



# Forest Of Reading

## 2020 Teen Committee List

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### White Pine Readers

High School, Grades 9-12

Official Wholesaler

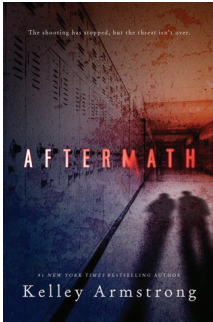
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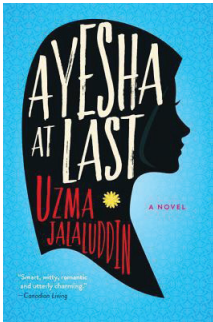
# Suggested Reading List

White Pine Readers (high school, Grades 9-12)



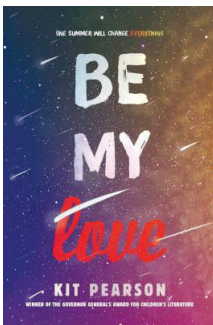
## **Aftermath** by Kelley Armstrong (Penguin Teen)

Three years after losing her brother Luka in a school shooting, Skye Gilchrist is moving home. But there's no sympathy for Skye and her family because Luka wasn't a victim; he was a shooter. Jesse Mandal knows all too well that the scars of the past don't heal easily. The shooting cost Jesse his brother and his best friend—Skye. Ripped apart by tragedy, Jesse and Skye can't resist reopening the mysteries of their past. But old wounds hide darker secrets. And the closer Skye and Jesse get to the truth of what happened that day, the closer they get to a new killer.



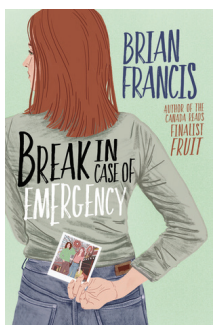
## **Ayesha at Last** by Uzma Jalaluddin (HarperAvenue)

Ayesha Shamsi has a lot going on. Her dreams of being a poet have been set aside for a teaching job so she can pay off her debts to her wealthy uncle. She lives with her boisterous Muslim family and is always being reminded that her flighty younger cousin, Hafsa, is close to rejecting her one hundredth marriage proposal. Though Ayesha is lonely, she doesn't want an arranged marriage. Then she meets Khalid, who is just as smart and handsome as he is conservative and judgmental. She is irritatingly attracted to someone who looks down on her choices and who dresses like he belongs in the seventh century. When a surprise engagement is announced between Khalid and Hafsa, Ayesha is torn between how she feels about the straightforward Khalid and the unsettling new gossip she hears about his family. Looking into the rumors, she finds she has to deal with not only what she discovers about Khalid, but also the truth she realizes about herself.



## **Be My Love** by Kit Pearson (HarperTrophy)

For as long as she can remember, Maisie has spent her summers on Kingfisher Island. She and her beloved cousin Una run wild, and Maisie feels the warm embrace of her big, extended family. This summer Maisie needs that escape more than ever. But now everything on Kingfisher has changed: Una has returned from her mainland school a sophisticated young woman too mature for childish games, and even worse, she has an all-consuming infatuation with David Meyer, both an old friend and an older man. Soon Maisie finds herself playing second fiddle—jealous of Una and David's closeness, and unsure of what those feelings mean. When Maisie's greatest attempt to maintain the special magic of her friendship with Una goes up in smoke, it seems as though all is lost. But with an enormous revelation, and a heartrending intervention, Maisie may finally discover the strength she needs to find the same peace that the island has brought her within herself.

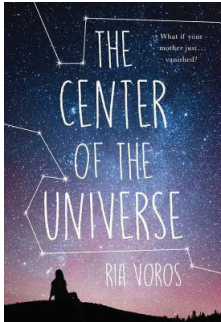


## **Break in Case of Emergency** by Brian Francis (HarperCollins)

Life has been a struggle for Toby Goodman. Her mother died by suicide five years ago, and her father left their small town before Toby was born. Now a teenager living on her grandparents' dairy farm, Toby has trouble letting people in. She keeps even her closest friend, the brash but endearing Trisha, at arms' length, and recently ended her first relationship, with Trisha's burnout brother, Mike. Convinced that she is destined to follow her mother's path, Toby creates a plan to escape her pain. But with the news that her father is coming home and finally wants to meet her, Toby must face the truth of her family's story. Not only is her father gay, but he's also a world-famous female impersonator—and a self-absorbed, temperamental man-child who is ill-prepared to be a real parent. When Toby's careful plans go awry, she is forced to rebuild the life she thought she knew from the ground up. While she may not follow an expected path, through the support of a quirky but lovable circle of friends and family, Toby may finally put together the many different pieces that make up her past, her present, and her future.

