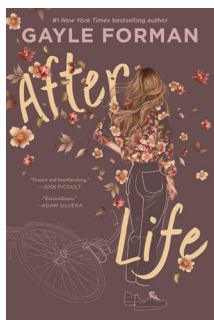
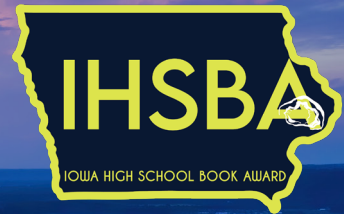


Iowa High School Book Award 2026–2027



AFTER LIFE FORMAN, GAYLE

She died seven years ago—so why is she back?

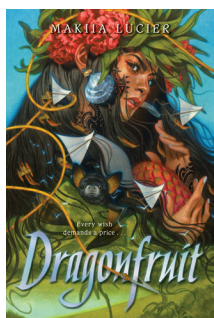
On a perfectly normal spring day, Amber Crane returns home after school on her bicycle—and her mother screams. Amber, as everyone in her family and community knows, died seven years ago, hit by a vehicle while riding that same bike. Now, she is the same age as just before she died, but everyone else is seven years older. Amber must learn how to fit into a new world she doesn't understand yet looks so familiar—her sister now older than her, her parents estranged from one another, her boyfriend and friends no longer the same people—and at the same time rediscover who she was and why she might have been given a second chance at life.



BLACK GIRL SURVIVES IN THIS ONE: HORROR STORIES EVANS, DESIREE S.

Monsters beware: a chilling story collection where the Black girl always makes it out alive.

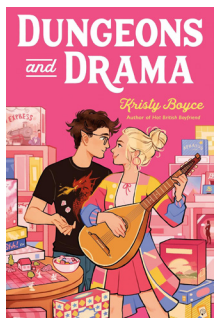
Contains a collection of fifteen horror stories by Black writers that feature female protagonists, all of whom survive various terrors, including monsters hunting for prey at a house party, a Black teen fighting a demon that abducts girls, and a space explorer confronting the myth of a being that steals faces.



DRAGONFRUIT LUCIER, MAKIIA

To save a kingdom, she must steal a dragon's cure.

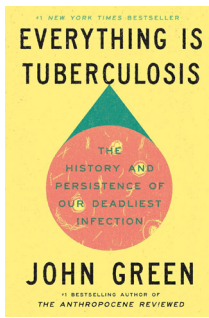
Ten years ago, Hanalei's father stole a dragon's egg—a dragonfruit—meant to cure the poisoned Tamarind Princess Oliana and instead used it to cure Hanalei, who also was poisoned. The act killed her father and left Hanalei to grow up in exile. Now eighteen, Hanalei spends her time studying seadragons, until she's offered the opportunity to return to Tamarind and rectify her father's actions. She's welcomed by her childhood friend, Prince Samahtitamahenele, who is eager to cure his still bedridden mother Oliana. Procuring another dragonfruit comes with risks, but both Hanalei and Sam are committed to whatever outcome lies before them.



DUNGEONS AND DRAMA BOYCE, KRISTY

Fake flirting, real feelings, and a D&D campaign gone rogue.

Musical lover Riley dreams of becoming a director on Broadway one day, and she has big plans to make her high school's spring musical a hit, but when she takes her mom's car without permission, she's grounded and forced to spend her after-school hours working at her dad's game shop. She soon meets one of the shop's employees, Nathan, and convinces him to cover her shifts and, in exchange, she'll flirt with him to make his gamer-girl crush jealous by joining his Dungeons & Dragons campaign. Nathan agrees and Riley is surprised to discover how much she actually enjoys role-playing games, but soon Riley starts to wonder if their romantic gestures are just act or turning into something real.



EVERYTHING IS TUBERCULOSIS GREEN, JOHN

A deadly disease reshaped history and still threatens millions today.

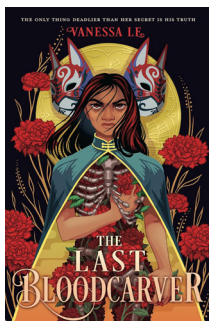
Chronicles the history of tuberculosis and how it has shaped our world. Describes how author John Green's experiences after meeting Henry, a young boy with tuberculosis living at Lakka Government Hospital in Sierra Leone, led him to become an advocate for increased access to treatment for this curable, preventable disease. Explores how tuberculosis has become a disease connected to poverty that is found mainly in developing countries, and examines the healthcare inequities that allow tuberculosis to kill millions of people each year. Includes black-and-white photographs and a map.



