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Criteria

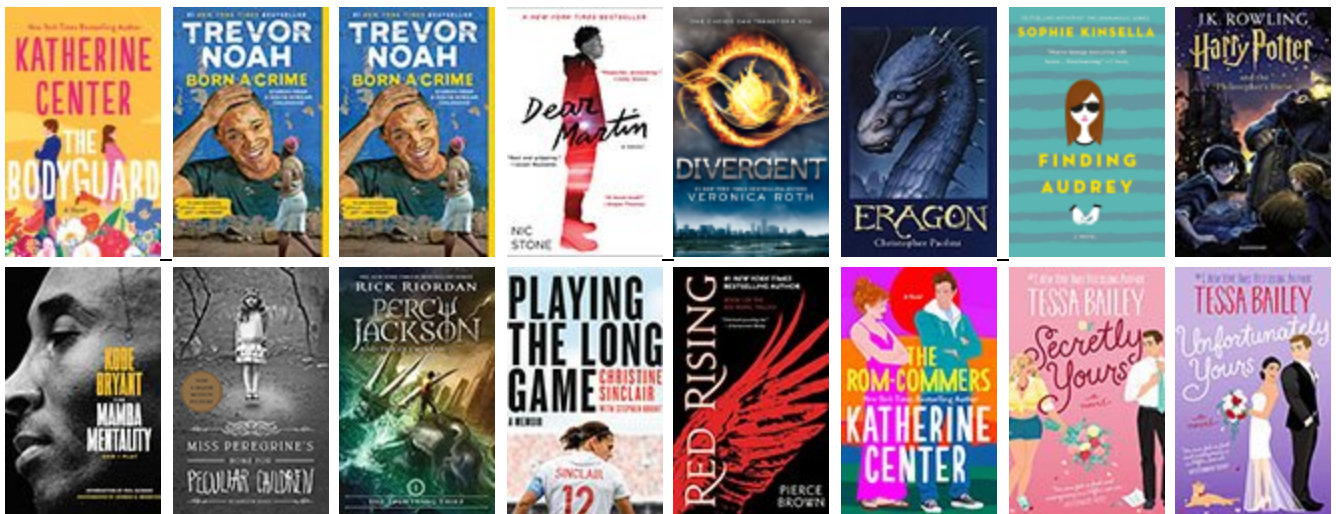
Items being reviewed must meet the following criteria:

- Must be available through Port Colborne Public Library or a participating LINC library.
- Must be an appropriate reading level.
- Books can be fiction or non-fiction, and in book, e-book or audiobook format.

Additionally, reviews must meet the following criteria:

- Must be at least 250 words in length (or longer).
- Must contain an introduction to the book, a brief summary (without spoilers), a thoughtful review, as well as whether or not you would recommend the book.
- Be an original review; plagiarism will not be accepted.
- Contains no graphic or explicit language.

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***The Bodyguard* by Katherine Center (Reviewed by KR)**

The Bodyguard, written by Katherine Center, is funny, sweet, and has a happy ending.

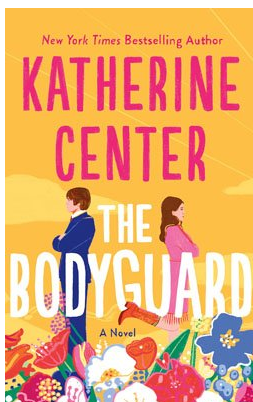
Hannah Brooks does not look intimidating and does not look like she could protect you. Truthfully, she is a bodyguard, an excellent one to add. After her mom dies and her boyfriend breaks up with her, she wants to work and distract herself. She finally gets a good job protecting somebody, but she unfortunately has to stay in Texas for it, the place she's been trying to get out of.

She's been hired to protect celebrity Jack Stapleton. Everybody wants this job, but she finds it too boring for her. Jack Stapleton is a famous actor, and everybody loves him. The issue with being famous? Having a stalker.

When his mom gets sick, he comes to Texas to stay with his family until she gets better. He does not want his family to worry about him, so he hides the information about his stalker and the fact that he has a bodyguard. Since he needs Hannah with him at all times, they have to fake being in a relationship. She thinks it will be an easy mission and nothing can go wrong, but what happens when she starts wishing the relationship were real?

