



TEEN BOOK REVIEWS

SEPTEMBER 2023

GUIDE

BOOKS IN THE
YOUNG ADULT
COLLECTION

BOOKS IN THE
ADULT
COLLECTION

BOOKS IN THE
CHILDREN
COLLECTION



WHAT HAPPENS AFTER MIDNIGHT BY K.L. WALTHER

CALL #

YA FIC WALTHER

COLLECTION:

YOUNG ADULT FICTION

RATING:



GENRE:

REALISTIC FICTION

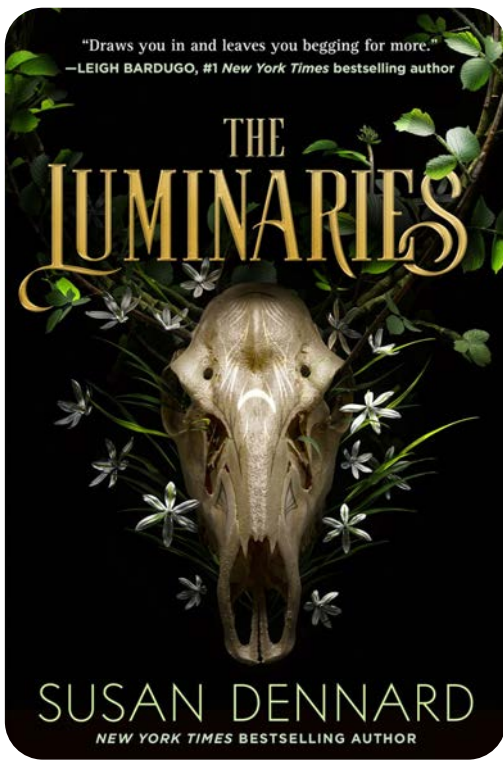
Book Review:

What Happens After Midnight is a YA romance centering around a group of high school seniors on their mission to complete the annual senior prank and the romance that ensues. Lily Hopper, the main character, is just about to graduate, and upon receiving a mysterious note from the "jester" (the organizer of the prank, whose identity is only known to the previous years' jester), drops her reputation of being a goody-two-shoes and decides to play a role in the complex prank. However, she soon realizes that the jester is none other than her ex-boyfriend Taggart, whom she still has feelings for. Although the Senior Class President has already asked her to Prom, Lily can't help but with Tag. In addition to the prank, this also follows Lily's everlasting feelings towards Tag and whether they may be meant to be.

Although I enjoyed the story's plot, its "young adult" nature was a bit too cringy for me. Nonetheless, there are definitely still aspects of the story that I very much enjoyed. Particularly, in the final few chapters, Tag and Lily's relationship development was fun to witness. I feel that in many books, particularly in the young adult genre, romances seemed to be forced and unnatural. With this book, though, it seemed genuine, and the pair seemed to actually care about one another, making the book that much more real and, therefore, enjoyable.

Additionally, the character dynamics were fun to read about, particularly Lily and her mom's relationship. Their conversations demonstrated the perfect dynamic between a mother and daughter, or really a parent and child of any sort. Her mom always had her back, and there was mutual respect between the two.

All in all, I would recommend reading this book if you are seeking to read a cute little romance and don't mind a little bit of cringe. It reflects on the fun of school and friends and the difficulties of relationships and balance that come with it.



THE LUMINARIES BY SUSAN DENNARD

CALL # YA FIC DENNARD

COLLECTION: YOUNG ADULT FICTION

RATING: ★★★★★

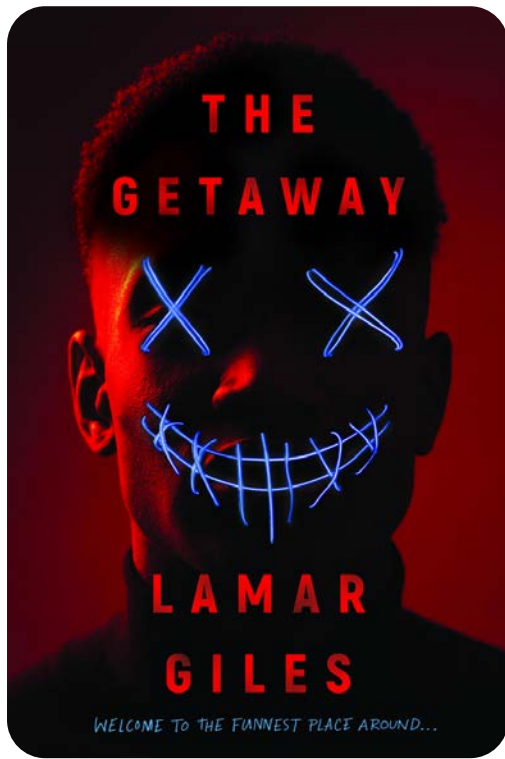
GENRE: FANTASY

Book Review:

The Luminaries is the first book in a fantasy series that follows a 16-year-old girl, Winnie Wednesday, as she attempts to pass the deadly trials to become a hunter for the Luminaries, who are tasked with keeping the nightmares in the forest from escaping, and restore her family's honor. Winnie has struggled with fitting in ever since her dad was discovered to be a Diana, the opposing force to the Luminaries. Still, if she can pass the trials, her family's outcast status will be revoked. As the plot progresses, we uncover mysteries upon mysteries and watch as a potential romance begins to bud.

