



# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

### Agenda - Final

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Tuesday, May 7, 2024

8:30 AM

District Office - Board Room

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#### CALL TO ORDER

#### REFLECTION

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

#### ADOPTION OF AGENDA

1. [24-2266](#) Approval to adopt the agenda dated 5/7/2024.

#### CITIZEN INPUT ON PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS (WHITE FORMS)

#### PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS - BOOK CHALLENGES

2. [24-2192](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to remove the book, "Damsel" written by Elana Arnold, from circulation and not be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 42 DAMSEL REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION AND ARTIFACTS 047 23 M4L HHS](#)  
[DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS FOR DAMSEL](#)  
[CHALLENGE 42 DAMSEL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM 047 23 M4L HHS](#)  
[CHALLENGE 42 RESPONSE FOR DAMSEL 047 23 M4L HHS](#)  
[Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

3. [24-2194](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to remove the book, "Felix Ever After" written by Kacen Callender, from circulation and not be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 49 REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION FOR FELIX EVER AFTER 054 23 M4L HHS](#)  
[DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS FOR FELIX EVER AFTER](#)  
[CHALLENGE 49 FELIX EVER AFTER COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM 054 23 M4L HHS](#)  
[CHALLENGE 49 FELIX EVER AFTER RESPONSE 054 23 HHS M4L](#)  
[Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

4. [24-2195](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to remove the book, "House of Earth and Blood" written by Sarah Maas, from circulation and not be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 98 HOUSE OF EARTH AND BLOOD REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION AND ARTIFACTS CHS 0109 23 M4L](#)  
[CHALLENGE 98 HOUSE OF EARTH AND BLOOD DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS](#)  
[CHALLENGE 98 HOUSE OF EARTH AND BLOOD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM CHS 0109 23 M4L](#)  
[CHALLENGE 98 HOUSE OF EARTH AND BLOOD RESPONSE 0109 23 M4L CHS](#)  
[Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

5. [24-2197](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to remove the book, "Homegoing" written by Yaa Gyasi, from circulation and not be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 44 HOMEGOING REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION FORM AND ARTIFACTS 049 23 HHS M4L](#)  
[DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS FOR HOMEGOING](#)  
[CHALLENGE 44 HOMEGOING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM 049 23 HHS M4L](#)  
[CHALLENGE 44 HOMEGOING RESPONSE 049 23 HHS M4L](#)  
[Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

6. [24-2200](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to remove the book, "Red Hood" written by Elana Arnold, from circulation and not be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 46 RED HOOD REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION FORM AND ARTIFACTS HHS 051 23 M4L](#)  
[DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS FOR RED HOOD AT HHS](#)  
[CHALLENGE 46 RED HOOD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM HHS 051 23 M4L](#)  
[CHALLENGE 46 RED HOOD RESPONSE 051 23 HHS M4L](#)  
[Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)



7. [24-2201](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to remove the book, "Beautiful" written by Amy Reed, from circulation and not be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 103 BEAUTIFUL REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION FORM AND ARTIFACTS CHS 0114 23 M4L](#)  
[DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS FOR BEAUTIFUL](#)  
[CHALLENGE 103 BEAUTIFUL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM CHS 0114 23 M4L](#)  
[CHALLENGE 103 BEAUTIFUL RESPONSE 0114 23 M4L CHS](#)  
[Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

8. [24-2202](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to remove the book, "Boy Toy" written by Barry Lyga, from circulation and not be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 96 BOY TOY REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION AND ARTIFACTS WWHS 0107 23 M4L](#)  
[DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS FOR BOY TOY AT WWHS](#)  
[CHALLENGE 96 BOY TOY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM WWHS 0107 23 M4L](#)  
[CHALLENGE 96 BOY TOY RESPONSE 0107 23 WWHS M4L](#)  
[Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

9. [24-2217](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to remove the book, "Man O' War" written by Cory McCarthy, from circulation and not be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 47 MAN O WAR REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION AND ARTIFACTS HHS 052 23 M4L](#)  
[DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS FOR MAN O WAR AT HHS](#)  
[CHALLENGE 47 MAN O WAR COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM HHS 052 23 M4L](#)  
[CHALLENGE 47 MAN O WAR RESPONSE 052 23 HHS M4L](#)  
[Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

10. [24-2233](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Cemetery Boys" written by Aiden Thomas, in circulation and be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 48 CEMETERY BOYS REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION FORM and ARTIFACTS 053 23 M4L HHS](#)  
[DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS CEMETERY BOYS](#)  
[CHALLENGE 48 CEMETERY BOYS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM 053 23 M4L HHS](#)  
[CHALLENGE 48 CEMETERY BOYS RESPONSE 053 23 M4L HHS](#)  
[Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

11. [24-2237](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Forever" written by Judy Blume, in circulation and be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 60 FOREVER REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION and ARTIFACTS 067 23 NCTHS M4L](#)  
[CHALLENGE 61 FOREVER REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION and ARTIFACTS 069 23 CHS M4L](#)  
[CHALLENGE 62 FOREVER REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION and ARTIFACTS 070 23 WWHS M4L](#)  
[DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS FOR FOREVER FOREVER COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM](#)  
[CHALLENGES 60 61 and 62 RESPONSE FOR FOREVER NCTHS CHS WWHS](#)  
[Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

12. [24-2241](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Nineteen Minutes" written by Jodi Picoult, in circulation and be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 89 NINETEEN MINUTES REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION AND ARTIFACTS 0100 23 M4L SHS](#)  
[DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS FOR NINETEEN MINUTES NINETEEN MINUTES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM 0100 23 M4L SHS](#)  
[CHALLENGE 89 NINETEEN MINUTES RESPONSE SHS 0100 23 M4L](#)  
[Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

13. [24-2242](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Kingdom of Ash" written by Sarah Maas, in circulation and be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 99 KINGDOM OF ASH REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION FORM and ARTIFACTS 0110 23 M4L CHS](#)  
[DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS FOR KINGDOM OF ASH CHALLENGE 99 KINGDOM OF ASH COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM 0110 23 M4L CHS](#)  
[CHALLENGE 99 KINGDOM OF ASH RESPONSE 0110 23 M4L CHS](#)  
[Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

14. [24-2243](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Spinning" written by Tillie Walden, in circulation and be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 51 SPINNING REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION FORM and ARTIFACTS 056 23 M4L HHS](#)  
[DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS FOR SPINNING](#)  
[CHALLENGE 51 SPINNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM HHS 056 23 M4L](#)  
[CHALLENGE 51 SPINNING RESPONSE 056 23 M4L HHS](#)  
[Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

15. [24-2244](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Little and Lion" written by Brandy Colbert, in circulation and be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 86 LITTLE AND LION REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION FORM AND ARTIFACTS HHS 096 23 M4L \(1\)](#)  
[DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS FOR LITTLE AND LION](#)  
[CHALLENGE 86 LITTLE AND LION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM HHS 096 23 M4L](#)  
[CHALLENGE 86 LITTLE AND LION RESPONSE 096 23 M4L HHS](#)  
[Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

16. [24-2245](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "A Court of Thorns and Roses" written by Sarah Maas, in circulation and be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 100 A COURT OF THORNS AND ROSES REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION FORM and ARTIFACTS AT CHS 0111 23 M4L](#)  
[DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS FOR A COURT OF THORNS AND ROSES](#)  
[CHALLENGE 100 A COURT OF THORNS AND ROSES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM CHS 0111 23 M4L](#)  
[CHALLENGE 100 A COURT OF THORNS AND ROSES RESPONSE 0111 23 M4L CHS](#)  
[Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

17. [24-2246](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Opposite of Innocent" written by Sonya Sones, in circulation and be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 90 OPPOSITE OF INNOCENT REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION AND ARTIFACTS HHS 0101 23 M4L](#)  
[DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS FOR OPPOSITE OF INNOCENT](#)  
[CHALLENGE 90 OPPOSITE OF INNOCENT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM HHS 0101 23 M4L](#)  
[CHALLENGE 90 OPPOSITE OF INNOCENT RESPONSE 0101 23 HHS M4L](#)  
[Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

18. [24-2250](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Chosen" written by P.C. Cast and Kristin Cast, in circulation and be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 85 CHOSEN REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION and ARTIFACTS NCTHS 094 23 M4L](#)  
[DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS FOR CHOSEN AT NCTHS](#)  
[CHALLENGE 85 CHOSEN COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM NCTHS 094 23 M4L](#)  
[CHALLENGE 85 CHOSEN RESPONSE 094 23 M4L NCTHS](#)  
[Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

19. [24-2235](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Life Is Funny" written by E.R. Frank, in circulation and be made available to students in grades 9-12 in Hernando County High Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 53 LIFE IS FUNNY FORM AND ARTIFACTS 059 23 M4L NCTHS](#)  
[DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS LIFE IS FUNNY NCTHS](#)  
[LIFE IS FUNNY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM AT NCTHS 059 23](#)  
[CHALLENGE 53 RESPONSE FOR LIFE IS FUNNY AT NCTHS 059 23](#)  
[Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

20. [24-2236](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Life Is Funny" written by E.R. Frank, in circulation, but limit access to students in grade 8 at the middle school level for Hernando County Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 80 LIFE IS FUNNY REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION AND ARTIFACTS 089 23 CK8 M4L](#)  
[DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS LIFE IS FUNNY NCTHS](#)  
[CHALLENGE 80 LIFE IS FUNNY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM AT CK8 089 23 M4L](#)  
[CHALLENGE 80 LIFE IS FUNNY RESPONSE 089 23 M4L CK8](#)  
[Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

21. [24-2239](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Queen of Shadows" written by Sarah Maas, in circulation and be made available to students in grades 9-12 in Hernando County High Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 71 QUEEN OF SHADOWS REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION FORM and ARTIFACTS CHS 079 23 M4L](#)  
[CHALLENGE 72 QUEEN OF SHADOWS REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION FORM and ARTIFACTS WWHS 080 23 M4L](#)  
[DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS FOR QUEEN OF SHADOWS HIGH SCHOOL](#)  
[CHALLENGES 71 and 72 QUEEN OF SHADOWS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM 079 83 CHS and 080 23 WWHS M4L](#)  
[CHALLENGES 71 and 72 QUEEN OF SHADOWS RESPONSE 079 23 CHS 080 23 WWHS M4L](#)  
[Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

22. [24-2240](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Queen of Shadows" written by Sarah Maas, in circulation and be made available to students in grades 6-8 in Hernando County Middle Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 52 QUEEN OF SHADOWS REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION FORM and ARTIFACTS CK8 058 23 M4L](#)  
[CHALLENGE 70 QUEEN OF SHADOWS REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION FORM and ARTIFACTS DSPMS 078 23 M4L](#)  
[DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS FOR QUEEN OF SHADOWS MIDDLE SCHOOL](#)  
[CHALLENGES 52 and 70 QUEEN OF SHADOWS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM CK8 058 23 DSPMS 078 23 M4L](#)  
[CHALLENGES 52 and 70 QUEEN OF SHADOWS RESPONSE 058 23 CK8 and 07823 DSPMS M4L](#)  
[Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

23. [24-2247](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Tower of Dawn" written by Sarah Maas, in circulation and be made available to students in grades 9-12 in Hernando County High Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 92 TOWER OF DAWN REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION AND ARTIFACTS CHS 0103 23 M4L HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL](#)  
[DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS FOR TOWER OF DAWN CHS](#)  
[CHALLENGE 92 TOWER OF DAWN COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM CHS 0103 23 M4L](#)  
[CHALLENGE 92 TOWER OF DAWN RESPONSE 0103 23 M4L CHS](#)  
[Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

24. [24-2248](#) Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Tower of Dawn" written by Sarah Maas, in circulation, but limit access to students in grade 8 at the middle school level for Hernando County Schools.

**Attachments:** [CHALLENGE 91 TOWER OF DAWN REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION FORM and ARTIFACTS CK8 0102 23 M4L MIDDLE SCHOOL LEVEL DISTRICT MEDIA PEER REVIEWS FOR CK8 CHALLENGE 91 TOWER OF DAWN COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM FOR CK8 0102 23 M4L CHALLENGE 91 TOWER OF DAWN RESPONSE 0102 23 M4L CK8 Budget Sheet Sept 2021 Revised NO Financial Impact ACC](#)

**GENERAL COUNSEL**

**SCHOOL BOARD COMMENTS**

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mission Statement

The Hernando County School District Collaborates with students, parents and other community stakeholders to effectively prepare all students for a successful transition into a diverse and changing world.

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# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

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**Agenda Item # 1. 24-2266**

5/7/2024

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**Title and Board Action Requested**

Approval to adopt the agenda dated 5/7/2024.

**Executive Summary**

The Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board adopt the agenda dated 5/7/2024.

**My Contact**

John Stratton

Superintendent of Schools

**2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

**Financial Impact**

No Financial Impact

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.



# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

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**Agenda Item # 2. 24-2192**

5/7/2024

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### **Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to remove the book, "Damsel" written by Elana Arnold, from circulation and not be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

### **Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to remove the book, "Damsel" written by Elana Arnold, from circulation. This book is being challenged at Hernando High School.

Hernando High School's Review Committee met on February 12, 2024 and February 22, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 5-0 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book be removed from circulation in Hernando County Schools.

Per Hernando County School District 2522 Policy requirements, the Superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to remove the book.

### **My Contact**

Kelly Downey

Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs

352-797-7000 ext. 280

downey\_k@hcsb.k12.fl.us

### **2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

### **Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.





## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605

M4LHernando.CMRCChair@gmail.com

Hernando County School District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE: HHS "Damsel" (M4LHC – 047/2023)

October 12, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 047-23) for "Damsel" which is currently located at Hernando High School's media center. This book was discovered back on August 2, 2023.

"Damsel" contains age inappropriate sexual content: forced marriage, explicit sexual activities; sexual battery; and sexual nudity; self - harm, suicide, animal cruelty and profanity. This book is clearly marked with WARNING LABEL for 18 and over.

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently violates H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic, sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation, and gender identity, to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I'm calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book, from Hernando High School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can't be "disappeared" (i.e., hidden) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name) JT

Address : PO Box 1568 City Brooksville State FL Zip Code 34605

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: October 12, 2023 Author: Elana Arnold

Title: Damsel

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Balzer + Bray imprint of HarperCollins 2019

School(s) in which item is used: Hernando High School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames, etc. Attach additional pages if necessary) Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

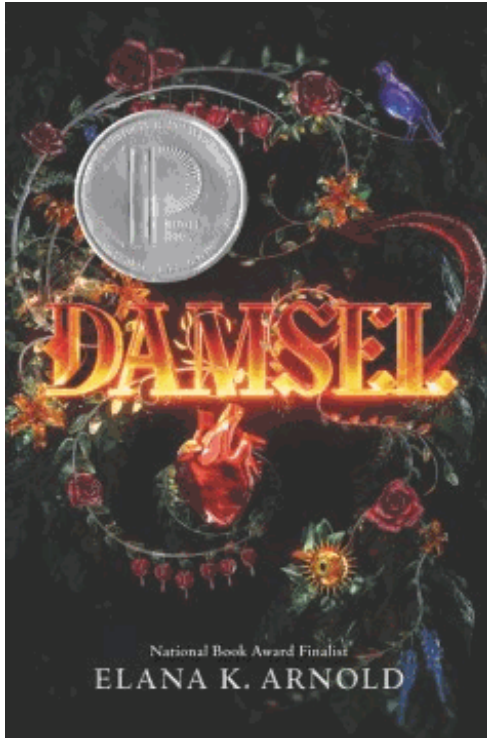
If yes, where? Name and date of publication: Amazon 2018

Complainant's Signature

Julia Thomas

Date October 12, 2023

# DAMSEL



*Young Adult*

**By Elana Arnold**

ISBN: 978-0-06-274232-2

## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains explicit sexual activities; sexual battery; and sexual nudity; and infrequent profanity.



**4** / 5

**Not For Minors**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
17	Then, knowing the dragon was watching, he unbuttoned the front of his trousers, freed his yard, and pissed a steaming stream right there, at the top of the cliff, marking it as his own.
56	Reynard watched with disinterested curiosity as Emory rubbed Ama dry with the coarse wool blanket; he started with her arms, rubbed her breasts, the hard pink nubs of her nipples, her stomach, her buttocks, the fire red hair between her legs, her legs themselves.
60	"Ridiculous, the size of babies when they slip from their mother's slits."
107	<p>She raised herself up onto her elbows, and would have sat fully erect but for Emory's insistent hand on her shoulder, pinning her there, and then his insistent mouth slashing down across her own.</p> <p>His mouth was hot and wet and open and tasted of the evening's wine and meat. Underneath the weight of him- his mouth, first, and then his chest across hers, pressing Ama back into the mattress- Ama felt breathless an trapped, as if she had been submerged underwater.</p> <p>...The rest of her became part of the landscape of the room- her lips, pressed into Emory's teeth. Her hair, torn from its neat plait by his desperate hand. Her breast, when he shifted his weight up and slipped his hand down from her head to her chest, pulling apart the ribbons of her chemise, spreading open the cloth, and finding her bare skin beneath. His hand squeezed her flesh as if he would try to make something from it, and the calluses of his palm rubbed across her nipple, causing it to harden, which Ama noticed as if watching from some distance rather than from within the very skin he handled.</p> <p>But when Emory tugged up at the hem of Ama's shift, bunching the fabric at her waist and running his hand first across the downy nest of hair between her legs and then pushing his fingers inside of her, opening her in a way she had not know she could be opened, Sorrow growled once more.</p> <p>...Emory's hand froze, fingers knuckle-deep in Ama, and then, slowly, he withdrew it, leaving her bruised and undone.</p> <p>Emory cleared his throat, lifted himself from the bed, and arranged his yard, which stood in his trousers, hard and demanding.</p>
161	She pictured his mouth on her face, on her breasts, as they had been on Ama, and she imagined his fingers parting Fabiana between her legs, as they had parted her. She wondered what Fabiana felt inside her flesh, if she truly did feel pleasure beneath Emory's hands and body.
166	"...It can be a soft lump of warm dough, a handful of wrinkles and weight. And then it becomes a great thick horn, like the well-cooked leg of a turkey. And then, down betwixt my legs, it feels like...well, a key, perhaps, or a poker to a fire. It stirs me up. It takes me apart. It makes me feel myself like a warm, moist dough."
167	<p>"But as you seem to take pleasure in that which I most likely just endure, I wanted to let you know that it would not be against my wishes if you continued to...take visits from the king."</p> <p>..."Lady," she said finally, "you are greatly mistaken if you think it matters one whit whether I find pleasure or no pain with my king's yard, or, for that matter,</p>

Page	Content
	whether or not you do. What matters, only, is my king's pleasure. You, and I, and whichever other girls take his fancy, we are all servants to that." ..."if you cannot find pleasure with my king, I suggest you at least find a way to appear to do so. Otherwise, you risk his wrath. And a man's wrath can be mightier by far than his yard."
222	If, she thought at the end of each night, as Emory walked her to the door of her chamber, as he kissed her face and her mouth and her throat, as he kneaded the mounds of her breasts through the velvet and satin of her gowns (not troubled, it seemed, by her waning figure), as he pushed her up against the door, grinding his yard into her stomach.
250	Ama, as ever, stood very still as Emory breathed, hot and moist, against her ear, his hands skimming her shoulders, down her arms, across her waist, and back up to her breasts, which he took in both his hands and squeezed. "Soon, I will be the one to warm you, and from the inside," he promised, before taking her bottom lip in his teeth and pulling it into his mouth, sucking it there hard enough to leave it swollen.
283	Emory's hands still trapped hers, and he held them in his lap, and she felt beneath the tangle of their hands the rising of the king's yard.
284	"We are but three days from our wedding, Ama," Emory murmured. "I am your secret-keeper, and soon to be your husband. Surely you would not deny me a taste of your sweetness, now, this day, after the favors I have given you?" He didn't wait for an answer, and still he did not free Ama's hands. Holding them both in one of his, he managed to twist free the buttons of his trousers, and then he guided Ama's fingers to the shaft of him. A noise like a hiss escaped from Emory as he used his hand to wrap Ama's fingers around his yard. It was hot and hard, with a dew-wet drip at its tip. Emory moved Ama's hands within his grip, up and down, up and down, slowly at first and then faster, until, with a grunt and a groan and a spasm so tight that the knuckles of Ama's fingers cracked, a jet of warmth spilled out of him and trickled down Ama's hands, still encased in Emory's. A moment passed, during which the only sounds were Emory's labored gasps and the intermittent squeaking of carriage wheels. When Emory's breath had quieted, he cleared his throat and released Ama's hands, which were still wrapped around the king's yard, now softening and shrinking. Her fingers were coated with the sticky mess of him.
305	"You stabbed me with your steel," Ama said. "I did. My second weapon. I found the unprotected flesh beneath your arm. I pierced you good, I did." Ama remembered the blade going in, the surprise of it. She saw herself biting at the wound, desperate to extract the metal from within her flesh. She felt her teeth connect with the sword's shaft, she remembered how it felt to pull it out, the rush and gush of blood that came with it. "And then," said Ama. "Yes," Emory said. "It takes three weapons to conquer a dragon and free a damsel. My brain. My steel. And my yard." "Your yard," Ama said.

Page	Content
	<p>"You should thank me," Emory repeated. "You- the dragon- managed to extract the steel. The dragon lay and bled, but I knew it would not be long before it rose again, and my sword was gone, so the next time I attacked, I would be done for. There was nothing to lose by trying. And Mother had told me that it takes three weapons to slay a dragon. My yard, I have with me, always.</p> <p>"Of course," Emory continued, "a dragon is not female in the same ways as a woman...They do not mate or birth. One a generation, that is all. One dragon, one damsel. You were my destiny, Ama. I had to take you. I went to the dragon's lair to find a damsel. I would leave with one."</p> <p>"You...improvised," Ama said, remembering. She had lain bleeding on the stone floor of her lair...</p> <p>...And here came Emory, loosening the buckle of his belt, freeing the horn of him, and entering the bloody tear he had ripped beneath her arm.</p>

Profanity	Count
Shit	1

## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings



h - HERN x +

https://hcsdhhs.goalexandria.com/search# 110% ☆

Hernando High School Log In

Study Programs Medium Genre Tags

Smart Search DAMSEL Temp List

3 Results

FIC ARN  
**Damsel**  
Arnold, Elana K.,  
Text-unmediated-volume ([2018])  
Fantasy fiction

Elana K. Arnold.  
Balzer + Bray, an imprint of HarperCollinsPubli...  
309 pages ;22 cm  
9780062742322

Waking up in the arms of Prince Emory, Ama has no memory of him rescuing her from a dragon's lair, but she soon discovers there is more to the legend of dragons and damsels than anyone knows and she is still in great danger.

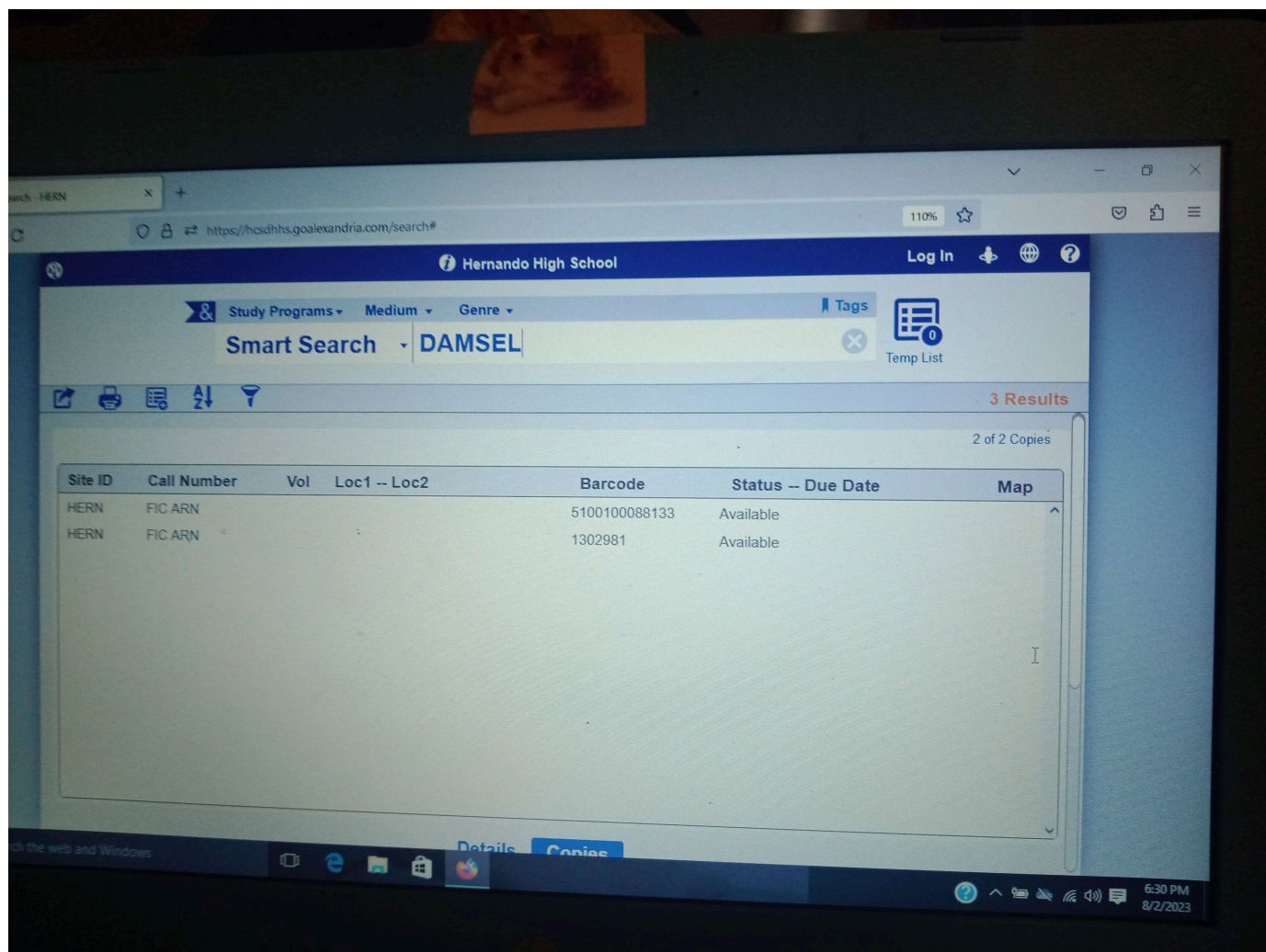
Dragons

Awards Note: A Junior Library Guild selection (JLG)

the web and Windows

6:30 PM 8/2/2023





# DAMSEL

BY ELANA K. ARNOLD • RELEASE DATE: OCT. 2, 2018

*While Arnold has written a compelling flipped fairy tale and commentary on misogyny, she's missed the mark for her intended...*

Arnold (*Bat and the Waiting Game*, 2018, etc.) blends an abusive romance-novel relationship and intense feminist and patriarchal imagery with the classic storyline of a prince saving a damsel from the lair of a dragon.

In a gray, medieval world, Prince Emory of Harding makes his way toward a dragon's lair to rescue a damsel and make her his bride, in the process bringing light to the land and glory upon himself. The damsel cannot recall who she is, and so Emory names her Ama. They return to Harding, where Prince Emory is crowned king, and his mother announces they will be wed in a few months' time, and Ama will give birth to his heir. Ama must learn how to be a queen and is reminded repeatedly that Emory's desires are what matters—she is never allowed to forget that he “saved” her. When she does not comply with his wishes, she is brutally and sadistically punished, sexually, psychologically, and physically. What if, instead of being the hero's beloved, you are your abuser's captive? The symbolism and imagery, as well as the meaning of the sexual violence that is perpetrated upon Ama, may go over the heads of less sophisticated readers. All characters are white.

While Arnold has written a compelling flipped fairy tale and commentary on misogyny, she's missed the mark for her intended audience. (*Fiction. 15-adult*)



## Reviews & Awards

Booklist starred, 08/01/18

Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, 10/01/18

Horn Book Magazine, 11/01/18

Michael L. Printz Honor, 2019

Publishers Weekly Annex, 10/22/18

School Library Journal starred, 06/01/18

## Full-Text Reviews

*Booklist* starred (August 2018 (Vol. 114, No. 22))

Grades 10-12. A prince ventures into the wilderness to slay a dragon and save a damsel. When he returns home with his rescued bride, he becomes king. That is how it has been in the kingdom of Harding, and how it will always be. Sound familiar? Perhaps, but it's not how this story ends. The first thing Ama knows is waking up in Prince Emory's arms as they ride toward his home. "I saved you," he tells her, and though she has no memory of the thing he saved her from, she believes him. In his castle, as their wedding approaches, she learns to become the perfect queen: calm, obedient, gentle. Ama works at becoming small, but flashes of memory are starting to return to her, and there is more in this castle—and in her heart—than can be contained. Arnold's (*What Girls Are Made Of*, 2017) pitch-black fairy tale is not subtle in its delivery, but, as its volcanic ending attests, this is not a tale that requires subtlety. It's not an easy read: physical, sexual, and psychological violence all come into play, and adults may want to be on hand for discussions. But for teens, especially girls, learning to transform sadness and fear into active, productive fury, it's an essential allegory. Eat your heart out, *Sleeping Beauty*: this brutal, devastating, powerful novel won't soon be forgotten.

*Horn Book Guide* starred (Spring 2019)

Prince Emory saves a damsel from a dragon and whisks her away to his kingdom to await their wedding day. Initially obliging, amnesiac protagonist Ama soon begins to despair of her captivity and exploitation. Hints along the way suggest Ama's true origin and the nature of her "rescue," but the conclusion is nevertheless both surprising and satisfying. Arnold's original fairy tale is lyrical, brutal, and unapologetically feminist.

