



2021 Alex Award Winners

Presented by Wyatt Packard and Aubrey Shumake

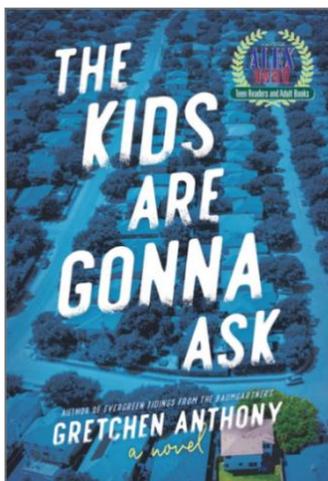
Bethany Branch Library – September 3rd, 2021

South Branch Library – September 16th, 2021

Nebraska Library Association Annual Conference – October 13th, 2021

The Alex Awards are given to ten books written for adults that have special appeal to young adults, ages 12 through 18. The winning titles are selected from the previous year's publishing. The Alex Awards were first given annually beginning in 1998 and became an official ALA award in 2002.

The award is sponsored by the Margaret A. Edwards Trust. Edwards pioneered young adult library services and worked for many years at the Enoch Pratt Library in Baltimore. Her work is described in her book *Fair Garden and the Swarm of Beasts*, and over the years she has served as an inspiration to many librarians who serve young adults. The Alex Awards are named after Edwards, who was called “Alex” by her friends.

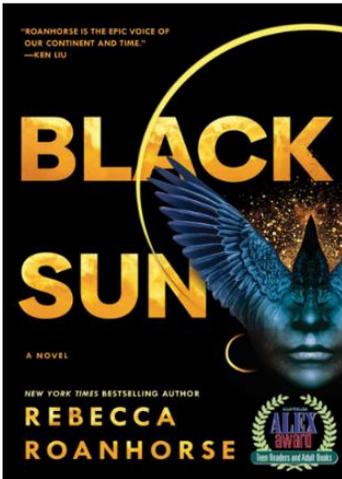


[The Kids Are Gonna Ask](#)

by Gretchen Anthony (Anthony)

Published by Park Row Books (ISBN 9780778308744).

A few years after losing their mother, the McClair twins use podcasting to search for their biological father. The family is turned inside out by the media, but with the help of their loving grandmother, they persevere in this witty coming of age novel.

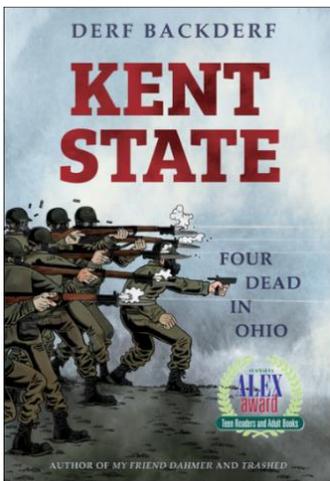


[Black Sun](#)

by Rebecca Roanhorse

Published by Saga Press, an imprint of Simon & Schuster (ISBN 9781534437678).

A diverse group of priests, sailors, and travelers converge in the holy city of Tova in preparation for the annual winter solstice celebration, which coincides with a solar eclipse in this epic fantasy adventure. Great writing and world building transport the reader to a civilization inspired by pre-Columbian mythology.

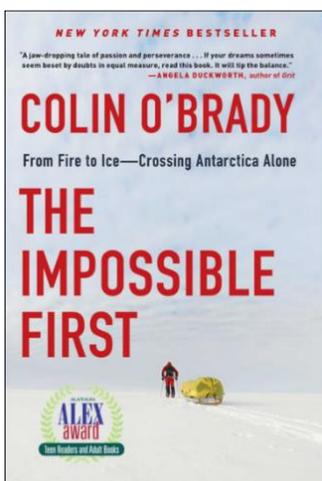


[Kent State: Four Dead in Ohio](#)

by Derf Backderf (YA 741.5 Der)

Published by Abrams Comicarts (ISBN 9781419734847).

In 1970 the Ohio National Guard opened fire on Kent State students protesting the Vietnam War, killing four and wounding nine. This chilling graphic novel follows the lives of the students, politicians, guardsmen, and law enforcement in simple black and white, revealing a volatile situation ending in heartbreaking tragedy.

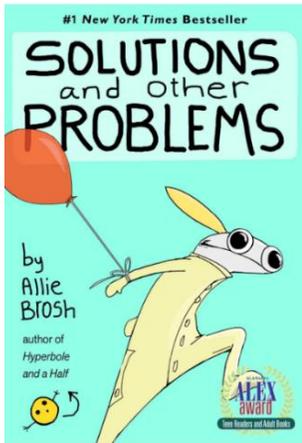


[The Impossible First: From Fire to Ice - Crossing Antarctica Alone](#)

by Colin O'Brady (919.89 Obr)

Published by Scribner, an imprint of Simon & Schuster (ISBN 9781982133115).