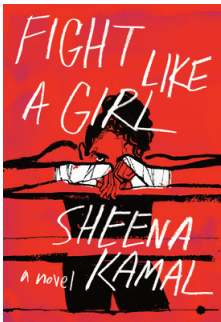
# Suggested Reading List

White Pine Readers (high school, Grades 9-12)



## ***The Center of the Universe* by Ria Voros (Kids Can Press)**

Grace Carter's mother, the celebrity news anchor GG Carter, is everything Grace is not. GG is a star, with a flawless wardrobe and a following of thousands, while Grace, an aspiring astrophysicist, is into stars of another kind. She and her mother have always been in different orbits. Then one day GG is just ... gone. Cameras descend on their house, news shows speculate about what might have happened and Grace's family struggles to find a new rhythm as they wait for answers. While the authorities unravel the mystery behind GG's disappearance, Grace grows closer to her high school's golden boy, Mylo, who has faced a black hole of his own. She also uncovers some secrets from her mother's long-lost past. The more Grace learns, the more she wonders. Did she ever really know her mother? Was GG abducted ... or did she leave? And if she left, why?



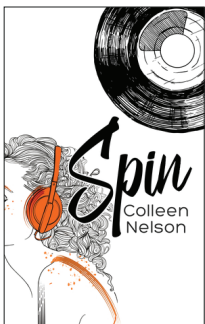
## ***Fight Like a Girl* by Sheena Kamal (Penguin Teen)**

Love and violence. In some families they're bound up together, dysfunctional and poisonous, passed from generation to generation like eye color or a quirk of smile. Trisha's trying to break the chain, channeling her violent impulses into Muay Thai kickboxing, an unlikely sport for a slightly built girl of Trinidadian descent. Her father comes and goes as he pleases, his presence adding a layer of tension to Toronto's east-end townhouse Trisha and her mom call home, every punch he lands on her mother carving itself indelibly into Trisha's mind. Until the night he wanders out drunk in front of the car Trisha is driving, practicing on her learner's permit, her mother in the passenger seat. Her father is killed, and her mother seems strangely at peace. Lighter, somehow. Trisha doesn't know exactly what happened that night, but she's afraid it's going to happen again. Her mom has a new man in her life and the patterns, they are repeating.



## ***My Story Starts Here: Voices of Young Offenders* by Deborah Ellis (Groundwood Books)**

Jamar found refuge in a gang after leaving an abusive home where his mother stole from him. Fred was arrested for assault with a weapon, public intoxication and attacking his mother while on drugs. Jeremy first went to court at age fourteen ("Court gives you the feeling that you can never make up for what you did, that you're just bad forever") but now wears a Native Rights hat to remind him of his strong Métis heritage. Kate, charged with petty theft and assault, finally found a counselor who treated her like a person for the first time. The kids in this book represent a range of socioeconomic backgrounds, genders, sexual orientations and ethnicities. Every story is different, but there are common threads — loss of parenting, dislocation, poverty, truancy, addiction, discrimination. Most of all, this book leaves readers asking the most pressing questions of all. Does it make sense to put kids in jail? Can't we do better? Have we forgotten that we were once teens ourselves, feeling powerless to change our lives, confused about who we were and what we wanted, and quick to make a dumb move without a thought for the consequences?