I give this book a 5-star rating because it was such a fun read. The storyline was adorable, and I began to love the characters. I would recommend this book to anyone who wants to read a fun romantic comedy, and I would reread it.

[Find "The Bodyguard" today in our catalogue.](#)



Born a Crime by Trevor Noah (Reviewed by CC)

This book is Trevor Noah's memoir about growing up in South Africa during and after apartheid, and it really opened my eyes in ways I wasn't expecting.

What really stood out to me was how Trevor used humor even when talking about some of the darkest, scariest parts of his life. Growing up mixed race in South Africa, when that was literally against the law, is something I can't even imagine. He tells these stories about hiding from the police, or the way his mom had to do everything possible to protect him, and sometimes I just had to pause because it felt so unfair. But then he cracks a joke, and somehow you're laughing while also thinking, "Wow, that's actually heartbreaking."

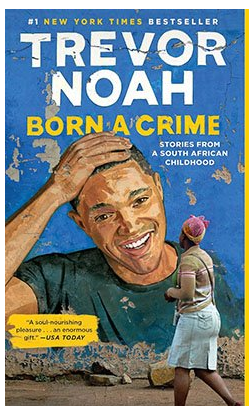
The thing I loved most, though, was his relationship with his mom. She's tough, hilarious, and honestly kind of fearless. She doesn't back down from anyone, not even Trevor. I admired her so much, she reminded me of how strong moms can be when they're protecting their kids. Reading about their bond made the book feel less like just a memoir and more like this powerful love story between a mother and her son.

What surprised me was how much the book also taught me about South Africa, about racism, poverty, and what resilience really looks like. It made me think a lot about my own life and the stuff I take for granted.

I'd definitely recommend this book to other teens. It's funny, it's sad, and it makes you think in a way that sticks with you. It's one of those books that makes you laugh out loud but also leaves you sitting there in silence after you put it down.

5/5 Stars

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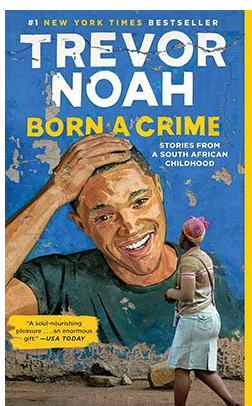
***Born a Crime* by Trevor Noah (Reviewed by SS)**

The childhood biography *Born a Crime* by Trevor Noah is dramatic, surprising, and exciting. This story about a child who illegally exists to become a professional stand-up comedian is impressive and enlightening. This book shares Trevor Noah's childhood story from birth to adulthood. Trevor Noah had a tough childhood dealing with problems involving his parents, and his road to success. This book will show you the incredible rise of Trevor Noah.

I recommend this book to anyone because it gave me a lot of courage. Trevor had to see his mom get thrown out of a moving car which is insane. He also had to deal with the racist apartheid system in South Africa. Trevor is a brave man who has a lot of courage. A lot of people wouldn't be able to persevere through all the problems that he faced. I have lost courage, especially in school presenting in front of my fellow students. I've always felt uncomfortable. Trevor had the same type of situation because when he was a mixed child in South Africa, he found it very hard to make friends with all the Black kids. He learned to become an extrovert which took a lot of courage to do. When I saw this, I started becoming more of an extrovert because I saw Trevor as a role model.

I would give this book a four-star rating because it shows no matter where you come from, you can still be a successful person in this world. The reason why it's not a five-star rating is because the book had a lot more sad feelings in comparison to happy feelings. I enjoy books that have a lot of happy moments. Other than that, it was an awesome book to read.

Find "[Born a Crime](#)" today in our catalogue.



***Dear Martin* by Nic Stone (Reviewed by SS)**

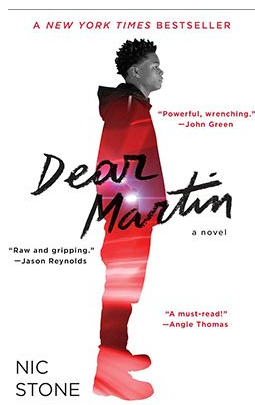
This book shows how much racism can affect someone. The main character is Justyce McAllister, a 17-year-old student who deals with many people saying and doing very racist things. He lives in Atlanta, where there are many Black gangs.