EVERYTHING WE NEVER HAD RIBAY, RANDY

Four generations fight to break cycles and define their identities

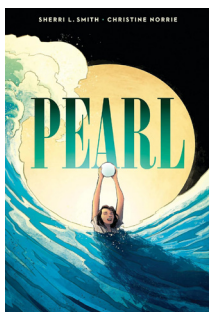
Presents a multiple perspectives story that follows four generations of Filipino American men who face different challenges in their lives and pass down their own flaws, values, and virtues to their children. In 1930, sixteen-year-old Francisco Maghabol leaves the Philippines in search of a better life in California, but as he barely gets by on his earnings from picking apples and faces increasing violence from white men in town, he starts to question whether he should have left in the first place. In 1965, Emil refuses to follow in the footsteps of his labor organizer father, Francisco, and is determined to prove he has what it takes to make it in the United States. In 1983, Chris faces challenges as he tries to connect to his Filipino roots and prove that his overbearing father Emil can't control his life. In 2020, Enzo's world changes forever when his abrasive grandfather moves in during a global pandemic, and he attempts to heal the decades-long rift between his father and grandfather.



LAST BLOODCARVER LE, VANESSA

A feared healer uncovers a conspiracy that could destroy her city.

In the industrial city of Theumas, eighteen-year-old Nhika is a heartsooth, trained by her grandmother to heal, although everyone else believes she is a monster and calls her a bloodcarver who can alter the human body with a touch. Nhika is caught using her abilities and is captured and sold to the wealthy Congmi family to heal the last witness of their father's murder. The more Nhika becomes involved in the mystery, the more entangled she becomes in the evil lurking in Theumas.



PEARL : A GRAPHIC NOVEL SMITH, SHERRI L.

Stranded by war, she must choose which country claims her.

Amy, a thirteen-year-old Japanese American girl who lives in Hawaii, travels to visit her family in Hiroshima, Japan, for the first time in 1941. When the Japanese navy attacks Pearl Harbor, it becomes impossible for Amy to return to Hawaii. She is conscripted into translating English radio transmissions for the Japanese army and then fears for her family's safety back home after they are imprisoned by the U.S. government in an interment camp. Amy soon finds herself torn between two countries at war, and she must figure out where her loyalties lie and where she truly feels at home.



THIS BOOK WON'T BURN AHMED, SAMIRA

One teen stands up when her school tries to ban books.

Noor Khan is forced to start the last quarter of her senior year in a new school after her dad abandons the family and they must move. Noor just wants to make it to graduation, but soon she finds herself involved in the debate to remove hundreds of books labeled obscene or pornographic by queer and BIPOC authors from the school library due to a new school board policy. Now Noor must decide what she is willing to risk by speaking up.



THRASHERS SOTO, JULIE

A dead girl's secrets return—and her friends aren't safe.

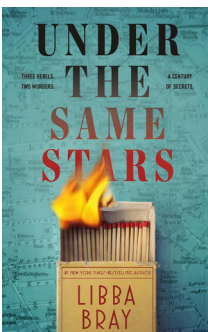
Sacramento senior Jodi Dillon is a member of her school's popular clique, the Thrashers, by default, since she's been friends with Zack Thrasher for forever. She considers herself plain next to cheerleader Paige, model Julian, and pretty Lucy, and isn't sure she really fits in. When sophomore Emily Mills, a girl who desperately wanted to be a part of the Thrashers, is found dead on prom night, her diary seems to implicate Zack, Paige, Julian, and Lucy, and Jodi decides to investigate. Strange, violent events begin afflicting members of the Thrashers shortly thereafter, and Jodi begins to wonder if Emily—or her ghost—has nefarious plans for them all.



TWENTY-FOUR SECONDS FROM NOW: A REGULAR LOVE STORY REYNOLDS, JASON

Twenty-four seconds, one big choice, and a love story remembered.

Teenagers Neon Benton and Aria Wright have been dating for two years and have decided to take the next step in their relationship with one another, but before the big event, Neon has locked himself in her bathroom and is stressing about doing things right. In flashbacks to the past, readers learn how the couple met, how their mutual respect and affection for one another grew, and how their decision to be intimate grew out of frank talks with loving family and friends who gave each teen empowerment to know themselves and what they want, and the desire to respect their partner.



UNDER THE SAME STARS BRAY, LIBBA

One oak tree connects the destinies of six teens across three different eras.

The lives of six teenagers living in three different time periods link together in unexpected ways, beginning in 1940s Germany where best friends Sophie and Hannah regularly visit the Bridegroom's Oak in the Dodauer Forest, said to bring lasting love to those who write to it. Hopeless romantic Sophie brings her love letters to the tree, hoping for a response, but when the Nazis invade Poland, Hannah gets involved in the resistance movement, and begins using the tree for a different purpose, that leads to the two girls' disappearances. In 1980s West Germany, American transplant Jenny meets rebellious punk rocker Lena, who shows her love, the Berlin underground scene, and the legacy left by World War II. In 2020 New York City, quarantined teens Miles and Chloe rifle through a box of mementos from Chloe's grandmother, and work to unravel the mysterious thread that ties Chloe to the women in her past.