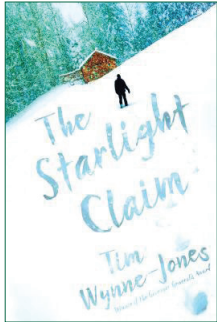


## ***Spin* by Colleen Nelson (Dundurn Press)**

An aspiring teenage DJ must learn how to navigate life when people find out that she's the daughter of a famous singer. Fifteen-year-old Delilah "Dizzy" Doucette lives with her dad and brother above their vintage record store, The Vinyl Trap. She's learning how to spin records from her brother's best friend, and she's getting pretty good. But behind her bohemian life, Dizzy and her family have a secret: her mom is the mega-famous singer Georgia Waters. When this secret is revealed to the world, Dizzy's life spins out of control. She must decide what is most important to her — the family she has or the family she wants.

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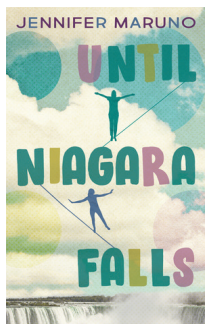
## ***The Starlight Claim* by Tim Wynne-Jones (Candlewick Press)**

Fast-paced, evocative, and intensely suspenseful, Tim Wynne-Jones's latest psychological thriller finds a teenager setting his wits against the frigid wilderness and a menacing crew of escapees. Four months after his best friend, Dodge, disappeared near their families' camp in a boat accident, Nate is still haunted by nightmares. He'd been planning to make the treacherous trek to the remote campsite with a friend — his first time in winter without his survival-savvy father, Burt. But when his friend gets grounded, Nate secretly decides to brave the trip solo in a journey that's half pilgrimage, half desperate hope he will find his missing friend when no one else could. What he doesn't expect to find is the door to the cabin flung open and the camp occupied by strangers: three men he's horrified to realize have escaped from a maximum-security prison. Snowed in by a blizzard and with no cell signal, Nate is confronted with troubling memories of Dodge and a stunning family secret, and realizes that his survival now depends on his wits as much as his wilderness skills. As things spiral out of control, Nate finds himself dealing with questions even bigger than who gets to leave the camp alive.



## ***This Place: 150 Years Retold* by Kateri Akiwenzie-Damm, Sonny Assu, Brandon Mitchell, Rachel and Sean Qitsualik-Tinsley, David A. Robertson, Niigaanwewidam James Sinclair, Jen Storm, Richard Van Camp, Katherena Vermette, Chelsea Vowel; illustrated by Tara Audibert, Kyle Charles, GMB Chomichuk, Natasha Donovan, Scott B. Henderson, Ryan Howe, Andrew Lodwick, Jen Storm; colour by Scott A. Ford, Donovan Yaciuk (HighWater Press)**

Explore the last 150 years through the eyes of Indigenous creators in the graphic novel anthology, *This Place: 150 Years Retold*. Beautifully illustrated, these stories are an emotional and enlightening journey through magic realism, serial killings, psychic battles, and time travel. See how Indigenous peoples have survived a post-apocalyptic world since Contact.

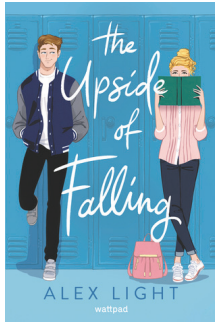


## ***Until Niagara Falls* by Jennifer Maruno (Dundurn Press)**

Is friendship supposed to feel like walking over the falls? Brenda is afraid of heights, being in the dark, and dog poop. Then she meets daring, rule-breaking Maureen and realizes their friendship is a bit like walking a tightrope — exciting but dangerous. Maureen encourages Brenda to use fire escapes, sleep outside in a tent, and walk through strange backyards. Their friendship strains when Maureen makes fun of Harvey, Brenda's special needs neighbour. It strains even further when Maureen borrows Gran's bracelet and lies about returning it. Suddenly, Brenda realizes she has to be as brave as The Great Blondin, the man who walked across the falls, to get it back.

