

High School

Readers Rally List

2020-2021

American Road Trip

By: Patrick Flores Scott

With a strong, loving family, an incredibly loyal best friend, and a budding romance with the girl of his dreams, life shows promise for seventeen-year-old Teodoro “T” Avila. But he takes some hard hits the summer before his senior year when his nearly perfect brother Manny returns from a tour in Iraq with a devastating case of PTSD.

In a desperate effort to save Manny from himself and pull their family back together, T's fiery sister Xochitl hoodwinks her brothers into a road trip with many stops along the road to visit loved ones from their past.

Aurora Rising

By: Amie Kaufman and Jay Kristoff

The year is 2380, and the graduating cadets of Aurora Academy are being assigned their first missions. Star pupil Tyler Jones is ready to recruit the squad of his dreams, but his own boneheaded heroism sees him stuck with the dregs nobody else in the Academy would touch...

A cocky diplomat with a black belt in sarcasm
A sociopath scientist with a fondness for shooting her bunkmates
A smart-ass techwiz with the galaxy's biggest chip on his shoulder
An alien warrior with anger management issues
A tomboy pilot who's totally not into him, in case you were wondering

And Ty's squad isn't even his biggest problem—that'd be Aurora Jie-Lin O'Malley, the girl he's just rescued from interdimensional space. Trapped in cryo-sleep for two centuries, Auri is a girl out of time and out of her depth. But she could be the catalyst that starts a war millions of years in the making, and Tyler's squad of losers, discipline-cases and misfits might just be the last hope for the entire galaxy.

The Bone Houses

By: Emily Lloyd-Jones

Seventeen-year-old Aderyn ("Ryn") only cares about two things: her family, and her family's graveyard. And right now, both are in dire straits. Since the death of their parents, Ryn and her siblings have been scraping together a meager existence as gravediggers in the remote village of Colbren, which sits at the foot of a harsh and deadly mountain range that was once home to the fae. The problem with being a gravedigger in Colbren, though, is that the dead don't always *stay* dead.

The risen corpses are known as "bone houses," and legend says that they're the result of a decades-old curse. When Ellis, an apprentice mapmaker with a mysterious past, arrives in town, the bone houses attack with new ferocity. What is it that draws them near? And more importantly, how can they be stopped for good?

Together, Ellis and Ryn embark on a journey that will take them deep into the heart of the mountains, where they will have to face both the curse and the long-hidden truths about themselves..

Dry

By: Neal Shusterman and Jarrod Shusterman

When the California drought escalates to catastrophic proportions, one teen is forced to make life and death decisions for her family in this harrowing story of survival,

The drought—or the Tap-Out, as everyone calls it—has been going on for a while now. Everyone's lives have become an endless list of don't's: don't water the lawn, don't fill up your pool, don't take long showers.

Until the taps run dry.

Suddenly, Alyssa's quiet suburban street spirals into a warzone of desperation; neighbors and families turned against each other on the hunt for water. And when her parents don't return and her life—and the life of her brother—is threatened, Alyssa has to make impossible choices if she's going to survive.

Have a Little Faith in Me

By: Sonia Hartl

When CeCe's born-again ex-boyfriend dumps her after they have sex, she follows him to Jesus camp in order to win him back. Problem: She knows nothing about Jesus. But her best friend Paul does. He accompanies CeCe to camp, and the plan—God's or CeCe's—goes immediately awry when her ex shows up with a new girlfriend, a True Believer at that.

Scrambling to save face, CeCe ropes Paul into faking a relationship. But as deceptions stack up, she questions whether her ex is really the nice guy he seemed. And what about her strange new feelings for Paul—is this love, lust, or an illusion born of heartbreak? To figure it out, she'll have to confront the reasons she chased her ex to camp in the first place, including the truth about the night she lost her virginity..

Here to Stay

By: Sara Farizan

For most of high school, Bijan Majidi has flown under the radar. He gets good grades, reads comics, hangs out with his best friend, Sean, and secretly crushes on Elle, one of the most popular girls in his school. When he's called off the basketball team's varsity bench and makes the winning basket in a playoff game, everything changes in an instant.

But not everyone is happy that Bijan is the man of the hour: an anonymous cyberbully sends the entire school a picture of Bijan photoshopped to look like a terrorist. His mother is horrified, and the school administration is outraged. They promise to find and punish the culprit. All Bijan wants is to pretend it never happened and move on, but the incident isn't so easily erased. Though many of his classmates rally behind Bijan, some don't want him or his type to be a part of their school. And Bijan's finding out it's not always easy to tell your enemies from your friends . . .

House of Salt and Sorrows

By: Erin A. Craig

Annaleigh lives a sheltered life at Highmoor, a manor by the sea, with her sisters, their father, and stepmother. Once they were twelve, but loneliness fills the grand halls now that four of the girls' lives have been cut short. Each death was more tragic than the last—the plague, a plummeting fall, a drowning, a slippery plunge—and there are whispers throughout the surrounding villages that the family is cursed by the gods.

Disturbed by a series of ghostly visions, Annaleigh becomes increasingly suspicious that the deaths were no accidents. Her sisters have been sneaking out every night to attend glittering balls, dancing until dawn in silk gowns and shimmering slippers, and Annaleigh isn't sure

whether to try to stop them or to join their forbidden trysts. Because who—or what—are they really dancing with?

When Annaleigh's involvement with a mysterious stranger who has secrets of his own intensifies, it's a race to unravel the darkness that has fallen over her family—before it claims her next.

Internment

By: Samira Ahmed

Rebellions are built on hope.