He also wrote stories about his problems to Martin Luther King Jr. because he wanted to try to incorporate Martin's teachings into his own life.

I would recommend this book to teenagers because it demonstrates a teenage lifestyle involving a lot of peer pressure and anxiety. Justyce faces a lot of anxiety such as rubbing his wrists throughout the story whenever something bad happens. The book also has romance involving Justyce having to figure out who he likes more between SJ and Melo. There were also a lot of teenage parties that didn't go very well. Some situations even involved the police being called and some punches occurred also. There is also a very tragic death towards the end of the book that will shock you.

I would give this book a 4-star rating. I didn't get a five because there was too much gossip in the book, and I'm not a big fan of gossip. I tend to stay away from that type of stuff. I did enjoy the book because it made me think about how much you can hurt someone by saying the wrong words. I never want to hurt someone in my life. The story is all about treating everyone the same. The theme would be equality. I love what it's all about and I'm all for it.

Find "Dear Martin" today in our catalogue.



***Divergent* by Veronica Roth (Reviewed by NC)**

To start off this review I have to tell you this book is incredible, but me telling you that means nothing, so go read it for yourself.

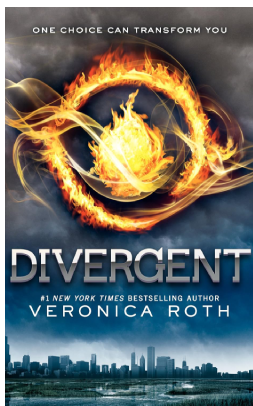
We start off the book with the main character Beatrice. She lives with her mom, dad and her brother Caleb. It is almost the day of the aptitude test, and after that the choosing ceremony which will decide every 16 year-old's future. In the aptitude test something strange happens with Beatrice's test. For the choosing ceremony she is frantic because she doesn't know what to choose or what is expected. Her brother always fit into their birth faction, called Abnegation so it seems obvious what he will choose.

When you read the book you really feel the suspense of the scenes, and that is another reason this book is amazing. Slowly through the book Beatrice notices all the secrets being kept, and slowly she gets more and more suspicious. She starts to see things that are corrupt, she sees things that are wrong; but she is only one girl - what can she do alone? By the end of the story the characters have already fully absorbed me, and then the author finishes off the story with not a cliff hanger but something just as potent.

This story focuses mainly on family, guilt and life choices. Though I may have said a lot I haven't even scratched the surface and not even slightly close to the emotional effect that this book can create. One more point is trusting authority, which you will realize if you read *DIVERGENT*. This book also reminds me of *The Hunger Games*, which is a popular opinion for anyone who knows the story. Once you read through the book you see the similarities, but you really see the differences and that is a very important distinction. Another of the main points of this masterpiece is embracing your true self which I believe is a perfect theme, especially for this point in time of my life.

That is my take on *DIVERGENT*, created in 2011 and written by VERONICA ROTH.

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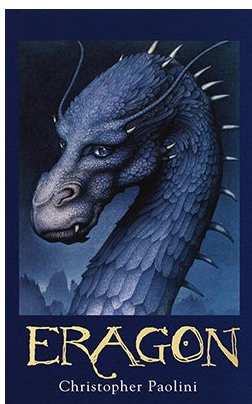
***Eragon* by Christopher Paolini (Reviewed by AB)**

Eragon is a young adult fantasy novel written by Christopher Paolini that takes place in a high fantasy setting. It tells the story of a farm boy named Eragon and how everything in his life changes when he finds a mysterious blue stone in the woods that is revealed to be a dragon egg. The egg hatches and falls away to reveal a tiny dragon, a creature that is known to many in only legends and stories, Eragon included. After living with the dragon for some time, Eragon is then forced to make choices and bear responsibilities that are far greater than any he has ever known before as he sets out on an adventure to discover what path to take.