*Horn Book Magazine* (November/December, 2018)

This original fairy tale begins with Prince Emory on the dangerous quest required to prove himself worthy of his father's recently vacated throne: saving a damsel from a dragon. But following the successful (off-page) rescue, it quickly becomes clear that our protagonist is the damsel herself, who has no memory of how she got to the dragon's lair or of her life before it. Emory names her Ama and whisks her away to his walled kingdom to await their wedding day. Initially obliging, Ama soon begins to despair of her captivity and exploitation—and the cruel sense of ownership underlying Emory's actions. Thematically supporting subplots include the lynx kitten Ama adopts after it is orphaned by Emory; the hawk's blinded and tamed by the castle's falconer; and the servants and villagers entirely at the new king's whim. Eventually, after meeting the kingdom's famed glassblower, Ama discovers an unusual aptitude for the craft and much-sought clues to her past. Hints along the way suggest Ama's true origin and the nature of her "rescue" well before they are revealed, but the conclusion of her tale is nevertheless both surprising and satisfying. Though somewhat reminiscent in plot of Beagle's *The Last Unicorn*, Arnold's wrenching tale is more akin in theme and tone to Lanagan's *Tender Morsels* (rev. 9/08) or *The Brides of Rollrock Island* (rev. 9/12)—lyrical, brutal, and unapologetically feminist. katie bircher

*Kirkus Reviews* (July 15, 2018)

Arnold (*Bat and the Waiting Game*, 2018, etc.) blends an abusive romance-novel relationship and intense feminist and patriarchal imagery with the classic storyline of a prince saving a damsel from the lair of a dragon. In a gray, medieval world, Prince Emory of Harding makes his way toward a dragon's lair to rescue a damsel and make her his bride, in the process bringing light to the land and glory upon himself. The damsel cannot recall who she is, and so Emory names her Ama. They return to Harding, where Prince Emory is crowned king, and his mother announces they will be wed in a few months' time, and Ama will give birth to his heir. Ama must learn how to be a queen and is reminded repeatedly that Emory's desires are what matters—she is never allowed to forget that he "saved" her. When she does not comply with his wishes, she is brutally and sadistically punished, sexually, psychologically, and physically. What if, instead of being the hero's beloved, you are your abuser's captive? The symbolism and imagery, as well as the meaning of the sexual violence that is perpetrated upon Ama, may go over the heads of less sophisticated readers. All characters are white. While Arnold has written a compelling flipped fairy tale and commentary on misogyny, she's missed the mark for her intended audience. (Fiction. 15-adult)

*Publishers Weekly Annex* (October 22, 2018)

This subversion of fairy tale tropes begins with familiar elements: a prince rescues a damsel from a dragon to make her his bride and prove his worth to become king, as happens with every generation in the kingdom of Harding ("I saved you," he repeats). But the damsel, whom he names Ama, has no memory of her past, her family, or her time with the dragon. And the more time she spends around her husband-to-be, learning the ways of his culture and her intended role, the more uncomfortable she becomes. King Emory is cold, strict, sometimes violent, swift to exert his authority, and eager to have sex with Ama—whether she is interested or not. As Ama struggles to unlock her memories and find her own destiny, she discovers the dark side of the kingdom's traditions. With haunting prose and lush descriptions, Arnold (*What Girls Are Made Of*) weaves a terrifying tale that explores contemporary conversations about rape culture, misogyny, male entitlement, female agency, and the need for consent. The message is as timely as it is vital, but frank discussions of self-harm, physical and emotional abuse, and descriptions of sexual violence may not be appropriate for readers at the younger end of the stated range. Ages 14-up. Agency: East West Literary. (Oct.) © Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.

*School Library Journal* (June 1, 2018)

Gr 9 Up—Somewhere in medieval Europe, deep in a gray land by the gray sea, at the top of a craggy tower, a prince conquers a dragon and rescues a damsel. He names the woman Ama and delivers her to his castle where he will be made king and they will be married—for in this land, no king can exist without his damsel. Ama remembers nothing about herself, the world, or her

experiences from before her rescue except flashes of bright color and a luscious, soothing heat. Her prince, however, is happy to teach her how to be a woman, and soon Ama learns to carve away at herself to fit neatly into her prince's expectations. Art, exploration, and thinking are forbidden to her, and she is encouraged to take up as little space as possible. Inside, Ama rages and chafes against the physical and mental limitations imposed on her, and despite the warnings, Ama can't stop wondering about the mystery of the dragons and who she was before. Graphic violence, sexuality, and rape are present on the page, though carefully presented to create a crucial juxtaposition to the lyrical writing. The characters' roles, actions, and motivations are reflected through foils, revealing powerful symbolism and dramatic irony. All of this works to increase the tension, which comes to a dark but ultimately satisfying conclusion. VERDICT This incisively written allegory rips into a familiar story and sets it aflame. Highly recommended for high school libraries where literary feminist retellings are popular.-Leighanne Law, Scriber Lake High School, WA © Copyright 2018. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

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Let us know how we're doing.

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days after its formation. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School Hernando High School Date 2/22/2024

Title Damsel

Author Elana K. Arnold

Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material

Silent Voting Results:

0 Do Not Remove

5X Remove/Discontinue

Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
If committee is recommending limiting access-	Basis for removal, check all that apply:
_____ Grade Level	<input type="checkbox"/> The material is pornographic
_____ For Advance Course	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The material is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS
_____ Parent Permission	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The material is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.
	_____ The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.



# Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

Print Name	Position	Signature
Lori Howie	ESE Teacher (Lay person)	Lori Howie
Stacey Swihart	AP	Stacey Swihart
Penny Hewitt-Schrag / Media Specialist	District	Penny Hewitt-Schrag
Tiffany Skinner	Parent	Tiffany Skinner
Pam Everett	Community	Pam Everett
Administrator's Signature	Stacey Swihart	Date 2/22/24



TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: February 22, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenge HHS 047-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, “Damsel” at Hernando High School. The review committee at Hernando High School has evaluated the book, "Damsel", written by Elana Arnold based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is for the book to be removed from Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on April 9, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before April 9, 2024.

**A. Item Currently Budgeted -**

Account Name		<u>No Financial Impact</u>								
Account Number										
		<u>Fund</u>	<u>Function</u>	<u>Object</u>	<u>Cost Center</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Sub Project</u>			
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$

Account Name										
Account Number										
		<u>Fund</u>	<u>Function</u>	<u>Object</u>	<u>Cost Center</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Sub Project</u>			
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$

**B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -\*\***

Funding Source						
Account Name						
Account Number	<u>Fund</u>	<u>Function</u>	<u>Object</u>	<u>Cost Center</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Sub Project</u>
Amount \$						

Funding Source						
Account Name						
Account Number	<u>Fund</u>	<u>Function</u>	<u>Object</u>	<u>Cost Center</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Sub Project</u>
Amount \$						

**C. History**

Check one:

Prior Year Budget: ☐New for Current Year: ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$

**\*\* WHEN ITEM NOT CURRENTLY BUDGETED IS APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD, THIS WILL SERVE AS THE BUDGET AMENDMENT\*\***





# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

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**Agenda Item # 3. 24-2194**

5/7/2024

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**Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to remove the book, "Felix Ever After" written by Kacen Callender, from circulation and not be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to remove the book, "Felix Ever After" written by Kacen Callender, from circulation. This book is being challenged at Hernando High School.

Hernando High School's Review Committee met on February 22, 2024 and March 6, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 3-2 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book be removed from circulation in Hernando County Schools.

Per Hernando County School District 2522 Policy requirements, the Superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to remove the book.

**My Contact**

Kelly Downey  
Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs  
352-797-7000 ext. 280  
downey\_k@hcsb.k12.fl.us

**2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

**Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.



## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605  
M4LHernando.CMRCChair@gmail.com

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Hernando County School District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE: HHS “Felix Ever After” (M4LHC –  
054/2023)

October 13, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 054-23) for “*Felix Ever After*” which is currently located at Hernando High School’s media center. This book was discovered removed from copies on Alexandria back on August 2, 2023.

“Felix Ever After” contains sexual age-inappropriate content: sexual activities; sexual nudity; drug use; profanity; racism, and cyber bullying, and alternate gender ideologies. This book clearly shows a warning label for 18 years of age and up.

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently violates H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I’m calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book from Hernando High School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can’t be “disappeared” (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name) JT

Address : PO Box 1568 City Brooksville State FL Zip Code 34605

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: October 13, 2023 Author: Kacen Callender

Title: Felix Ever After

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Balzer + Bray imprint of HarperCollins 2020

School(s) in which item is used: Hernando High School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames, etc. Attach additional pages if necessary) Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

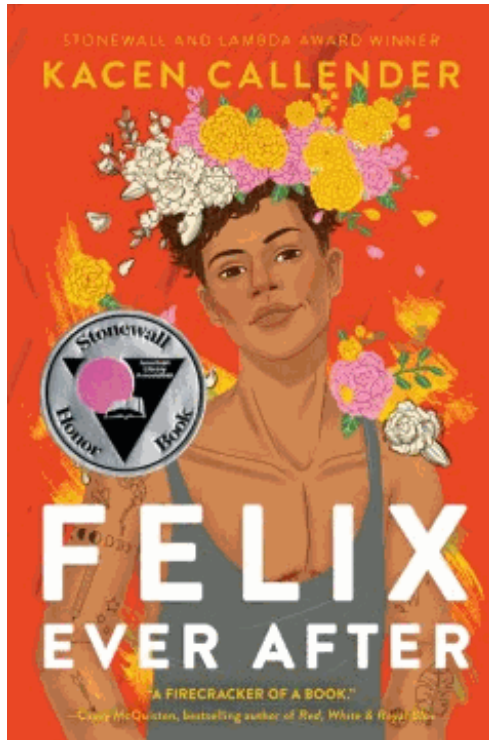
If yes, where? Name and date of publication: GoodReads 2020, 2022

Complainant's Signature

Julia Thomas

Date October 13, 2023

# FELIX EVER AFTER



## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains sexual activities; sexual nudity; drug use; profanity; and alternate gender ideologies.

*Young Adult*

**By Kacen Callender**

ISBN: 978-0-06-282025-9



**3** /5

**Minor Restricted**  
BookLooks Review Rating

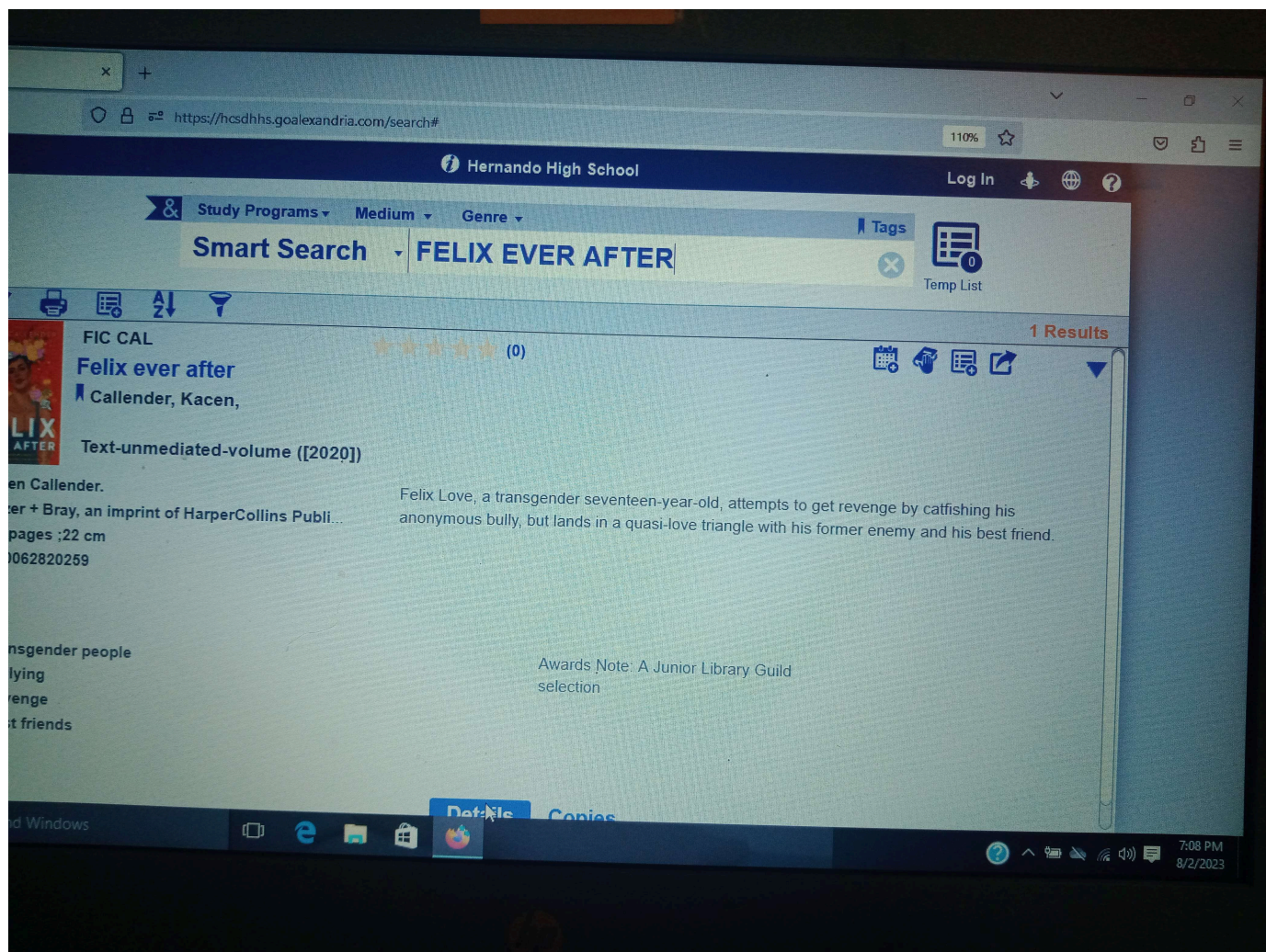
Page	Content
1	Ezra lights a blunt he pulls out of I-don't-know-where and offers it to me, and we suck on the last of it as we walk.
21	I don't think he'd want to know that we've been staying up until three every morning, smoking weed, or that I'm still struggling to get my shit together.
52	I picked off a couple leaves of the weed, grab some of the paper that's waiting beside the TV, and roll while Ezra kicks his legs all the way up to the beat, toes pointed and all. The lighter is at the edge of the counter in the kitchen- I click, click, until the paper sizzles and smoke wisps into the air. Ezra slides to my side, and I pop the bud in his mouth.
200	Marisol passes the weed to Ezra, releases a cloud of smoke. "Been there, done that." Leah groans and rolls over onto her stomach, playing with the sand. "Have you had sex with everyone here?" Marisol glances around, "Not everyone," she says. "I haven't had sex with Austin or Felix."
255	I lean in this time, and he puts a hand to my face, the other to the back of my neck, and I push my mouth against his, so hard my tooth grazes against his bottom lip. He pulls back an inch. "Softer," he murmurs. I nod, mumbling an apology, pulling him back to me again. All I can feel are his lips, his hand under my shirt, on my legs, up and down my back. Somehow, I ended up on his lap, legs on either side of him, and I can feel him, feel his hard-on, which both scares the shit out of me and sends a thrill through me as I press against him, tugging at his shirt- He pulls back. I try to follow his mouth with my own, but he pulls back again. ...My eyes automatically glance back down to Ezra's lap, where I was just seconds ago, and where a bulge still very obviously still presses up against his jeans. He's embarrassed too- I can tell by the way he won't look at me as he tries to tug his shirt down.
309	I remember what Ezra had said- soft, gentle, not so hard- and I barely breathe against Declan's lips. He grins at me as I kiss him again, and again, until we're leaning back onto the bed. Declan ends up on top of me, pulling our shirts off, mouth on my neck, my collarbone, my scars. I didn't even go this far with Ezra, and my nerves start to pump. "Slowly," I tell him, embarrassed when it comes out like a gasp. "We should go more slowly." He nods, kissing my scars and neck and mouth again. "Is this your first time?" "My first time?" "Having sex." ..."I mean, yea, I've never..." He nods again like it isn't a big deal, but I start to worry. "Have you? Had sex, I mean?" He pulls up, surprised. "Well, yeah. Me and Ezra..." I look away. "Right." ..."I just don't think I'm ready," I tell him. It's only been a few days since my first kiss. ...He sits up, crosses his legs. "Are you nervous because- I mean, I looked up how to have sex with trans guys-"
310	We haven't even talked about how I identify as a demiboy now.

Page	Content
310	"Did you invite me up here just to have sex with you?" "No," he says, a little loudly. "I wanted to spend time with you, and I thought that maybe you'd want to have sex, so I looked up how to have sex with trans guys, and now we're here." He takes a big breath, looking away. ..."Would you have sex with me if I was Ezra?"

## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings







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# FELIX EVER AFTER

BY KACEN CALLENDER • RELEASE DATE: MAY 12, 2020

*A trauma- and drama-filled demiboy's story  
that's not for the faint of heart.*

Jealousies and deceit resolve into affirmation and artistic self-love.

Seventeen-year-old black trans boy narrator Felix Love wants romance but lacks self-understanding. No longer a girl, he thinks “boy” doesn’t always fit either. Felix’s dad deadnames him despite supporting his top surgery and hormone therapy, and he hates his mom for leaving when he was 10. Felix’s self-image shatters when his pre-transition photos and name appear in the school gallery—followed by relentless transphobic texts. A talented visual artist, Felix dreams of an art scholarship to Brown. His uber-rich, down-to-earth best friend, Ezra Patel, helps him navigate contentious relationships at their private art school’s summer intensive and shares copious pot and booze with Felix. But this friendship falters when Ezra starts dating Austin, and Felix thinks he likes Declan—Ezra’s ex and Felix’s rival for the art scholarship. Felix’s ethnicity seems to have no cultural richness, surfacing primarily when he’s being marginalized for his race, poverty, and gender. Keeping up with his devastating episodes of self-doubt and anxiety along with the story’s complicated plot details make this an exhausting read, and although Felix ultimately overcomes some oppressive transphobia, the barrage of blatant ignorance and bigotry he faces might haunt readers despite the book’s ebullient ending.

A trauma- and drama-filled demiboy’s story that’s not for the faint of heart.  
(author’s note, resources) (*Fiction. 14-18*)

**Pub Date:** May 12, 2020

**ISBN:** 978-0-06-282025-9

**Page Count:** 368



## **Felix Ever After**

Kacen Callender

4.26

58,127 ratings11,213 reviews

**Goodreads Choice Award**

**Nominee for Best Young Adult Fiction (2020)**

**From Stonewall and Lambda Award-winning author Kacen Callender comes a revelatory YA novel about a transgender teen grappling with identity and self-discovery while falling in love for the first time.**

**Felix Love has never been in love—and, yes, he’s painfully aware of the irony. He desperately wants to know what it’s like and why it seems so easy for everyone but him to find someone. What’s worse is that, even though he is proud of his identity, Felix also secretly fears that he’s one marginalization too many—Black, queer, and transgender—to ever get his own happily-ever-after.**

**When an anonymous student begins sending him transphobic messages—after publicly posting Felix’s deadname alongside images of him before he transitioned—Felix comes up with a plan for revenge. What he didn’t count on: his catfish scenario landing him in a quasi-love triangle....**

**But as he navigates his complicated feelings, Felix begins a journey of questioning and self-discovery that helps redefine his most important relationship: how he feels about himself.**

**Felix Ever After** is an honest and layered story about identity, falling in love, and recognizing the love you deserve.

Genres**LGBTYoung AdultContemporaryRomanceQueerFictionAudiobook**  
...more

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

# Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days after its formation. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School Hernando High School Date March 6/2019

Title Felix Ever After  
Author Kacen Callender

## Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material

### Silent Voting Results:

2 Do Not Remove

3 Remove/Discontinue

Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
<p>If committee is recommending limiting access-</p> <p>_____ Grade Level</p> <p>_____ For Advance Course</p> <p>_____ Parent Permission</p>	<p>Basis for removal, check all that apply:</p> <p>_____ The material is pornographic</p> <p>_____ The material is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The material is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.</p> <p>_____ The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.</p>

Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

Print Name

Position

Signature

Penny Hewitt Schrand District Media Specialist Penny Hewitt Schrand

Tiffany Skinner ~~Parent~~ Tiffany Skinner

Lori Howie Teacher Lori Howie

Stacey Swihart AP Stacey Swihart

Pam Everett Community PEverett

Received by District

Stacey Swihart AP

Date

3-6-24



TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: March 7, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenge HHS 054-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, “Felix Ever After” at Hernando High School. The review committee at Hernando High School has evaluated the book, "Felix Ever After", written by Kacen Callender based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is for the book to be removed from Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on May 14, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before May 14, 2024.

**A. Item Currently Budgeted -**

Account Name		<u>No Financial Impact</u>										
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

**B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -\*\***

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

**C. History**

Check one:

Prior Year Budget: ☐New for Current Year: ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$

**\*\* WHEN ITEM NOT CURRENTLY BUDGETED IS APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD, THIS WILL SERVE AS THE BUDGET AMENDMENT\*\***





# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

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**Agenda Item # 4. 24-2195**

5/7/2024

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**Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to remove the book, "House of Earth and Blood" written by Sarah Maas, from circulation and not be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to remove the book, "House of Earth and Blood" written by Sarah Maas, from circulation. This book is being challenged at Central High School.

Central High School's Review Committee met on March 1, 2024 and March 13, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 4-1 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book be removed from circulation in Hernando County Schools.

Per Hernando County School District 2522 Policy requirements, the Superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to remove the book.

**My Contact**

Kelly Downey

Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs

352-797-7000 ext. 280

downey\_k@hcsb.k12.fl.us

**2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

**Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.





## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605  
M4LHernando.CMRCChair@gmail.com

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Hernando County School District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE: CHS “Earth of House and Blood”  
(M4LHC – 0109/2023)

November 1, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 0109-23) for “House of Earth and Blood” which is currently located at Central High School’s media center. This book was discovered in Alexandria back on August 3, 2023

“House of Earth and Blood ” contains sexual age-inappropriate contents: obscene/explicit sexual activities and sexual nudity; frequent/excessive profanity; graphic violence; alcohol and drug use. This book shows a warning label for 18 years of age and up, and is not meant for K-12 schools

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently violates H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I’m calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book from Central High School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can’t be “disappeared” (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA  
Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name: JT

Address : PO Box 1568

City: Brooksville State: FL Zip Code: 34605

Telephone:      Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: November 1, 2023 Author: Sarah Maas

Title: "House of Earth and Blood"

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Bloomsbury 2020

School(s) in which item is used: Central High School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames,etc. Attach additional pages if necessary):

Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes   X   No                   

If yes, where? Name and date of publication:

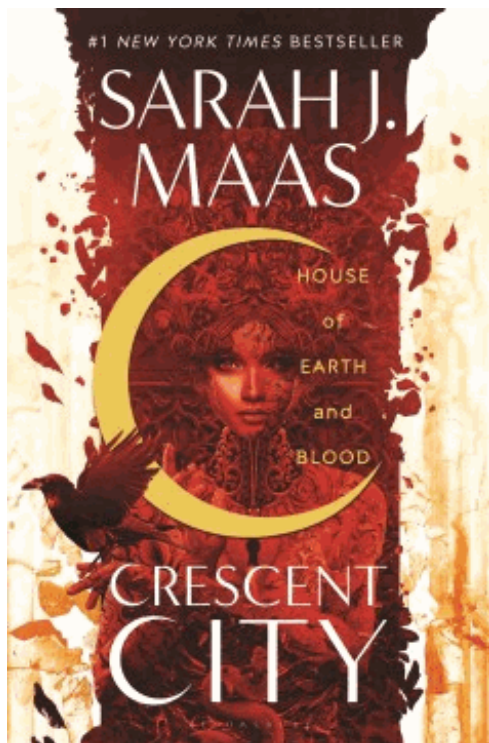
Good Read 2020

Complainant's Signature:

Julia Thomas

Date: November 1, 2023

# HOUSE OF EARTH AND BLOOD



*Adult*

**By Sarah J. Maas**

ISBN: 978-1-63557-404-3



## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains obscene/explicit sexual activities and sexual nudity; frequent/excessive profanity; graphic violence; alcohol and drug use.

**4**/5

**Not For Minors**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
29	She swigged from her beer.
31	Danika swigged from her beer.
32	<p>“One, I think it’s a hot name. And two, Reid is hot.” Gods help her, Reid Redner was hot as Hel. Though the sex was ... fine. Standard. She’d gotten off, but she’d really had to work for it. And not in the way she sometimes liked to work for it. More in the sense of Slow down, Put that here, Can we switch positions? But she’d slept with him only twice. And she told herself that it could take time to find the right rhythm with a partner. Even if ...</p> <p>Danika just said it. “If he grabs his phone to check his messages before his dick’s barely out of you again, please have the self-respect to kick his balls across the room and come home to me.”</p> <p>“Fucking Hel, Danika!” Bryce hissed. “Say it a little gods-damn louder.”</p> <p>The wolves had gone silent. Even their munching had stopped. Then resumed just a decibel too loudly.</p> <p>“At least he’s got a good job,” Bryce said to Danika, who crossed her slender arms—arms that hid tremendous, ferocious strength—and gave her a look. A look that said, Yeah, one that Reid’s daddy gave him. Bryce added, “And at least he’s not some psychotic asshole who will demand a three-day sex marathon and then call me his mate, lock me in his house, and never let me out again.” Which was why Reid—human, okay-at-sex Reid—was perfect.</p> <p>“You could use a three-day sex marathon,” Danika quipped.</p>
36	<p>She stabbed pearl studs into her ears, hoping half-heartedly that they’d add some class to what might be considered a somewhat scandalous dress. But she was twenty-three, and she might as well enjoy her generously curved figure. She gave her gold-dusted legs a little smile as she twisted in front of the full-length mirror propped against the wall to admire the slope of her ass in the skintight gray dress, the hint of text from that still-sore new tattoo peeking over the plunging back, before she stepped into the living room again.</p>
47	<p>So he had to be with her through his own free will, then—or desire for whatever she offered: sex, money, influence. It was a fool’s bargain, though.</p>
48	<p>She could feel the eyes of a well-dressed angel at the next table travel up her expanse of bare leg, then heard the chair groan as he leaned back to admire the view of her ass.</p>
49	<p>As if she were just something he needed to feed before he fucked. She said clearly, “This isn’t working out.”</p> <p>His mouth tightened. “Excuse me?”</p> <p>She doubted he’d ever been dumped. She said with a sweet smile, “Bye, Reid. Good luck with work.”</p> <p>“Bryce.”</p> <p>But she had enough gods-damned self-respect not to let him explain, not to accept sex that was merely okay basically in exchange for meals at restaurants she could never afford, and a man who had indeed rolled off her and gotten right back on that phone. So she swiped the bottle of wine and stepped away from the table, but not toward the exit.</p> <p>She went up to the sneering Fae female and her human plaything and said in a cool voice that would have made even Danika back away, “Like what you see?”</p> <p>The female gave her a sweeping glance, from Bryce’s heels to her red hair to the bottle of wine dangling from her fingers. The Fae female shrugged, setting the black stones in her long dress sparkling. “I’ll pay a gold mark to watch you two.” She inclined her head to the human at her table.</p> <p>He offered Bryce a smile, his vacant face suggesting he was soaring high on some drug.</p>

Page	Content
	Bryce smirked at the female. "I didn't know Fae females had gotten so cheap. Word on the street used to be that you'd pay us gold by the armful to pretend you're not lifeless as Reapers between the sheets." ...She swigged from the bottle of wine and flipped off the preening hostess on her way through the bronze doors.
51	To dance inside was to worship that nameless god, hinted at in the age-worn carvings of satyrs and fauns drinking and dancing and fucking amid grapevines. A temple to pleasure—that's what it had once been.
58	She'd blown all her marks on the drugs. Unless someone had paid...
59	Gods, she wanted good sex. No-holds-barred, scream-your-lungs-out sex. Break-the-bed sex. She knew Connor would be like that. More than that. It'd go far beyond the physical with him. It might honestly melt whatever was left of her mind after tonight.
61	Fuck the drugs in her system—fuck Fury. She'd promised no hallucinations. Bryce was never drinking or polluting her body with those drugs ever again.
67	He tried to inquire about the injuries on the male, but she dropped the angel's phone as the drugs pulled her back, yanked her down, and she swayed. The alley warped and rippled.
81	Bryce had written back twenty minutes later, I just hooked up with someone in the bathroom. Don't tell Connor. ...Danika wrote back, Was it good?!? Only good enough to take the edge off.
82	Stop fucking strangers in the bathroom, because Connor's coming with me.
87	"The Raven's owner told me she was drunk and had snorted a pile of lightseeker," Ruhn snapped. "But you'll find Bryce with that kind of shit in her system at least one night a week." ..."If you're asking whether I'm fucking her," Ruhn seethed, "the answer, asshole, is no. She's family."
93	Bryce Quinlan stumbled from the White Raven's bathroom, a lion shifter nuzzling her neck, his broad hands grabbing at her waist. It was easily the best sex she'd had in three months. Maybe longer than that. Maybe she'd keep him for a while. Maybe she should learn his name first. Not that it mattered.
94	Just perfect: he thought she was one of the whores in Riso's employ. Sacred prostitution, Riso had once explained—since the club lay on the ruins of a temple to pleasure, it was his duty to continue its traditions. "Consider it on the house," she crooned, patting him on the cheek before she turned toward the glowing golden bar on the glass mezzanine hovering over the cavernous space.
95	Bryce ducked her head, making herself smile. "You say that to all the girls." "Only the mouthwatering ones." An offer for how this night could end, if she wanted: being sucked and fucked. She didn't bother to inform him she'd already had that particular need scratched, minus the sucking.
101	Ruhn snorted. "Still happy playing slutty secretary, I see."
108	The helmet's visor cast everything into stark relief, its audio receptors picking up sounds from behind the shut bedroom doors lining either side of hallway: low-level sentries playing some video game, doing their best to keep their voices down as they cursed at each other; a female sentry talking on the phone; two angels fucking each other's brains out; and several snorers.