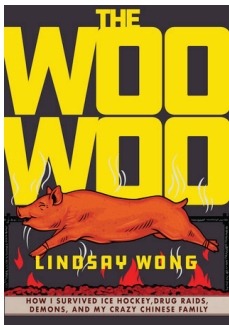
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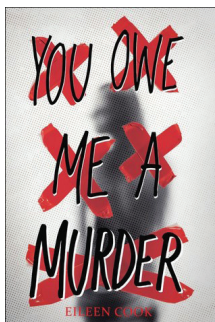
## ***Upside of Falling* by Alex Light (HarperTeen)**

It's been years since seventeen-year-old Becca Hart believed in true love. But when her former best friend teases her for not having a boyfriend, Becca impulsively pretends she's been secretly seeing someone. Brett Wells has it all. Being captain of the football team and one of the most popular guys in school, he should have no problem finding someone to date, but he's always been more focused on his future than who to bring to prom. When he overhears Becca's lie, Brett decides to step in and be her mystery guy. It's the perfect solution: he gets people off his back for not dating and she can keep up the ruse. Acting like the perfect couple isn't easy though, especially when you barely know the other person. But with Becca still picking up the pieces from when her world was blown apart years ago and Brett just barely holding his together now, they begin to realize they have more in common than they ever could have imagined. When the line between real and pretend begins to blur, they are forced to answer the question: is this fake romance the realest thing in either of their lives?



## ***The Woo-Woo: How I Survived Ice Hockey, Drug Raids, Demons, and My Crazy Chinese Family* by Lindsay Wong (Arsenal Pulp Press)**

In this jaw-dropping, darkly comedic memoir, a young woman comes of age in a dysfunctional Asian family whose members blamed their woes on ghosts and demons when in fact they should have been on anti-psychotic meds. Lindsay Wong grew up with a paranoid schizophrenic grandmother and a mother who was deeply afraid of the "woo-woo"—Chinese ghosts who come to visit in times of personal turmoil. From a young age, she witnessed the woo-woo's sinister effects; at the age of six, she found herself living in the food court of her suburban mall, which her mother saw as a safe haven because they could hide there from dead people, and on a camping trip, her mother tried to light Lindsay's foot on fire to rid her of the woo-woo. The eccentricities take a dark turn, however, when her aunt, suffering from a psychotic breakdown, holds the city of Vancouver hostage for eight hours when she threatens to jump off a bridge. And when Lindsay herself starts to experience symptoms of the woo-woo herself, she wonders whether she will suffer the same fate as her family. On one hand a witty and touching memoir about the Asian immigrant experience, and on the other a harrowing and honest depiction of the vagaries of mental illness, *The Woo-Woo* is a gut-wrenching and beguiling manual for surviving family, and oneself.