I enjoyed this book a lot overall. The story was exciting and interesting and I was never bored with it. The characters never stay in one place for too long as they're always on the move or doing something that contributes to the story - whether it's big or small. There is a variety of landscapes and each one has their own unique features or engaging experience that adds to the overall plot such as Angela's Shop or Helgrind. Fantasy is one of my favourite genres and this book does a good job with it, although I would critique that it is very cliché with its characters and plot. It feels like a checklist at times when it comes to character tropes and story beats. The book of course has typical fantasy elements like dragons, magic, a chosen one, sword fighting, and such. However, it also takes the time to explore the world as well as develop an expansive fictional language with translations for every word used throughout the story in the back of the book. It's well thought-out and nicely implemented. The world building overall is one of the strongest elements in this book in my opinion. It sets it apart from being just another typical fantasy book. However, not all of the characters get a lot of development throughout the story. I would have liked to see Saphira get more spotlight in particular. She just feels like an extension to Eragon instead of her own separate character which is a shame because she's a compelling and incredibly unique character. Her perspective as well as philosophy surprised me at times simply because it was sometimes very different from what the other characters thought. Saphira is just as, if not more important than Eragon and I wish the book had spent more time exploring her character altogether.

I would definitely recommend this book if you enjoy fantasy novels, especially if you enjoy the stereotypical "chosen one goes on a quest" kind of novel. It is very cliché at times but has a genuinely good story at its core. I wouldn't recommend this book if you're looking for a very detailed or complicated fantasy title though as *Eragon* is rather simple in terms of its plot and world. *Eragon* is part of The Inheritance Cycle so I would also recommend reading the rest of the series afterwards if you want to know what happens next.

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***Finding Audrey* by Sophie Kinsella (Reviewed by OS)**

Finding Audrey by Sophia Kinsella tackles serious things - like anxiety, depression and bullying but at the same time keeping things surprisingly gentle. You walk step-by-step through the life of Audrey, a teen reeling from rough school days, yet the tone stays clear of heaviness. Still, it doesn't shy away from showing how messy things feel for her, giving real glimpses into her world while skipping gloom. The whole thing feels true, sort of quiet, but never dull.

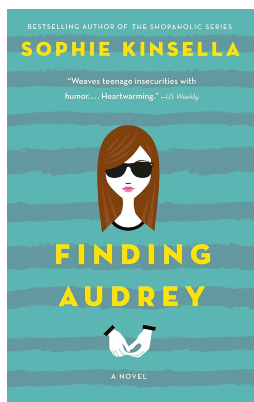
Audrey's tone is why this clicks. Because she admits how worry sneaks into each moment - stuff others barely notice. Her constant dark shades? She uses them to stay safe from everything around her. Yet while reading, it becomes clear she begins to relax - bit by bit, moment by moment.

Linus, who's close to her, matters just as much. Yet he doesn't show up like some hero with instant answers. Rather, he sticks around, quietly encouraging without pressing. What they share seems genuine - flawed at times, yet steady when it really matters.

Audrey's crew cracks me up the most. Her mom flips out nonstop, tackling every tiny issue like it's a crisis move straight out of a soap opera. Meanwhile her brother? Totally glued to his screen, deep in some wild gaming showdown at all times all that madness adds serious humour and stops everything from feeling too intense.

In the end, *Finding Audrey* comes across as genuine and uplifting. Instead of glossing over mental health, it highlights how small actions can make a difference. When you enjoy tales blending raw feelings with light moments, Audrey's path might just click with you. Overall, I would give this book 4.5/5 star rating.

[Find "Finding Audrey" today in our catalogue.](#)



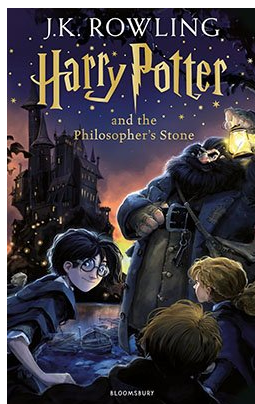
***Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* by J.K. Rowling (Reviewed by SS)**

This book is a part of one of the greatest book series of all time. It shows the amazing world of wizardry. The main character is Harry Potter. It shows how he goes from living a pretty sad normal life into a wizard. It starts with him living with his aunt and uncle. He never knew his parents. While he was living there, a bunch of mysterious situations occurred. The uncle got so scared, he drove to this cabin to be as far away from the situation. This led to Harry meeting someone who helped him to learn about his true potential.

