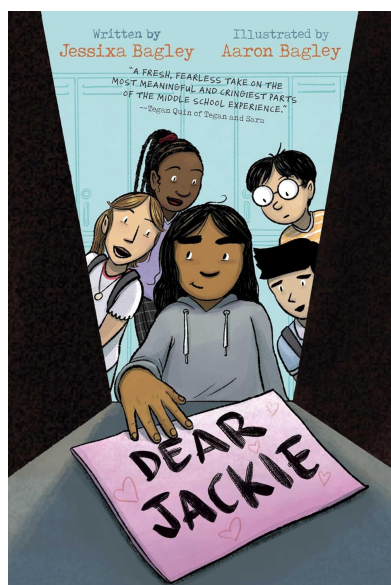




Hot List & New Titles

**Frankfurt Book Fair
October 2025**

Upstart Crow Literary
& The Inkhouse
594 Dean Street, Office 47
Brooklyn, NY 11238 212.686.5834
Inquiries: michael@upstartcrowliterary.com

**Fall 2025**

Middle Grade fiction (8 and up)
 288 pages
 Simon & Schuster Books FYR (WE)
 HC 978-1534496583
 PB 978-1534496576

Review materials: PDF of interior

A fake love letter sets off a hilarious cycle of middle-school gossip about a non-existent secret admirer

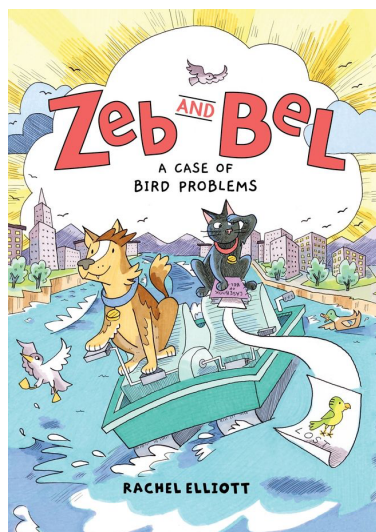
DEAR JACKIE

Written by Jessixa Bagley, Illustrated by Aaron Bagley

When Jackie's lifelong best friend Milo grows apart from her, she finds herself lost in the stressful world of middle school. Her new friends want to make her over into someone she's not, and worse, want to help her find her "crush." To get them to back off, Jackie does something unthinkable: sends herself a very public but very anonymous love letter. But if anything, this makes the pressures worse: Soon Jackie's secret admirer is all anybody at school can talk about. Now she's wondering: *Dear Jackie, how are you going to get out of this mess?*

"Smart, sweet, and sophisticated, *Dear Jackie* is a fresh, fearless take on the most meaningful and cringiest parts of middle school. You'll swoon, squeal and cheer in that order."—Tegan Quin (of pop super-duo Tegan and Sara)

Jessixa and Aaron Bagley are a married pair of artists who live in the Pacific Northwest and the creators of the award-winning graphic novel *Duel*. She is the award-winning writer-illustrator of many picture books, he is a well-published cartoonist, and together they are the creators of *Vincent Comes Home*. www.jessixa.com

**Summer 2026**

Middle Grade fiction (8 and up)
 160 pages
 Harper Collins (WE)
 HC 978-0-06-335430-2
 PB 978-0-06-335429-6

Review materials: PDF of interior

An utterly charming graphic novel series starter about a pair of animal detectives, from an award-winning comics creator