Mindset expert Colin O'Brady recounts his experience as the first to traverse Antarctica solo and unassisted. Drawing strength from prior successes, failures, and his support system, he endures whiteouts, subzero temperatures, and starvation while pulling a 365-pound supply sled.

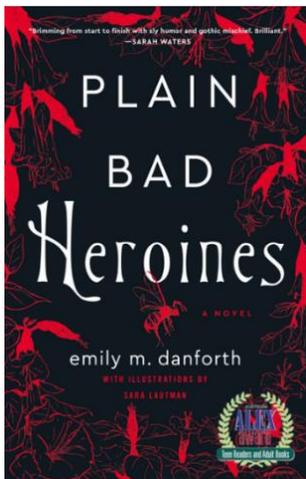


Solutions and Other Problems

by Allie Brosh (741.5 Bro)

Published by Gallery Books, an imprint of Simon & Schuster (ISBN 9781982156947).

In this humorous graphic memoir about the ups and downs of life, Allie Brosh uses simple, expressive illustrations and wit to grapple with difficult and challenging topics, such as grief, loneliness, and self-love, even if you're a weirdo.

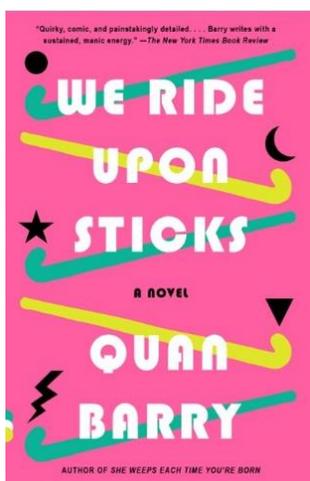


Plain Bad Heroines

by emily m. Danforth (Danforth)

Published by William Morrow, an imprint of HarperCollins (ISBN 9780062942852).

This gothic horror novel follows the lives of queer women throughout history. As our past and present heroines learn about a mysterious curse connected to Brookhaunts School for Girls, they explore their own identities in this work of metafiction filled with sapphic romance.

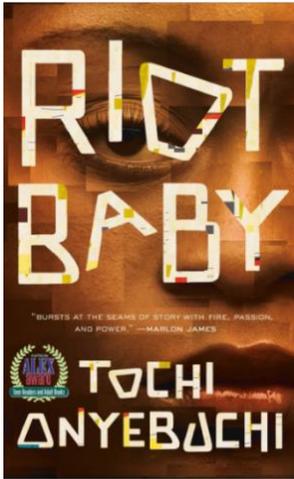


We Ride Upon Sticks

by Quan Barry (Barry)

Published by Pantheon Books, a division of Penguin Random House (ISBN 9780525565437).

The 1989 Danvers High School Field Hockey team is sick of losing. Could their town's gritty history surrounding the Salem Witch Trials and a notebook featuring Emilo Estevez change their luck and their lives? Join the team for this quirky ride.

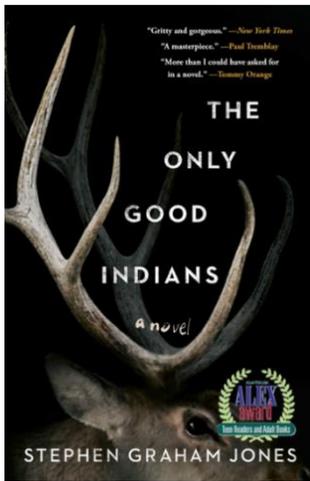


Riot Baby

by Tochi Onyebuchi (Onyebuchi)

Published by Tom Doherty Associates/Tor Books (ISBN 9781250214751).

Ella has unexplained powers. She worries about her younger brother Key, born during the LA riots and later incarcerated simply for being black. Magical realism highlights the injustice, anger, and systemic racism that is prevalent in modern society.

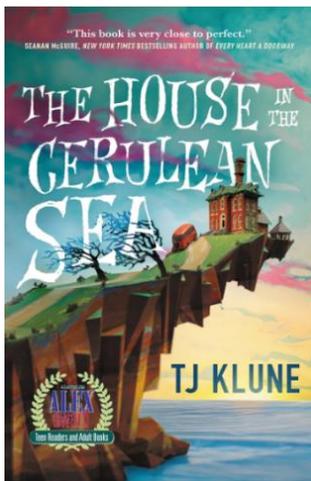


The Only Good Indians

by Stephen Graham Jones (Jones)

Published by Saga Press, an imprint of Simon & Schuster (ISBN 9781982136451).

Told through the backdrop of cultural tradition versus modern expectations, this horror story follows four Native American men as a decision from their past comes back to haunt them. Magical realism and realistic fiction blend as an avenging presence tracks them down.