I would recommend this book to readers who enjoy good dialogue and good imagery. The book has a very cool dialogue between the characters. Some say funny comments, serious comments, and wise comments. There is also a lot of specific and detailed imagery of the surroundings. In the world of wizardry, there are a lot of cool objects that sound even cooler when described in powerful words. I also loved the plot of the story. The author tried to give little hints to show who the villains were.

I would give this book a 5-star rating because it is honestly the best book I've ever read in my life. The book got me hooked in the first couple of pages. I loved the characters. All the different characters made it more and more interesting. After reading it, I've decided to go read the next book of the series. My goal is to finish the entire series because of how awesome the first book was.

[Find "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone" today in our catalogue.](#)



***The Mamba Mentality: How I Play* by Kobe Bryant (Reviewed by SS)**

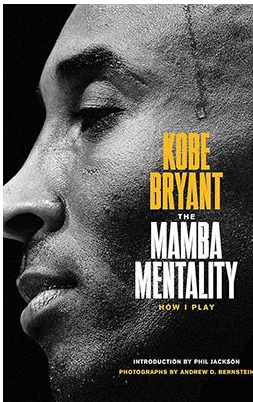
This biography of Kobe Bryant demonstrates how much it took for Kobe Bryant to achieve greatness. This story is very inspirational and breathtaking. It shows how Kobe grew up and became one of history's greatest NBA players. He talks about his knowledge of the game, his opponents, and how he studied the game.

It shows what he had to do to start trusting his teammates would eventually help him to win multiple NBA championships.

I recommend this book to young basketball players who don't think that they have a future in playing basketball. Basketball is one of the most competitive sports in the world. Many people dream about going pro, but many believe that dream is impossible. Kobe's story will show you that anything is possible. This book could also help young kids who want to quit. Kobe helped show that quitting is never an option. An example would be when Kobe was traded on draft night. He thought that no one wanted him, but the team that traded for him decided to take a chance on him and the rest is history.

I would give the book a 5-star rating because I'm a young basketball player and this book made me feel more passionate about the game of basketball. Kobe had a great passion for basketball and spent hours dribbling and shooting a basketball. I also have that same love for the game. The book also thought a bunch of cool tactics in the game. It shared cool stories about Kobe and his rivals. I believe that this book is incredible.

Find "The Mamba Mentality: How I Play" today in our catalogue.



***Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* by Ransom Riggs
(Reviewed by AB)**

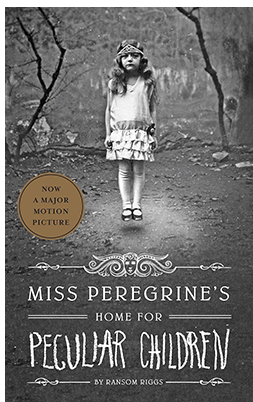
Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children is a young adult dark fantasy novel written by Ransom Riggs. It follows the story of a teenage boy named Jacob as he sets out to discover the meaning behind his grandfather's final words, leading him to discover strange and curious things he never would have believed even existed.

Overall, the book was very exciting and engaging, with twists and turns at every corner. It had

me on the edge of my seat and I never knew what to expect next. The characters were all very distinct and memorable, each with their own strengths and weaknesses that had a great impact on the story. Millard and Miss Peregrine herself were among some of my favourite characters. I really liked their peculiarities and personalities. The author's use of vintage pictures scattered throughout the book also created a creepy and eerie effect that went really well with the mood of the story and characters, particularly with the antagonists. While I enjoyed the book for the most part, I disliked the romantic relationship between Jacob and Emma. It didn't add much to the story and created unnecessary conflict between the two of them. I think the book would have been better off without the romance. It felt forced in just for the purpose of adding a love interest because it's a young adult novel.

I would recommend this book if you enjoy mystery novels or enjoy books with an overarching plot. I wouldn't recommend it for someone who is especially interested in horror and frightening imagery because frankly it isn't very scary although some of the vintage photographs are a little creepy. Due to the fact that *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* is part of a series, I would also recommend that you read the rest of the books to conclude the story and answer any questions that you may have.