Page	Content
109	He swigged from his beer.
124	Hunt clenched his jaw, but she strode for the front door, hips swishing like she knew precisely how spectacular her ass was.
129	Filled the space with midnight storms, sex and death entwined.
130	And just like that, that scent of sex rippling off the Archangel turned to rot.
141	Walking around the desk, she swept the silky curtain of red hair over a shoulder, the slightly curled ends almost brushing the generous curve of her ass.
144	Micah growled, "Keep your dick in your pants and your hands to yourself. Or you'll find yourself without either for a long while."
163	He needed a drink. A strong fucking drink.
180	Jesiba had said no, and instead bought a pet kelpie that had humped the glass with all the finesse of a wasted college guy.
182	If one of the females partying downstairs had shown herself into his room, thinking she'd get a nice, sweaty ride with a Prince of the Fae, she'd be sorely disappointed. He was in no shape for fucking right now. At least not any fucking that would be worthwhile.
183	Every bong and bottle of liquor, every pair of female underwear that had never been returned to its owner, every trace and scent of sex and drugs and all the stupid shit they did here had been hidden. ...Must be from when Declan had leapt off the stair railing onto it, swinging around and swigging from his bottle of whiskey. He'd fallen off a moment later, too drunk to hold on.
184	"Because you look high off your ass, too."
186	Bryce asked, swirling the whiskey in its glass, "Is this house really befitting of the Chosen One?"
211	"Cthona's tits," he muttered, shaking his head.
214	"This drive contains footage of you at a three-day orgy?" Hunt demanded. "Let me know if it gets you hot and bothered, Athalar." ...Her green eyes drifted toward his lap. "I hear you're one Hel of a ride when you pause the brooding long enough." Oh please. Hunt's teeth flashed as he bared them in a silent snarl, so Bryce said, "Orgy and Hunt's bedroom prowess aside, you've got a salt vendor in this market." ..."You ever get sick of crawling for that sorceress, come find me. I have a stable of clients who'd crawl for you. And pay to do it."
218	"Unfortunately, I don't think the size differences between you and Athalar would work in the bedroom. You're barely big enough to wrap your arms around his dick." ..."I'm not the one who's bingeing a show that's basically porn with a plot. What's it called again? Fangs and Bangs?" ..."It's not called that and you know it! And it's artistic. They make love. They don't ..." She choked. "Fuck?" Bryce suggested dryly. ...Bryce said, "I doubt Hunt Athalar is the making love type." ...Just to torture her a bit more, Bryce added, "He's the type to bend you over a desk and—"
225	She turned on Lehabah's electronic tablet. The screen revealed a vampyr and wolf tangled in each other, groaning, naked— ...The air in the room lightened, as if Bryce's sorrow had cracked at the sight of the wolf



Page	Content
	pounding into the moaning vampyr female. ...Hunt, as if despite himself, chuckled. "You watch Fangs and Bangs?"
229	"The tattoo on my back—she and I got it done that week. We got stupid drunk one night, and I was so out of it I didn't even know what the fuck she put on my back until I'd gotten over my hangover."
242	"I'm just a half-breed slut, right?" ...Five minutes after Bryce got there, Jesiba's client—a raging asshole of a leopard shifter who believed he was entitled to put his paws all over her ass—prowled in and purchased a small statue of Solas and Cthona, portrayed as a sun with male features burying his face in a pair of mountain-shaped breasts.
256	The scent of sex and booze and sweat that hit him had every instinct rising with dizzying speed as they crossed the glass-framed courtyard and ascended the steps.
258	He glanced at Bryce, who was guzzling her booze like it was a protein shake. She hadn't eaten dinner yet, and even though he'd been distracted this morning when she'd emerged from her bedroom in nothing but a lacy hot-pink bra and matching underwear, he'd noted through the living room window that she'd also forgone breakfast, and since she hadn't brought lunch with her or ordered in, he was willing to bet she hadn't eaten that, either. ...Bryce reached for her drink again. But Hunt moved faster, his hand wrapping around her wrist and pinning it to the table before she could guzzle down more booze. ..."You have a rough day and you come to drown yourself in vodka?"
265	"When males are kneeling between my legs, Athalar," she said, "they're not usually grimacing." ...Just as he realized that he was indeed kneeling between her thighs, and had leaned closer to her lap to see that scar.
288	"One," he told her, yanking over a chair and turning it backward for him to straddle. "The last thing I want to do is fuck you, so we can take the whole Sex, Mating, and Baby option off the table. Two, I don't have friends, so there sure as fuck will be no couples-retreat lifestyle anytime soon. Three, if we're complaining about people who are clothing-optional ..." He finished the croissant and gave her a pointed look. "I'm not the one who parades around this apartment in a bra and underwear every morning while getting dressed."
292	At Luna's Temple, he'd heard Bryce refer to him calling her a half-breed slut.
293	Hunt lifted a brow. "What'd you wish for?" "For my boobs to get bigger." A laugh burst out of him, chasing away any lingering shadows that talk of Sandriel dragged up. But Hunt avoided looking at Bryce's chest as he said, "Seems your wish paid off, Quinlan." Understatement. Big, fucking, lace-covered understatement.
294	So Hunt said, "Since I'm perfectly happy with the size of my assets, I'd wish for you to stop being such a pain in my ass."
297	Bryce choked on a laugh at the title. "You sure that Starborn power isn't for finding smut?" She called to Lehabah, "This one's right up your alley."
298	"Any good sex scenes yet?" Bryce asked Ruhn idly, going over Danika's location data for the third time.

Page	Content
303	The legionary who lounged on a low-lying couch wasn't particularly skilled in stealing covert glances at her ass. Bryce looked over a shoulder, as if some extra sense told her someone was watching, and gave the soldier a smile.
305	<p>"Which one? There was the one drooling on the Traskian carpet, the one with his tongue rolled out on the floor, or the one who was staring at your ass like it was going to talk to him?"</p> <p>..."They must keep you all starved for sex in these barracks if the presence of one female sends them into such a tizzy. So—do you know his name? The one who wanted to have a chat with my ass."</p>
306	"Do you have a girlfriend? Boyfriend? Someone whose ass you gawk at?"
308	And since half-breed sluts weren't allowed into those, she'd never had a chance to take one home.
316	<p>"So? Just because I saved his life, that doesn't mean I'm destined to be his girlfriend. It'd be like banging a statue anyway."</p> <p>Hunt smirked. "In all fairness, the females who have been with him say otherwise."</p> <p>..."See, that right there is the problem. You and the whole rest of the world seem to think I exist just to find someone like him. That of course I can't be genuinely not interested, because why wouldn't I want a big, strong male to protect me? Surely if I'm pretty and single, the second any powerful Vanir shows interest, I'm bound to drop my panties. In fact, I didn't even have a life until he showed up—never had good sex, never felt alive—"</p>
338	<p>Highlight(pink) - Chapter Thirty-Five &gt; Page 338 · Location 5622</p> <p>"When the Vanir tell you you're not good enough for any job because of your human blood, when males like this asshole next to you just see you as a piece of ass to be fucked and then discarded, when you see your mother—it is a human mother for you, isn't it? It always is—being treated like trash ... You'll find those self-righteous feelings fading real fast."</p>
344	He trailed off again and swigged from his beer.
361	<p>"You wanna tell me about everyone you've ever hooked up with, Athalar?"</p> <p>His silence told her enough. She smirked.</p> <p>But then the angel said, as if he needed something to distract him from the pulped remains they'd left behind, "None of my hookups are worth mentioning."</p>
362	<p>"Want to hear my worst hookup?" she asked, throwing him a forced grin.</p> <p>He chuckled. "I'm half-afraid to hear it, but sure."</p> <p>"I dated a vampyr for like three weeks. My first and only hookup with anyone in Flame and Shadow."</p> <p>..."And I couldn't stop wondering what part of me he wanted more: blood or ... you know. And then he suggested eating while eating, if you know what I mean?"</p> <p>...She didn't fail to note his glance to her legs—between them. The way his eyes seemed to darken further, something within them sharpening. "Wouldn't that hurt?"</p> <p>"I didn't want to find out."</p> <p>..."No more vamps after that?"</p> <p>"Definitely not. He claimed the finest pleasure was always edged in pain, but I showed him the door."</p>
371	He forced himself to focus. Consider the conversation at hand and not contemplate whether Quinlan's legs would feel as soft beneath his mouth as they looked.

Page	Content
376	Ruhn had once nearly run from a date with a young nymph when her high-pitched giggling had sounded more like a porpoise's squeal. And in bed ... fuck, how many partners had he never called again not because the sex had been bad, but because the sounds they'd made had been unbearable? Too many to count.
396	She blinked at him. "You thought it was a sex toy, didn't you?" He said nothing. "You think I keep my vibrator in my linen closet?" He crossed his arms. "What I want to know is why you have a box of these things."
398	"Here. Next time you want to check out my vibrators, just ask, Athalar." She inclined her head toward her bedroom door and winked. "They're in the left nightstand." ..."I'd rather be a pain in the ass," she said slyly over her bare shoulder, "than a snooping pervert."
402	He certainly had not been looking for any of her sex toys when he'd opened up the linen closet last night. But he'd spied a flash of purple sparkles, and—fine, maybe the thought had crossed his mind—he'd just pulled down the box before he could really think. And now that he knew where they were, he couldn't help but look at that nightstand and imagine her there, in that bed. Leaning against the pillows and— It might have made sleeping a shade uncomfortable last night.
408	"I'm surprised you don't have a tattoo of Jelly Jubilee somewhere." His eyes skimmed over her, lingering on the short, tight green dress. Her toes curled. "Who says I don't have a tattoo of her somewhere you can't see, Athalar?" She watched him sort through everything he had already seen. Since he'd moved in, she'd stopped parading about the apartment in her underwear while getting dressed, but she knew he'd spotted her through the window in the days before. Knew he realized there was a limited, very intimate, number of places where another tattoo might be hidden. She could have sworn his voice dropped an octave or two as he asked, "Do you?" With any other male, she would have said, Why don't you come find out? With any other male, she would have already been on the other side of the desk. Crawling into his lap. Unbuckling his belt. And then sinking down onto his cock, riding him until they were both moaning and breathless and—
410	His face was flushed, and his eyes ... Fucking Solas, his black eyes glittered, wholly fixed on her face. Like he was thinking of touching her. Tasting her. "Okay," he said roughly, running a hand through his hair. His eyes settled, the dark fire in them banking. Thank the gods.
420	"It's hard to remember, isn't it, when you were high, drunk, and fucking strangers."
448	Hunt chuckled, letting himself bury his face against her neck. "So am I." Bryce's fingers curled against his spine, exploring and gentle. Every single one of his senses narrowed to that touch. Came roaring awake. "We should get out of the rain," she murmured. "We should," he replied. And made no move. "Hunt." He couldn't tell if his name was a warning or a request or something more. Didn't care as he grazed his nose against the rain-slick column of her neck. Fuck, she smelled good. He did it again, unable to help himself or get enough of that scent. She tipped her chin up slightly. Just enough to expose more of her neck to him.

Page	Content
	<p>Hel, yes. Hunt almost groaned the words as he let himself nuzzle into that soft, delicious neck, as greedy as a fucking vampyr to be there, smell her, taste her.</p> <p>...Bryce's fingers tightened on his back—then began stroking. He nearly purred.</p> <p>He didn't let himself think, not as he brushed his lips over the spot he'd nuzzled. She arched slightly against him. Into the hardness that ached behind the reinforced leather of his battle-suit.</p> <p>Swallowing another groan against her neck, Hunt tightened his arms around her warm, soft body, and ran his hands downward, toward that perfect, sweet ass that had tortured him since day fucking one, and—</p>
450	He stopped his arm before it could cover Bryce's breasts—the heart beating beneath them.
481	"Is it wise to cook when you've been pounding whiskey?"
482	<p>She pointed to the sweep of her hips. "I was told my half-human body was too clunky. I was also told that my boobs were too big, and my ass could be used as an aerialport landing pad."</p> <p>"Your ass is perfect." The words slipped out. He refrained from commenting on just how much he liked the other parts of her, too. How much he wanted to worship them. Starting with that ass of hers.</p> <p>Color bloomed on her cheeks. "Well, thank you."</p>
485	He leaned against the counter behind them and swigged from his beer, letting her fill in the rest.
501	<p>He was naked, she realized, having somehow forgotten. Utterly naked. She didn't let herself contemplate it as she began lathering his neck, his powerful shoulders, his muscled arms. "I'll leave your bottom half for you to enjoy," she said, her face heating.</p> <p>He was just watching her with that raw openness. More intimate than any touch of his lips on her neck. Like he indeed saw everything she was and had been and might yet become.</p> <p>She scrubbed down his upper body as best she could. "I can't clean your wings with you sitting against the wall."</p> <p>Hunt rose to his feet in a mighty, graceful push.</p> <p>She kept her eyes averted from what, exactly, this brought into her direct line of vision. The very considerable something that he didn't seem to notice or care about.</p> <p>So she wouldn't care about it, either. She stood, water splattering her, and gently turned him. She didn't let herself admire the view from behind, either. The muscles and perfection of him. Your ass is perfect, he'd said to her.</p> <p>Likewise, she could now attest.</p>
503	So she grabbed the white T-shirt she'd intended to give him, and twisted away, peeling off her own shirt and bra and chucking them into the bathroom. They landed with a slap on the tiles, drowning out the rustle of his soft shirt as she slid it over herself. It hung down to her knees, providing enough coverage that she shucked off her wet sweats and underwear and threw them into the bathroom, too.
508	<p>He had a long-lost love he was still holding a torch for. And she'd just gone too long without sex. Cthona's tits, it'd been weeks since that hookup with the lion shifter in the Raven's bathroom. And with Hunt here, she hadn't dared open up her left nightstand to take care of herself.</p> <p>Keep telling yourself all that, a small voice said.</p> <p>The muscles in Hunt's back stiffened. His hands paused whatever they were doing.</p> <p>Shit, he could smell this kind of thing, couldn't he? Most Vanir males could. The shifts in a</p>

Page	Content
	<p>person's scent: fear and arousal being the two big ones.</p> <p>He was the Umbra Mortis. Off-limits in ten million ways. And the Umbra Mortis didn't date—no, it'd be all or nothing with him.</p> <p>Hunt asked, voice like gravel, "What are you thinking about?" He didn't turn from the stove. You. Like a fucking idiot, I'm thinking about you.</p> <p>"There's a sample sale at one of the designer stores this afternoon," she lied.</p> <p>Hunt glanced over his shoulder. Fuck, his eyes were dark. "Is that so?"</p> <p>Was that a purr in his voice?</p> <p>She couldn't help the step she took back, bumping into the kitchen island. "Yes," she said, unable to look away.</p> <p>Hunt's eyes darkened further. He said nothing.</p> <p>She couldn't breathe properly with that stare fixed on her. That stare that told her he scented everything going on in her body.</p> <p>Her nipples pebbled under that stare.</p> <p>Hunt went preternaturally still. His eyes dipped downward. Saw her breasts. The thighs she now clamped together—as if it'd stop the throbbing beginning to torture her between them. His face went positively feral. A mountain cat ready to pounce. "I didn't know clothing sales got you so hot and bothered, Quinlan."</p> <p>She nearly whimpered. Forced herself to keep still. "It's the little things in life, Athalar."</p> <p>"Is that what you think about when you open up that left nightstand? Clothing sales?" He faced her fully now. She didn't dare let her gaze drop.</p> <p>"Yes," she breathed. "All those clothes, all over my body." She had no idea what the fuck was coming out of her mouth.</p> <p>How was it possible all the air in the apartment, the city, had been sucked out?</p> <p>"Maybe you should buy some new underwear," he murmured, nodding to her bare legs.</p> <p>"Seems like you're out."</p> <p>She couldn't stop it—the image that blazed over her senses: Hunt putting those big hands on her waist and hoisting her onto the counter currently pressing into her spine, shoving her T-shirt over her midriff—his T-shirt, actually—and spreading her legs wide. Fucking her with his tongue, then his cock, until she was sobbing in pleasure, screaming with it, she didn't care just so long as he was touching her, inside her—</p> <p>"Quinlan." He seemed to be shaking now. As if only a tether of pure will kept him in place. As if he'd seen the same burning image and was just waiting for her nod.</p> <p>It'd complicate everything. The investigation, whatever he felt for Shahar, her own life—To fucking Hel with all that. They'd figure it out later. They'd—</p>
514	Just like it had this morning when he'd seen her breasts peak, and had scented how filthy her own thoughts had turned.
567	<p>And Hunt, as if he sensed it, too, leaned forward again. Brushed his mouth against hers. Just a hint of a kiss—a feather-soft glancing of his lips over hers.</p> <p>A star bloomed inside her at that kiss. A long-slumbering light began to fill her chest, her veins.</p>
571	That too-brief kiss he'd given her had said enough. So had the light he could have sworn glowed in her eyes as he'd pulled away.
590	Hunt gripped her trembling fingers. "What's this about?" he murmured, unable to help himself from pressing his mouth to the dusky nails. How many times had he thought about these hands on him? Caressing his face, stroking down his chest, wrapped around his cock?



Page	Content
	<p>Her swallow was audible. He pressed another kiss to her fingers. "This wasn't supposed to happen—between us," she whispered. "I know," he said, kissing her shaking fingers again. He gently unfurled them, exposing the heart of her palm. He pressed his mouth there, too. "But thank fucking Urd it did." Her hands stopped shaking. Hunt lifted his eyes from her hand to find her own lined with silver—and full of fire. He interlaced their fingers. "For fuck's sake, just kiss me, Quinlan." She did. Dark Hel, she did. His words had barely finished sounding when she slid her hand over his jaw, around his neck, and hauled his lips to hers.</p> <p>The moment Hunt's lips met her own, Bryce erupted. She didn't know if it was weeks without sex or Hunt himself, but she unleashed herself. That was the only way to describe it as she drove her hands into his hair and slanted her mouth against his.</p> <p>No tentative, sweet kisses. Not for them. Never for them.</p> <p>Her mouth opened at that first contact, and his tongue swept in, tasting her in savage, unrelenting strokes. Hunt groaned at that first taste—and the sound was kindling. Rising onto her knees, fingers digging into his soft hair, she couldn't get enough, taste enough of him—rain and cedar and salt and pure lightning. His hands skimmed over her hips, slow and steady despite the mouth that ravaged hers with fierce, deep kisses.</p> <p>His tongue danced with her own. She whimpered, and he let out a dark laugh as his hand wandered under the back of her dress, down the length of her spine, his calluses scraping. She arched into the touch, and he tore his mouth away.</p> <p>Before she could grab his face back to hers, his lips found her neck. He pressed openmouthed kisses to it, nipped at the sensitive skin beneath her ears. "Tell me what you want, Quinlan." "All of it." There was no doubt in her. None.</p> <p>Hunt dragged his teeth along the side of her neck, and she panted, her entire consciousness narrowing to the sensation. "All of it?"</p> <p>She slid her hand down his front. To his pants—the hard, considerable length straining against them. Urd spare her. She palmed his cock, eliciting a hiss from him. "All of it, Athalar." "Thank fuck," he breathed against her neck, and she laughed.</p> <p>Her laugh died as he put his mouth on hers again, as if he needed to taste the sound, too. Tongues and teeth and breath, his hands artfully unhooking her bra under her dress. She wound up straddling his lap, wound up grinding herself over that beautiful, perfect hardness in his lap. Wound up with her dress peeled down to her waist, her bra gone, and then Hunt's mouth and teeth were around her breast, suckling and biting and kissing, and nothing, nothing, nothing had ever felt this good, this right.</p> <p>Bryce didn't care that she was moaning loud enough for every demon in the Pit to hear. Not as Hunt switched to her other breast, sucking her nipple deep into his mouth. She drove her hips down on his, release already a rising wave in her. "Fuck, Bryce," he murmured against her breast.</p> <p>She only dove her hand beneath the waist of his pants. His hand wrapped around her wrist, though. Halted her millimeters from what she'd wanted in her hands, her mouth, her body for weeks.</p> <p>"Not yet," he growled, dragging his tongue along the underside of her breast. Content to feast on her. "Not until I've had my turn."</p> <p>The words short-circuited every logical thought. And any objections died as he slipped a hand up her dress, running it over her thigh. Higher. His mouth found her neck again as a finger</p>

Page	Content
	<p>explored the lacy front of her underwear.</p> <p>He hissed again as he found it utterly soaked, the lace doing nothing to hide the proof of just how badly she wanted this, wanted him. He ran his finger down the length of her—and back up again.</p> <p>Then that finger landed on that spot at the apex of her thighs. His thumb gently pressed on it over the fabric, drawing a moan deep from her throat.</p> <p>She felt him smile against her neck. His thumb slowly circled, every sweep a torturous blessing.</p> <p>“Hunt.” She didn’t know if his name was a plea or a question.</p> <p>He just tugged aside her underwear and put his fingers directly on her.</p> <p>She moaned again, and Hunt stroked her, two fingers dragging up and down with teeth-grinding lightness. He licked up the side of her throat, fingers playing mercilessly with her. He whispered against her skin, “Do you taste as good as you feel, Bryce?”</p> <p>“Please find out immediately,” she managed to gasp.</p> <p>His laugh rumbled through her, but his fingers didn’t halt their leisurely exploration. “Not yet, Quinlan.”</p> <p>One of his fingers found her entrance and lingered, circling. “Do it,” she said. If she didn’t feel him inside her—his fingers or his cock, anything—she might start begging.</p> <p>“So bossy,” Hunt purred against her neck, then claimed her mouth again. And as his lips settled over hers, nipping and taunting, he slid that finger deep into her. Both of them groaned. “Fuck, Bryce,” he said again. “Fuck.” Her eyes nearly rolled back into her head at the feeling of that finger. She rocked her hips, desperate to drive him deeper, and he obliged her, pulling out his finger nearly all the way, adding a second, and plunging both back into her. She bucked, her nails digging into his chest. His thunderous heartbeat raged against her palms. She buried her face in his neck, biting and licking, starving for any taste of him while he pumped his hand into her again.</p> <p>Hunt breathed into her ear, “I am going to fuck you until you can’t remember your gods-damned name.”</p> <p>Gods, yes. “Likewise,” she croaked.</p> <p>Release shimmered in her, a wild and reckless song, and she rode his hand toward it. His other hand cupped her backside. “Don’t think I’ve forgotten this particular asset,” he murmured, squeezing for emphasis. “I have plans for this beautiful ass, Bryce. Filthy, filthy plans.”</p> <p>She moaned again, and his fingers stroked into her, over and over.</p> <p>“Come for me, sweetheart,” he purred against her breast, his tongue flicking over her nipple just as one of his fingers curled inside her, hitting that gods-damned spot.</p> <p>Bryce did. Hunt’s name on her lips, she tipped her head back and let go, riding his hand with abandon, driving them both into the couch cushions.</p> <p>He groaned, and she swallowed the sound with an openmouthed kiss as every nerve in her body exploded into glorious starlight.</p> <p>Then there was only breathing, and him—his body, his scent, that strength.</p> <p>The starlight receded, and she opened her eyes to find him with his head tipped back, teeth bared.</p> <p>Not in pleasure. In pain.</p> <p>She’d driven him into the cushions. Shoved his wounded back right up against the couch. Horror lurched through her like ice water, dousing any heat in her veins. “Oh gods. I am so sorry—”</p> <p>He cracked his eyes open. That groan he’d made as she came had been pain, and she’d been</p>

Page	Content
	<p>so fucking wild for him that she hadn't noticed—          "Are you hurt?" she demanded, hoisting herself up from his lap, reaching to remove his fingers, still deep inside her.          He halted her with his other hand on her wrist. "I'll survive." His eyes darkened as he looked at her bare breasts, still inches from his mouth. The dress shoved halfway down her body. "I have other things to distract me," he murmured, leaning down for her peaked nipple.          Or trying to. A grimace passed over his face.          "Dark Hel, Hunt," she barked, yanking out of his grip, off his fingers, nearly falling from his lap. He didn't even fight her as she grabbed his shoulder and peered at his back.          Fresh blood leaked through his bandages.          "Are you out of your mind?" she shouted, searching for anything in the immediate vicinity to press against the blood. "Why didn't you tell me?"          "As you like to say," he panted, shaking slightly, "it's my body. I decide its limits."          ...He gripped her wrist again. "We're not done here."          "Oh yes we fucking are," she seethed. "I'm not having sex with you when you're spouting blood like a fountain." An exaggeration, but still.          His eyes were dark—burning. So Bryce poked his back, a good six inches beneath his wound. His answering wince of pain settled the argument.          Setting her underwear to rights and sliding her dress back over her chest and arms, she dialed the public medwitch number.</p>
594	<p>Then Hunt had the nerve to ask if he was cleared for sex.          The witch, to her credit, didn't laugh. Just said, When you're able to fly again, then I'd say it's safe for you to be sexually active as well. She nodded toward the couch cushions—the bloodstain that would require a magi-spell to erase. I'd suggest whatever ... interaction caused tonight's injury also be postponed until your wings are healed.          ...Cleared for sex, indeed.</p>
608	<p>She and Danika had been no better than two addicts, inhaling and snorting everything they could get their hands on.</p>
624	<p>She'd snapped another photo of him working in the kitchen: of his ass. With her own hand in the foreground, giving a thumbs-up of approval.</p>
782	<p>And she wanted to be kissed by that light. Now.          Wanted to kiss him back, and tell Syrinx to go wait in his crate for a while.          ...When Bryce looked back at Hunt, she found his focus on her lips. And became hyperaware of the fact that she was sitting across his lap. On her bed. From the hardness starting to poke into her backside, she knew he'd realized it, too.          Still they said nothing as they stared at each other.          So Bryce wriggled slightly against his erection, drawing a hiss from him. She huffed a laugh. "I throw one smoldering look at you and you're already—what was it you said to me a few weeks ago? Hot and bothered?"          One of his hands traced down her spine again, intent in every inch of it. "I've been hot and bothered for you for a long time now." His hand halted on her waist, his thumb beginning a gentle, torturous stroking along her rib cage. With each sweep, the building ache between her legs ratcheted.          Hunt smiled slowly, as if well aware of that. Then he leaned in, pressing a kiss to the underside of her jaw. He said against her flushed skin, "You ready to do this?"          "Gods, yes," she breathed. And when he kissed just beneath her ear, making her back arch</p>

Page	Content
	<p>slightly, she said, "I recall you promising to fuck me until I couldn't remember my own name." He shifted his hips, grinding his cock into her, searing her even with the clothing still between them. "If that's what you want, sweetheart, that's what I'll give you."</p> <p>Oh gods. She couldn't get a solid breath down. Couldn't think around his roving mouth on her neck and his hands and that massive, beautiful cock digging into her. She had to get him inside her. Right now. She needed to feel him, needed to have his heat and strength around her. In her.</p> <p>Bryce shifted to straddle his lap, lining herself up with all of him. She met all of him, satisfied to find his breathing as ragged as her own. His hands bracketed her waist, thumbs stroking, stroking, stroking, as if he were an engine waiting to roar into movement upon her command. Bryce leaned in, brushing her mouth over his. Once. Twice.</p> <p>Hunt began shaking with the force of his restraint as he let her explore his mouth. But she pulled back, meeting his hazy, burning gaze. The words she wanted to say clogged in her throat, so she hoped he understood them as she pressed a kiss to his now-clear brow. Sketched a line of soft, glancing kisses over every inch where the tattoo had been. Hunt slid a shaking hand from her waist and laid it over her thundering heart. She swallowed thickly, surprised to find her eyes stinging. Surprised to see silver lining his eyes as well. They had made it; they were here. Together.</p> <p>Hunt leaned in, slanting his mouth over hers. She met him halfway, arms snaking around his neck, fingers burying themselves in his thick, silken hair.</p> <p>A shrill ringing filled the apartment.</p> <p>She could ignore it, ignore the world—</p> <p>Call from ... Home.</p> <p>Bryce pulled back, panting hard.</p> <p>"You gonna get that?" Hunt's voice was guttural.</p> <p>Yes. No. Maybe.</p> <p>Call from ... Home.</p> <p>"She'll just keep calling until I pick up," Bryce murmured.</p> <p>Her limbs were stiff as she peeled herself from Hunt's lap, his fingers trailing over her back as she stood. She tried not to think about the promise in that touch, as if he was as reluctant to let go of her as she was of him.</p>
785	<p>But it shocked away any lingering heat between her legs and the heady desire clouding her mind.</p>
786	<p>He hadn't cared that an entire city was looking on: he'd wanted to kiss her when the light of her power had faded, when Hunt had lowered his wings to find her in his arms, looking up at him like he was worth something. Like he was all she needed. End of story.</p> <p>No one had ever looked at him like that.</p> <p>And when they'd come back here, and he'd had her on his lap on her bed and seen the way her cheeks became pink as she looked at his mouth, he'd been ready to cross that final bridge with her. To spend all day and night doing so.</p> <p>Considering how her firstlight had healed him, he'd most definitely say he was cleared for sex. Aching for it—for her.</p> <p>...Hunt smiled, going half-hard again at the sass in her tone. He could listen to her snark all fucking day. He wondered how much of it would make an appearance when he got her naked again. Got her moaning.</p> <p>The first time, she'd come on his hand. This time ... This time, he had plans for all the other</p>

Page	Content
	ways he'd get her to make that beautiful, breathless sound as she'd orgasmed. Leaving Bryce to deal with her mother, willing his cock to calm the fuck down, Hunt grabbed a burner phone from his underwear drawer and dialed Isaiah, one of the few numbers he'd memorized.
794	Ruhn glared at the adjacent rooftop where Hunt stood. "Athalar has a big fucking mouth." One she'd like to put to good use on various parts of her body, she didn't say. She didn't need Ruhn puking on her clean clothes.

Profanity	Count
Ass	158
Bitch	18
Cock	15
Cunt	1
Dick	17
Fuck	528
Piss	50
Prick	15
Shit	224
Tit	4



## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings

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House of earth and blood

Maas, Sarah J.

[book] (2020.) Romance fiction

Sarah J. Maas.  
Bloomsbury Pub.,  
803 p. :map ;25 cm.  
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After a demon murders her friends, Bryce vows to avenge their deaths. Hunt is a Fallen angel tasked with helping Bryce find the murderer so his freedom will be granted. As they dig into the cities underbelly, they discover a dark power that could destroy everything. They also find a blazing passion in each other.

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*Crescent City #1*

# House of Earth and Blood

Sarah J. Maas

4.50

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Bryce Quinlan had the perfect life-working hard all day and partying all night-until a demon murdered her closest friends, leaving her bereft, wounded, and alone. When the accused is behind bars but the crimes start up again, Bryce finds herself at the heart of the investigation. She'll do whatever it takes to avenge their deaths.

Hunt Athalar is a notorious Fallen angel, now enslaved to the Archangels he once attempted to overthrow. His brutal skills and incredible strength have been set to one purpose-to assassinate his boss's enemies, no questions asked. But with a demon wreaking havoc in the city, he's offered an irresistible deal: help Bryce find the murderer, and his freedom will be within reach.

