



# TEEN BOOK REVIEWS

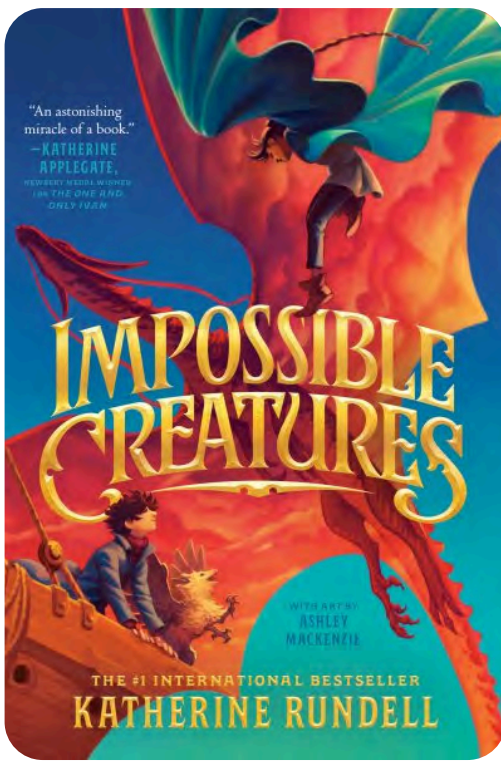
APRIL 2025

GUIDE

BOOKS IN THE  
YOUNG ADULT  
COLLECTION

BOOKS IN THE  
ADULT  
COLLECTION

BOOKS IN THE  
CHILDREN  
COLLECTION



# IMPOSSIBLE CREATURES BY KATHERINE RUNDELL

CALL #: J RUNDELL

COLLECTION: J FICTION

RATING:



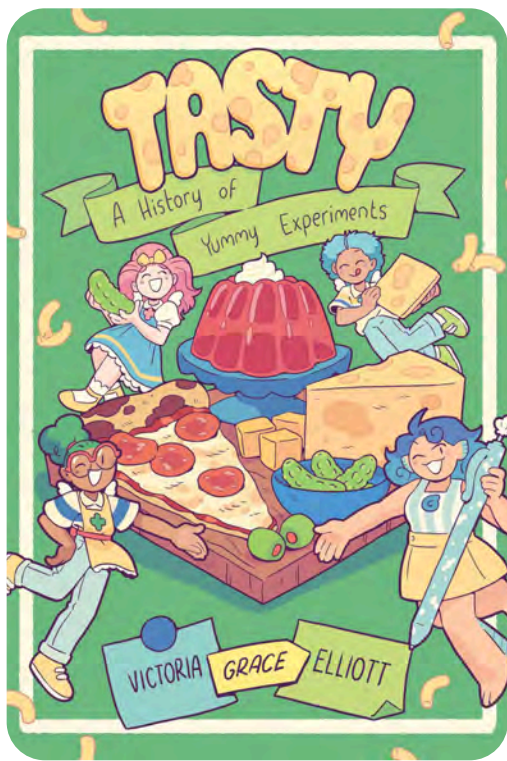
GENRE: FANTASY

## Book Review:

Twelve-year-old Christopher Forrester was not expecting his trip to the Irish countryside to turn into a mythical adventure. After saving a precocious young girl named Mal and her griffin Gelifen, who popped out of the portal in the lake behind his grandfather's house, he is asked to assist her in her quest to heal the glimourie, a magical force that livens and thrives her homeland; the Archipelago, a hidden group of islands where the last remaining mythical creatures, such as unicorns and dragons, inhabit. In a rush of instant friendship, Christopher agrees.

A mystical epic, this adventure novel has the whimsicality of a modern-day fairy tale, consisting of action, twists, and turns, and, of course, the classic fantasy aspect, which Rundell, the author, pulls off brilliantly. The story is told through the different characters' perspectives, which interchange from one another smoothly, so the book has the feel of reading through a birds-eye view. The reader will relish traveling through the Archipelago with Christopher and Mal, the world the author created being well-crafted and equally magical as the plot.

I would recommend this book to fantasy lovers, magical creature enthusiasts, those who enjoy a bittersweet ending, and fans of Katherine Applegate.



# TASTY : A HISTORY OF YUMMY EXPERIMENTS BY VICTORIA GRACE ELLIOT

**CALL #:** J GN 641.3022 TASTY

**COLLECTION:** J GRAPHIC NOVEL

**RATING:**



**GENRE:**

COMICS AND GRAPHIC NOVELS;  
FOOD BOOKS

## Book Review:

*Tasty: A History of Yummy Experiments* is a non-fiction graphic novel talking about the history of different food products throughout time. Not only does it incorporate food history, it also integrates the various cultures of the world in the back drop of a story by three friends Peri, Fee and Fada. It is amazing to see all the hard work involved in making this book as it not only involved the history but also how humans have evolved various food products according to the availability in the particular region, how the food changes slightly from one country to the another according to their taste, supply of ingredients, climate conditions, and cultural preferences. It also shows the scientific experiments the friends do together to try out the food, like making cheese! This book describes all the yummy food like cheese, pizza, pickles, sodas, easy foods like cakes, mac and cheese, and many more!