[Find "Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children" today in our catalogue.](#)



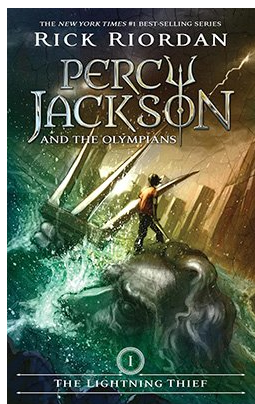
***Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan (Reviewed by VB)**

Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief written by Rick Riordan is an adventure, fantasy novel that follows the story of a twelve year old boy named Percy Jackson. Percy was living a normal life, going to a boarding school, living day-to-day until an event happened that changed the rest of his life. He learns the truth about the world, that Greek mythology isn't just stories and legends but is very real and always has been. Percy, accused of stealing Zeus's lightning rod, goes on a journey together with his friends Grover and Annabeth to retrieve Zeus's lightning rod and find the real culprit. Throughout the journey he meets all sorts of different Greek mythology figures, good and bad.

Overall, I ended up really liking this book. Some of the plot twists caught me off guard and were not what I expected. This book is a great introduction into Greek mythology. Many of the gods and monsters make a cameo throughout the Percy Jackson book series. The main aspect I really liked about this book was how the author managed to mix Greek mythology, all the folklore, and tales with modern times. The writing in this book does a perfect job at that. Both of these things make the *Lightning Thief* a very enjoyable book to read.

I would definitely recommend *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief* to people who like Greek mythology and the fantasy, adventure and action genres. Otherwise, you're better off watching paint dry. If you did enjoy this novel, then I recommend reading the rest of the Percy Jackson book series to see the complete story and true ending.

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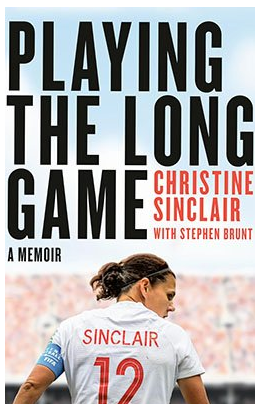
***Playing the Long Game: A Memoir* by Christine Sinclair with Stephen Brunt (Reviewed by SS)**

The book shows how Christine Sinclair was an incredibly impactful human being and soccer player, inspiring and motivating many other females to pursue the sport of soccer and to learn never to say never. The book shows how she impacted women's soccer in Canada: The three reasons are the way she impacted women's soccer, the way she impacted Canada, and her legacy in Canada and women's soccer. This shows how much Christine Sinclair has done for women's soccer in Canada. Canadians will always remember her because we might not get another superstar from Canada like her. The book helps us see how important family is. Sinclair was close to her family and talked about how much their support meant to her.

I would recommend this book to young soccer girls because it shows dedication and fight. Many people should not take women's soccer for granted because they will miss seeing inspirational talent. Her playstyle was unlike any other women's soccer player, and that playstyle is quiet leadership. Christine Sinclair will always have Canada and women's soccer, and all the fans will have her in their hearts. She always wanted people to care about women's soccer in Canada, and now many people care about women's soccer in Canada. I hope this book will make people aware of how important she was to women's soccer in Canada.

I would give this book a 5-star rating because this book encouraged me to prove people wrong, and that no one can stop me. Many people doubted Sinclair because no one thought that Sinclair would be able to significantly impact women's sports. Sinclair continued to fight and now you can see how everything changed.

[Find "Playing the Long Game: A Memoir" today in our catalogue.](#)



***Red Rising* by Pierce Brown (Reviewed by LY)**

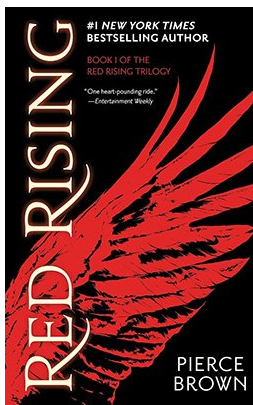
Red Rising written by Pierce Brown is an excellent book that starts off on the planet of Mars after Earth has colonized the planet. We follow Darrow, a lowborn miner from the O'Lykos clan and unlikely hero that steps up to lead a revolution against a corrupt society. As he attempts to revolutionize civilization, he realizes

that not everything is as it seems, and that his enemies may end up becoming his greatest allies.