As Bryce and Hunt dig deep into Crescent City's underbelly, they discover a dark power that threatens everything and everyone they hold dear, and they find, in each other, a blazing passion-one that could set them both free, if they'd only let it.

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***A #1 New York Times bestseller!***

***Sarah J. Maas's brand-new CRESCENT CITY series begins with House of Earth and Blood: the story of half-Fae and half-human Bryce Quinlan as she seeks revenge in a contemporary fantasy world of magic, danger, and searing romance.***

Bryce Quinlan had the perfect life-working hard all day and partying all night-until a demon murdered her closest friends, leaving her bereft, wounded, and alone. When the accused is behind bars but the crimes start up again, Bryce finds herself at the heart of the investigation. She'll do whatever it takes to avenge their deaths.

Hunt Athalar is a notorious Fallen angel, now enslaved to the Archangels he once attempted to overthrow. His brutal skills and incredible strength have been set to one purpose-to assassinate his boss's enemies, no questions asked. But with a demon wreaking havoc in the city, he's offered an irresistible deal: help Bryce find the murderer, and his freedom will be within reach.

As Bryce and Hunt dig deep into Crescent City's underbelly, they discover a dark power that threatens everything and everyone they hold dear, and they find, in each other, a blazing passion-one that could set them both free, if they'd only let it.

With unforgettable characters, sizzling romance, and page-turning suspense, this richly inventive new fantasy series by #1 *New York Times* bestselling author Sarah J. Maas delves into the heartache of loss, the price of freedom-and the power of love

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

# Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days following the formation of the committee. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School Central High School Date 3/13/24

Title House of Earth and Blood

Author Sarah Maas

## Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material

### Silent Voting Results:

1 Do Not Remove

4 Remove/Discontinue

Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
<p>If committee is recommending to limit access-</p> <p><u>      </u> Grade Level</p> <p><u>      </u> For Advance Course</p> <p><u>      </u> Parent Permission</p>	<p>Basis for removal, check all that apply:</p> <p><u>  X  </u> The materials is pornographic</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.</p> <p><u>  X  </u> The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.</p>



### Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

Print Name

Position

Signature

Kelly Slusser	Principal	Kelly Slusser
Debbie Warrell	District	Debbie Warrell
Rachel Kingdom	Lay	Rachel Kingdom
David McDuffie	Parent	DM
Pam Everett	Community	Everett

Administrator's Signature

Kelly Slusser

Date

3/14/24



TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: March 20, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenge CHS 0109-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, “House of Earth and Blood” at Central High School. The review committee at Central High School has evaluated the book, "House of Earth and Blood", written by Sarah Maas based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is for the book to be removed from Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on May 7, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before May 7, 2024.

**A. Item Currently Budgeted -**

Account Name		<u>No Financial Impact</u>										
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

**B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -\*\***

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

**C. History**

Check one:

Prior Year Budget: ☐New for Current Year: ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$

\*\* WHEN ITEM NOT CURRENTLY BUDGETED IS APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD, THIS WILL SERVE AS THE BUDGET AMENDMENT\*\*



# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

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**Agenda Item # 5. 24-2197**

5/7/2024

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**Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to remove the book, "Homegoing" written by Yaa Gyasi, from circulation and not be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to remove the book, "Homegoing" written by Yaa Gyasi, from circulation. This book is being challenged at Hernando High School.

Hernando High School's Review Committee met on March 4, 2024 and March 19, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 5-1 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book be removed from circulation in Hernando County Schools.

Per Hernando County School District 2522 Policy requirements, the Superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to remove the book.

**My Contact**

Kelly Downey

Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs

352-797-7000 ext. 280

downey\_k@hcsb.k12.fl.us

**2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

**Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.



## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605  
M4LHernando.CMRCChair@gmail.com

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Hernando County School. District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE: HHS “Homegoing” (M4LHC –  
049/2023)

October 12, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 049-23) for “*Homegoing*” which is currently located at Hernando High School’s media center. This book was discovered removed from copies on Alexandria back on July 22, 2023.

“*Homegoing*” contains sexual age-inappropriate content: sexual activities; sexual assault; and nudity. This book clearly shows a warning label for 18 years of age and up.

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently violates H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I’m calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book from Hernando High School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can’t be “disappeared” (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*



THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name) JT

Address : PO Box 1568 City Brooksville State FL Zip Code 34605

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: October 12, 2023 Author: Yaa Gyasi

Title: Homegoing

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Knopf 2016

School(s) in which item is used: Hernando High School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames, etc. Attach additional pages if necessary) Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

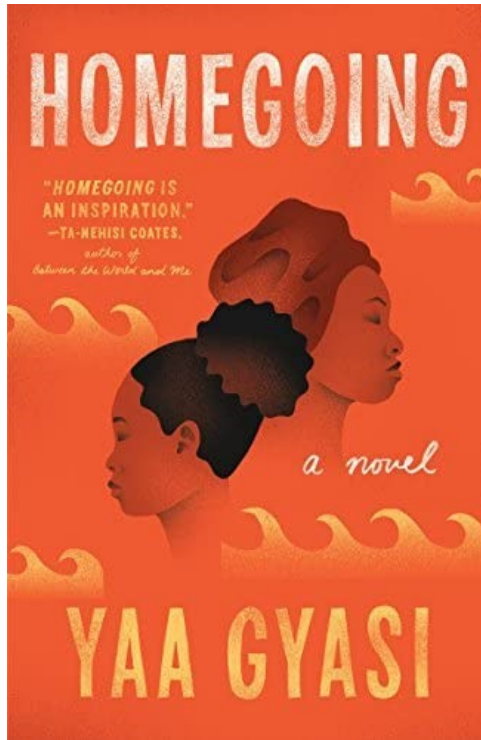
If yes, where? Name and date of publication: GoodReads 2016, 2018

Complainant's Signature

Julia Thomas

Date October 12, 2023

# HOMEGOING



## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains sexual activities; sexual assault; and nudity.

*Adult*

**By Yaa Gyasi**

ISBN: 9781101947142

## CONTENT WARNING

You are about to access material that may contain content of an ADULT nature. These files may include pictures and materials that some viewers may find offensive. If you are under the age of 18, or if such material offends you or if it is illegal for you to view these materials, please exit now.

**4**/5

**Not For Minors**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
22	He was still in his uniform, and Effia could tell that he'd had a long day by the way his lapel drooped. She helped him pull off his coat and shirt and she pressed her body against his, as Adowa had taught her. Before he could register his surprise, she grabbed his arms and pushed him to the bed. Not since their first night together had he been this timid, afraid of her unfamiliar body, the full-figured flesh, so different from how he had described his wife. Excited now, he pushed into her, and she squeezed her eyes as tightly as she could, her tongue circling her lips. He pushed harder, his breathing heavy and labored. She scratched his back, and he cried out. She bit his ear and pulled his hair. He pushed against her as though he were trying to move through her. And when she opened her eyes to look at him, she saw something like pain written across his face and the ugliness of the act, the sweat and blood and wetness they produced became illuminated, and she knew that if she was an animal tonight, then he was too.
41	When she heard the soft moaning, the quickened breath, she turned to face the wall of the hut. Once, just once, she had watched them where they lay, the darkness helping to cover her curiosity. Her father was hovering over her mother's body, mobbing softly at first, and then with more force. She couldn't see much, but it was the sounds that had interested her. The sounds her parents made together, sounds that walked a thin line between pleasure and pain. Esi both wanted and was afraid to want. So she never watched again.
47	One of them grabbed a woman on the far end and pushed her against the wall. His hands found her breasts and then began to move down the length of her body, lower and lower still, until the sound that escaped her lips was a scream
48	He put her on a folded tarp, spread her legs, and entered her. She screamed, but he placed his hand over her lips, then put his fingers in her mouth.
101	For the entire week after, his body had taken over the excuse-making for him, his penis lying limp between his legs each time he went to her. Even on the nights she braided her hair the way he liked it and rubbed coconut oil on her breasts and between her thighs.
116	They kissed, and whatever clothes Anna hadn't gotten to, Jo made quick work of removing. He tasted her and could feel more than hear the pleasure it sent through her body like a current, the way she stifled her moans so the kids wouldn't wake up, and expert at that after many nights and seven children. They worked quickly and quietly together, hoping the dark would mask their motions if one of the children happened to be peering through the curtain, unable to sleep. Jo grabbed onto Anna's butt with both of his hungry hands. As long as she lived, it would always be a pleasure and a gift to fill his hands with the weight of her flesh.
136	Ohene had discovered that the stick between his legs could perform tricks, and while Abena's father and mother were out begging for a share of the elders' food, as they did every week, Ohene and showed Abena those tricks. ..."See?" he said as they watched it lift when she touched it. They had both seen their fathers' this way. Ohene on those days his father went from one wife's hut to the next, and Abena in the days before she got her own hut. But they had never known Ohene's to do the same. ..."What does it feel like?" she had asked. ...He shrugged, smiled, and she knew what he felt was a good thing.

Page	Content
	<p>...All children had heard the fables about people who lay together before they had their marriage ceremonies: the far-fetched one about the men whose penises turned into trees while still inside the woman, growing branches into her stomach so that he could not exit her body; the simpler, truer ones about banishment, fines, and shame.</p> <p>...Finally that night, Abena had been able to convince Ohene, and he had fumbled around, thrusting at the entrance until he broke through and she hurt, thrusting inside: once, twice then nothing. There was no loud moan or whimper as they had heard escape their fathers' mouths. He simply left the same way he had arrived.</p>
143	<p>Soon her lips were meeting lips. They were not the lips she remembered from their childhood, the ones that were thin and always dry because he refused to oil them. They were thicker, a trap for her own lips, her own tongue.</p> <p>...Soon they were lying down in the shadow of the cave. Abena took off her wrapper and heard Ohene Nyarko suck in his breath, removing his own. At first they just stared at each other, taking their bodies in, comparing them with what they'd know before.</p> <p>...He reached for her, and she flinched, remembering the last time he had touched her. How she had lain on the floor of her parent's hut, staring up at the straw roof and wondering if there was more to it than that, the pain of it so outweighing the pleasure that she could not understand why it happened in huts across her village, the Asante, the world.</p> <p>...Now Ohene Nyarko pinned her arms down to the hard red clay. She bit his arm and he growled, letting go, until she hugged him back toward her. He moved like the knew the scenes that were playing inside her head. And she let him inside her. And she let herself forget everything but him.</p> <p>...When they had finished, when they were sweaty and spent and catching their breath, Abena laid her head against his chest, that panting pillow, his heart drumming into her ear.</p>
192	<p>That night, Crippled Man turned Crazy Woman onto her back and entered her, forcefully at first, and then more timidly. She opened her eyes to see him working more slowly than he used to, using his arms to push off, push in, his sweat dripping slowly off the bridge of his nose to land on her forehead and trickle down to meet the floor.</p>
210	<p>Robert was cautious, but she was wild. It had always been that way. The first night he had lain with her, he'd been so nervous that his penis had rested against his left leg, a log on the river of his quivering thigh.</p> <p>..."Your daddy's gon' kill me," he said. They were sixteen, their parents at a union meeting.</p> <p>..."I'm not thinkin' 'bout my daddy right now, Robert," she'd said, trying to stand the log. She's put each of his fingers into her mouth one by one and had bitten the tips, watching him all the while. She'd eased him into her and moved on top of him until he was begging her to stop, to not stop, to quicken, to slow. When he closed his eyes, she'd bidden him to open them, to look at her. She liked to be the star of the show.</p>
214	<p>The gray suit eased the mop away. "You still have cleaning to do," he said. He caressed her face. His hands started to move down her body, but before it could</p>

Page	Content
	<p>reach her breast she spit in his face.</p> <p>..."Well, why don't you come over here and give her a kiss?" the gray suit asked. He had already unzipped his pants with his left hand. With his right hand, he stroked his penis. "don't worry, I won't touch her," he said.</p> <p>...And he kept his word. Robert did all the work that night while the blue suit guarded the door. It wasn't more than a few tear-stained kisses and carefully placed hands. Before the gray suit could ask for Robert to enter her, he came, a shuddering, breathy thing. Then, immediately after, he grew bored with his game.</p>
259	<p>Sonny went up to Amani. He stood behind her and wrapped his arms around her belly, felt the firmness of its weight. "Why don't you give me something, baby?" he whispered into her ear.</p> <p>...She started to wriggle, but he held firm and she softened, leaned into him. Sonny had never loved her, not really. But he had always wanted her. It took him a while to learn the difference between those two things.</p> <p>..." I just did my hair, sonny," she said, but she was already offering him her neck, bending it to the left so that he could run his tongue along the right side. "Sing me a li'l something, Amani," he said, reaching for her breast. She hummed at his touch, but didn't sing.</p> <p>...Sonny let his hand wander down from her breasts, down to meet the tufts of hair that awaited him. Then she started. "I love you, Porgy. Don't let him take me. Don't let him handle me and drive me mad." She sang so softly it was almost a whisper. Almost. By the time his fingers found her wet, she was back at the chorus.</p>



## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings

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★★★★★ (0)

**Homegoing**

Gyasi, Yaa,

Text-unmediated-volume (2016.)

Historical fiction

Yaa Gyasi.  
Alfred A. Knopf,  
305 pages ;25 cm  
1101947136

"Two half sisters, Effia and Esi, unknown to each other, are born into two different tribal villages in 18th century Ghana. Effia will be married off to an English colonial, and will live in comfort in the sprawling, palatial rooms of Cape Coast Castle, raising half-caste children who will be sent abroad to be educated in England before returning to the Gold Coast to serve as administrators of the Empire. Her sister, Esi, will be imprisoned beneath Effia in the Castle's women's dungeon, and then shipped off on a boat bound for America, where she will be sold into slavery. Stretching from the tribal wars of Ghana to slavery and Civil War in America, from the coal mines in the no..."

Sisters

Slavery

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8:19 PM 7/22/2023

# HOMEGOING

BY YAA GYASI • RELEASE DATE: JUNE 7, 2016

*A promising debut that's awake to emotional, political, and cultural tensions across time and continents.*

A novel of sharply drawn character studies immersed in more than 250 hard, transformative years in the African-American diaspora.

Gyasi's debut novel opens in the mid-1700s in what is now Ghana, as tribal rivalries are exploited by British and Dutch colonists and slave traders. The daughter of one tribal leader marries a British man for financial expediency, then learns that the "castle" he governs is a holding dungeon for slaves. (When she asks what's held there, she's told "cargo.") The narrative soon alternates chapters between the Ghanans and their American descendants up through the present day. On either side of the Atlantic, the tale is often one of racism, degradation, and loss: a slave on an Alabama plantation is whipped "until the blood on the ground is high enough to bathe a baby"; a freedman in Baltimore fears being sent back South with the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act; a Ghanan woman is driven mad from the abuse of a missionary and her husband's injury in a tribal war; a woman in Harlem is increasingly distanced from (and then humiliated by) her husband, who passes as white. Gyasi is a deeply empathetic writer, and each of the novel's 14 chapters is a savvy character portrait that reveals the impact of racism from multiple perspectives. It lacks the sweep that its premise implies, though: while the characters share a bloodline, and a gold-flecked stone appears throughout the book as a symbolic connector, the novel is more a well-made linked story collection than a complex epic. Yet Gyasi plainly has the talent to pull that off: "I will be my own nation," one woman tells a British suitor early on, and the author understands both the necessity of that defiance and how hard it is to follow through on it.



## **Homegoing**

Yaa Gyasi

4.47

319,729 ratings 34,626 reviews

### **Goodreads Choice Award**

#### **Nominee for Best Historical Fiction (2016)**

An alternate cover edition can be found [here](#).

*A novel of breathtaking sweep and emotional power that traces three hundred years in Ghana and along the way also becomes a truly great American novel. Extraordinary for its exquisite language, its implacable sorrow, its soaring beauty, and for its monumental portrait of the forces that shape families and nations, Homegoing heralds the arrival of a major new voice in contemporary fiction.*

Two half-sisters, Effia and Esi, are born into different villages in eighteenth-century Ghana. Effia is married off to an Englishman and lives in comfort in the palatial rooms of Cape Coast Castle. Unbeknownst to Effia, her sister, Esi, is imprisoned beneath her in the castle's dungeons, sold with thousands of others into the Gold Coast's booming slave trade, and shipped off to America, where her children and grandchildren will be raised in slavery. One thread of *Homegoing* follows Effia's descendants through centuries of warfare in Ghana, as the Fante and Asante nations wrestle with the slave trade and British colonization. The other thread follows Esi and her children into America. From the plantations of the South to the Civil War and the Great Migration, from the coal mines of Pratt City, Alabama, to the jazz clubs and dope houses of twentieth-century Harlem, right up through the present day, *Homegoing* makes history visceral, and captures, with singular and stunning immediacy, how the memory of captivity came to be inscribed in the soul of a nation.

Generation after generation, Yaa Gyasi's magisterial first novel sets the fate of the individual against the obliterating movements of time, delivering unforgettable characters whose lives were shaped by historical forces beyond their control. *Homegoing* is a tremendous reading experience, not to be missed, by an astonishingly gifted young writer.



THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days after its formation. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School Hernando High School Date 3-19-24

Title Homegoing

Author Yaa Gyasi

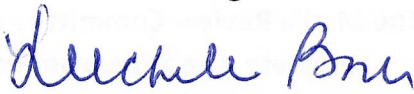
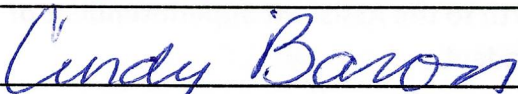
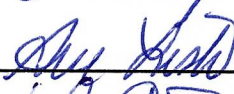

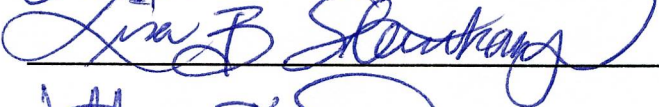
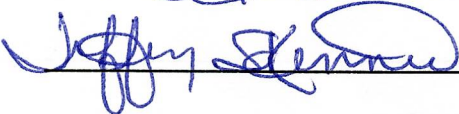
Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material

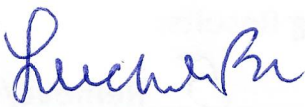
Silent Voting Results:

1 Do Not Remove 5 Remove/Discontinue

Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
<p>If committee is recommending limiting access-</p> <p><u>      </u> Grade Level</p> <p><u>      </u> For Advance Course</p> <p><u>      </u> Parent Permission</p>	<p>Basis for removal, check all that apply:</p> <p><u>      </u> The material is pornographic</p> <p><u>✓</u> The material is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS</p> <p><u>      </u> The material is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.</p> <p><u>      </u> The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.</p>

# Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

Print Name	Position	Signature
Leechele Booker	Principal, Hernando High School	
Cindy Baron	District Media Specialist	
Sue Lisk	Lay Person	
Lori Sowers	Community Member	
Lisa Steinkamp	Parent	
Tiffany Skinner	Parent	

Administrator's Signature  Date 3-19-24

**The School District of Hernando County, Florida**

Office of the Superintendent

919 N. Broad Street

Brooksville, FL 34601

Phone: (352) 797-7001

Fax: (352) 797-7101



Superintendent: *John Stratton*

Board Chairperson: *Linda Prescott*

Vice Chairperson: *Susan Duval*

Board Members:

*Gus Guadagnino*

*Mark Johnson*

*Shannon Rodriguez*

Learn it. Love it. Live it.

TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: March 20, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenge HHS 049-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, “Homegoing” at Hernando High School. The review committee at Hernando High School has evaluated the book, "Homegoing", written by Yaa Gyasi based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is for the book to be removed from Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on May 7, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before May 7, 2024.

**A. Item Currently Budgeted -**

Account Name		<u>No Financial Impact</u>										
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

**B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -\*\***

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

**C. History**

Check one:

Prior Year Budget: ☐New for Current Year: ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$

**\*\* WHEN ITEM NOT CURRENTLY BUDGETED IS APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD, THIS WILL SERVE AS THE BUDGET AMENDMENT\*\***



# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

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**Agenda Item # 6. 24-2200**

5/7/2024

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**Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to remove the book, "Red Hood" written by Elana Arnold, from circulation and not be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to remove the book, "Red Hood" written by Elana Arnold, from circulation. This book is being challenged at Hernando High School.

Hernando High School's Review Committee met on March 14, 2024 and April 3, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 5-0 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book be removed from circulation in Hernando County Schools.

Per Hernando County School District 2522 Policy requirements, the Superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to remove the book.

**My Contact**

Kelly Downey

Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs

352-797-7000 ext. 280

downey\_k@hcsb.k12.fl.us

**2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

**Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.



## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605  
M4LHernando.CMRCChair@gmail.com

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Hernando County School. District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE: HHS “Red Hood” (M4LHC –  
051/2023)

October 13, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 051-23) for *Red Hood*” which is currently located at Hernando High School’s media center. This book was discovered removed from copies on Alexandria back on August 2, 2023.

“Red Hood ” contains sexual age-inappropriate content: sexualizing of a minor child, obscene sexual activities; violence; and profanity. This book clearly shows a warning label for 18 years of age and up.

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently violates H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I’m calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book from Hernando High School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can’t be “disappeared” (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*



THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name) JT

Address : PO Box 1568 City Brooksville State FL Zip Code 34605

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: October 13, 2023 Author: Elana Arnold

Title: Red Hood

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Balzer + Bray imprint of HarperCollins 2020

School(s) in which item is used: Hernando High School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames, etc. Attach additional pages if necessary) Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

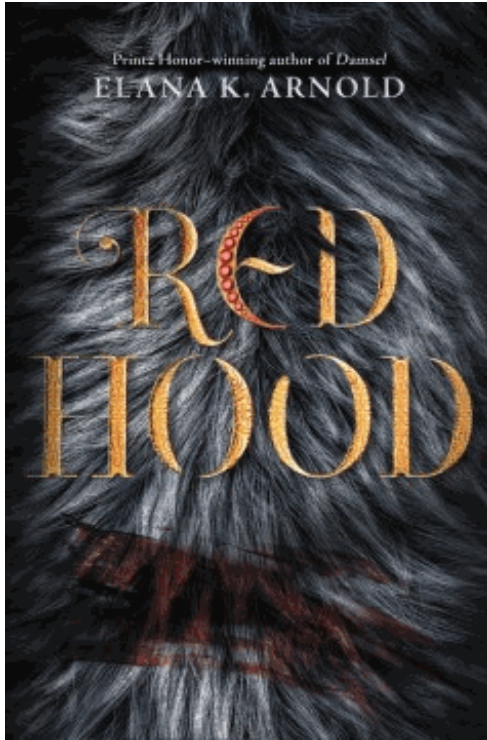
If yes, where? Name and date of publication: GoodReads 2021, 2020, 2019

Complainant's Signature

Julia Thomas

Date October 13, 2023

# RED HOOD



*Young Adult*

**By Elana Arnold**

ISBN: 978-0062742353

## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains obscene sexual activities; violence; and profanity.

## CONTENT WARNING

You are about to access material that may contain content of an ADULT nature. These files may include pictures and materials that some viewers may find offensive. If you are under the age of 18, or if such material offends you or if it is illegal for you to view these materials, please exit now.

**4**  
/5

**Not For Minors**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
9	<p>These are remarkable- his kisses, tracing a path down your neck, his hands pulling low the sweetheart neckline of your dress, his nose brushing your right nipple, and then, a moment later, his lips capturing it, his tongue circling, circling, his teeth skimming and biting, not hard, just enough to make your hands tighten into fists and clutch the blanket, enough to make your legs begin to quiver.</p> <p>And then he pushes up the tulle and satin of your skirt, rustling like wrapping paper coming undone, and his hands reach and find the lace panties you bought just especially for this occasion, and slowly, so slowly, he pulls them down your thighs, and you lift your hips to help him slide them free. Your feet are already bare, high heels abandoned in the front seat, so there is nothing to stop your panties from coming all the way off.</p> <p>Oh, how much you want this.</p>
10	<p>How much you want him to put his mouth on you, there, right there, at the crux of you.</p> <p>Your combined breaths have fogged the windows of the wagon, the air is damp. Your head rolls with desire, frustration, as he moves his kisses from your right thigh to your left as his fingers run up and down your legs, all the way down to your toes but never up all the way to your aching center.</p>
10	<p>Do you shiver from anticipation, for the moment when- at last, at last- his mouth finds his way to the center of you?</p> <p>At last, at last, he's found his way there, a hand on each of your thighs, his head buried between them, and he's not teasing you, not now, not anymore, he's earnest in his desire to bring you desire, and yes, you think, as his tongue and lips press into you, as his fingers pull you apart, as you come undone beneath his hands, it is important to be earnest if this is what earnestness brings.</p> <p>Yes, the smell of him, the sight of him, the feel of him, all of it familiar, but not this- the hot firm pressure of his tongue against your center, the insistence of his hands on your thighs, the building of wonder of your pleasure rising, oh, that is not familiar, that is new, brand-new.</p> <p>You gush- that is the word, the only word- you gush as the pleasure becomes too much to survive, and it bursts like a shaken-up can of soda, it tickles and it burns and it ripples from your center outward, in pulses of sensation so intense you are pinned by them, and your left hand curls into a fist and your right hand flails, hitting the damp cold glass and streaking away the steam, and your eyes open as the pleasure ebbs, and just then the clouds outside part, revealing the full white moon, unblinking, staring down at you from a black velvet sky.</p> <p>James laughs, his gentle, happy laugh, and looks up from where he's crouched between your thighs, and he smiles, and you see his face in the moonbeam that pours through the strip of window you've wiped clean, and at first you don't know what you're seeing, you don't know what to make of the redness on his chin.</p>
29	<p>There is the pelt of your pubic hair. You keep it trimmed close and neat around the edges, but you like the way it looks and have bucked the fashion magazines that advise you to shear it completely. There is the nub of your clitoris, and again you push away the memory of what James did last night with his tongue. With your right hand, you pull apart the lips of your vagina, and with your left, you angle the tampon toward its opening. You are slick with blood, and so the tampon</p>

Page	Content
	<p>slips in easily. You push until you're knuckle-deep in your own body, the first time you've touched yourself like this- though you have rubbed your clitoris and touched the outside, you've never put your fingers inside, somehow feeling like it was not right, like it would be trespassing.</p> <p>It's warm in there, almost hot. It feels like what it is- a muscular tube, made of flesh.</p>
30	The thrust of your small breasts. Nipples that seem darker than you imagine they should be, the right one smaller than the left.
32	<p>You are not going to tell your grandmother about the feel of James's mouth between your legs. You are not going to tell her about your orgasm in his old blue wagon, or about the moonbeam that illuminated his face just as he looked up to see your pleasure on your face and showing you your blood on his.</p>
52	<p>You turned a corner toward your locker and there they were—Maggie and Tucker, her pushed up against the row of lockers, him pinning her there, his mouth on-her throat and one hand disappeared u under her skirt. Maggie squirmed like maybe she wanted him to stop, or maybe she was just embarrassed to be found there by you like that, so undone.</p> <p>But Tucker didn't pull away; he kept his hand where it up under Maggie's skirt, buried between her thighs, as you walked past them, as you turned the dial Of your padlock) as you extracted your book, as you relocked your locker, as you passed them again on your way back up the hallway</p>
72	You have lain together in your bed, first him on top, then you, then him again.
84	He liked to drink- beer, of course, usually Bud Light. Jack Daniel's as well.
104	<p>You work on loosening the buttons of his blue-and-green plaid flannel, and though he do it more efficiently himself, he waits and watches. Then the last button is free, and you push the shirt off his shoulders. There's a white T-shirt underneath, tucked in, and, with a sudden rush of urgency, you pull it roughly from the waistband of his pants, up and over his head. He lifts his arms willingly, and you see the dark curls of his armpit hair, which seems like maybe the most intimate thing you have ever seen.</p> <p>He is hard, you see the shape of him through the thick denim of his jeans. You reach out, you put your hand there. You squeeze and look up into James's eyes. They shine down at you, and you read them well- desire, pleasure, love. Hand still wrapped around his erection, you lean up to kiss him.</p>
105	<p>The rest of your clothes come off, and James's. You are together in your bed, and he is naked before you in a way you have never seen this clearly- his dark, flat chest, the tight black curls of his pubic hair surrounding his erection. It's wet-tipped and urgent, and you stroke it with your fingers. James makes a sound, a moan, and he falls back against your pillows, giving his body up to you to explore. You take your time. If James wishes you'd do something more, or faster, he doesn't say. Instead he strokes your arms, gently, as you run your hands across and over him.</p>

Page	Content
	<p>He doesn't ask you to, but you want to, and you reach into James's discarded pants and find his wallet, find the condom he's tucked inside. He grins then, and he watches as you tear it open.</p> <p>You've never used one of these before, but you've been told how, and anyway, it's not hard to figure out; you roll it down James's penis, all the way to the base of the hair. James adjusts it, making sure it's rolled completely down and pinching the tip a little, stretching it. He's still lying on his back on the bed, and you kneel before him, letting your hair hide your face as you reach between your bodies, find his penis, and guide it toward the entrance of your vagina.</p> <p>It feels thick there, sort of scary, and there is a moment when you wonder how on earth it will fit inside, but James doesn't rush you, and you lower yourself onto him, his hands gentle on your hips, not trying to tell you what to do. His eyes are closed, his head is back, and you look at him through the soft curtain of your hair as you sink all the way down, as you feel a tear deep inside you, painful but not terrible, as you feel yourself full of him, of James.</p> <p>And then you move, careful and slow, your hands on his chest, his on your hips, your thighs, and it's not long before his face tightens up, he makes a low groan, and he shivers beneath you.</p> <p>You stay there, above him, for a moment longer, and inside you, you feel his penis beginning to soften.</p> <p>...Then he grasps the base of the condom while you move off him, and then you sort of look away, a little embarrassed, while he pulls off the condom, knots it.</p>
107	<p>But James is not; he kisses you again, on the mouth, and then he readjusts the blankets and begins to move his mouth down your body, across your breasts, down your stomach. You clench your legs together, remembering last time, but James looks up at you and says, "Relax, Bisou, I'm not worried," and so you let your legs fall apart, you let James kiss you there, and it is wonderful.</p>
121	<p>He said once he had, like, a rash, you know, on his dick, but that was it.</p>
130	<p>Each time the sex feels better than the time before, more natural, though James is embarrassed about how he can only last a few minutes.</p> <p>"It just feels so goo," he says, which makes you smile.</p> <p>That third Wednesday, you decide to try again, after the first time ends quickly. And this time is different- you still don't have an orgasm while he's inside you, but it lasts longer, and you're more able to focus on trying things that feel good for you.</p>
142	<p>You press yourself more firmly into James, you pull his sweater away from his back and run your fingers up and down his warm skin, you tangle your tongue with his and take his lower lip between your teeth. He makes a sound only you can hear, a soft moan, and you feel all the ways his body responds to you.</p>
148	<p>...an I Support Planned Parenthood sticker in the lower right corner of the windshield.</p>
188	<p>He got rough with me, dear one. He tore the neck of my blouse, and he bruised my wrist, but as soon as I could manage it, I found the door handle with my other hand and pried it open. I yanked up with my arm and broke his grip, and I landed hard on the asphalt, hard enough to bruise my tailbone, hard enough to rip the skin from both of my elbows.</p>

Page	Content
	..."Come on, Sybil," he said. "Don't play hard to get."
213	And my mistake, dear one, was not the abortion. My mistake was leaving a phone number with the clinic.
250	"His daughter had sex with him?" "Not willingly. Maybe no one cared if it was rape or consensual..."
259	Roosters who can't get laid don't flap off to Mother Nature demanding a chicken sex slave. ...You talk about how smart and talented you are, but then you go and reveal that you think "forced monogamy" is a good idea.
277	You wonder, one Saturday afternoon, your chin rubbed red from his weekend stubble, your vulva swollen with desire...
308	"...told us about this time he had sex with a girl at a party, a girl who was really drunk. Too drunk, probably."
310	You feel him shift to open his bedside table and you hear him rustle around, find a condom and tear it open, and his hand slips between you to unroll it before the two of you fit together, his breath in your hair, his blankets up to your chins, and you move together, together, together, until you shiver with pleasure and his breath catches, his hips tighten, and he moans into your hair.