## ***You Owe Me a Murder* by Eileen Cook (HMH Books for Young Readers)**

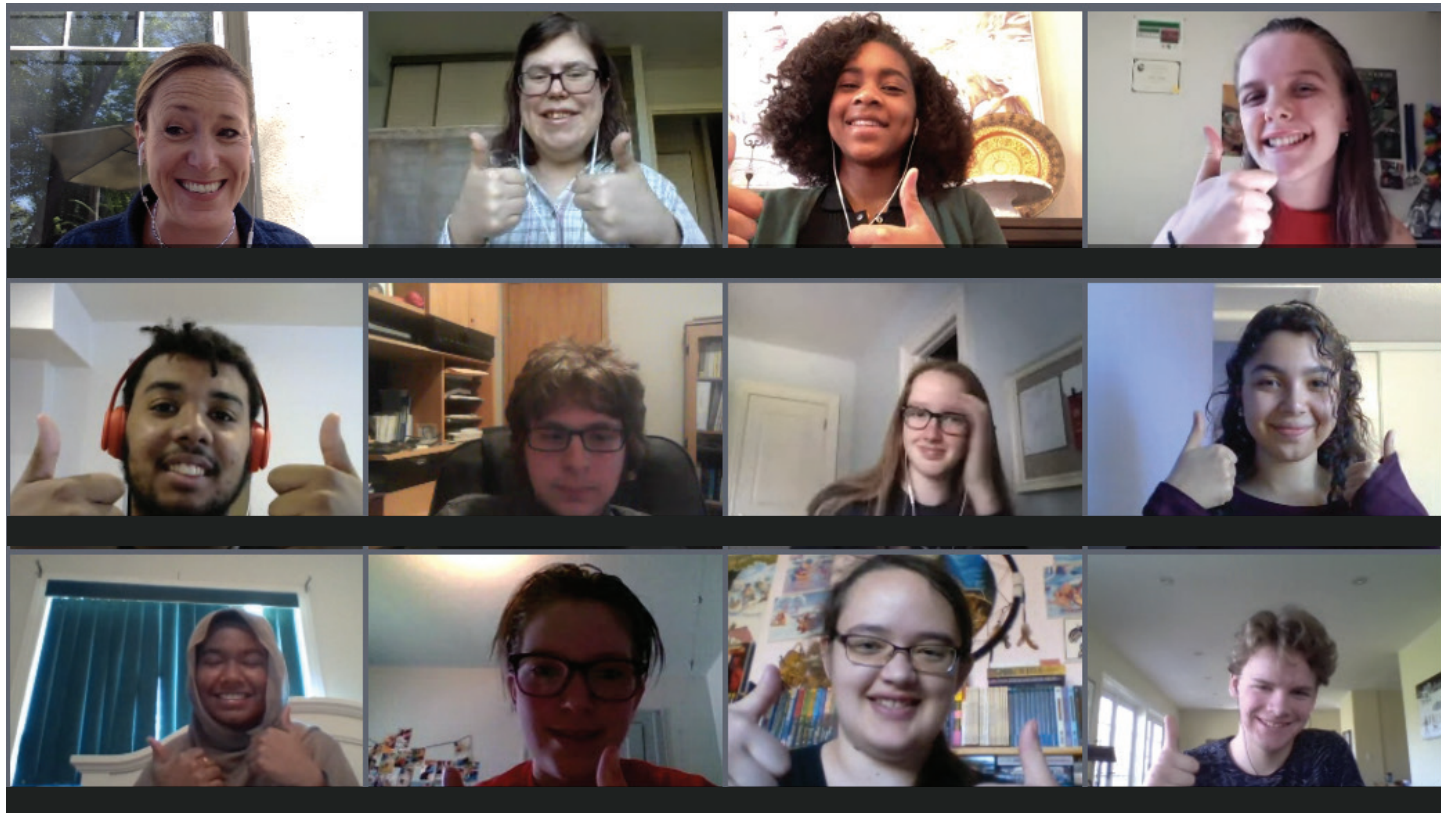
17-year-old Kim never expected to plot a murder. But that was before her boyfriend dumped her for another girl. Now, Kim's stuck on a class trip to London with him and his new soulmate and she can't help wishing he was a little bit dead, even if she'd never really do that. But when Kim meets Nicki, a stranger on the plane who's more than willing to listen to Kim's woes, things start to look up. Nicki's got a great sense of humor, and when she jokes about swapping murders, Kim plays along—that is, until Kim's ex-boyfriend mysteriously dies. Blackmailed by Nicki to fulfill her end of the deal, Kim will have to commit a murder or take the fall for one.

# The 2020 Committee

Met Virtually on May 22, 2020



## White Pine



**First Row (L-R): Meredith Tutching** — Director of the Forest of Reading, **Amy Mathers** — Facilitator of the Teen Committee, **Sophia** — Simcoe County District School Board (Alliston), **Chloe** — Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (Ottawa)

**Second Row (L-R): Xavier** — Conseil scolaire Viamonde (Toronto), **Ethan** — Thunder Bay Public Library (Thunder Bay), **Lauren** — Peel District School Board (Mississauga), **Yasmin** — Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board (Courtice)

**Third Row (L-R): Tahiyah** — Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (Brantford), **Joey** — Waterloo Region District School Board (Kitchener), **Sara** — Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board (Bowmanville), **Will** — Halton District School Board (Milton)

### About Amy Mathers, the Teen Committee Facilitator:

After completing a Marathon of Books in 2014, reading 365 Canadian teen novels in one year, Amy Mathers reviews books for the *National Reading Campaign* and the Canadian Children's *BookNews*. She is a long-time volunteer for the Forest of Reading White Pine Selection Committee, and recently started a podcast called Amy's Travels in Teen Fiction interviewing Canadian teen authors.

### A Special Note about the 2020 Teen Committee List from Amy Mathers:

Given the world's current circumstances, the major theme in the teen committee this year were books in the mystery/thriller genre. We talked about it a bit, and there was a general consensus that those books are the easiest to read right now. Sometimes it's difficult to keep your attention on a book when life is changing so drastically around you, but a good book that pulls you in and holds your attention while taking you out of your own life is much appreciated.