ZEB AND BEL (#1): A CASE OF BIRD PROBLEMS

Rachel Elliott

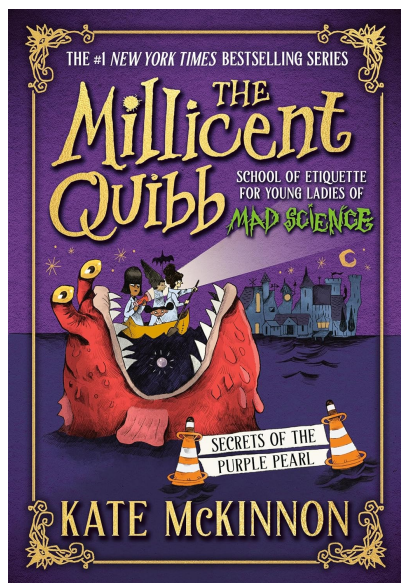
Zeb and Bel aren't your typical brother and sister mystery-solving duo. For one thing, Zeb is a *dog* and Bel is a *cat*. For another, they can't do anything without the other. Zeb is warm-hearted, fearless, and imaginative—always willing to do what must be done. While Bel is unquestionably the brains behind the operation, keeping the two of them out of trouble. And trouble is what they find in their apartment building, the Uppin Arms.

In this first book in the series, Zeb and Bel get to work when their parrot neighbor goes missing. Is it murder most fowl? Has this bird flown the coop? Zeb and Bel will get to the bottom of it!

Praise for *The Real Riley Mayes*:

- *A New York Public Library Best Book of 2022*
- *Junior Library Guild Gold Standard Selection*
- *A Book Riot Best Comic 2022*
- *A Comics Journal Best Comic of 2022*

Rachel Elliott is the award-winning creator of *The Real Riley Mayes*. She lives in Lexington.



September 2025

Middle Grade fiction (8 and up)
Hachette (US)/Harper Collins (UK)
HC ISBN 978-0-316-55529-6

Review materials: PDF forthcoming

The hilarious blockbuster #1 New York Times–bestselling series continues the adventures of three sisters and their fearless teacher

SECRETS OF THE PURPLE PEARL

The Millicent Quibb School of Etiquette for Young Ladies of Mad Science, Book 2

Kate McKinnon

After the adventures of Book One, the Porch sisters worry they will never see Millicent Quibb again... until another mystery unfolds in the town of Antiquarium. It's summertime, and everyone has flocked to the majestic lakeside Purple Pearl Hotel, including the nefarious group of evil mad scientists, the KRA. They haven't given up on resurrecting their fearsome leader, Talon Sharktūth, and now, they're hot on the trail of the legendary Purple Pearl, a source of power that is rumored to be lost at the bottom of Kagloopy Lake. The Porch sisters are the only thing standing between the KRA and ultimate power.

While Millicent, Gertrude, Eugenia, and Dee-Dee work to stop this nefarious plan, they discover more secrets than they bargained for—including where they came from, and who they truly are...

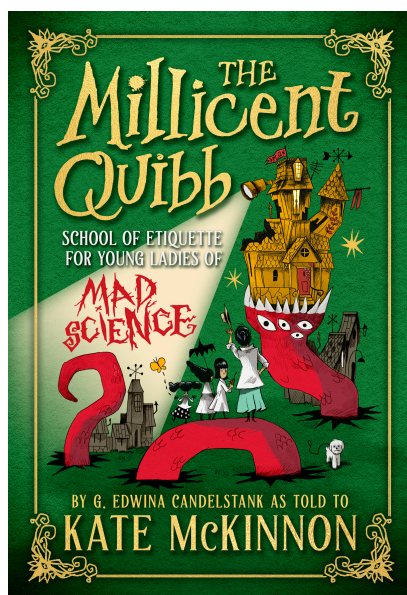
It's a mad science summer vacation they'll never forget!

***more than a quarter-million copies sold**

***20 Weeks on the New York Times bestseller list**

***Sold in a massive, multi-house auction**

**Supported by a high six-figure marketing & publicity plan
Including: multi-city author tour, television and
online press, and unparalleled outreach to
influencers, gatekeepers, and readers**



October 2024

Middle Grade fiction (8 and up)
Hachette (US)/Harper Collins (UK)
HC ISBN 978-0-316-55473-2

Review materials: PDF, galleys



Kate McKinnon is an award-winning performer and writer who is celebrated globally for her work in film and television. She recently played Weird Barbie in Greta Gerwig's worldwide blockbuster *Barbie*. *The Millicent Quibb School of Etiquette for Young Ladies of Mad Science* was her debut novel.