**Alternate ISBN**  
0-06-274235-3

Profanity	Count
Fuck	4
Shit	6



## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings

ch - HERN x +

https://hcsdhhs.goalexandria.com/search# 110% ☆

Hernando High School Log In

Study Programs Medium Genre Tags

Smart Search RED HOOD Temp List

3 Results

FIC ARN ★★★★★ (0)

**Red hood**

Arnold, Elana K.,

Text-unmediated-volume ([2020])

Elana K. Arnold.  
Balzer + Bray, an imprint of HarperCollins Publi...  
353 pages ;22 cm  
9780062742353

Wolf attacks  
Young women  
Magic

"You are alone in the woods, seen only by the unblinking yellow moon. Your hands are empty. You are nearly naked. And the wolf is angry. Since her grandmother became her caretaker when she was four years old, Bisou Martel has lived a quiet life in a little house in Seattle. She's kept mostly to herself. She's been good. But then comes the night of homecoming, when she finds herself running for her life over roots and between trees, a fury of claws and teeth behind her. A wolf attacks. Bisou fights back. A new moon rises. And with it, questions. About the blood in Bisou's past, and on her hands as she stumbles home. About broken boys and vicious wolves...."

Awards Note: A Junior Library Guild selection

the web and Windows

6:33 PM 8/2/2023



Browser address bar: <https://hcsdhhs.goalexandria.com/search#>

Page Header: **Hernando High School** | Log In

Navigation: Study Programs | Medium | Genre | Tags

Search Bar: **Smart Search** | **RED HOOD**

Temp List

3 Results

1 of 1 Copies

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HERN	FIC ARN		Media Center	5100100088484	Available	

Taskbar: Details | Copies

System Tray: 6:32 PM 8/2/2023

<https://www.common sensemedia.org/book-reviews/red-hood>

Parents' Guide to

# Red Hood

By [Mandie Carroll](#), Common Sense Media Reviewer

age 15+

Clever feminist spin on fairy tale honors power of women.

Book [Elana K. Arnold](#) Fantasy 2020

[Add your rating](#)



Save

Parents Say: age 18+ [4 reviews](#)

Any Iffy Content? [Read more](#)

Talk with Your Kids About... [Read more](#)

## A Lot or a Little?

What you will—and won't—find in this book.

### Educational Value

Readers will learn about the incel phenomenon (men

### Positive Messages

There's nothing inherently embarrassing or shameful

### Positive Role Models

Bisou, who's 16, is a thoughtful person and fierce

### Violence & Scariness

In dark woods, wolves attack girls and Bisou kills

### Sex, Romance & Nudity

Bisou and James have consensual and loving sex (in

### Products & Purchases

Not present

### Drinking, Drugs & Smoking

A party scene shows drinking and pot smoking, none

### Parents Need to Know

Parents need to know that *Red Hood*, by award-winning author Elana K. Arnold (*Damsel*), is an unapologetically feminist twist on the classic fairy tale. Bisou, a girl in a red hooded sweatshirt, discovers she has the instincts and strength to stop boys from hurting the young women they prey upon...

## Community Reviews

age 18+

Based on 4 parent reviews

**brey0120** Parent of 2, 9 and 11-year-old

1 year ago

age 18+

My 11 year old daughter was tasked by her teacher to find a fantasy book to read. We went to the library and nothing in the children's section was peaking her interest. She is not a typical fantasy reader, but more of age appropriate horror. I let her go to the young adult section and she picked this book out. She was really enjoying it but the good kid she is came to me to say she thought it may be in appropriate for her. I took it from her and read to page 9 and agreed. Yikes. We ended up finding her another book and good thing too because I went ahead and continued reading it because why not. We had it for 2 weeks, might as well. There was another scene that was pretty graphic to me. More than it really needed to be in my opinion. It is definitely not for anyone under the age of 18. At least not something I want my daughter reading. I wish I had came here first as to not have exposed her to it. With that said, I truly enjoyed the book. It has several good, inspiring messages in it. It didn't take long to get me hooked and I read it very quickly. Other than the sexual scenes, that in my opinion completely irrelevant to the story and not needed, it is a wonderful book.

Show more

**cmgriffith** Adult

2 years ago

age 18+



## Not a children's book

This book blindsided me. I went in thinking I was reading YA Little Red Riding Hood retelling, but what I got was an erotica book marketed for teens with a feminist, anti-male agenda. This is a book for adults or young adults ages 18+.

## What's the Story?

In RED HOOD, readers follow Bisou into the woods towards home after an embarrassing incident with boyfriend James. A wolf attacks her there, and in self-defense, she kills it. The next day, she learns that Tucker, a classmate who'd drunkenly forced himself on her at a dance earlier that night, was found dead where she killed the wolf, and she realizes that Tucker was probably the wolf. After Bisou saves Keisha from a similar wolf attack, and supports another friend, Maggie, who's being sexually harassed by a likely incel ("involuntary celibate"), her grandmother, Mémé, tells Bisou about the mysterious powers she's inherited that come with the full moon and her period. Mémé also fills in many blanks about Bisou's violent early childhood. The remainder of the story focuses on the bonds between Bisou, her friends, and Mémé, as well as the strength and power they find in one another to confront toxic masculinity and the real violence it engenders.

Show more

## Is It Any Good?

Our review:

Parents say: (4):

Kids say: Not yet rated

This absorbing, gorgeously written novel both challenges and inspires readers. An early sex scene and extended descriptions of Bisou's first period may cause even strident feminists discomfort. But the underlying messages are that joyous sex between consenting teens is sometimes a healthy part of growing up and that menstruation is not inherently shameful. Readers are rewarded with lyrical prose and a magical story that affirms the power we can find in one another. Though trauma and threat of male violence is ever-present, it's inspiring to see the characters overcome their troubles.

The narrator uses "you," which effectively puts the reader in Bisou's shoes, but it may take some getting used to, and inserted poems have no context until late in the story. But aside from these small hiccups, *Red Hood* is a truly satisfying read. While teen readers will benefit from learning about the timely problem of toxic masculinity, they will also enjoy the twist on the classic fairy tale and remember the fierce women characters (and the men who support them) long after turning the last page.

# RED HOOD

BY ELANA K. ARNOLD • RELEASE DATE: FEB. 25, 2020

*A timely and unabashedly feminist twist on a classic fairy tale.*

Sixteen-year-old Bisou Martel's life takes a profound turn after encountering an aggressive wolf.

Following an embarrassing incident between Bisou and her boyfriend, James, after the homecoming dance, a humiliated Bisou runs into the Pacific Northwest woods. There, she kills a giant wolf who viciously attacks her, upending the quiet life she's lived with her Mémé, a poet, since her mother's violent death. The next day it's revealed that her classmate Tucker—who drunkenly came on to her at the dance—was found dead in the woods with wounds identical to the ones Bisou inflicted on the wolf. When she rescues Keisha, an outspoken journalist for the school paper, from a similar wolf attack, Bisou gains an ally, and her Mémé reveals her bloody and brave legacy, which is inextricably tied to the moon and her menstrual cycle. Bisou needs her new powers in the coming days, as more wolves lie in wait. Arnold (*Damsel*, 2018, etc.) uses an intriguing blend of magic realism, lyrical prose, and imagery that evokes intimate physical and emotional aspects of young womanhood. Bisou's loving relationship with gentle, kind James contrasts with the frank exploration of male entitlement and the disturbing incel phenomenon. Bisou and Mémé seem to be white, Keisha is cued as black, James has light-brown skin and black eyes, and there is diversity in the supporting cast.

A timely and unabashedly feminist twist on a classic fairy tale. (*Fantasy*. 14-18)

**Pub Date:** Feb. 25, 2020

**ISBN:** 978-0-06-274235-3

**Page Count:** 368

**Publisher:** Balzer + Bray/HarperCollins

**Review Posted Online:** Nov. 18, 2019

**Kirkus Reviews Issue:** Dec. 15, 2019

**Categories:**

TEENS & YOUNG ADULT LITERARY FICTION | TEENS & YOUNG ADULT SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY | TEENS & YOUNG ADULT SOCIAL THEMES

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

# Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days after its formation. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School HHS Date 4/3/24

Title Red Hood

Author Elana K. Arnold

## Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material

### Silent Voting Results:

0 Do Not Remove

✓5 Remove/Discontinue

Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
<p>If committee is recommending limiting access-</p> <p><u>      </u> Grade Level</p> <p><u>      </u> For Advance Course</p> <p><u>      </u> Parent Permission</p>	<p>Basis for removal, check all that apply:</p> <p><u>      </u> The material is pornographic</p> <p><u>      </u> The material is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS</p> <p><u>      </u> The material is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.</p> <p><u>✓</u> The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.</p>



Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

Print Name	Position	Signature
Penny Hewitt-Schwarz	Media Specialist	Penny Hewitt-Schwarz
Stacey Swihart	AP	Stacey Swihart
Lori Howie	Teacher	Lori Howie
Jan Everett	Community	Jan Everett
Tiffany Skinner	Parent	Tiffany Skinner

Administrator's Signature Stacey Swihart Date 4/3/24



TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: April 5, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenge HHS 051-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, "Red Hood" at Hernando High School. The review committee at Hernando High School has evaluated the book, "Red Hood", written by Elana Arnold based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is for the book to be removed from Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on May 7, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before May 7, 2024.



**A. Item Currently Budgeted -**

Account Name		<u>No Financial Impact</u>										
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

**B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -\*\***

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

**C. History**

Check one:

Prior Year Budget: ☐New for Current Year: ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$

**\*\* WHEN ITEM NOT CURRENTLY BUDGETED IS APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD, THIS WILL SERVE AS THE BUDGET AMENDMENT\*\***



# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

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**Agenda Item # 7. 24-2201**

5/7/2024

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### **Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to remove the book, "Beautiful" written by Amy Reed, from circulation and not be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

### **Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to remove the book, "Beautiful" written by Amy Reed, from circulation. This book is being challenged at Central High School.

Central High School's Review Committee met on March 13, 2024 and April 3, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 4-1 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book be removed from circulation in Hernando County Schools.

Per Hernando County School District 2522 Policy requirements, the Superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to remove the book.

### **My Contact**

Kelly Downey

Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs

352-797-7000 ext. 280

downey\_k@hcsb.k12.fl.us

### **2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

### **Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.



## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605  
M4LHernando.CMRCC0pq+++1hair@gm

ail.com

Hernando County School. District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, 34601

RE: CHS“Beautiful” (M4LHC – 0114/2023)

November 1, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 0114-23) for “Beautiful ” which is currently located at Central High School’s media center. This book was discovered in Alexandria back on July 21, 2023

“Beautiful” contains sexual age-inappropriate content: sexual activities; sexual nudity; drug abuse by minors; alcohol use by minors; excessive/frequent profanity; and self-harm including anorexia. This book shows a warning label for 18 years of age and up.

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I’m calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book from Central High School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can’t be “disappeared” (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name) JT

Address : PO Box 1568 City Brooksville State FL Zip Code 34605

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: November 1, 2023 Author: Reed, Amy Lynn

Title: Beautiful

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Simon Pulse 2010, 2009

School(s) in which item is used: Central High School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames, etc. Attach additional pages if necessary) Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

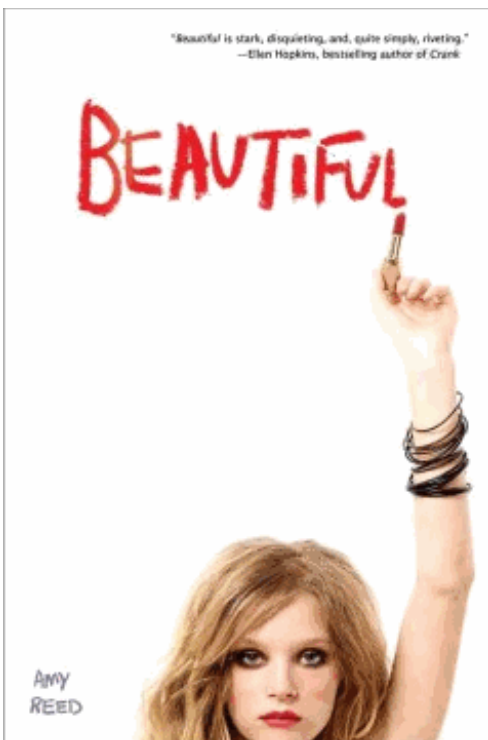
If yes, where? Name and date of publication: GoodReads 2013, 2010.

Complainant's Signature

Julia Thomas

Date November 1, 2023

# BEAUTIFUL



*Young Adult*

**By Amy Reed**

ISBN: 978-1-41697830-5

## CONTENT WARNING

You are about to access material that may contain content of an ADULT nature. These files may include pictures and materials that some viewers may find offensive. If you are under the age of 18, or if such material offends you or if it is illegal for you to view these materials, please exit now.

### Book Summary:

A thirteen-year-old girl becomes addicted to drugs and alcohol while trying to fit in at her new school.

### Summary of Concerns:

This book contains sexual activities; sexual nudity; drug abuse by minors; alcohol use by minors; excessive/frequent profanity; and self-harm including anorexia.

**4** / 5

**Not For Minors**  
BookLooks Review Rating



Page	Content
5	<p>"So, are you straight?" he says. "I mean, do you do drugs and stuff?"</p> <p>"Yeah, um, I guess so." I haven't. I will. Yes. I will do anything he wants.</p>
14	<p>"Most of them are high schoolers," Alex tells me. They are smoking and drinking out of paper bags.</p> <p>...There's a fat guy sitting in the middle of the sidewalk with a rat crawling across his shoulders and down his back, over his lap and up his chest. It settles on top of his head and looks at us with the same beady eyes as the boy. The rat is purple like the fat boy's hair. It settles in like camouflage.</p> <p>"Purple Haze," says Alex.</p> <p>"What do you want?" he says.</p> <p>..."Four hits," she says, and I have no idea what she's talking about.</p> <p>..."Can we have the acid now?" says Alex</p> <p>"Do you have the money?"</p> <p>..."She does."</p> <p>He looks me up and down and the fat under his chin wiggles like Jell-O. "I'll give it to you for free if you two make out," he says, and the smoke from the cigarette goes too far into my lungs and I start coughing.</p> <p>"I'm not a dyke fucker," says Alex.</p> <p>..."Just give us the acid," Alex says, exhaling smoke like she knows what she's doing.</p> <p>..."Have you ever taken a shit that was so good it was better than an orgasm?" says Purple Haze.</p>
18	<p>In the shadows Alex says, "Where's the acid?" I hold my hand out with two little cellophane packets. "You take one and I'll take two." She opens a packet and licks it. The two tiny white paper squares stick to her tongue. She opens the second packet and presses her finger inside. One square sticks and she points it at me.</p> <p>"Here," she says.</p> <p>"What?" I say.</p> <p>"Eat it."</p> <p>I lick her finger and its salty.</p> <p>"Am I supposed to swallow it?"</p> <p>"Just let it dissolve."</p> <p>"Where are we going now?"</p> <p>"James's house."</p> <p>I say "Shit," and it sounds ridiculous coming out of my mouth.</p> <p>"You look good," Alex says. "Don't worry. He already wants you."</p>
23	<p>James looks at me like I'm something salvageable, like the something that got ruined is still there somewhere. He helps me up and says, "So you're not so straight," and I say "No," even though I still don't know what it means. And he says, "How are you feeling?" and I feel my feet leave the ground and the air in my lungs feels heavy and warm and full of mud, and he says, "I took some, too. I'll be like you soon."</p> <p>The boys from the lunch table are shadows on the other side of the empty yard, watching and grinning like they know something I don't. They are drinking something brown out of a bottle and smoking something that does not smell like cigarettes.</p>

Page	Content
25	<p>The walls are dripping because I am on acid. He is not yet on acid. The tab is still on his tongue, dissolving, tasting like spit wad.</p> <p>I'm thirteen and I'm on acid. He's fifteen and he will be on acid soon. I'm on his bed and under The Wall and listening to Pink Floyd. I do not know why James listens to music my dad likes. I do not know why I am looking at his stereo, the real kind, with different levels stacked on top of each other and blinking lights — green, red — with speakers as big as I am, playing Pink Floyd and reminding me of snow.</p> <p>He is wearing a baseball cap and I want it off his head. It makes him look like a normal boy. I want his hat off because he is not that kind of boy. I would not be on my back like this for that kind of boy.</p> <p>I pull off his baseball cap because I need him to be someone else. His hair is flat and straight like a girl's and falls into his eyes. He takes the hat out of my hand and puts it back on his head. He says, "Stop it," and I laugh, and I do it again and he grabs it again and I think it's a game but he does not, and he says, "Fucking stop it," and pins my wrist onto the bed, and I stop it. Then his tongue goes in my mouth and this is nothing like a first kiss is supposed to be.</p> <p>Alex opens the door and says, "Can I use the phone?" James waves his hand and I can't tell if he's giving her permission or shooing her away, but she comes in and sits on his desk and picks up the phone and starts dialing. He takes off his hat because it is getting in the way of our faces and I know better than to ask why it's okay if he does it now but not when I wanted him to, and I cannot see what he looks like now because I'm closing my eyes.</p> <p>Alex is on the phone talking to everyone she knows. I can feel her sitting on the desk next to the stereo blinking red and green, stop, go, and James's tongue is in my mouth and it taste like something dusty, small, darting around and hitting my teeth like it's looking for a way to get inside me, a trap door, searching for something hidden and unlocked. And Alex is watching and telling everyone she knows, "Cassie is on the bed with James and they're slurping." she keeps saying "slurping" and it sounds like something ugly, and her cackle ricochets off the wall, the white bricks like the album cover, and it is too loud in here, it is too bright, and the slurping makes spit and the spit makes choking and I close my mouth and lock his tongue out and he says, "Get the fuck out, bitch," and I think he's talking to me, but Alex cackles and hangs up the phone and James says, "Turn off the lights," and she does, and "Close the door," and she does, and my teeth open and his tongue goes inside and I try to keep up but I have no idea what I'm doing and I'm scared because it's just me and him and I can't see anything but the green and red lights, and he's the only one who knows his way around here in the dark.</p> <p>There's a mouth on mine and teeth scraping and I'm thinking of cheese. I'm thinking, why does expensive cheese stink? I'm thinking of my stubbly armpits that he's touching with his big hands. The sound of a zipper unzipping. The sound of Pink Floyd. And I'm thinking of snow. I'm thinking of driving fast through it, nothing but white shiny sometimes texture, patterns that shift and cackle because the sky is cloudy and the shadows are lying. And I'm wearing a white cotton bra that is not a bad-girl bra. He laughs. He says, "Is this a training bra?" and I look at the lights — red, green — and they tell me nothing about what I should answer. So I shrug as well as I can shrug with his body on top of mine and my right arm</p>

Page	Content
	<p>under his hot hand and my left arm not wanting to move at all and my shoulders cold and shuttering under Pink Floyd snow.</p> <p>His fingers are inside me and I am trying to make my mouth move. I feel something that feels like sickness, something all through my body, like poison slowly filling me up. I don't know if my mouth is moving because I can't feel anything except the poison. There is something running in my brain. I cannot see it but I know it is coming. I can feel the pounding of the footsteps shaking everything. I hear pants unzipping, somewhere far away, and I don't know how long this is supposed to take but I hope it is fast because I want to go home. I want this feeling to stop. I want to give him what he wants and leave.</p> <p>...I zip up my pants and put on my bra.</p> <p>...I feel the ghosts of his fingers inside me.</p>
29	<p>It is the closest thing I can say to something I'm not allowed to say, something not, "No," not "I want to go," not "I don't want to be in your bed, not with your dripping walls, not with your hat off, not with you touching me, not with your fingers inside me or anything else from your body." I cannot say that.</p> <p>...The lunch-table boys: "Cock tease."</p> <p>...The lunch-table boys: "Cock tease. Little girl."</p>
34	<p>"You look hot. Fuck James. You could get a high schooler."</p> <p>"Fuck James," I say even though I feel like crying every time I saw him at school this week, with that other girl on his arm and that look on his face like, "Look what you're missing."</p>
36	<p>"We should go soon," she says.</p> <p>"Go where?" I ask.</p> <p>"Portland. As soon as we get some money. What you have to do is steal a little out of your parents' wallets every day, not too much or they'll notice."</p> <p>"What will we do for money when we get there?"</p> <p>"I don't know. My brother makes a lot of money. I could help him."</p> <p>"What does he do?"</p> <p>"Sells drugs."</p> <p>"Oh," I say. She keeps pulling my hair tighter.</p> <p>"He has a friend who could get you a job."</p> <p>"Doing what?"</p> <p>"Giving blow jobs."</p> <p>I don't tell her I still don't know exactly what that is.</p> <p>"You don't have to have sex with them," she explains. "That way, you keep your self-respect."</p> <p>"What if I'm not good at it?"</p> <p>"It doesn't matter. Old guys would pay a fortune to have you just look at their dick."</p> <p>"I don't want to look at an old guys dick. I don't want to look at anyone's dick."</p>
46	<p>"He got kicked out of Rose Hill for selling weed," she says.</p>
47	<p>James the asshole has his arm around the slutty girl and he grins at me before he starts sucking on her ear, and she's looking at me and giggling like his dirty mouth on her ear makes her better than me.</p>

Page	Content
58	<p>She points to a broken light fixture on the ceiling. "And that's where- drumroll, please- my dad hung himself."</p> <p>..."Yeah. He just left him up there and packed up his shit and was gone. The funniest part is he left a note right next to the suicide note. It said, 'Dad's hanging in the basement. I'm leaving. Bye.' What a weirdo."</p>
59	<p>I am tracing the outline of my lips with blood red pencil and I can see Alex behind me in the reflection. She is sitting on the toilet, peeing, and her thighs are covered with bruises.</p> <p>"What happened?" I ask her.</p> <p>"To what?" She says, wiping herself.</p> <p>"To your legs?"</p> <p>She laughs at me like I'm a stupid child. "Wes just likes it rough."</p> <p>"Likes what rough?"</p> <p>"Sex, stupid," she says. "But you wouldn't know anything about that, would you? Not Cassie the sweet little virgin."</p>
61	<p>Lenora is passed out when we leave, so Alex steals a pack of her cigarettes and a bottle of vodka, just puts them in her backpack like it's no big deal, like she's not even afraid of getting caught. We walk to the lake and it's freezing. I drink fast so I'll get warm, so I don't have to think about that house and the things that happened in it, so I won't be scared of where we're going.</p> <p>"My half-sister is moving in next week," Alex says, her voice torn by the shot she just drank.</p> <p>"How old is she?"</p> <p>"Eighth grade."</p> <p>"Is she cool?"</p> <p>"She's all right."</p> <p>"Why is she moving here?"</p> <p>"Her dad's fucking her," she says, and the vodka gets stuck in my throat, gagging me, pulling everything inside me out.</p> <p>"We have the same mom," she says. "But Sarah's dad was some guy my mom had an affair with so my dad made my mom get rid of her."</p>
62	<p>"Who are those guys?" I ask.</p> <p>"High schoolers."</p> <p>I want to turn around. The vodka's not working. I drink more and it's still not working.</p>
63	<p>I sit and he sits next to me and everyone else sits and soon we are all in a circle, and Alex is passing around the bottle of vodka and it is getting emptier and emptier and I am suddenly very angry. I am furious. That is our vodka, I want to tell her. They are drinking it and it will be gone and there won't be enough for me. ...I drink extra when the bottle comes around so I won't think about the fact that I'm not talking. It does not take long for me to get drunk enough so my mind does not have to be here anymore.</p>
65	<p>There are arms around me, a hard chest against mine, hands on the small of my back, breath in my ears. This is when I'm supposed to put my arms around his neck, when I'm supposed to put my face close to his. This is when I'm supposed to kiss him, when he's touching me and his warmth is getting inside my clothes. I'm</p>

Page	Content
	<p>supposed to do it now or he won't be interested later.</p> <p>...I must kiss him because what he wants is my mouth, my hands on his back, my body closer, closer. I must turn my head, feel his breath on my face, move my lips to his mouth. Open. Tongue in. Out. Close my eyes. They like it when you close your eyes.</p> <p>"Damn, girl," he says, licking his lips.</p>
69	<p>We're sitting on the floor, passing a joint around, and we want something stronger.</p> <p>"Doesn't that nasty kid in your smart class take Ritalin?" says Alex.</p> <p>"I love Ritalin," says Sarah, and her face lights up.</p> <p>..."Call him," says Alex.</p>
70	<p>We sit in silence for a while, thinking about money and getting high. I am thinking about Ritalin. I am trying to guess what it could do, why something so great could be a kid's prescription. My stomach turns over and my body tingles. Of course he will give it to me. He probably won't even make me pay. I will have an endless supply of something new to feel.</p>
75	<p>A thirty-something guy in a stained white undershirt gives us nothing, but tells us we're pretty and says he'll give us some whiskey if we stick around. I consider it, but Sarah starts walking.</p>
80	<p>This is when we pass a joint back and forth and I let him talk and let him think I'm interested in what he's saying. We are talking about the things you are supposed to talk about before you have sex.</p> <p>...It is the middle of the afternoon and my mother is sleeping. She doesn't know we are here, in my bedroom, on my bed. She doesn't know his hand is under my shirt and rubbing while he talks. He does not know that I feel nothing.</p> <p>...He says this as he's unbuttoning my gentile pants, as he slides his hand into my gentile underwear.</p> <p>...He knows that my mom sleeps like the dead in the late afternoon, that we have bulk quantities of snacks, that my door locks, that I'm a good kisser, that I let him do anything he wants.</p>
82	<p>He knows that my underwear and bra are pink and lacy. He does not know about the old white cotton bras and underwear hidden in the back of my drawer. He does not know my face without makeup.</p> <p>He knows what it feels like to be on top of me, that I don't move, but I am small and thin and pliable, that my breasts are the perfect size for his hand.</p> <p>I am thinking, this is supposed to be special. I am thinking, everybody's lying about this being special. I am strangely not scared. All of this seems vaguely familiar, like I've seen it in movies, like I've seen myself doing it. I wonder why I can hardly feel anything else, how I can know that it hurts but not even feel it, how I don't even have to be here, how I can drift away to somewhere else, float up to the ceiling and watch how ridiculous we look: him thrusting into me like his life depends on it; me lying there looking like I'm wood, something hard and unbendable, when really I'm nothing, when really I'm just skin wrapped around fog.</p> <p>"Does it hurt?" He asks me.</p> <p>"It's okay," I say.</p>



Page	Content
	<p>"Does it feel good?" he asks me.</p> <p>"Yeah," I say. I am lying. It feels like nothing. I wish he would stop talking. I wish he would stop making me speak. It is hard to speak when I'm on the ceiling, in the corner. It makes me have to come back down, feel his weight on top of me, feel him hard inside me, punching my insides. I come down long enough to see what he wants to hear, then float away again. It is not difficult, this flying from place to place. It is like I was born knowing how to do it.</p> <p>"Oh, shit, I'm gonna come," he says, and I hear him and my ears bring me back to the bed just in time to feel him shutter, hear him grown. He holds his breath in the world pauses and I feel like I'm holding the whole thing up with my skinny arms and bent knees, my legs spread wide open, then everything lets go and he falls on top of me and I sink into the mattress until I am nothing.</p> <p>He lies like that for a while, like he's dead, and I think for a moment that he is. I would not be traumatized if he died on top of me, his shrinking, shriveling dick still inside of me. Anything could happen and it would not matter.</p> <p>...I feel too naked. He rolls onto his side and faces me, puts his arm around me. He kisses my shoulder, my neck, my jaw, my ear, making annoying cooing noises as he does it. I want him to stop. I want to crush my cigarette on his eyelid. I would rather he keep fucking me for the rest of the night then lie here staring at me and tracing my ribs with his fingertips, acting like what happened meant something.</p> <p>..."I love you," he says, and it sounds ridiculous. Everything about him is ridiculous: the messy hair, the forest of zits on his chin; the thin, pathetic attempt at a mustache; the white thigh; the penis laying against it, shriveled and small with the condom still on.</p>
85	<p>Maybe this is all love is and all it will ever be- boys fucking girls and pretending it's love, girls getting fucked and pretending they like it, saying "I love you, too," and wanting to throw up.</p>
86	<p>Finally he says, "You didn't bleed," in a small voice. He does not seem angry, but I don't know what else he could be.</p> <p>..."Virgins are supposed to bleed," he says, and I realize he is pouting, looking at the white sheets like they let him down, searching for blood like it's some kind of trophy.</p> <p>..."You're a virgin aren't you?"</p> <p>"Yes. Of course I'm a virgin. Why wouldn't I be a virgin?"</p> <p>"Thirteen is pretty young to not be a virgin."</p> <p>"I am a virgin." Of course I'm a fucking virgin</p>
87	<p>I don't care if he thinks I wasn't a virgin. I don't care if he thinks I'm a slut, if he thinks I've fucked a million boys before.</p> <p>...I want no memory, no feeling, no one, nothing inside me.</p>
88	<p>"You're my girl, right?" He says softly.</p> <p>"Right," I say. What else would I be? You are the most popular guy at school and I'm nobody. I will keep letting you fuck me until you get tired of it, until you find someone better to fuck.</p>
91	<p>He's got his arm around her and what they're doing could be called kissing but it's more like sword fighting with tongues. They are by the pile of discarded clothes, across the concrete from me and Sarah, on the other side of the world.</p>