I have not one but many favorite parts in this book. Firstly, being a graphic novel, it makes the book very interesting for a young reader as so many excellent illustrations make it very interesting. Secondly, kids who are food enthusiasts will love the book as it describes foods from different parts of the world, so many cultures are included. There is something for everyone! It also has some yummy recipes that kids/adults can try at home! Finally, I love the atlas that they have depicting the particular foods in every part of the world. My favorite part is to see the different types of cheese and how they are made. Who does not like cheese?

I highly recommend this book for kids and adults who love food, like to try new food, and want to know the history of food. This will also be a good book to have for extracurricular classes for kids who are in a cooking club. They can choose a particular food and read about it, experiment with it, and try it. It's a super fun idea for school breaks and a good book when planning to travel and try local cuisine!





# DESERT ECHOES BY ABDI NAZEMIAN

**CALL #:** YA FIC NAZEMIAN

**COLLECTION:** YOUNG ADULT FICTION

**RATING:**



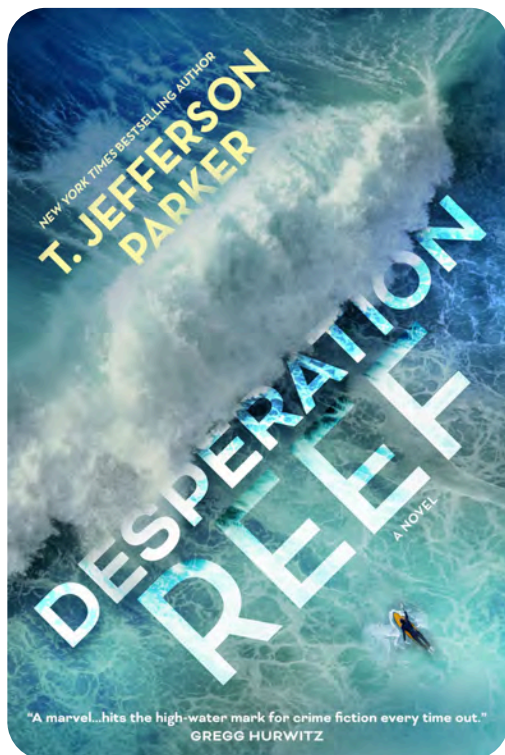
**GENRE:** REALISTIC FICTION

## Book Review:

*Desert Echoes* is a unique story about a boy named Kam grappling with the grief of his missing boyfriend, Ash, two years later. He struggles to move on and forgive himself without closure. He decides to return to the place where Ash went missing for a school trip, hoping to heal. His best friend struggles to help him, but the secrets between them keep mounting. This novel also follows Kam's complicated home life in a traditional Iranian family.

I liked this book overall. The author did a great job making the characters tangible and relatable—everyone was deeply flawed, but that made it more realistic. I also appreciated the flashback chapters, which slowly revealed memories and made the book more interesting. *Desert Echoes* was sorrowful at times, romantic at others, and even humorous. One interesting note is that the book takes place during the pandemic. I personally did not like how that was mundanely incorporated into the story, but perhaps others would find it intriguing.

I recommend this to people looking for an emotional book that fills you with someone else's life. It's a personal and painful story, but you can count on a happy ending. It's a bit slow-moving, but it's not exactly meant to be a thriller.



# DESPERATION REEF

## BY T. JEFFERSON PARKER

CALL #: M PARKER

COLLECTION: MYSTERY

RATING:



GENRE: THRILLERS AND SUSPENSE

### Book Review:

*Desperation Reef*, by T. Jefferson Parker, is a thriller filled with moments of high stakes, overcoming mental blocks, and the memorial of people who have passed. The story follows the perspectives of three members of the family known by Stonebreakers. Jen, an early widowed woman who lost her husband during a surfing competition (Mavericks) in their twenties, now works at her coastside bar called the Barrel and is struggling with the memories of the death of her husband at the Mavericks. Casey, one of two born by Jen, is a top surfer in the world. He engages with the internet, exposes illegal fishers, promotes his brands and sponsors, and works at the Barrel. Brock, the other child, works hard for an organization he founded that helps those in need, although not everyone supports his actions. Twenty years after the first Mavericks, Jen and her sons agree to take on the competition where a core family member was taken from them. Overcoming fears and absences in their lives.

After reading through the book, I wasn't overcome with new emotions or feelings towards certain ideas, as its story is not very realistic (considering it takes place in the real world). The story is also hard to keep track of at times, with the reader often being thrown into the moment without much context. Despite the book mainly wanting to focus on Jen's struggles of loss and anxiety, I was much more invested in her son's, Casey, activities and adventures. However, the quality of the writing was very high, as the way Parker describes scenes and certain moments is very refreshing.

The novel isn't the most captivating book I have ever picked up, and it may take a bit to finish. However, one thing this book does well is introduce readers to a commonly forgotten part of the world: surfing. So, there is a possible appeal to those interested in surfing and wanting to read about a novel that includes their hobbies or likes. Within the pages, there are occasionally some mature lines that may not be fit for elementary schoolers. The novel was fairly long. However, that didn't stop me from finishing it at a good pace. In general, I would not recommend this book first to anyone wanting to get back into reading or wanting a quick, intense read, but it is still a good pick.