Rights Information: Hachette/Little, Brown (US), HarperCollins (UK/ANZ), Poche (France), Duomo (Spain), Knigolove (Ukraine), Salani (Italy), V&R (Brazil)

Inquiries: rights@upstartcrowliterary.com



February 2026

Middle Grade fiction (10 and up)

Delacorte/PRH

HC ISBN 978-0-593-90486-2

Review materials: PDF

An avid fan of Agatha Christie whodunits finds herself smack-dab in the middle of a mystery when a priceless gem goes missing

THE CASE OF THE SCARLET SNAKEBITE

Christyne Morrell

Amber Adler is only twelve, but she knows a thing or two about solving mysteries. For one thing, she has read all of Agatha Christie's novels, several of them twice. Second, she herself is the observant daughter of a famous detective, and everyone knows such talents run in the family.

So when the wealthy Willoughby family stays at her mother's bed-and-breakfast and the priceless Scarlet Snakebite ruby goes missing, Amber hits the ground running. And a good thing, too, as her mother is the chief suspect! It is up to Amber and her singular mystery-solving skills to find the *real* culprit and clear her mother's name before the grumpy head of the Willoughbys calls in the police and sends her mother to the slammer.

Christyne Morrell is the author of *Curse of the Dead Man's Diamond*, *Trex*, and *Kingdom of Secrets*. christynewrites.com



March 2025

Middle Grade fiction (10 and up)

Candlewick Books

HC ISBN 978-1-536237-7-88

Review materials: PDF

Starving, a girl scales the walls of a grand estate's kitchen garden to steal a peach, with life-changing consequences

THE PEACH THIEF

Linda Joan Smith

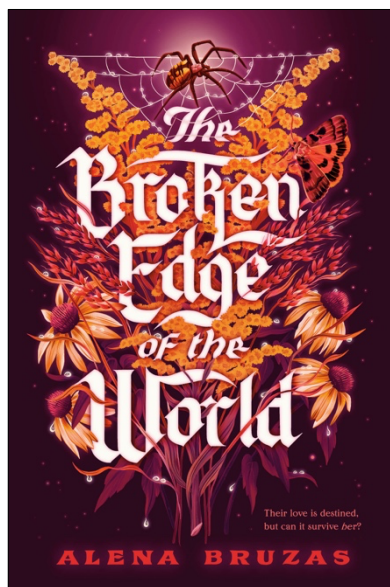
Tired and desperately hungry, Scilla risks everything to scramble over the wall into the Earl's garden to steal something to eat. What Scilla craves most of all is a peach, a fruit she's tasted once before and has since dreamed of. She's caught—and because she looks like a boy in her rough trousers and cap, stern head gardener Mr. Layton takes her on as an apprentice. Now going by Seth, Scilla dreams of becoming a permanent employee and, eventually, a gardener. But her growing breasts and bodily changes, as well as her unfamiliar romantic feelings for gardener-in-training Phineas Blake, threatens to expose her secret and get her expelled from the garden forever.

★ "Exceptional ... [a] vivid story of struggle and loss spearheaded by hope." —*Booklist*, starred review

★ "Smith's debut serves up a historical fiction tale not to be missed." —*School Library Journal*, starred review

★ "[A] deeply layered novel. Nuanced, richly atmospheric, and exquisitely written." —*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

Linda Joan Smith is a former magazine editor and a lifelong lover of libraries and children's literature. She lives in California. *The Peach Thief* is her first novel.



July 2026

YA fiction (14 and up)
Rocky Pond/PRH (US)
HC ISBN 978-0-593859-179

Review materials: PDF

Their love is destined ... but can it survive her?

THE BROKEN EDGE OF THE WORLD

Alena Bruzas

In this romantic gender-flipped fantasy, 17-year-old Sylvie, who battles OCD, takes a summer job at a remote prairie preserve, and quickly finds that the stark beauty of the prairie disguises a mysterious curse – a curse that leaves her torn between the stunning shepherd boy she’s been warned against but can’t resist, and Jack, a strange-looking and strangely gentle coworker.

Sylvie becomes recklessly determined to break the curse and free the one trapped in its spell. But in her desperation to control everything, will she break more than just the curse?