Page	Content
92	He is my boyfriend now. Because I let him fuck me, I can do whatever I want with his sweatshirt. ..."What are you doing?" she says. Her face is covered with slime. She looks proud of herself, even though she's the one who told me about Wes's reputation for fucking anything, including a couple of retards from Special Ed.
93	I can do it because Alex is busy getting her face sucked off.
95	I hand her the pipe and she inhales, holds her breath, exhales slowly. ..."You like her?" she says, motioning toward Alex, who is under the sleeping-bag coat, kneeling in front of Wes with her face in his lap. ..."You miss where you used to live," Sarah says as she reloads the pipe. ..."How?" she asks, passing me the pipe. I inhale, I feel the smoke softening the tightness in my throat and my chest.
98	"I thought we were gonna go driving later," he says, which really means parking behind an abandoned building or at the end of a rural road so he can fuck me.
99	I have to kiss him now. I have to make him forget the voice that came out. I have to remind him that I am who he wants me to be, not someone who tells him "No." I pull him close. I bite his ear. I put my mouth on his. I put my hand on his crotch, squeeze gently, feel him hot and sweaty through baggy pants.
100	"I'd look unhappy too if I just had Wes's crusty dick in my mouth for the last half hour," I say, and Sarah smiles and we put our hoods over our heads.
109	"They said he'd been raping me since I was little." ..."They said the doctors could tell by the scars."
114	All I want is a drink and a joint and a quieter corner to sit in until Alex decides it's time to go home. Wes is standing outside drinking a forty. Alex throws her coat off in my direction, runs up to him, and throws her arms around his neck. They stick their tongues in each other's mouths while I stand at the curb, holding her jacket and watching people I don't know smoking cigarettes and drinking out of paper bags.
115	The guys leaning against the apartment building looking at me with their droopy, stoned eyes, whispering things and making each other laugh. ..."Is Ethan here?" and all of a sudden I want nothing more than to be in the back of his car behind the reservoir, looking at the ceiling while I let him fuck me.
116	Forties are piled on a table, and Wes hands each of us one.
117	"Did you get it?" Wes says to Alex. "Of course I did," Alex says. "That's my girl," Wes says as he dumps out a pile of white powder on the glass table. The boy named Jarvis takes out his school ID card and starts chopping it up. Wes and another guy do the same, and the rest of us sit and watch and listen to the tap, tap, tap of white powder becoming finer. Wes makes lines for all of us and they seem enormous, bigger than the ones I've seen in movies. ...Jarvis rolls up a dollar bill, snorts a line, and doesn't die. He runs his finger across the glass and rubs his teeth. He closes his eyes and says, "Come on, baby." He passes the dollar bill and everyone takes their turn. By the time it gets to me, I imagine the bill covered with snot, but I do like everyone else did- I put my finger on one nostril, put the dollar bill in the other, lean over, and breathe in as hard as

Page	Content
	<p>I can.</p> <p>It feels like little thin needles in my nose for two seconds, then nothing. Then a terrible taste in my throat like liquid chemicals dripping. I pull a cigarette out of Alex's purse, light it, take a drag, and wait for something to happen.</p> <p>...I hear Alex whisper into Wes's ear, "Cocaine makes me horny," and that's when it hits me, when the lights suddenly seem brighter and the bed is softer and everyone's more beautiful, and my body is lighter and stronger and sexier and more awake, and the hangover's gone and the music is beautiful and everything is perfect.</p> <p>Wes and Alex are making out on the floor. Jarvis and another guy are talking about how one of their teachers at school is a child molester.</p> <p>...I gulp down my cheap, warm beer and it is the most wonderful thing I have ever tasted. I take a drag from my cigarette and feel the smoke lift me.</p>
121	<p>"What's going on in here?" Anton says. He is staring at the pile of white powder on the table.</p> <p>"You want some, man?" Jarvis says from the corner.</p> <p>"Yeah," he says. "It's been a while."</p> <p>"Me too," I say, and Anton laughs.</p> <p>"Hold on girl," he says.</p> <p>Everyone's perked up and waiting for Anton to cut the lines. I realize my nose is dripping and I wipe it with the back of my hand. He is not going fast enough. I drink the remains of the forty I left on the floor and he is still not done.</p> <p>...He lets me go first.</p> <p>...The line he cut is not big enough. I pick up the card he left on the table and pull out more from the pile that has gotten much smaller.</p> <p>"Take it slow, Cassie," Wes laughs.</p> <p>"You just calm down, young man," I say, and everyone laughs like it's the funniest thing they've ever heard, and I snort the two lines I've made for myself and pass the dollar bill to Anton and savor the chemical sludge in the back of my throat.</p> <p>"This white girl's funny," one of the guys says, and I realize that this is the best night of my entire life.</p>
123	<p>I am high on cocaine and sitting next to a six-foot-tall black man who just got out of prison and has a gun in his lap.</p>
131	<p>This is where Justin gives me his medicine and asks for nothing in return. Just time.</p> <p>...Ritalin makes him normal and it makes me invincible. I took four every day, then six, then eight, now I can't keep track and nobody has any idea. Alex and Sarah think he only gives me half his normal prescription, that we're all getting the same tiny amount to save up for the weekends. They don't know they're getting nothing compared to me. They don't know he gets his prescription filled four more times than he's supposed to and his mom doesn't notice and nobody notices because Justin is invisible.</p>
134	<p>He looks at me with his squinty eyes and leans over and whispers even though there's nobody around here, just me and him and the memory of drool bubbles, and pills in my pocket and erection in his.</p> <p>"What do you mean?" He says, and his breath smells like beef jerky.</p>

Page	Content
	<p>I say, "Anything." I am leaning closer, pressing my breasts against his shoulder. "Anything you want."</p> <p>He thinks for a moment. His mouth opens slightly, then closes. Finally, he looks at me. Finally, he leans over and whispers, "I want to touch you." He sniffles. "I want to touch you down there."</p> <p>"Okay," I say. This is easy. This is nothing.</p> <p>He is shaking and he flinches at the sound of the zipper. He flinches when I grab his wrist and lead his hand down into the sexy underwear I only wear when I know I have a date with Ethan. He lets his hand lie there for a while, not moving at all, and his eyes are closed and his nostrils flare with heavy, wheezy, snotty breaths, like this is the most important thing that's ever happened to him. His hand is lying there so gentle and scared and I want to slap him. Just do it, I want to say. I want to slap him.</p> <p>"You are so pretty," he says.</p> <p>"Fuck pretty," I say.</p> <p>"Why are you so angry?" He says.</p> <p>"Fuck you," I say.</p> <p>His fingers move a little. He stops breathing. His face is red and still and he smells like mildew, like eggs and toast, like computers, and the bell rings, and I want to slap him even more, not just slap but punch and kick and bite until he bleeds and jump on his ribs until they are all broken. His eyes shoot up like he's heard the thoughts inside my head, and he takes back his hand and runs off without his backpack, holding his hand to his chest as if it is broken, running like a boy with asthma runs, trailing dirty boy smells behind him, smells of mildew, smells of something musty from myself.</p> <p>I zip up my pants and smoke a cigarette even though I am already late for class.</p>
139	<p>I have not been hungry in weeks. Usually Sunday is the day I eat. I take a bunch of sleeping pills the night before and spend all day on the couch drinking coffee and eating everything I can find, taking periodic breaks to go to my room to smoke pot and cigarettes. Ethan does not know this. Nobody knows this. But he has been saying things lately, like he can see my ribs poking out, like he can feel my pelvic bones stabbing him when he fucks me. I just shrug and bat my eyes and kiss him. We had an assembly at school about eating disorders that I skipped to smoke pot behind the gym.</p>
142	<p>He lies on the bed. He says, "Come here," and I do. I let him undress me. I move my arms when it is time to take my shirt off. I move my hips and legs when it is time for my pants. I do this with the sleepy-lidded eyes I know he likes, even though I haven't taken a pill since lunchtime, even though I can see my purse across the room, holding what I need to feel good. I could get up now and go get it. I could tell him to stop and say I have to pee. But I don't. I know this will not take long. I know he will be dozy afterward and he will not question my need to go to the bathroom.</p> <p>He fucks me and I lay there looking at this new ceiling that looks like every other ceiling I've seen – white, bumpy, blank, neutral. I rub my hands on his back so it seems like I'm paying attention. He finishes, falls on top of me with a sigh, rolls over next to me. I wait a few seconds and start to get up, sure that he's nodded</p>

Page	Content
	<p>off.</p> <p>"Wait," he says pulling me close to him.</p> <p>"What?" I say.</p> <p>He pauses for a moment. He looks at me with his droopy eyes. "Do you like it?"</p> <p>He says.</p> <p>"Like what?" I say.</p> <p>"Like sex," he says. "Do you like sex with me?"</p> <p>"Of course I do, baby." I kiss him.</p> <p>"But you just lie there," he says. "You don't even move. It seems like you don't like it."</p> <p>"I do," I say. "I really like it."</p> <p>"Do you...?"</p> <p>"What?" I am losing my patience. There are pills in my purse waiting for me.</p> <p>"You don't have an orgasm," he says.</p> <p>What are you talking about? Is what I want to say. Girls don't have orgasms, I want to say, but I already know I have no idea what I'm talking about. These are not things I know, not things I've thought about. They are things I've accepted by not thinking about them. I vaguely remember reading something about them. I vaguely remember reading something about orgasms in the book Mom gave me, something about the best feeling in the world. But all I care about is getting out of here and getting to my bag and getting those pills in my throat and feeling the only best feeling in the world I know.</p>
155	<p>"Have you ever had an orgasm?" I say.</p> <p>..."I mean, do you, like, like sex?"</p> <p>..."I've never had sex," she says. "Not really. Not, like, with a boyfriend."</p>
160	<p>She looks through her purse, takes out a small red envelope and hands it to me. To Cassie, it says. Love, Sarah. I open it carefully and pull out a little cellophane packet with four hits of acid. I look at her.</p> <p>"For us to do together," she says. "Just you and me." She is smiling, hopeful, like she just asked me to marry her.</p> <p>"Let's do it now," I say.</p> <p>....She looks down at my hand holding the cellophane, then up at me with her same old pathetic face. "Okay," she says, but I can tell she doesn't want to, and I don't care.</p> <p>I pick up the two hits with my fingernails and stick them on my tongue. I hand the rest to her. She licks them out of the wrapper like someone's holding a gun to her head, and I think if she doesn't want to do it, she should just give the rest to me.</p>
163	<p>I could make Justin invent the pill. I could marry him and pretend all sorts of things and he would make me the pill and it would be worth all the lies and slimy, smelly sex I would have to have with him.</p>
175	<p>I lie there for a while, looking at the ceiling. I would do anything to sleep right now. I would do anything to be home in my own bed, five or six sleeping pills in my stomach. I would do anything to never have to wake up again.</p>
186	<p>She's always smoking and drinking whiskey, snorting things up her nose or shooting things in her arm.</p>

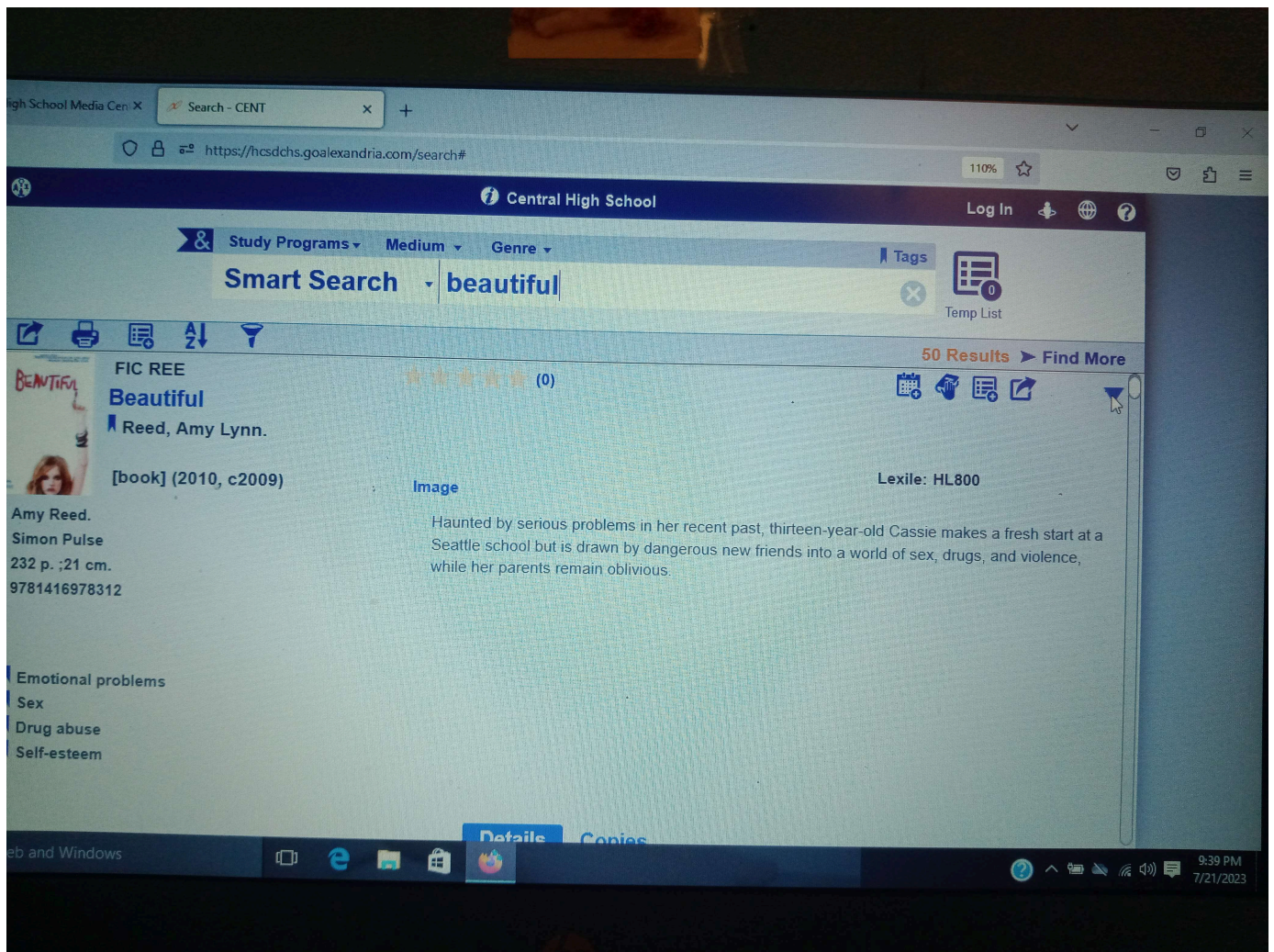


Page	Content
187	What I'm supposed to do now is smoke pot and eat sleeping pills and sleep tonight without dreams. I am supposed to wake up, do the rest of the Ritalin, then panic in a few hours when it starts to wear off. I will call Justin even though I already know he's gone for the holidays because no one's picked up the phone at his house in days. I will call Alex because she can get anything and I don't know the people she knows and I'm afraid to go to the arcade by myself. We will get fucked up and she will be my best friend and if I'm devoted enough she might let Sarah hang out with us as long as we don't pay too much attention to each other. Sarah will be quiet and spacey and her eyes will have nothing in them. We will go to parties full of people I don't know. We will go to Ethan's house and watch the boys play video games. We will drive to the park and snort coke, and Alex will give Wes head in the front seat while Ethan fucks me in the back, and I will go to class and smell Justin all day long sitting next to me, feel his knotty finger inside me, and I will think of letting him do it again if it means I don't have to think or feel anything.
192	I do not tell her that I've been avoiding her calls, that I've been lying in bed smoking pot since Christmas.
213	There's James making out with his slut, and there's Ethan pouring whiskey into his Coke, looking sad in public and not caring who sees.
214	Everyone laughs except Ethan, who is pretending he doesn't see me, who is drinking whiskey out of a bottle now, not even bothering to disguise it in his Coke.
215	"Justin," I manage to say. "Do you have any of those pills?"

Profanity	Count
Ass	13
Bitch	8
Cock	2
Dick	5
Dyke	1
Fuck	56
Goddamn	1
Piss	7
Shit	17
Tit	1

## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings





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9:39 PM 7/21/2023

# BEAUTIFUL

BY AMY REED • RELEASE DATE: OCT. 6, 2009

Thirteen-year-old Cassie makes a snap decision to reinvent her nerdy, unpopular self when she moves to a new school district in Seattle. When green-haired Alex invites—actually drags—her over to the table where the “dangerous” ninth-grade boys sit, she goes along. And from there she goes along, unresisting, with everything else: heavy drinking, constant use of myriad drugs, sexual encounters that she dislikes and theft. Her dysfunctional, self-absorbed parents are numb to her growing despair, which results from her out-of-control behavior. Cassie shows remarkable insight in her first-person narration, even through her drug-induced fog. When another teen, sexually abused by her father, falls under Alex’s thrall and reaches out to Cassie for help, the seventh grader hits rock bottom. Rather than acting as a cautionary tale, this novel often seems to function more as a roadmap to a dark but realistic underworld of young unsupervised teens drifting from one unsavory experience to another. A conclusion that seems implausibly optimistic, considering the life Cassie’s recently led, slaps a bandage on an oozing sore. (*Fiction. 14 & up*)



# Beautiful

Amy Reed

**3.66**

5,459 ratings 568 reviews

When Cassie moves from the tiny town where she has always lived to a suburb of Seattle, she is determined to leave her boring, good-girl existence behind. This is Cassie's chance to stop being invisible and become the kind of girl who's worth noticing.

Stepping into her new identity turns out to be easier than Cassie could have ever imagined... one moment, one choice, changes everything.

Cassie's new existence both thrills and terrifies her. Swept into a world of illicit parties and social landmines, she sheds her virginity, embraces the numbness she feels from the drugs, and floats through it all, knowing that she is now called beautiful. She ignores the dangers of her fast-paced life... but she can't sidestep the secrets and the cruelty.

Cassie is trapped in a swift downward spiral tinged with violence and abuse, and no one—not even the one person she thought she could trust—can help her now.

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

# Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days following the formation of the committee. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School Central High Date 4-3-24

Title Beautiful

Author Amy Lynn Reed

## Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material

### Silent Voting Results:

1 Do Not Remove

4 Remove/Discontinue

Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
<p>If committee is recommending to limit access-</p> <p><u>      </u> Grade Level</p> <p><u>      </u> For Advance Course</p> <p><u>      </u> Parent Permission</p>	<p>Basis for removal, check all that apply:</p> <p><u>  X  </u> The materials is pornographic</p> <p><u>  X  </u> The materials is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.</p> <p><u>      </u> The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.</p>

Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

Print Name	Position	Signature
Kelly Slusser	Principal	Kelly Slusser
Debbie Warren	District	Debbie Warren
David McDuffie	Parent	David McDuffie
Rachel Kingdom	Lay	R. Kingdom
Pam Everett	Community	Pam Everett

Administrator's Signature Kelly Slusser Date 4/3/24



TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: April 4, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenge CHS 0114-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, “Beautiful” at Central High School. The review committee at Central High School has evaluated the book, "Beautiful", written by Amy Lynn Reed based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is for the book to be removed from Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on May 7, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before May 7, 2024.

B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -**						
Funding Source						
Account Name						
Account Number						
	Fund	Function	Object	Cost Center	Project	Sub Project
Amount	\$					

Funding Source						
Account Name						
Account Number						
	Fund	Function	Object	Cost Center	Project	Sub Project
Amount	\$					

**C. History**

Check one:

**Prior Year Budget:** ☐

**New for Current Year:** ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

126





# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

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**Agenda Item # 8. 24-2202**

5/7/2024

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**Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to remove the book, "Boy Toy" written by Barry Lyga, from circulation and not be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to remove the book, "Boy Toy" written by Barry Lyga, from circulation. This book is being challenged at Weeki Wachee High School.

Weeki Wachee High School's Review Committee met on March 20, 2024 and April 8, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 4-2 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book be removed from circulation in Hernando County Schools.

Per Hernando County School District 2522 Policy requirements, the Superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to remove the book.

**My Contact**

Kelly Downey

Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs

352-797-7000 ext. 280

downey\_k@hcsb.k12.fl.us

**2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

**Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.



## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas

PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605  
M4LHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Hernando County School District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE: WWHS "Boy Toy" (M4LHC –  
0107/2023)

October 31, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 0107-23) for "Boy Toy" which is currently located at Weeki High School's media center. This book was discovered back on July 19, 2023.

"Boy Toy" has a warning label marked for ages 18 and above. This book contains explicit sexual activities including a minor with an adult; sexual nudity; and excessive/frequent profanity.

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently violates H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I'm calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book, from Weeki Wachee School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can't be "disappeared" (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA  
Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name: JT

Address : PO Box 1568

City: Brooksville State: FL Zip Code: 34605

Telephone:      Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: October 31,2023 Author: Barry Lyga

Title: "Boy Toy"

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Graphia 2007

School(s) in which item is used: Weeki Wachee High School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames,etc. Attach additional pages if necessary):

Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/orauthoritative critics?

Yes \_\_X\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, where? Name and date of publication:

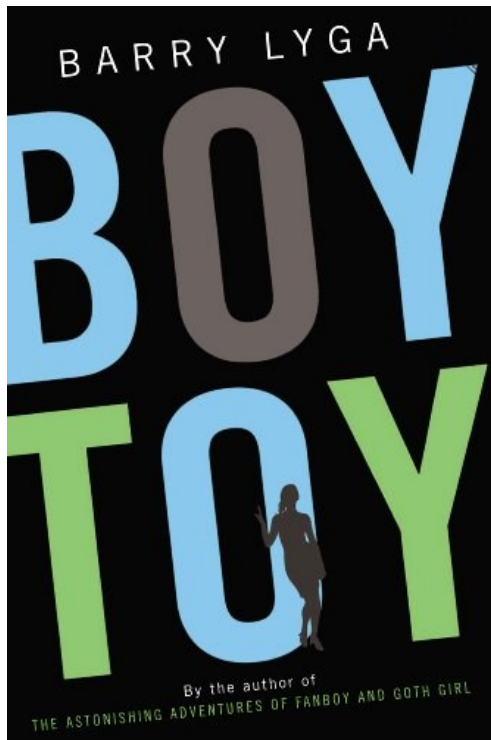
Good Reads 2011, 2008,2007

Complainant's Signature:

Julia Thomas

Date: October 31, 2023

# BOY TOY



*Young Adult*

**By Barry Lyga**

ISBN: 9780547348988



## Book Summary:

A young man recalls the molestation he endured by his teacher when he was twelve years old.

## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains explicit sexual activities including a minor with an adult; sexual nudity; and excessive/frequent profanity.

**4** / 5

**Not For Minors**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
6	She was my size, in a loose sleeveless top and a skirt worn low on her frame. Too skinny, to tell the truth; her skirt was tight enough to emphasize the lack of hips, low enough to expose her concave belly.
7	<p>She wiggled on my lap. I wasn't worried about the chair.</p> <p>I couldn't let this continue. I struggled to move her off me, our bodies chafing against each other. Her butt slipped and ground against my pelvis in a way that was almost pleasant, almost painful.</p> <p>...Like so many girls, she emphasized the positive, though, with tight jeans and skirts designed to show off the legs and ass toned over months of beating the throw to first. Up top, she favored the loose blouses and shirts that hinted that maybe, maybe, something was starting to sprout under there.</p>
10	<p>She leaned in even closer; her blouse brushed against my hand. Then her lips pressed to my cheek. They were slippery with too much lipstick. She fumbled for a minute, adjusting, and eventually found my lips. More slimy lip action. "Don't you like me?" she whispered.</p> <p>—touch—</p> <p>—lick—</p> <p>—OK—</p> <p>—yes—</p> <p>..."Kiss me," she said, and kissed my lips again, this time probing with her tongue.</p> <p>I opened my mouth and she sighed deep in her throat when our tongues touched. It sounded familiar. Universal. I closed my eyes again and pretended. Pretended I wasn't in a closet in the Madisons' basement, with Zik and Michelle intertwining their fingers ten feet away through a cheap fiberboard door. Pretended I wasn't sitting cross-legged across from a flat-chested girl with freckles and a too-slutty skirt that looked wrong on her but would have looked so right on someone else.</p> <p>Instead, I moved forward with my body and my tongue. I heard a familiar grunt of approval. I reached out to touch her</p> <p>—touch—</p> <p>—yes—</p> <p>and slid my hands down to the bare skin between the blouse and the skirt. I crushed my face to hers, let my hands move the way they wanted, the way they knew . . .</p>
23	Just then—it's really embarrassing—I flicker—slide my hand up her skirt—and come back to the present.
25	<p>She doesn't have to tell me who she is—</p> <p>—tongue tracing a line of cool heat up—</p> <p>and I blink, actually jerking my head at the power of it.</p>
43	Her hips have rounded a bit—helps her on the pitcher's mound, and makes it fun to watch her walk away. Her breasts topped out at A cups, but she makes the most of them.
44	<p>I start to follow her, then stop when I realize how bizarre it is to be chasing after the girl—the woman—I molested.</p> <p>...I could have lived my entire life a happy and fulfilled man without learning that my mother has a thong—</p> <p>—push it aside—</p>



Page	Content
46	State police arrested Sherman five years ago based on allegations that she had engaged in sexual activity with a local minor male while she taught at South Brook Middle School. She was also accused of providing that same student with alcohol.
50	Through the ductwork that runs along the ceiling of the house, you can hear a lot at night when it's still. And, yes, that means I can hear my parents having what they call sex. This isn't quite as creepy as it seems; I've been hearing this every once in a while as long as I can remember, though the frequency over the past few years has been nearly nonexistent. ...After some rustling of bedclothes and squeaking of bed-springs, there's silence until Mom starts to complain and Dad says, "I'm sorry, honey. I'm sorry," and I turn over in bed, pull the pillow around my ears, and force myself back into sleep before I can finish the thought, before I can finish thinking, I do it better.
69	You mean they can only have sex with the person who abused them?
79	I shouldn't be so mean about Zik and Michelle, about her whipping him, about the stupid movie dates. It's jealousy in part, I admit. Zik's got a regular warm body at his disposal, and what a hell of a body it is. Michelle's been blessed with the Jurgens Asset, a rack that makes grown men weep and teenagers faint dead away from the sudden rush of blood away from the brain. I'd never tell Zik that I love sneaking looks at Michelle's tits (especially in the summer, when she wears these thin little halter tops that are completely and gloriously inappropriate for someone so well endowed), because you just don't talk about a guy's girlfriend like that.
89	"Rachel! God! I was—I was embarrassed. I practically raped you in that closet! I couldn't even think about looking you in the eye." "You didn't practically rape me, you bonehead! I was coming on to you!" "Oh, right. Like you wanted to have sex with me right there in the closet, with Zik and Michelle on the other side of the door!"
90	She leans in closer and kisses me on the lips. It's not like last time. Her lips are dry, naked, firmer than before. I fight the warring urges in my body; I want to grab her and pull her closer, but that would scare the living shit out of her, so I also want to break away and run like hell. It's been like this with every girl. I flicker, seeing Eve before me, and my reflexes rear up, telling me what to do, what needs to be done, what she needs, what I need, what she insists be done. My hands tremble and the tremble reminds me I'm wearing a glove, and that somehow brings me back to the real world as Rachel pulls back. "It's better if you open your mouth," she says. "Yeah. I know." "I know you do."
91	"We were too young for . . . for what I tried to do." "Says who? You had a hell of a lot of experience by then, didn't you?"
92	Like standing perfectly still and close-mouthed while Rachel tries to kiss me. ...My sex life is practically an open book to anyone with the time and patience to browse the Internet.
93	She stoops to pick up her glove and the ball, giving me a glimpse of her butt as it tenses under the tight shorts. I don't think there's an ounce of unneeded flesh on her. It's all lean muscle, perfectly toned, and I have to stop thinking like this—it's no good.

