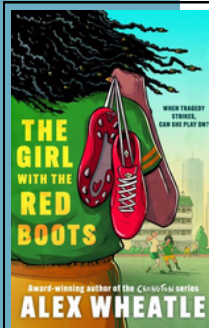


This feast of a life

Cynthia So



Inspired by their favourite chef, Auden decides to start their own food blog. Struggling with their identity, they hope it will be a space where they can finally be themselves. Meanwhile, Valerie is struggling with the loss of her mum. The kitchen, her mum's domain, has barely been used in the year since her death but when Valerie discovers Auden's blog it sparks an enthusiasm for food that she thought she'd lost. After connecting online, they decide to meet IRL, discovering a chemistry that might just be a recipe for romance.



The girl with the red boots

Alex Wheatle



Aspiring footballer Kadeen has had to flee from her home in Jamaica to grey, gloomy London after identifying the man who shot and killed her brother. Grieving and homesick, her only escape is playing football with the local team, the SW2s, despite her Aunt Mel's disapproval. Sneaking out, training hard and making new friends, Kadeen slowly begins working through her grief in this heartwarming story. Perfect for fans of the beautiful game, this shows the late Alex Wheatle at his literary best.



Make good trouble

Jamia Wilson



For as long as oppression has existed, young people have challenged it. This gripping read charts two centuries of youth-led resistance—from union movements and mass protests to revolutionary uprisings. Told in short, punchy chapters, it spans the globe and shines a light on the courage of marginalized communities fighting for justice. Discover the bold defiance of the Newsies Strike, the bravery of the Little Rock Nine, the quiet resistance of the White Rose, and the global momentum of the School Strike for Climate. Each story is a testament to the power of youth activism.

The Full List

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Monthly themed sessions for 11 to 14 year olds.

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**Celebrate the love of reading in these relaxed and social
sessions.**

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