I thought *Red Rising* was a thrilling book following Darrow. The plot and characters of the story really made the story feel alive, especially with the characters. I enjoyed reading about the strategies and scheming from the characters as Pierce Brown didn't drag it out long enough to make it boring to read. Although the book is set on a distant future on Mars, some of the scenery and sci-fi aspects don't feel any different from Earth. While there are some sci-fi events in the book, I would say it's not heavily built on the traditional sci-fi genre but rather military sci-fi. I will warn that this book is dark, including gore and dark subjects and people keep this in mind when reading this book.

Overall, Pierce Brown never fails to make me cry to one of his books. I would give this book 4/5 stars because of the plot and characters. I believe if Pierce Brown added more time for character development for some of the characters and more interesting settings, would this book be a 5/5. I would recommend this book to others, specifically those who enjoy science fiction, dystopian fiction, and Game of Thrones type politics.

Find "[Red Rising](#)" today in our catalogue.



***The Rom-Comers* by Katherine Center (Reviewed by KR)**

The title, *The Rom-Comers*, gives a pretty good description of what the book is about. Emma Wheeler has wanted to be a screenwriter her whole life. Since she can remember, she's been obsessed with romantic comedies. While she dreams of writing romantic comedies, she is also a full-time caretaker for her father. Her dad suffered a brain injury and requires 24/7 care, so Emma took on the role. She loves her dad and loves taking care of him, but she sometimes feels as if she's missing out on life.

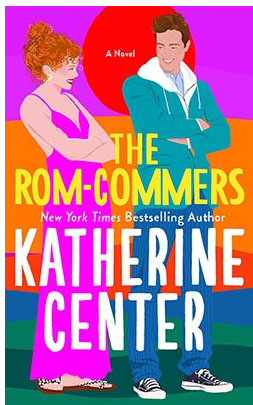
Her friend works in LA and helps to set her up with screenwriting opportunities, and he finally landed her a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. The only issue is that

she has to move to LA for 6 weeks. Her younger sister steps in for her as the caretaker, and she moves to LA for 6 weeks.

She's working with the Legendary Charlie Yates. Charlie is a fantastic writer, but he cannot do rom-coms. He doesn't even believe in love, so he needs her help. He doesn't care about the script, but she won't let him get off easy. What will she do when she starts to fall for him? You'll have to read to find out.

I give this book a 5-star rating because it was very well written and had an intriguing plot. I recommend this novel to anyone wanting to read a good romantic comedy, and I wouldn't say there is any specific age group for this. If you like romantic comedies, you will like this novel.

Find "The Rom-Commers" today in our catalogue.



***Secretly Yours* by Tessa Bailey (Reviewed by KR)**

Secretly Yours is a fun romantic comedy novel written by Tessa Bailey.

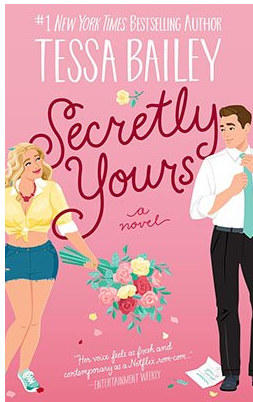
Hallie Welch had the biggest crush on Julian Vos since she was 14. They went to high school together, and she almost got to kiss him until he realized she was a freshman. She's remained in the same town since then, but he went off to school and even became a professor at an Ivy League school. When on sabbatical, he returns to his hometown to stay with his family at their winery. While on his sabbatical, he decides to write a novel, assuming it's a good place for him with no distractions. That's until Hallie starts gardening right outside of his office window.

Hallie's grandmother owned a gardening business, but when she passed away, Hallie took over. She works all around town and does almost everybody's gardening, even the Vos winery. Julian can't help but get distracted from his novel with her working directly outside. She tends to be late, doesn't have specific plans, and goes with the flow. Julian, on the other hand, is a tidy, uptight person who needs everything planned out. They are opposites, but somehow, he feels this pull to her.