Page	Content
	<p>"Yeah, a bet." She smiles at me knowingly; she knew I was checking out her ass. What's more, she didn't mind.</p> <p>...Doesn't she know I'm a sex fiend?</p>
133	<p>"Man," Zik went on, "if it was me, I woulda seen the bedroom. I woulda gone there and snooped around, you know? See if she has any porn or lingerie."</p>
137	<p>When I woke up, my pajamas were sticky and wet. At first I thought I'd wet the bed, but then I realized. I sneaked into the bathroom to clean up, then changed into fresh pajamas. I balled up the old ones and jammed them deep into the hamper, hoping that Mom wouldn't notice when she did the wash.</p> <p>It was tough to focus in history that day—I felt like Mrs. Sherman could tell that I dreamed about her.</p> <p>...I imagined Mrs. Sherman standing up at her desk while it was just the two of us in her classroom, unbuttoning her blouse, slowly, letting it slide down her shoulders and arms like water from a pool or a bath, then reaching around to unfasten her bra—</p>
143	<p>"What do you like about the art?" She sipped at her wine.</p> <p>But . . .</p> <p>Her boob . . .</p> <p>Her breast . . .</p> <p>Was just resting against my shoulder!</p> <p>I could feel it, the side of it! Her breast lay there, heavy against me, yielding just slightly.</p> <p>...Her breast.</p> <p>"Wow," she said, and pulled me tight against her for a brief, glorious moment. Her breast just smashed against me for that instant and my throat tightened and I was rock hard in no time flat, near to hyperventilating, and then she pulled away.</p>
144	<p>I sat in front of the TV and prayed that she wouldn't sit where she could see my lap, but she did. I held the Xbox controller there and unpaused the game just as a dinosaur came on screen and made the controller vibrate with the shaking of its footsteps.</p> <p>"Does that vibrate?" she asked, as if discovering this for the first time.</p> <p>..."Um, yeah." And, in fact, it was vibrating against me right now, and I wanted very much for it to stop.</p> <p>"Let me see."</p> <p>I handed over the controller, leaning in such a way as to conceal (I hoped) my lap. She took the controller and jumped a little at its vibration, then laughed and said, "No wonder George likes this one," before handing it back immediately.</p> <p>I sat there with the controller and an erection and my eyes locked on her left foot and its pink toenails.</p>
145	<p>That night, I lay in bed and replayed the breast, the pull closer, the toenails, the hair-ruffling over and over in my mind. To my shame, I had to change my pajamas before I even fell asleep.</p> <p>...I put my arm around her waist in turn, aware of how close to her breast and hip my hand was, midpoint between two things I wanted to touch very badly. On the other side, her breast and hip pressed against me, making me dizzy, the very opposite of what hanging on to each other was supposed to accomplish. I was glad for the long winter coat that hid my hard-on, and the slippery stairs that made it OK for me to walk a little funny.</p>
147	<p>It wasn't just that by leaning back her breasts pushed up and strained against the material of her blouse. No. It's that her legs were slightly apart, and thanks to the reflection in the</p>

Page	Content
	<p>glass-topped coffee table, I could see . . .</p> <p>I could see.</p> <p>Right up her skirt.</p> <p>Right up to her panties.</p> <p>At least, I think they were panties. There was almost nothing there, just a strip of shiny black material. I thought I would explode. I was like an animal trying to cross the highway, caught halfway, terrified by the loud sounds and zooming metal things but unable to move for all that fear. I couldn't make myself look away, but at the same time I knew I had to look away, that at any moment she could look down or look over at me and see me doing this, doing this horrible, horrible thing.</p> <p>My mouth went dry and I licked my lips. I was losing my mind.</p> <p>...I couldn't even see the screen. All I could see was that reflection in my mind's eye, the smooth skin of her thighs, the darkening under the skirt, leading to that shiny patch of black material. God! I knew I would never be soft again.</p> <p>...So engrossed that I couldn't possibly have just been looking up her skirt five seconds ago.</p> <p>...I unfolded myself from the floor and, miracle of all miracles, my erection had subsided.</p>
150	<p>That night, I did my best not to think of Eve as I lay in bed. It was pure torture; she had become a part of my nightly ritual, to the point that I didn't put on my pajamas until I'd already added another wad of tissues to the trash can.</p>
151	<p>Zik smuggled one of his brother's Playboys into school one day and we sneaked off during recess to page through it, saving the centerfold for last.</p> <p>..."What do these numbers mean?" I asked. "Thirty-four C—"</p> <p>As usual, Zik had the scoop—his dad and brother were a font of this sort of information. "Those are measurements. Here, here, and here," he said, cupping imaginary breasts, then hands to his waist, then his hips.</p> <p>"I don't get it. What do the numbers mean?"</p> <p>"Thirty-four C is, like, her bra size, J. Thirty-four C is good."</p> <p>We caressed the centerfold with our eyes again. "Well, obviously. But what does it mean?"</p> <p>"I don't know! What is it with you? Can't you just stare at the tits?"</p>
154	<p>"You've got some of my lipstick from the glass right . . . Ah." She stroked the pad of her thumb across my lips, wiping away the lipstick. It took all my willpower not open my mouth and taste her thumb.</p>
156	<p>In bed a little while later, I thought about the kiss. I focused on the memory, trying to transfer the sensation of her lips from my cheek to my lips, but I couldn't do it. I couldn't stop thinking about the taste of her lipstick.</p> <p>I lay awake a long time and went through many tissues before I slept.</p>
158	<p>I went into the living room.</p> <p>On the TV, there were three people. A man and two women. They were naked.</p> <p>And they weren't sitting around talking about the weather.</p> <p>...I had seen naked bodies before, thanks to Zik's filching of his Dad's and Mike's porn, but never in motion. And never with sound. I stood, paralyzed, as the three people on screen entwined themselves into something that looked almost painful. The sounds they were making didn't sound painful, though. They were quite the Happy Trio.</p> <p>...I slowly came to realize that my heart was pounding ferociously and I was fiercely erect at the same time. The images and sounds from the DVD seemed to be imprinted on my brain itself, pressed there like a fossilized footprint.</p>

Page	Content
	<p>...It was there as I thought of Eve curled up on the sofa with George, watching naked people have sex, kissing him with those lips, kissing him on the lips, not caring if he had a smear of lipstick on his cheek or lips.</p> <p>...Eve lay on the bed, turned on her stomach, one leg brought up, the knee bent. The room was dark, but I could make out the smooth curve of her calf, the crook of her knee before her leg disappeared up her skirt.</p> <p>I trembled in the doorway. I had meant to tell her about the DVD, but she was sleeping, her back softly rising and falling with each breath. I took a step into the room; she didn't move.</p> <p>What did her leg feel like?</p> <p>I was possessed by a sudden urge to lay my palm flat on her calf and run it up to her knee, taking the curve into the hollow there, then running up—</p> <p>...My breath was so loud that I thought she had to hear me. She would wake up and turn to see me standing there, evidence of my lust tenting the front of my jeans.</p> <p>But I didn't care. I wanted her to see. Somehow, imagining her seeing drove the image of her and George on the sofa out of my mind, and it was very important that I kill that image. I took another step. My feet made no sound on the carpet. My hand, running up her leg, up under the skirt . . . fingertips brushing against . . . against . . . shiny black—</p>
161	They had sex.
162	<p>Hated her for loving George, for kissing him, for having sex with him.</p> <p>...I hardly saw the game—I was seeing the Happy Trio, seeing George and Eve in my mind. Seeing Eve and me in my mind.</p>
163	<p>It was so weird—one second, I was in the car, fuming in the dark. The next, I was back in Eve's apartment, two steps into her bedroom, my hand twitching as I contemplated touching her calf and running my hand up her skirt . . .</p> <p>I blinked and I was back in the car. I gasped at the shock. It had been so real. I hadn't just remembered the moment in her bedroom. I had relived it. I was there again, for just a second.</p>
164	<p>I dreamed of Eve, of course. Dreamed of her sleek and free like the women in the Happy Trio.</p> <p>...I thought of the backs of her legs, of the scent of the lotion, the feel of it, slippery. Dozing, they became Eve's legs.</p>
166	<p>But most of all, fear of Eve.</p> <p>Fear that she knew about my dreams. Fear that she'd seen me looking down her blouse or up her skirt. Fear of what happened to me when I was around her—I didn't understand the rising welter of guilt, shame, and terror that somehow, in some twisted way, made me feel good . . . for a little while, at least.</p>
170	I shouldn't have mentioned the Xbox! That conjured the moaning ghosts of the Happy Trio.
172	<p>It made me horny in the way that Zik's near-endless supply of Playboys did. But it was different because Zik wasn't around. Because there was motion and sound. Because it was in Eve's apartment, with Eve sleeping down the hall, on her stomach on the bed, one leg cocked—</p>
173	<p>But I think the Happy Trio had other words for it.</p> <p>"They were kissing . . ."</p> <p>Yes, they were definitely doing that.</p>

Page	Content
	<p>"Do you want to kiss me, Josh? Is that it?"</p> <p>"I can't—I can't—you're my teacher." I wanted to kill myself right then and there.</p>
174	<p>I was trying to figure out what she was sorry about when she kissed me. Not on the cheek this time. Not for just a second. Her lips against my lips.</p> <p>...—hand running up—</p> <p>and rallied back just as I felt something warmer and softer and stronger than her lips pressing against my lips. Her tongue oh wow shouldn't that be gross someone's tongue but it isn't it is glorious pressing against my lips, prying them open, and then her tongue inside my mouth like in the movies—I realized, This is how they kiss in the movies and sparks flew in my brain, ricocheting in my consciousness and igniting me all over.</p> <p>I probed at her tongue with my own. Yow! It was like sticking a fork in a socket. My mind melted. Everything I was or would be boiled down to the tip of my tongue.</p> <p>Our tongues danced around each other. I tasted the wine on hers. Could she taste the Coke on mine? She traced the edges of my teeth, slid around the confines of my mouth as if seeking out every last trace of taste from me.</p> <p>I couldn't stand it. I had to—</p> <p>I pushed forward the tiniest bit and forced her tongue out of my mouth . . . following it back into her mouth with my own, our lips fused as if with glue.</p> <p>I followed her lead, exploring the inside of her mouth, dueling with her tongue, rooting out the flavor of the white wine and the even sweeter taste of her own saliva. It should have been gross. I always imagined it would be gross. But it wasn't.</p>
176	<p>"Listen to me very carefully," she said on the way. "What we did was fine. We care about each other, and when people care about each other, they kiss. You know that, right?"</p> <p>...I was a little annoyed. I wasn't a baby. "Yes."</p> <p>..."But you know I could get in trouble for it, right? I mean, I could lose my job. I could go to jail." Her fingers strummed on the steering wheel.</p> <p>..."I know."</p> <p>..."So-and I know I've said this before-you can't tell anyone what we talked about or what we did. OK?"</p> <p>..."Uh-huh."</p> <p>..."Promise me, Josh. Promise me you'll never tell anyone."</p> <p>...I promised. Why would I tell anyone? If I told anyone, they would know what I had thought and seen. They would know I'd lusted after Eve, know that I'd spied on her while she slept, that I'd dreamed about her even while awake. I couldn't tell anyone.</p> <p>..."OK." We pulled into my driveway. The house was dark, the driveway bare. I started to open the door, but Eve stopped me with a hand on my shoulder. The dome light dimmed and we were in darkness.</p> <p>...She looked around for a second, then leaned toward me. I met her halfway and she kissed me again, a shorter but no less electric version of what we'd shared in the apartment.</p> <p>..."To keep you warm tonight." She giggled. I don't know why-I felt like I'd be warm forever.</p>
180	<p>FOR THE NEXT COUPLE OF DAYS, this is how it went: I would go home with Eve after school and we would spend an hour or so on the sofa, kissing. She taught me what she liked, training my lips and tongue, an education in when to thrust and be aggressive and when to tease, passive. Her hands roamed my upper body the whole time, tracing electric charges over my chest and stomach and back and shoulders. Everywhere she touched me felt</p>



Page	Content
	<p>supercharged. I put my arms around her, touching only her back, exulting in the glory of her body pressed tightly to mine.</p> <p>...It took a while, but eventually my erection would subside. My Xbox play suffered; I really sucked after a make-out session with Eve. I couldn't concentrate. I flickered like the images on the screen.</p> <p>If George was working late, we would cook dinner together, like we were married or something, and have another brief make-out session on the sofa while dinner cooked, stopping with the buzz of the oven timer. Sometimes she unbuttoned my shirt or (if it was a pullover) pulled it out of my waistband and skipped her nails lightly across my chest, a sensation I can only describe as . . . indescribable.</p> <p>...We would stop up the road from my house out of range of the streetlights and nosy neighbors, for one last brief kiss.</p>
181	<p>It was a Friday afternoon, and Eve seemed particularly aggressive, moaning deep in her throat as we kissed and clawing at my back through my shirt. The lights were off, the room lit by candles placed on the coffee table. As Eve pulled back from me, her face was a gorgeous painting, sections drenched in black, others lit in a flickery orange. She was gasping, and so was I. Her hand lingered on my belly, stroking gently back and forth. I waited for her to get up and go into the bedroom, like she usually did. Instead, she leaned in and nibbled on my ear (another thing I never would have imagined could feel good . . . but did) and whispered, "You poor thing."</p> <p>I liked the way her voice went husky and breathy when we were alone.</p> <p>"What do you mean?"</p> <p>"I think I've been torturing you. I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to."</p> <p>"What?" My head was spinning as her tongue found its way into the shell of my ear, flicking lightly, sending sparks down into my brain.</p> <p>"It's so selfish of me," she whispered, and her hand moved farther south. When she touched my belt, I hitched up a breath and jerked involuntarily. "Shh! Shh!" she said. "It's OK."</p> <p>"I'm sorr—" I started to say, but then her hand went lower, touching me through my jeans. Oh, God! She knew! She knew I had an erection! I wanted to melt away from embarrassment then and there.</p> <p>"Don't be sorry. What are you sorry for?" It had to be a rhetorical question, because she shoved her tongue into my mouth just then and I was helpless as she found my zipper and pulled it down.</p> <p>If I'd thought that the feel of her tongue on my ear or her nails on my naked chest were phenomenal, then I had absolutely no idea what to expect and no way to be prepared when her hand slipped into my fly. There was nothing tentative about it—her fingers didn't brush against me gently, they sought me out and grabbed. I groaned into Eve's mouth, was greeted with a groan in return.</p> <p>It only took a few seconds for her to navigate the fly of my boxers and then her fingers were on me directly. I saw explosions of light against my eyelids as my eyes squeezed tightly shut. Before I knew it, she had me out in the open and broke our kiss.</p> <p>I looked at her as she looked down into my lap. "Well," she said. "Well."</p> <p>And started to do to me what I had been doing to myself two, sometimes three, times a day. Only it was so much better.</p> <p>"Can you . . ." She stopped. Stopped talking, that is.</p> <p>"What?" I was shocked I could even speak.</p>

Page	Content
	<p>"Never mind," she whispered. "I want to be surprised."</p> <p>I didn't understand, but seconds later I didn't even understand how to breathe as a kaleidoscope of stars exploded behind my eyes, leaving fire trails like bottle rockets. Eve giggled a little and murmured something that sounded like, "That answers that." She kissed me on the cheek and went to the bathroom to wash her hands. I slumped on the sofa in something like shock until I heard her open the bathroom door and close the bedroom door. Then I went to clean myself up and straighten my clothes.</p>
184	<p>Did she ever kiss him like she kissed me? I thought about it—I had never seen my parents kiss like that, either. Maybe . . .</p> <p>...I knew married people had sex because I'd heard my parents. But they didn't seem to kiss a lot. And Eve and George weren't kissing. Maybe they didn't have sex, either?</p>
187	<p>AS ALWAYS, ZIK WAS MY FONT OF KNOWLEDGE for all things sexual. He eavesdropped on his brother and father all the time, got to watch Kevin Smith movies on cable at home, and had that nigh-endless supply of fresh nudie magazines to consult.</p> <p>...I didn't specifically tell him anything about Eve and me, just sort of made some calculated, seemingly random musings, and learned that I had been the recipient of my first "hand job," which sounded exactly like what it had been.</p>
191	<p>I went to Eve's every day after school, as usual, and for the first few days, we had our usual make-out session, now bolstered by the mind-blowing hand jobs that I replayed each night at home.</p> <p>...The next day, on her sofa, she did something different. She fished me out of my fly and then, to my astonishment and complete disbelief, leaned down and took me into her mouth. I thought my eyes would melt out of their sockets.</p>
193	<p>That afternoon, the last time we'd be together before Christmas break, lit by the usual candles, I received my second one, which was even better than the first because I was prepared to enjoy it. Eve once again withdrew into the bedroom while I lay about in a stupor of flickering recollection and pleasure aftershocks.</p> <p>She wasn't in the bedroom as long as usual, but when she came out, she wasn't wearing her outfit from school. She was wearing a robe, but it wasn't a thick, heavy, shapeless thing like my mom wore. It was red and black, light and filmy, shiny, and it clung to her like it couldn't bear not to touch her. In that moment, I empathized.</p> <p>In the soft light of the Christmas tree, she looked completely smooth and flawless, as if the robe were a part of her body and she was actually standing before me naked. My eyes couldn't decide where to look, so they tried to go everywhere at once.</p> <p>She struck a pose, cocking one hip, her arms out, hands palm up like a model. "You like?" I could only nod.</p> <p>"I can tell," she said, nodding toward my exposed lap. Her eyes glinted with mischief and something else.</p> <p>She sat down next to me. I hadn't even had time to zip up my pants. She put her arms around me and we went hurtling into an unprecedented second make-out session. My mind spun and bounced and ricocheted against invisible walls of pleasure. The robe was slippery and smooth under my hands. Touching her back, I realized that I couldn't feel a bra strap.</p> <p>She pulled back after a moment and dropped one shoulder, causing the robe to slip down. I stared at her shoulder, smooth and naked in the candlelight. I flickered—</p> <p>—lotion on Mom's leg—</p>

Page	Content
	<p>and forced myself back to the present. On the side where she had bared her shoulder, her robe was still slipping down, until she was exposed on that side from her throat to midbelly, a perfect triangle of naked flesh that included one breast. I stared. I'd seen Zik's magazines, of course, and I'd seen the Happy Trio and I'd seen R-rated movies at Zik's house, but I'd never in my life been within arm's reach like this.</p> <p>... "And this?" she asked in a husky voice. "Do you like this?"</p> <p>There was only one answer, but I had no voice with which to give it. "Come here," she said, putting her arms around me again, her hands at my neck, pulling me toward her, pulling my head down, pulling my mouth to her.</p> <p>She shuddered and caught her breath. I thought I'd done something wrong and tried to pull away, but she held me tight and I continued, going on instinct.</p> <p>... "Strawberries . . ." I mumbled.</p> <p>"My body wash," she whispered, and pulled me closer, shuddering again as I worked my mouth and tongue, shuddering, gasping, groaning quietly, almost whimpering. Then one hand left my head and migrated to my lap, where I was ready.</p> <p>"You'll remember me, won't you?" she whispered, her voice desperate and ragged. "You'll remember me over break, right?"</p> <p>I couldn't speak. I couldn't even think. My mouth was full, my brain was full. I moaned and she moaned and that was good.</p>
198	<p>The base-running schematic was pretty simple:</p> <p>First Base = Kissing</p> <p>Second Base = Touching above the waist</p> <p>Third Base = Touching below the waist</p> <p>Home Run = All the way</p> <p>We all knew what "all the way" meant, thanks to health class. But what base was there for Eve and me? We were past third, obviously, but hadn't hit a home run. You can't just stand there between third and the plate! You have to be stealing the base or running toward home.</p> <p>Is that what we were doing? Were we headed toward home? Was Eve going to have sex with me?</p>
204	<p>I knocked at Eve's door. She opened the door in her slinky robe, her hair falling around her face and down to her shoulders.</p> <p>She pulled me into the apartment and slammed the door, pressing herself against me, slippery and soft in the robe. She nibbled at my ear, breathing into it, gasping out her words: "Oh, baby, I missed you. I missed you so much. I need you so bad."</p> <p>"Me, too."</p> <p>She dropped to her knees and unbuckled my belt, then skinned down my pants and underpants. I was ready for her already, and she dived down, darting her head like a starving bird. I hissed out my breath and clenched my fists and leaned my head back against the door.</p> <p>She stopped. "Watch me," she groaned. "Watch." And she took my hands and put them on her head. I gripped her hair and looked down. She looked up at me, our eyes locked as she descended again.</p> <p>Later, we lay intertwined on the sofa while I played video games. She dozed, her robe open from throat to waist, her chest warm against my naked thigh.</p>

Page	Content
206	<p>That afternoon, after our usual session (she called it “petting,” and she was letting me touch her freely now—a stand-up triple, easy), she snuggled up to me on the sofa and let me copy her notes into my notebook so that I wouldn’t fall behind.</p>
207	<p>There was only one other lesson to learn, I guess.</p> <p>A week or so later, she asked me if I wanted to see the Happy Trio again. (She didn’t call them the Happy Trio. That’s just how I thought of them.)</p> <p>I was curious, I have to admit, so I told her yes. She went into the bedroom and got the DVD. We watched it from the beginning, when it was just a Happy Duo, not a Happy Trio. It was amazing to see it with the perspective of the last few weeks. I knew that. And that. And that, too.</p> <p>Except for when they pressed together, as close as Eve and I had pressed, but without clothing. I stared.</p> <p>...“I’m fine,” I said, unable to turn away from the TV. I knew the sounds of lovemaking from listening to my parents through the vents. But I’d never had the visuals to go with it.</p> <p>“I want to do that,” I whispered.</p> <p>Eve sat upright. “Are you sure?”</p> <p>...There were tears in her eyes. She held me tight to her and kissed me deep and long.</p> <p>“That’s OK.” Her tongue flicked at my ear. “I’ll teach you.”</p> <p>And she did. From then on, we moved our sessions from the sofa to the bedroom.</p> <p>...I learned every curve, nook, and niche of her body, every inch of smooth skin, every bump and turn.</p> <p>I learned what to touch, when to touch it, how to touch it, and for how long. I learned; I watched.</p> <p>I never, ever stopped thrilling to the sight each time I saw her naked. Every time, it was new. Never boring. Never old.</p> <p>She taught me how to make love and she taught me how to fuck and she taught me the difference. We ended up doing more of the latter than the former.</p> <p>One time, in the panting aftermath of our afternoon session, she lay on the bed in unconscious imitation of that Playmate from Zik’s Playboy an eternity ago.</p> <p>“What are your numbers?” I asked her.</p> <p>She looked at me sleepily over her shoulder. “My what?”</p> <p>“Your numbers.” I gestured at her chest, her waist.</p> <p>“Oh.” She laughed. “Why do you care all of a sudden?”</p> <p>“Numbers are important.”</p> <p>“Come on, Josh.”</p> <p>“Numbers are important.”</p> <p>She relented at the seriousness in my expression. She took my hand and made me touch breast, waist, hip, as she recited “Thirty-four, twenty-six, thirty-five.”</p> <p>“Are those good numbers?”</p> <p>Her eyebrows shot up. “Well, I like to think so! What do you think?” And she sprawled out on the bed, unashamed, completely open to me.</p> <p>“I like them,” I conceded.</p>
209	<p>“Are you OK, Josh?” she asked me as we put fresh sheets on the bed. I was being quieter than usual, I guess.</p> <p>“Yeah.”</p> <p>“Are you all right with what we’re doing?” Her eyes and her voice were filled with concern.</p>

Page	Content
	<p>"Yes. I'm fine with it."</p> <p>"Because if you want to stop—"</p> <p>"No. I don't want to stop."</p> <p>I couldn't tell her the truth: that I felt terrible for what I was doing. Guilty for making her do what I wanted. Guilty for making her do it my way. Guilty for making her cheat on her husband.</p>
210	She came to me and hugged me, our bodies still slightly sticky with sweat. She was a few inches taller than I, and my head nestled—perfectly, as if designed that way, she always said—in the hollow of her throat, just above her breasts.
212	"I've been lying to you and I've been kissing Eve and I've been having sex and I've been FUCKING." I don't know how they could have missed it. They must have been complete idiots.
216	My thirteenth birthday was a Friday. Mom and Dad said I was too old for a big party with lots of people, so I invited Zik to spend the night instead. Of course, I went home with Eve first, and we celebrated in our own way. She gave me a card that said "I love you," but didn't sign it. I read it as we lay in bed together.
224	"Homecoming's stupid." And it is. Bunch of kids looking for excuses to grope each other all night.
226	<p>And I want to struggle against it like before, but she somehow teases my mouth open, and then I'm kissing her back.</p> <p>Kissing Rachel is different from kissing Eve. Eve kissed like her life depended on it, as if kissing me were the only way to sate some urgent hunger, with moans and sudden breaks for gulps of air before attacking me again. Rachel kisses like she's looking for something. It's the difference between swinging for the fences and going for a guaranteed base hit. I flicker. I'm in the closet, in Eve's bed, on the sofa.</p> <p>I'm standing outside SAMMPark, fighting against the sick urge inside me, the urge that says to let go of her hands, enfold her in my arms, explore every part of her with my hands, devour her with my tongue—</p>
228	<p>I sit on my bed for a minute, still feeling Rachel's kiss on my lips, my teeth, my tongue. I'm hard. I want to beat off, but I'm dead tired, exhausted mentally and physically.</p> <p>...Forgiveness happens while you're asleep, while you're dreaming, while you're in line at the coffee shop, while you're showering, eating, farting, jerking off.</p>
230	<p>"Nah, he's just flicking my earlobe. Fucking around. Look, what happened, J? I gotta go soon."</p> <p>I give him a quick version—I apologized, she accepted. I don't get into the kissy-face shit because I don't even know how I feel about it yet. I don't want to think about Rachel that way, but a couple of kisses have a way of cementing a girl in your glands as a sexual possibility.</p>
248	Whether Zik and Michelle are having sex right now.
257	<p>We don't go any further than kissing and a little tongue-action on necks and ears, but it makes me dizzy and almost sick. Rachel doesn't groan like Eve did—she makes little sounds that are almost like whimpers, but somehow sexy.</p> <p>I'm hard as a rock the whole time and I don't want her to know, but I think that's probably impossible.</p>



Page	Content
264	What Evelyn Sherman did to you wasn't about intimacy. There may have been times that she made you feel like it was, but it was all about satisfying her needs. You were a means to that end. You've had a lot of experience in the physical actions that comprise sex and sexuality, but you have next to no experience in the emotional component.
273	Honestly, as boner-inducing as Michelle is, it's still Rachel I can't stop looking at. I've secretly lusted after Michelle almost as long as I've understood what a penis is for, so her appearance tonight is nothing new.
276	Rachel leans in to kiss me and slips her tongue past my lips. We both taste minty fresh. Thanks, Zik. "You boys ready to go?" Michelle unselfconsciously adjusts the front of her dress, causing her unencumbered breasts to bobble and collide. I tell myself that Rachel didn't see me look, but let's face it, I'm living in a dream world. Fortunately, my girlfriend is forgiving. She hauls me out of the chair and kisses me again.
283	If anything, we're the South Brook nightmare couple, the star softball pitcher and her freak boyfriend, the kid who fucked a teacher in seventh grade and has kept his head down ever since, the kid who beats the shit out of anyone who looks at him cross-eyed.
287	The TV is still going, playing some HBO special on sex, so there's a constant parade of naked fat people on the screen. Finally, Rachel and Michelle traipse off to the bedroom to change. Zik and I strip down. I sleep in boxer shorts, but I throw on a T-shirt since I'll be with Rachel.
289	"Oh? Why's she all dolled up?" She leans against the archway that leads into the bathroom. She doesn't seem to be in a hurry to come over here. "She's going to rock his world. Sorry that I'm just wearing this." She indicates her boring PJs. "That's OK." "It's just that, well, they're spicing up their sex life. And we don't have a sex life." ...But my heart's jackhammering and I close my eyes because it's too dark. She moves in the darkness next to me and then we're lying down next to each other, her fingers skipping over my chest, lightly. My entire body's on fire, with cool traces where she touches me. And then her lips on mine. Her body so close, one knee coming up, sliding against my leg, God, the rustle of fabric, the weight of her leg thrown across my thighs. Her breath quickens as we kiss, her hands touching my chest, stomach, shoulders. She's everywhere at once. It's too familiar for me, in some ways. It's like being back in the closet with Rachel, with Zik and Michelle just a few yards away, through a door. Only now I'm not thirteen. And neither is Rachel. Now I know more. And, somehow, less. Her hand slips under my T-shirt and I hear myself groan deep in my chest. She licks my ear and says, "Josh. Josh, unbutton my top." I can't. "Josh, please. Please." ...I'm back in the closet and in the closet I'm flickering, a flicker within a flicker, an infinite loop, I'm in the closet and I'm back with Eve. I'm twelve years old and I don't understand but I don't care if I understand because Eve's touching me, she's telling me what to do, how to do it, how to make it better and best. My body jerks back into the present. Rachel's lying on top of me. Her top is unbuttoned somehow. Did I do that? In the darkness, she's an outline over me, thinly seen in the murk. My hands move of their own accord, exploring, peeling the opened top down her

Page	Content
	<p>shoulders; her breath hisses and I flicker to Eve's bedroom, her leg cocked as she sleeps, back to the present, my hands tensed and tightened, ready to grab Eve—no—Rachel, grab and—</p> <p>Stop it!</p> <p>"Josh, please. God, Josh, don't you know I want you? Please?"</p> <p>I push Rachel off me, my hands burning where I touch her skin. I'm cheating. I'm not supposed to do this. I don't know what I'm doing. I'm flickering in and out, of the closet, of Eve's apartment. I'm being unfaithful, cheating on Eve with Rachel, cheating on Rachel with Eve.</p>
292	That it's not her fault, that she's beautiful and warm and sexy and that any man with a brain and a working cock would be an idiot not to yearn for her, not to worship every last inch of her.
297	<p>"Hey, J? What's that?" He pointed to my right hand, which was clenched in a fist. I looked down at it as if I'd never had a right hand before in my life, as if it had just grown there as part of some puberty ritual.</p> <p>I was clutching Rachel's panties, the edges torn and shredded.</p>
300	<p>"Mom, it wasn't Zik's fault. Me and Rachel were just playing."</p> <p>"Playing? Playing? You ripped her underwear off. You grabbed—I don't even want to say what you did, and you call it playing? Who taught you that? Where did you learn that? I know it was from Zik. His parents are letting you watch adult cable, aren't they?"</p> <p>"No, Mom! It wasn't Zik! I didn't know it was wrong. I was just playing like with E—" I stopped myself midsyllable, but it was too late.</p>
306	Eve was no longer my teacher, my confidante, my lover. She was now a scared, desperate . . . child.
332	"Isn't this your handwriting, describing events of a sexual nature that took place between you and the defendant?"
335	Which is how my entire life's sexual experience ended up on the Internet, couched in clipped, formal, sanitized language that made it seem as dirty and as evil as bleach water.
342	"He fucked my wife!" George wailed.
396	<p>And I tell her. About watching her as she slept, about those first steps taken toward her. About the wedding photo. About staring at her toes, her cleavage, her legs, her hips. About devouring her with my eyes a thousand times and a thousand ways. Everything I never told her before.</p> <p>... "You used to drink," I tell her. "Every day, we'd come to the apartment and you would drink and I took advantage of you . . ."</p>
398	<p>"When did you decide? How far along did things get before you decided you were going to have sex with me, Eve?"</p> <p>There's a thousand years before her answer:</p> <p>"The day we met, Josh. The first time I laid eyes on you."</p>
399	I was molested. When I was twelve.
405	Her arms slip around me and we're clenched tightly together, kissing. My hand goes up and skips past her bra strap, then runs through her hair. She digs into my back with her nails, worn short for softball. I hear myself moan into her.
406	She kisses her way up my chest to my throat, then my lips.