***Six-figure acquisition**

Praise for Alena Bruza’s previous novel, *To the Bone*:

★ “A young woman goes hungry—and falls in love—in the Virginia Company’s colony.... Ruthless and tender by turns: a triumph.”—*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

Alena Bruzas is the author of the acclaimed novels *Ever Since* and *To the Bone*. She lives in Lincoln, Nebraska.



September 2025

YA fiction (14 and up)
Candlewick Books (WE)
HC 978-1-536240-35-1

Review materials: manuscript

The hilarious tale of a theater nerd who tackles slut-shaming and learns the power of forgiving others—and herself

REASONS TO HATE ME

Susan Metallo

There are countless good reasons to hate Jess Lanza, Stone Bridge High School’s premier theater nerd and Champion of Questionable Life Choices—but most people are stuck on last year’s life-ruining mistake, the one that earned Jess the title “Boyfriend Stealing Slutbag.”

To take back her own story, Jess begins posting online posts about her most ridiculous fails and embarrassing self-owns. But somehow, all of Jess’s posts circle back to her friendship with Chloe—the friendship her alleged sluttiness pulverized—and the gaping hole she left in Jess’s life.

***Sold at auction for six-figures**

★ “Balances acerbic comedy with insightful prose.... In rueful, often laugh-out-loud narration, Jess addresses her apparent flaws and vulnerabilities [in] this aching and self-aware novel.”—*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

Susan Metallo is a youth services librarian. This novel, her debut, won the SCBWI Work-in-Progress Award, among many honors. www.susanmetallo.com

**Winter 2027**

Teen fiction (14 and up)
 Macmillan/Feiweil (US)/Scholastic
 (UK)
 HC ISBN TK

Review materials: complete
 manuscript

A tongue-in-cheek meta-fantasy à la The Princess Bride, in which a teen of romantasy finds herself in the world of her favorite series

ROMANCING THE THRONE

Caitlin Cooper

Find the princess. Tame the dragon. Fall in love. Don't die.

Sixteen-year-old Cyd is obsessed with the romantic fantasy epic *The Splintered Heart*: a tale of big magic and bigger romance. So when Cyd has the chance to meet the author, she leaps at the chance ... and is accidentally swept up into the pages of the novel itself. Only Cyd can rescue the princess and restore her to the throne. Not because Cyd has any particular powers or is part of a prophecy, but simply because she is this story's Number One Fan.

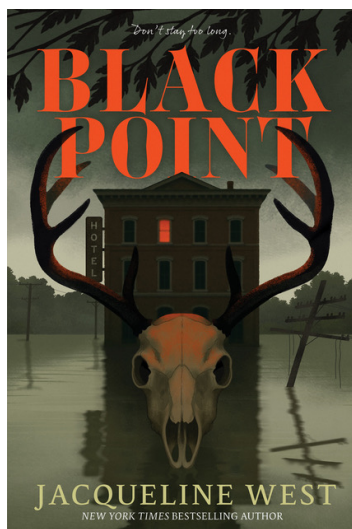
Packed with humor, adventure, and romance, ROMANCING THE THRONE is a saga for readers who love smart heroines, heroes with extremely tight pants, wicked smart fantasy, and books that celebrate the power of storytelling.

***Sold in a six-figure/book pre-empt in the US**

***Sold at auction in the UK**

Caitlin Cooper, a lifelong fan of fantasy and romance, lives outside Boston.

Rights Information: Feiweil & Friends/Macmillan (US), Scholastic (UK/ANZ), Oceano (Spain), Ciranda (Brazil).

**Summer 2026**

Teen fiction (12 and up)
 304 pages
 Atheneum/Simon & Schuster (US)
 HC 978-1-66598185-9

Review materials: PDF of interior

In this dark brew of a novel, like an American Midsommar, a town's sinister past resurfaces along with a rising river and a haunted hotel

BLACK POINT

Jacqueline West

Some secrets should never come to light.