This book was extremely well written and very enjoyable. It has incredibly strong worldbuilding that is communicated in ways that feel natural, plus it has a map in the front. The characters are all compelling, and I found myself extremely invested in the outcome of Winnie's trials, though I think her older brother, Darian, was my favorite. There were some questions that it didn't directly answer on the world, but by the end of the book, I had mostly figured them out. I loved this book and cannot wait for the sequel!

I would recommend this book if you're a fan of YA fantasy and mystery, especially ones with good world-building. If you're a romance disliker, you may not enjoy it as much, as there's a slow burn between Winnie and her childhood friend Jay. It's not overbearing in the first book, but it may become a bigger plot point in the future. The book reminded me of a few different books, namely "Not Even Bones" by Rebecca Schaeffer. Though it is far less dark or gorey, the writing was reminiscent of it for me, so if you enjoyed that trilogy, you might like this book.



THE GETAWAY BY LAMAR GILES

CALL #

YA FIC GILES

COLLECTION:

YOUNG ADULT FICTION

RATING:



GENRE:

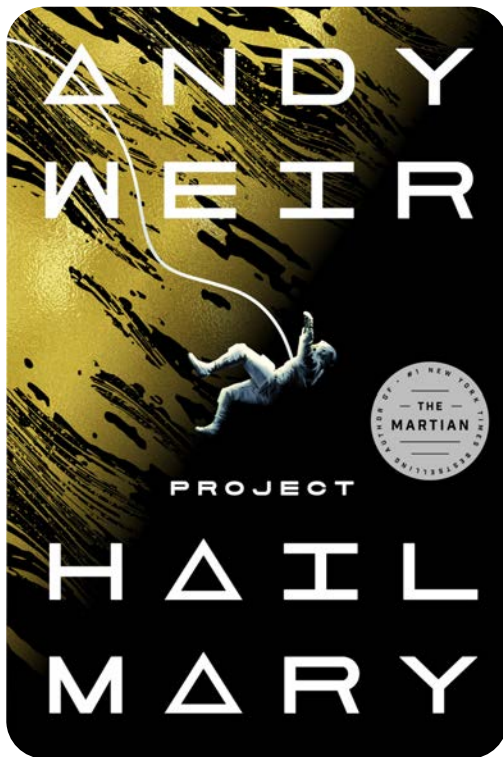
HORROR; DYSTOPIAN FICTION

Book Review:

The Getaway follows the story of our main character, Jermaine, a.k.a. Jay. It tells the story of his life in a world of suffering, where simple resources such as food and water are considered a blessing before his parents receive the opportunity to work at Karloff Country. This well-renowned amusement park/resort provides many accommodations for its guests and employees. He makes friends, works his job, and lives a “normal” life without worrying about the chaos happening outside. Soon, however, strange things start happening. The entirety of the resort goes into lockdown without warning, and the rich start arriving with strange plans. Jay and his friends must figure out the truth behind the plans of Karloff Country and get out before they become a part of it.

I really enjoyed this book because of its connection to real-world problems. It paints a picture of our world if global warming, political issues, and prices were multiplied by 100, but it still seems realistic. It lures you in with its false sense of security in Karloff Country, then betrays your trust as it slowly reveals the dark secrets behind the Karloff family's perfect smiles. Although with most books, you can see the plot twist coming a hundred miles away, this one shakes you down multiple different roads and then reveals a sudden drop leading to your inevitable fate, and you never know what could happen next. Not to mention the representation, it includes a cast full of people of color, LGBTQIA+ people, and more. It's a book of wonder, mystery, and, most importantly, fear.

I would recommend this book to any reader who has struggled with getting into books lately. The start isn't slow; it's remarkably paced and leaves you begging the author for more. Horror will grip your heart and swallow you whole when you learn of the gruesome things the antagonists will do to get their plans in motion and will make you question if our world will become like this since the similarities are through the roof. This is the perfect book for fans of thrillers, mystery, and, of course, a last chance to get away.



PROJECT HAIL MARY

BY
ANDY WEIR

CALL #

S WEIR

COLLECTION:

SCIENCE FICTION

RATING:



GENRE:

HARD SCIENCE FICTION,
SCIENCE FICTION THRILLER

Book Review:

In Project Hail Mary, we follow the protagonist, Ryland Grace, a science teacher who awakens aboard a spaceship with no memory of his past. As he unravels the mystery of his mission, we discover that he is humanity's last hope to save Earth from an early sun death. His mission is to extract a vital substance from a distant star to reignite the sun. Alongside him is an unexpected companion, Rocky, an alien organism with extraordinary abilities. Together, they must confront isolation, scientific challenges, and life-and-death decisions in their quest to rescue humanity.

I thoroughly enjoyed Project Hail Mary. Andy Weir's talent for blending scientific accuracy with a gripping narrative shines once again, much like his previous work, The Martian. The story is filled with moments of tension, humor, and scientific problem-solving, which kept me engaged from start to finish. The main character is a relatable and likable character, and his camaraderie adds heart to the story. I particularly appreciated the novel's exploration of scientific concepts, making complex ideas accessible and intriguing.

I recommend this to fans of science fiction, especially those who enjoy hard science fiction with a focus on problem-solving and space exploration. It's a book that will appeal to readers who appreciate well-researched science alongside a gripping plot. While it shares thematic elements with "The Martian," "Project Hail Mary" stands on its own as a unique and thrilling space adventure that will leave you pondering the wonders of the universe long after you've turned the final page.