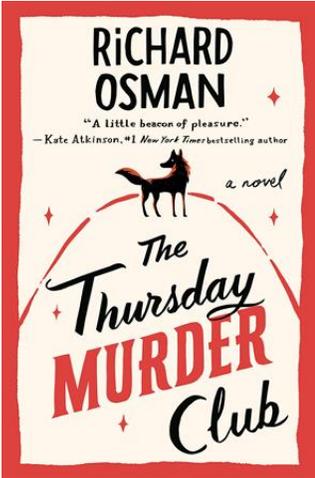
The House in the Cerulean Sea

by TJ Klune (Klune)

Published by Tom Doherty Associates/Tor Books (ISBN 9781250217288).

Buttoned-up and by-the-book Linus is sent to investigate a classified orphanage on a strange island by Extremely Upper Management. Forced out of his comfort zone, he is surprised to find love and family in this magically joyful tale.

Additional Favorites



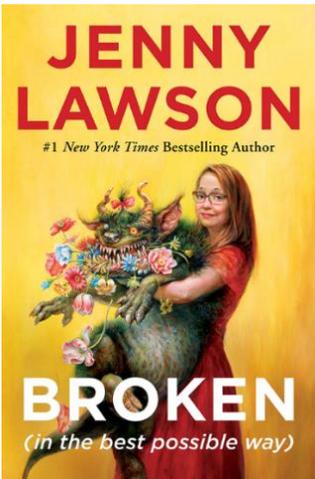
[The Thursday Murder Club](#)

by Richard Osman (Osman)

Published by Pamela Dorman Books (ISBN 9781984880963).

In a peaceful retirement village, four unlikely friends meet weekly in the Jigsaw Room to discuss unsolved crimes; together they call themselves the Thursday Murder Club.

When a local developer is found dead with a mysterious photograph left next to the body, the Thursday Murder Club suddenly find themselves in the middle of their first live case. As the bodies begin to pile up, can our unorthodox but brilliant gang catch the killer, before it's too late?



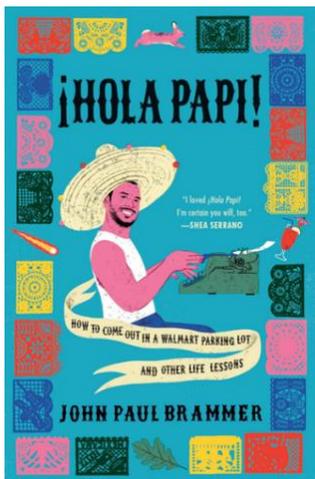
[Broken \(in the best possible way\)](#)

by Jenny Lawson (Biography Lawson)

Published by Henry Holt and Co (ISBN 9781250077035).

With people experiencing anxiety and depression now more than ever, Jenny humanizes what we all face in an all-too-real way, reassuring us that we're not alone and making us laugh while doing it. From the business ideas that she wants to pitch to Shark Tank to the reason why Jenny can never go back to the post office, Broken leaves nothing to the imagination in the most satisfying way. And of course, Jenny's long-suffering husband Victor—the Ricky to Jenny's Lucille Ball—is present

throughout.

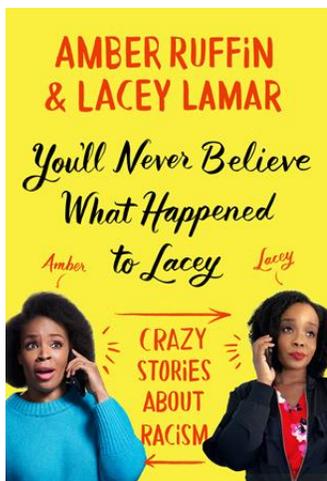


[Hola Papi: How to Come Out in a Walmart Parking Lot and Other Life Lessons](#)

by John Paul Brammer (Biography Brammer)

Published by Simon & Schuster (ISBN 9781982141493).

What started as a racialized moniker given to him on a hookup app soon became the inspiration for his now wildly popular advice column “¡Hola Papi!,” launching his career as the Cheryl Strayed for young queer people everywhere—and some straight people too. Sometimes the best advice to dole outcomes from looking within, which is what JP has done in his column and book—and readers have flocked to him for honest, heartfelt wisdom, and of course, a few laughs.



[You'll Never Believe What Happened to Lacey: Crazy Stories about Racism](#)

by Amber Ruffin and Lacey Lamar (305.8 AfrYr)

Published by Grand Central Publishing (ISBN 9781538719367).

From racist donut shops to strangers putting their whole hand in her hair, from being mistaken for a prostitute to being mistaken for Harriet Tubman, Lacey is a lightning rod for hilariously ridiculous yet all-too-real anecdotes. She's the perfect mix of polite, beautiful, petite, and Black that apparently makes people think "I can say whatever I want to this woman." And now, Amber and Lacey share these entertainingly horrifying stories through their laugh-out-loud sisterly banter. Painfully relatable or shockingly eye-opening (depending on how often you have personally been followed by security at department stores), this book tackles modern-day racism with the perfect balance of levity and gravity.