Most people grow up and leave Black Point, but not Lucia—the teen is determined to stay and carry on her grandfather's Viking Museum, a shrine to their ancestors and their doomed little town. But then some outsiders buy the 150-year-old abandoned hotel and bring new life to the town ... including the owner's teenage nephew, Max. Soon Lucia and Max together are learning about the old hotel and why it has lain empty so long: a run of mysterious guest disappearances tied to the Viking heritage of the town and its bloody traditions and leading right back to Lucia's grandfather's museum.

Praise for Jacqueline West's previous spooky novels:

"Everything I love in a book!"—V.E. Schwab on *Last Things*

★ "A spooky sisterhood mystery that is sure to be a hit."—*School Library Journal* (starred review) on *Long Lost*

"Grab a flashlight and stay up late with this one."—*Kirkus* on *Long Lost*

Jacqueline West is the award-winning, *New York Times*—bestselling author of ten novels for young readers. She lives in Michigan.



Fall 2026

Fiction (adult)

Harper Collins (US)/Transworld (UK)

HC ISBN 978-0-tk

Materials available: PDF of edited ms

The wife of a megachurch pastor upends her "rags-to-Rolux" life when her past comes roaring into the spotlight

TRUE CONFESSIONS OF FIRST LADY FREEMAN

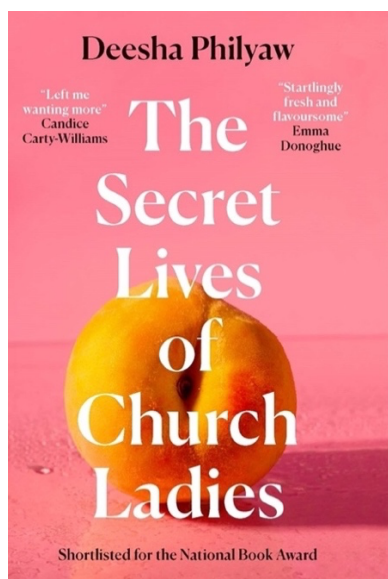
Deesha Philyaw

**The debut novel of a multiple award-winning author
Sold in a seven-figure auction in the US**

From the moment Scharisse Freeman married a megachurch pastor, she's been labeled too brash and too "of the world" by church folks—but it seems she'll finally get past all that when she gets an invitation to participate in the First Lady USA pageant. It is the validation she's always longed for. But as the competition nears, a scandal breaks with Schar at its center, and her carefully curated life begins to implode. Facing down explosive secrets from her childhood, Schar's past and present collide and she must choose: follow the edicts—and hypocrisies—of the life she's chosen, or embrace her authentic self.

An unflinchingly funny and frank examination of sexual agency and the Black church, this expansive novel weaves together narrative threads from the AIDS crisis of the 1980s to the Obama era of the 2000s in a one-of-a-kind tale of a woman finding the courage to be true to herself.

Deesha Philyaw's debut story collection, *The Secret Lives of Church Ladies*, was selected by Kirkus Reviews as a Best Books of the Century and received wide critical acclaim, including the PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction, the Story Prize, and the LA Times Book Prize. It was also a finalist for the National Book Award.



Fall 2020

Fiction (adult)

UWVPress (US)

ISBN: 978-1-949199-73-4

Materials available: PDF, finished books

The Award-winning collection—soon to be a series on HBO Max!

THE SECRET LIVES OF CHURCH LADIES

Deesha Philyaw

In this widely heralded debut, Deesha Philyaw uses stories from four generations of women to explore the raw and secret places in which Black women and girls dare to follow their desires while also trying to be the "good girls" their family tell them they ought to be, and how they ultimately end up as free as they deserve to be.

WINNER: 2021 PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction
WINNER: 2020 LA Times Book Prize Award for First Fiction
WINNER: 2020/2021 Story Prize for debut collection
FINALIST: 2020 National Book Award for Fiction
A Kirkus Best Book of 2020

Rights sold: UWVPress (US), Pushkin (UK/ANZ), Czarne (Poland), Ars Vivendi (Germany), Phillipe Rey (France), Societa Editrice Milan (Italy), Booky (China), Keiso Shobo (Japan), MPG (South Korea)