Set in a horrifying near-future United States, seventeen-year-old Layla Amin and her parents are forced into an internment camp for Muslim American citizens.

With the help of newly made friends also trapped within the internment camp, her boyfriend on the outside, and an unexpected alliance, Layla begins a journey to fight for freedom, leading a revolution against the internment camp's Director and his guards.

Heart-racing and emotional, *Internment* challenges readers to fight complicit silence that exists in our society today.

The Kingdom

By: Jess Rothenberg

Glimmering like a jewel behind its gateway, The Kingdom is an immersive fantasy theme park where guests soar on virtual dragons, castles loom like giants, and bioengineered species--formerly extinct--roam free.

Ana is one of seven Fantasists, beautiful "princesses" engineered to make dreams come true. When she meets park employee Owen, Ana begins to experience emotions beyond her programming including, for the first time... love.

But the fairytale becomes a nightmare when Ana is accused of murdering Owen, igniting the trial of the century. Through courtroom testimony, interviews, and Ana's memories of Owen, emerges a tale of love, lies, and cruelty--and what it truly means to be human.

On the Come Up

By: Angie Thomas

Sixteen-year-old Bri wants to be one of the greatest rappers of all time. Or at least win her first battle. As the daughter of an underground hip hop legend who died right before he hit big, Bri's got massive shoes to fill.

But it's hard to get your come up when you're labeled a hoodlum at school, and your fridge at home is empty after your mom loses her job. So Bri pours her anger and frustration into her first song, which goes viral . . . for all the wrong reasons.

Bri soon finds herself at the center of a controversy, portrayed by the media as more menace than MC. But with an eviction notice staring her family down, Bri doesn't just want to make it—she has to. Even if it means becoming the very thing the public has made her out to be.

Insightful, unflinching, and full of heart, *On the Come Up* is an ode to hip hop from one of the most influential literary voices of a generation. It is the story of fighting for your dreams, even as the odds are stacked against you; and about how, especially for young black people, freedom of speech isn't always free.

Opposite of Always

By: Justin A. Reynolds

When Jack and Kate meet at a party, bonding until sunrise over their mutual love of Froot Loops and their favorite flicks, Jack knows he's falling—hard. Soon she's meeting his best friends, Jillian and Franny, and Kate wins them over as easily as she did Jack.

But then Kate dies. And their story should end there.

Yet Kate's death sends Jack back to the beginning, the moment they first meet, and Kate's there again. Healthy, happy, and charming as ever. Jack isn't sure if he's losing his mind.

Still, if he has a chance to prevent Kate's death, he'll take it. Even if that means believing in time travel. However, Jack will learn that his actions are not without consequences. And when one choice turns deadly for someone else close to him, he has to figure out what he's willing to do to save the people he loves.

Rayne and Delilah's Midnite Matinee

By: Jeff Zentner

Every Friday night, best friends Delia and Josie become Rayne Ravenscroft and Delilah Darkwood, hosts of the campy creature feature show *Midnite Matinee* on the local cable station TV Six.

But with the end of senior year quickly approaching, the girls face tough decisions about their futures. Josie has been dreading graduation, as she tries to decide whether to leave for a big university and chase her dream career in mainstream TV. And Lawson, one of the show's guest performers, a talented MMA fighter with weaknesses for pancakes, fantasy novels, and Josie, is making her tough decision even harder.

Scary movies are the last connection Delia has to her dad, who abandoned the family years ago. If *Midnite Matinee* becomes a hit, maybe he'll see it and want to be a part of her life again. And maybe Josie will stay with the show instead of leaving her behind, too.

As the tug-of-war between growing up and growing apart tests the bonds of their friendship, Josie and Delia start to realize that an uncertain future can be both monstrous...and momentous.

Skyward

By: Brandon Sanderson

Defeated, crushed, and driven almost to extinction, the remnants of the human race are trapped on a planet that is constantly attacked by mysterious alien starfighters. Spensa, a teenage girl living among them, longs to be a pilot. When she discovers the wreckage of an ancient ship, she realizes this dream might be possible—assuming she can repair the ship, navigate flight school, and (perhaps most importantly) persuade the strange machine to help her. Because this ship, uniquely, appears to have a soul.

Stepsister

By: Jennifer Donnelly

Isabelle should be blissfully happy – she’s about to win the handsome prince. Except Isabelle isn’t the beautiful girl who lost the glass slipper and captured the prince’s heart. She’s the ugly stepsister who’s cut off her toes to fit into Cinderella’s shoe ... which is now filling with blood.

When the prince discovers Isabelle’s deception, she is turned away in shame. It’s no more than she deserves: she is a plain girl in a world that values beauty; a feisty girl in a world that wants her to be pliant.

Isabelle has tried to fit in. To live up to her mother’s expectations. To be like her stepsister. To be sweet. To be pretty. One by one, she has cut away pieces of herself in order to survive a world that doesn’t appreciate a girl like her. And that has made her mean, jealous, and hollow.

Until she gets a chance to alter her destiny and prove what ugly stepsisters have always known: it takes more than heartache to break a girl.

With the Fire on High

By: Elizabeth Acevedo

With her daughter to care for and her abuela to help support, high school senior Emoni Santiago has to make the tough decisions, and do what must be done. The one place she can let her responsibilities go is in the kitchen, where she adds a little something magical to everything she cooks, turning her food into straight-up goodness. Still, she knows she doesn’t have enough time for her school’s new culinary arts class, doesn’t have the money for the class’s trip to Spain — and shouldn’t still be dreaming of someday working in a real kitchen. But even with all the rules she has for her life — and all the rules everyone expects her to play by — once Emoni starts cooking, her only real choice is to let her talent break free.