Will he remember her from high school, or does he think she's just another girl?

This novel was a fun read, and the plot kept me interested. I would give it a 5-star rating because of the build-up to the relationship between the characters, and it didn't feel rushed. I wouldn't recommend this book to anyone under 16 because of the spicy aspects. I would also recommend reading the novel *Unfortunately Yours* before this novel because of the introduction of each character, but it isn't necessary.

[Find "Secretly Yours" today in our catalogue.](#)



***Unfortunately Yours* by Tessa Bailey (Reviewed by KR)**

Unfortunately Yours is a romantic comedy book written by Tessa Bailey. I found this novel a fun read and struggled to put it down. This novel is funny, romantic, and even emotional at times.

Unfortunately Yours starts with the character Natalie, who comes to Napa Valley from New York after breaking off her engagement. Her family owns a winery in Napa, making it a perfect place for her to settle for a little bit, and it gives her some time to figure out a new business plan for New York.

August is an ex-Navy Seal who came to open up his winery. The issue with August's winery? He doesn't know how to make wine. He doesn't know how to make it or what to start with. He can't even fix the horrible taste it has.

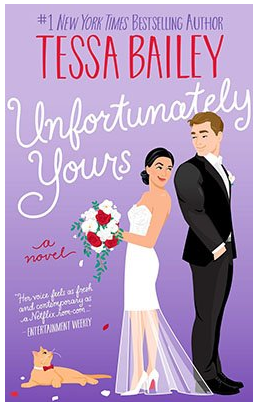
Natalie is an expert at winemaking and knows everything there is to know about wine. August and Natalie have come into contact at times, and most of the time, she has to taste his terrible wine and judge it. Natalie and August are far from friends. They don't like each other, and they don't plan on becoming best friends anytime soon.

What happens when Natalie needs to get married to receive her trust? Her father will not allow her to obtain her trust unless she is married. August needs

help with his wine, and Natalie needs to receive her money. What will they do in this situation?

I recommend this book to people ages 16 and above because there are some spicier scenes throughout the novel, but overall, I did find it enjoyable. I will give this book a rating of 4.5/5 because I liked how it was written, and I enjoyed the ending it had. This novel has others after it, and I highly recommend it to people who had a good time reading this one.

[Find "Unfortunately Yours" today in our catalogue.](#)



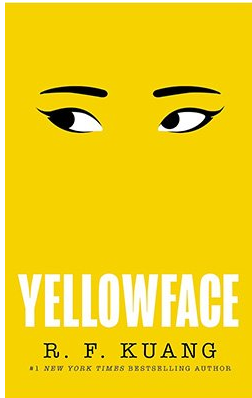
Yellowface by R.F. Kuang (Reviewed by LY)

Yellowface written by R.F Kuang is a suspenseful satire following Juniper Hayward, an obscure author who deeply envies successful author and her best friend, Athena Liu. Juniper witnesses Athena's death in an accident while celebrating an event at her apartment, leaving her just-finished manuscript in her apartment for June to steal. Rewriting it slightly and taking it as her own, she publishes the book under a new name, Juniper Song to follow the subject of the book, the unseen contributions of Chinese laborers during World War I to hint at her audience that she is Chinese. The success of her new book sky-rockets, but problems arise for Juniper as evidence begins to emerge and seems to be haunted by Athena. Juniper learns just how much she's willing to sacrifice to keep her secret hidden.

I thought *Yellowface* was an interesting read. The book was fast paced and easy to read. It was very fun to read following June. The book is very meta, containing topics about book reviews, scandals, and social media. Throughout the book, we question whether Athena really is still alive or if June is going insane. The book frames June to be the villain of the story, but later on we learn that we are just seeing the face value. R.F Kuang heavily criticizes the publishing industry and how publishers will push any kind of book, regardless whether it is good or bad, to be published because of their current media attention.

Overall, I thought the book was very well written. It kept me uncomfortable throughout the whole book and left me wondering if June will get away with the plagiarized book. It kept me glued to the pages and thought it was different from her other fantasy books she usually writes. I would give this book a 4/5 star rating and would recommend it to people who love satirical books and unreliable narrators.

Find "Yellowface" today in our catalogue.



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