Page	Content
409	I don't know what to say, so I just let her kiss me gently, softly.

Profanity	Count
Ass	43
Bitch	2
Cock	1
Dick	14
Fuck	65
Goddamn	19
Piss	13
Prick	2
Pussy	1
Shit	61
Tit	2

## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings

Weeki Wachee High School

Log In

Study Programs
Medium
Genre

Smart Search
Boy Toy

Tags
Temp List

2 Results

FIC LYG

Boy toy

Lyga, Barry.

[book] (2007)

by Barry Lyga.  
Graphia  
410 p. ; 21 cm.  
0547076347

Sexual abuse victims  
Emotional problems  
Baseball  
Psychotherapy

After five years of fighting his way past flickers of memory about the teacher who molested him and the incident that brought the crime to light, eighteen-year-old Josh gets help in coping with his molester's release from prison when he finally tells his best friends the whole truth.

Reading Counts: 3.9  
Lexile: 720

Details
Copies

e to search

92°F Mostly sunny

2:50 PM  
7/19/2023

146



Weeki Wachee High School

Log In

Study ProgramsMediumGenreTags

Smart SearchBoy Toy

Temp List

2 Results

1 of 1 Copies

Site ID	Call Number	Vol	Loc1 -- Loc2	Barcode	Status -- Due Date	Map
391	FIC LYG			39101000001647	Available	

DetailsCopies

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92°F Mostly sunny

2:51 PM  
7/19/2023

# Product Overview

## *From Follett*

After five years of fighting his way past flickers of memory about the teacher who molested him and the incident that brought the crime to light, eighteen-year-old Josh gets help in coping with his molester's release from prison when he finally tells his best friends the whole truth.

## *From the Publisher*

Josh Mendel has a secret. Unfortunately, everyone knows what it is. Five years ago, Josh's life changed. Drastically. And everyone in his school, his town--seems like the world--thinks they understand. But they don't--they can't. And now, about to graduate from high school, Josh is still trying to sort through the pieces. First there's Rachel, the girl he thought he'd lost years ago. She's back, and she's determined to be part of his life, whether he wants her there or not. Then there are college decisions to make, and the toughest baseball game of his life coming up, and a coach who won't stop pushing Josh all the way to the brink. And then there's Eve. Her return brings with it all the memories of Josh's past. It's time for Josh to face the truth about what happened.

If only he knew what the truth was . . .

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## Product Details

**Publisher:** Graphia

**Publication Date:** January 5, 2009

**Format:** Paperback

**Dewey:** -Fic-

**Classifications:** Fiction

**Description:** 410 pages ; 21 cm

**ISBN-10:** 0-547-07634-7

**ISBN-13:** 978-0-547-07634-8

**Follett Number:** 13536Y6

**Audience:** Young Adult

**Kirkus:** Young Adult

**Publishers Weekly:** Ages 16-up

**School Library Journal:** Gr 10-Up

**ATOS Book Level:** 4.5

**AR Interest Level:** UG

**AR Points:** 15

**AR Quiz:** 116397EN

**Reading Counts Level:** 4.4

**Reading Counts Points:** 24

**Lexile:** 720L

**Fountas & Pinnell:** Z+

# Reviews & Awards

Booklist, 09/01/07

Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, 10/01/07

Horn Book Magazine, 04/01/08

Kirkus Reviews starred, 09/01/07

Kliatt, 09/01/07

New York Times, 03/16/08

\* Taken from another format.

School Library Journal starred, 10/01/07

Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA), 10/01/07

Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA) starred, 10/01/07

Wilson's Senior High School, 01/01/09

Wilson's Senior High School, 10/01/11 \*

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## Full-Text Reviews

### *Kirkus Reviews starred (September 1, 2007)*

Striking out on a baseball bet forces a teen to face past emotional scars. At age 13, Joshua Mendel's history teacher, Eve Sherman, molested him for three weeks and changed the rest of his life. Five years later, the 18-year-old baseball star is preparing to graduate and working on restoring his damaged relationship with Rachel, a childhood crush. When Sherman is released from prison, Joshua realizes he must confront her in an attempt to gain the answers to the questions that have haunted him for years. Blending present events with extensive flashbacks, Lyga creates a tightly paced narrative that explores psychological turmoil without resorting to either clinical terminology or oversimplification. Authentic and fresh, the narrative voice develops along with Joshua, gaining experience but never overpowering the tortured undertones. Lyga's portrayal of the fight between Joshua and Sherman's husband is riveting and tense; the main character's later reflections on that confrontation are equally powerful. Deftly weaving together a painful confession and ambiguous ending, Lyga's dynamic writing style creates an emotionally wrenching and haunting tale. (Fiction. YA)

Taken from the **Hardcover**.

### *Library Media Connection (January 2008)*

Just as Josh is about to finish high school, the teacher who sexually molested him five years before is released from prison. Through his flickers of memories and opening up to the girl he has avoided since he was 13, Josh slowly discovers the way to move past his abusive past. Barry Lyga's second novel pulls no punches. Because of the fleshed out character, readers will be fully engaged in Josh's world, his friendships and guilt, and the hot young teacher who seduced him. The ending wraps the story up nicely, but not too neatly. Due to the detailed account of the teacher-student sexual relationship, school media centers will have to weigh this carefully. Additional Selection. Kristin Fletcher-Spear, Teen Librarian, Foothills Branch Library, Glendale, Arizona

Taken from the **Hardcover**.

### *Publishers Weekly (September 3, 2007)*

When Josh was a 12-year-old seventh grader, he was sexually abused by his history teacher, the young, beautiful (and married) Eve, who manipulated him into believing they were in love. Carefully crafting a narrative structure, Lyga flashes between that traumatic time and the present, when Josh, now a senior (at the school where *The Astonishing Adventures of Fanboy and Goth Girl* took place), learns that Eve is being paroled. The author handles heavy material with honesty and sensitivity, capturing both the young Josh's excitement and his realization that his "pleasure brought its own sort of guilt." Years later, he still struggles: he flies into rages (he punches a baseball coach in an opening scene), and he experiences "flickers," brief moments which feel like actual immersions in the past. Josh also has trouble pursuing Rachel, who seems like a perfect match, because he cannot trust his physical instincts; he is, as his psychologist puts it, "afraid to do anything at all because it might be the wrong thing." Details like Josh's obsession with calculating baseball statistics round out his character; the statistics speak to his intelligence and, more tellingly, to his attempts to control his world. Even his inevitable face-off with Eve proves a revelation. Readers may find the ending too neat, given the extent of Josh's problems, but in their richness and



credibility the cast-Eve included-surpasses that of the much-admired Fanboy. Ages 16-up. (Sept.) Copyright 2007 Reed Business Information.

Taken from the **Hardcover**.

### *School Library Journal (October 1, 2007)*

Gr 10 Up-For the past five years, Joshua Mendel has struggled with the aftermath of being sexually abused by his seventh-grade history teacher. Now a high school senior, he still experiences "flickers," his name for vivid, mini-flashbacks of his times with Eve. He still refuses to associate with Rachel, his seventh-grade romantic interest whose insistence on a game of spin the bottle at a party led to the exposure of his abuse, a trial, and Eve's imprisonment. Rachel is eager to resume their long-abandoned tentative romance, Eve has been released from prison, and Josh wants nothing more than to win a baseball scholarship to a college far from his small town where he feels certain everyone knows about his past. Despite years of counseling, Josh is unable to move on until he reveals the complete details of his experiences with Eve to Rachel and to his friend, Zik, and finally learns to accept the truth about it. Short groups of chapters set in the present alternate with much lengthier segments entitled "Flashbacks, Not Flickers," in which Josh describes his relationship with Eve from the beginning to the emotionally wrenching trial. The well-paced plot begins slowly, describing Eve's initial approaches to Josh as she wins his confidence and loyalty, then speeds up as their more frequent contacts move into the realm of inappropriate teacher/student behavior. Lyga's skillful writing subtly reveals Eve's cleverly calculated abuse of Josh in a way that older teens will find fascinating, distressing, and worthy of their attention.-Ginny Gustin, Sonoma County Library System, Santa Rosa, CA  
Copyright 2007 Reed Business Information.

Taken from the **Hardcover**.

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

# Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days after its formation. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School WWHS Date 4/8/24

Title BOY TOY

Author BARRY LYGA

## Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material

Silent Voting Results:

2 Do Not Remove

4 Remove/Discontinue

Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
<p>If committee is recommending limiting access-</p> <p>_____ Grade Level</p> <p>_____ For Advance Course</p> <p>_____ Parent Permission</p>	<p>Basis for removal, check all that apply:</p> <p>_____ The material is pornographic</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The material is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS</p> <p>_____ The material is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.</p> <p>_____ The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.</p>



# Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

Print Name	Position	Signature
Kelly Downey	District Staff	Kelly Downey
Sarah Johnston	Lay Person	Sarah Johnston
Tom Bracks	Community Member	Tom Bracks
Brady Stadelke	Lev Carrillo Person	Brady Stadelke
MICHELLE ELFERDINK	PARENT	MICHELLE ELFERDINK
Ed LaRose	Principal	Ed LaRose

Administrator's Signature

*[Handwritten Signature]*

Date

4/8/24



TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: April 8, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenge WWHS 0107-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, “Boy Toy” at Weeki Wachee High School. The review committee at Weeki Wachee High School has evaluated the book, "Boy Toy", written by Barry Lyga based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is for the book to be removed from Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on May 7, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before May 7, 2024.

**A. Item Currently Budgeted -**

Account Name		<u>No Financial Impact</u>										
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

**B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -\*\***

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

**C. History**

Check one:

Prior Year Budget: ☐New for Current Year: ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$

**\*\* WHEN ITEM NOT CURRENTLY BUDGETED IS APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD, THIS WILL SERVE AS THE BUDGET AMENDMENT\*\***



# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

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**Agenda Item # 9. 24-2217**

5/7/2024

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### **Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to remove the book, "Man O' War" written by Cory McCarthy, from circulation and not be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

### **Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to remove the book, "Man O' War" written by Cory McCarthy, from circulation. This book is being challenged at Hernando High School.

Hernando High School's Review Committee met on March 19, 2024 and April 9, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 5-1 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book be removed from circulation in Hernando County Schools.

Per Hernando County School District 2522 Policy requirements, the Superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to remove the book.

### **My Contact**

Kelly Downey

Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs

352-797-7000 ext. 280

downey\_k@hcsb.k12.fl.us

### **2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

### **Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.



## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605  
M4LHernando.CMRCChair@gmail.com

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Hernando County School. District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE: HHS “Man O” War” (M4LHC –  
052/2023)

October 13, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 052-23) for *Man O’ War*” which is currently located at Hernando High School’s media center. This book was discovered removed from copies on Alexandria back on August 2, 2023.

“Man o” War ” contains sexual age-inappropriate content:obscene sexual activities; sexual nudity; alternate gender ideologies; alternate sexualities; profanity/derogatory terms; references to hate involving homophobia and racism;controversial social and historical commentary; and alcohol use. This book clearly shows a warning label for 18 years of age and up.

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently violates H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I’m calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book from Hernando High School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can’t be “disappeared” (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*



THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name) JT

Address : PO Box 1568 City Brooksville State FL Zip Code 34605

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: October 13, 2023 Author: Cory McCarthy

Title: Man o' War

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Dutton Books for Young Readers 2023

School(s) in which item is used: Hernando High School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames, etc. Attach additional pages if necessary) Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

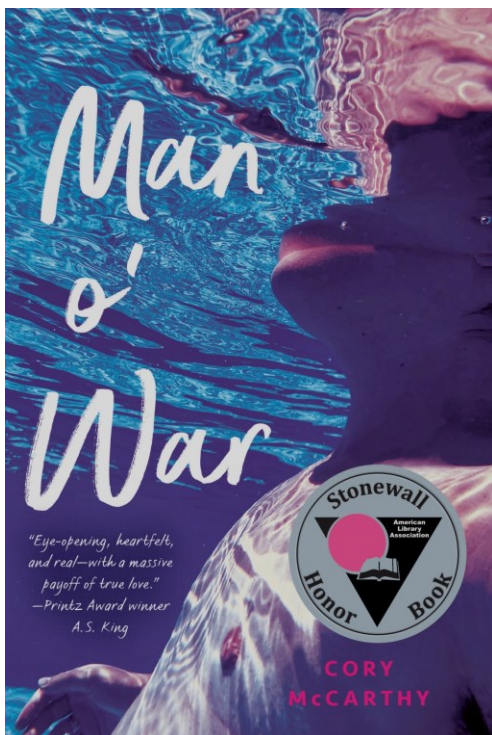
If yes, where? Name and date of publication: GoodReads 2022

Complainant's Signature

Julia Thomas

Date October 13, 2023

# MAN O' WAR



*Young Adult*

**By Cory McCarthy**

ISBN: 9780593353714



## Book Summary:

A young woman has a romantic relationship with a young man and comes to believe she is a different gender.

## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains obscene sexual activities; sexual nudity; alternate gender ideologies; alternate sexualities; profanity/derogatory terms; references to hate involving homophobia and racism; controversial social and historical commentary; and alcohol use.

**4** / 5

**Not For Minors**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
4	"The men's reads men's, and the women's reads girls'? That's some patriarchal fuckery." ...While the girls'-room occupants always trickled to the pool, delayed by their changing styles, the boys dumped out as one. Did they dress like that too? In a pod of penises?
9	"Maybe it's because he's gay." ..."Maybe it's because everyone at school is a damn racist who yells at him to enroll in every sport just because he's Black and tall. He's under a lot of pressure."
13	"He's taking out Gia. They're going to see that horny vampire movie. Rated R. Multiple sex scenes."
17	"Butch isn't an insult, you know. Especially in the rainbow community." I somehow managed to point out that that wasn't applicable in this situation, and would she please stop lobbing rainbow crap at me. "I didn't think you'd slept with Joss," she added into my hostile silence.
21	"Them. Man o' wars aren't an 'it.' They're a whole colony of organisms living together. Symbiotic as a whole." She grinned ever so slightly. "A polygender."
22	"Total baby dyke." Gia paused. "I hear she got hot because she's a state-ranked gymnast. Wait, was that her?" She dropped her voice. "How the mighty have fallen. Jellyfish Haven duty. Poor, pretty lesbian."
24	One minute and forty-three seconds of staring at Indy's perfectly round head and natural pink lips and sound shoulders to realize that maybe I wasn't organically homophobic like everyone else.
34	"Also, if you want to know, my peers never apply for pearl diver because of those Hooters cleavage suits. We take bets on if you hire on breast circumference alone."
35	"No need for khaki. I applied for pearl diver. If they hire me, I'll be walking cleavage." Taylor put her phone down and smiled straight at me, which warmed even after a year of dating. She liked me. When she looked at me, she got turned on, and that turned me on.
36	"We could have fifty orgasms in that window. We should keep a tally." ...Taylor kissed me, soft and slow. I kept my eyes open, until I caught her checking and sealed them shut. I tried to make up for it in wandering hands, and she made the right sounds, so I was doing a good job.
39	"Indy left school because she is . . . was . . . a lesbian. So, Indy is a former lesbian?" "She's clearly bi or pan. Met a cute guy and expanded her repertoire. It happens to the best of us. Not me. I'm not losing my gold star for any penis."
40	The last flag was that Henrietta was going through menopause and couldn't help but tell me about every hot flash that overtook her petite physique—which was often when I talked about having sex with girls.
42	"How does someone become not a lesbian? Because they're . . . bi or pan?" ..."I attended a gender and sexuality seminar a few months ago. Those words mainly differ in that they describe how someone is attracted, not necessarily to whom. Bisexual people can experience different kinds of attraction to different genders. Pansexual people can experience a similar kind of attraction, no matter the gender identity."
43	"Gender and sexuality are fluid . . . for some. They start in one place and transition when they're ready." ..."Shock to me too, but apparently I have two much-desired characteristics. Big lungs and bigger breasts."

Page	Content
47	"Or girls. Same rules apply. As well as the enbies and agenders and demi-everythings. No flirting."
50	"Are you sure about being a lesbian? From what you've disclosed in our conversations you're more likely pansexual. And gender nonconforming." ...Taylor liked to rage about gender nonconforming people; I liked to avoid the entire subject.
54	"The flag I wore to school in fourth was misleading. My mom is a lesbian. I was supporting her. I was ten. It was all mom-hero adoration. I had zero idea I was about to become a target for kid, parent, and administrator alike." ..."Isn't being nonbinary a joke."
58	Taylor's mouth connected with mine, and my head swam. I couldn't deny that kissing her was better than kissing anyone else I'd been with.
61	She pressed her hands under my shirt, caressing upward. ..."What's wrong now?" "I'm not going to take my shirt off." ..."Stop. She's not a girl." I stumbled to say it like Indy. "She . . . they are nonbinary." ..."You're kidding. We're not doing the nonbinary fads. My mom said people tried to do that midway gender crap when she was a teen too. If you've got a vagina, you're a girl. Penis? Boy. If your vagina wants to dress up like a man—like you do all the time—you're not less of a woman. Women can be anything. Including manlike, but they're still women." ..."What about intersex people?" She gave me a questioning look. "Remember? We learned about them in sixth-grade biology. They're all around us. Millions of them." "They always have a dominant sex trait, and there are surgeries to help them fit in. Please, this world is full of enough bullshit. We don't need to go reinventing gender."
62	Damn it, maybe I was gender nonconforming or nonbinary or something else.
64	"It's not a rainbow flag," my brother said. "It's the asexual flag."
84	She had been mother-henning the other two, who were both sophomores, and in my opinion too young to be working their cleavage for tips.
85	"Those're actually nice tits when they're all smashed on me."
86	"I'm a predator!" he screamed. I let him go, and I wasn't prepared to feel sorry. He cowered, not a boy, but a creature of slime and white male privilege, unchecked for so long he might as well be Gollum.
87	"Body dysphoria. When your body makes you feel the opposite of euphoria." Indy nodded encouragingly, and I squinted. "It's like a painful disappearing inside your skin." Huh. "My therapist said it's depression from feeling ostracized as a lesb . . . queer person."
88	"Just add it to the pile. I'm anxious and depressed, and apparently, I disappear inside my own skin like some kind of homophobic homo. Yeah, right. I'm afraid of myself."
89	"Those are stereotypes, not laws. And they're way dated. Like nineties dated. You don't even need to be a woman to identify as a lesbian anymore, not that a person ever should have had to. Gods, I loathe identity policing." ..."There's this thing called the internet, and—" "And my mom guards my browser history like a dragon." Now Indy looked really sorry for me. "What's a binder?" I blurted. Indy reached in the back, rummaging through a clothes pile to pull out a thick elastic tube

Page	Content
	<p>top fastened by industrial Velcro. “This is a binder. It flattens your chest.”</p> <p>“That’s for trans people. I’m not trans.”</p> <p>...“It’s for humans. Trans people, sure, but also nonbinary folk of all sorts. I mean, a lot of cis people wear them too. Athletes. Actors. Literally any human who needs it.”</p> <p>So I could get one and tell people it was about sports when they inevitably required an explanation about it. Well, shit. That could work.</p> <p>“Where do you get one?”</p> <p>“In Ohio? Only online. I got this in San Francisco. My grandparents live there. They have these amazing queer shops that . . .”</p>
90	<p>I held the aching spot on my side where my rib felt like a stress fracture. “Can wearing too many sports bras hurt you too?”</p> <p>“How many do you wear?”</p> <p>As many as I need.</p>
97	<p>“She thinks you two are kindergarteners because you don’t have sex, and that we’re going to eat candy and wander around campus in costume like huge nerds.”</p> <p>“We are going to do that,” Karina said. “Just with a lot of booze,” Everett added. C-3PO Harvey toasted with a flip flask that bore the symbol of the Rebel Alliance. “Did she make you promise not to drink? She always did that to me back in high school.”</p>
98	<p>“This is everything I ever wanted! Halloween at OU with a pack of fanboys.”</p> <p>“Try fanbies. More gender inclusive,” Karina said.</p>
100	<p>With Catherine’s assistance (and search engine), I’d looked up those terms Indy had spoken in their car, and the right words did that thing right words always do: create a sense of communion. Body dysphoria had to be where all my anxiety came from, my disconnect. And internalized homophobia . . . pretty sure that was the well of my endless depression. And anger. Odd how naming the madness eased it.</p>
101	<p>Everett plopped on his Kylo helmet and did a few warm-ups, lightsaber nearly taking out a group of slutty drag nurses on the street corner.</p>
104	<p>Everett was drunk already.</p>
110	<p>The kind of desperate laughter that comes with the revving down of alcohol and dank edibles in your veins.</p> <p>...“Assuming lesbians are vegetarians is totally a microaggression.”</p> <p>“But you’re no lesbian. As previously established and then confirmed with that”—I exhaled loudly—“incredibly attractive androgynous model of a boyfriend you’ve got.”</p> <p>“Partner. Ex-partner. He’s a demiboy. And we are only good at sex and breaking up. But yeah, Chauncey is beautiful. And he’s extremely aware of it at all times.”</p>
113	<p>“I’m coming for your gender binary!”</p> <p>...My mom’s views on things were racist, and yet my family let it happen. I felt as guilty for letting her dye my hair as for letting her believe that light hair and skin were coinage. That being a heterosexual, cisgendered person was normal, and that everything else was . . . not. Then again, she lived in that world; she didn’t create it.</p> <p>...“The word shouldn’t be gendered at all. But then if we change it, if we adopt the word without the e, we’re leaning into the patriarchy, painting with a masculine brush. And if we adopt the word with it, we risk feminizing being fair-haired.</p>
114	<p>“Because you’re nonbinary.”</p> <p>“Which you think is a joke.”</p>



Page	Content
	<p>...“I don’t think it’s a joke. I never did. I said that because I’d just spent an entire year in a relationship with someone who insisted a gender spectrum was unnecessarily . . . newfangled.”</p> <p>...“Sumeria, Babylon, Assyria. Those are some of the oldest human civilizations. The kalû, the gala, the assinnu. Those are different, documented nonbinary genders from those civilizations, literal thousands of years ago. Oh, not to forget the deity Ishtar, who was all about gender ambiguity and transformation. A whole-ass ancient god of not fitting into the system.”</p>
117	“There were years that I convinced myself you might actually like the boys you were hooking up with. I really hoped you did. If you didn’t, that would be too sad.”
119	<p>“They, Catherine. Indy uses they/ them.”</p> <p>“Actually, Indy uses she/ they most of the time. Right now her Instagram profile says she/ her. I’m looking at it right now”—a pause to gather emphasis—“how did you spend the weekend with someone without knowing their pronouns?”</p>
127	No one saw us together until we were kissing outright in the hall. Mostly, we made a home on her bed and tangled in a way we couldn’t have possibly enjoyed at school without taunts.
128	Gia got in my face, my line of sight straight up her camel toe. “There’s someone here to try out for the dive team, and she cross-dressed. Coach is losing her damn mind.”
129	<p>Indy stood before Coach and Catherine, holding conference, and I invited myself straight into it. “What’s going on?”</p> <p>“She can’t try out in that,” Kerrig said.</p> <p>I fired up. “They can—”</p>
140	<p>Let me drive you home from practice tomorrow.</p> <p>Indy wrote back right away. Sounds kinky. I’m in.</p>
154	<p>“There’s a gender-neutral bathroom for you. Waits, head to the girls’ room.”</p> <p>“I’m not a girl. Let me go in the . . . Did you say ‘gender neutral’? How could a bathroom be gender neutral? Do you mean gender inclusive? Granted assigning genders to bathrooms makes about as much sense as throwing a party to celebrate the ultrasound photo of your poor kid’s genitals.”</p>
155	<p>I found the much smaller locker room in a daze; it was actually labeled gender neutral. When I stepped inside, I nearly backed straight out. There was a boy in there. A boy with long hair. Who must not have been a boy, and when would I stop assuming people’s genders based on their body parts?</p> <p>...“I’m not allowed to change with the girls because I’m attracted to one of them, who isn’t even a girl, by the way, but here we are.”</p>
157	Maybe my dysphoria wasn’t because of my gender-whatever. Indy’s gender was a mystery, one they seemed to fully enjoy.
174	<p>“Well, you know how queer circles aren’t always accepting? A few years ago, right before you jumped in my shark tank, I went to a cosplay party with the Cleveland All Out group. ‘Dress as your gender identity.’ I came as Wednesday Addams because, in my mind, gender is dead. I wore all my pronouns pins, and no one would talk to me. All genders welcome . . . yeah right. Until someone agender shows up.”</p> <p>...A lot of people don’t know their gender beyond their assigned sex.</p>

Page	Content
175	<p>"Nonbinary seems like a better starting point here. River, what about trans masc?"</p> <p>..."Trans is too political." Indy's response was stiff, raised eyebrows. "I don't want to go anywhere near that word. It makes boomers' minds melt. And politicians go all Thanos, and I don't want to."</p>
176	<p>"But that's just it. I don't want to pick a new word. Sending myself the wrong way down the lesbian highway messed me up. Gender should be more like tides. And I'm a man o' war."</p> <p>Indy grinned. "You do remind me of a brilliantly multicolored colony of polyps. And like the man o' war, do you use they/ them pronouns?"</p> <p>..."Interestingly enough, I don't mind being a man o' war. It might be the best gender identity out there. What eats me is that I was ever lumped in with those jellyfish to begin with."</p>
178	<p>Her binder disappeared, and she wore nothing under soft button-downs, which drove me absolutely insane. We nearly kissed all the time, cheek to cheek, nose to nose. Anything to get closer. To stake small claims on each other everywhere we went. I spent a lot of time in the shower one knuckle in my mouth, the other hand extra busy. We listened to music, collapsed after swim practice in a heap of sore muscles, our bodies pressed together lengthwise on the couch in her room.</p>
180	<p>She kissed my neck at the corner of my jaw, and I shivered in rather delicious agony.</p>
188	<p>My thumb tugged one lip of her smile. She kissed my fingers, and I kissed Indy.</p> <p>We were soft but certain. My body heated, hummed. I held back, lips parting from hers soon but not fast.</p> <p>...I opened my mouth to comment, and she shook her head, pressing me down onto her bed, her knees straddling my lap. She kissed me this time, and it was long and hard, and soul-deep.</p> <p>...Euphoria.</p> <p>And that's why dysphoria was so aptly named. They were similar experiences, both a flight to a different realm of being, one to endless light, the other? Absolute nothingness. Indigo Waits made me feel euphoric. Like catching the wind, sailing.</p> <p>Our kissing lapsed into a kind of madness, and I tried to reel it back in before we turned irrevocably naked. "Should we stop?" I asked, eyes searching for hers until I found them and looked away.</p> <p>..."Do you want to stop, or do you think we should because yielding is deemed socially respectful decorum?"</p> <p>...I blinked hard, unable to see past the hormones that left me extra aware of my hands and Indy's extraordinary ass. "The second one."</p> <p>...Indy was still straddling my lap, and I held the tops of her hips, thoughts whirlpooling. "I can wait, but if you're waiting for me, I'm ready."</p> <p>"Right now?" I'd worked myself up to kiss Indy. Now she was asking for a lot more. I could do this; I certainly wanted to. I squeezed her legs, fingers edging toward the feverish center of her body. Indy threw her head back and groaned, and I was nearly undone.</p> <p>I looped off her baggy pajama top, revealing those sound shoulders, hard nipples, and the excruciatingly soft skin of her chest. Her kisses moved to my neck, and I lost my shirt, my binder pulled as tightly as possible, limiting each breath. Nuzzling the nook between her shoulder and neck, I asked, "Chest? Yes or no?"</p> <p>"Yes, please."</p>

Page	Content
	<p>My hands brushed every inch of her, palms open on her nipples that were so sensitive her sounds grew wild and her knees clamped on my hips. We switched positions, and I sank between her legs. Indy tossed herself backward on the bed, and I tugged away her unders, kissed her wide-open until her body rippled and arched, and she nearly pulled my hair out. She came just like she changed her clothes: unabashed and unbound. Intimidating and proud.</p> <p>Afterward, she reached for me with the same kind of hunger that had driven me here in the first place, only I was having trouble breathing. Relaxing. Feeling. Her hands went after my belt, and I couldn't help begging my dysphoria, Not now. Please don't do this to me right now.</p> <p>My three-pound binder was holding in a million pounds of flesh.</p> <p>...I tackled her, flipping us with my weight, lifting my hips to kick off my pants. My skin loved the warm angles of her body. Indy's neck and arms, her shaking legs. We pressed into each other at the same moment, and when I found her eyes wide, searching out mine, I didn't know what was wrong. I nearly asked, nearly stopped us. But there was nothing wrong with Indy staring into me while touching me so tenderly I wanted to cry.</p> <p>...Intrusive thoughts rose from my depths. Joss calling my orgasms too masculine. Taylor scolding me to come like a woman, to surrender to it or some shit. I'd long since pretended to finish before I had.</p> <p>...We kissed madly, came so many times. Our bodies shook into pieces, each one was more satisfying than smashing dinnerware on cement. We stayed in that bed for days, literal years following the countdown of midnight.</p>
192	I'd always been jealous of that. I'd always been jealous of a lot of things about Joss. He had the perfect swimmer's V body, his brown skin notable in this sea of white. I'd never asked him how he navigated the difference. As a basically-white-person, I hadn't felt like I had the right, so I'd just ignored his race. Like everyone else. That must have felt pretty terrible.
195	<p>"Since we're being so open, help me win an argument with Anders. Consider the baseball diamond of hooking up. Is third base considered sex for people like you? If so, what is a home run?"</p> <p>..."You want me to explain the difference between fingering and sex?"</p> <p>..."So, it comes down to nuance. This was my understanding. Not to mention there are lots of sex-based options that are sex no matter what combination of pieces."</p>
196	"Queers don't have bases." Indy waved their hand. "And it isn't because of anatomy. I've had plenty of what is traditionally considered sex that hardly felt like sex."
197	Indy sat behind me on the dark, cold bus. Their hands moved under my hoodie in the back, massaging. I wasn't wearing my binder, having been too tired to strap it on, and I could feel their fingers on skin that was usually kept away from everyone, even Indy, even in our more riotous explorations of each other. They lowered their face to my shoulder and kissed the back of my neck.
198	Indy kissed me. Their lips were a grounding rod, their body made everything all right.
213	"Can I be the bisexual skank?" Indy held up a hand.
217	<p>Indy kissed my jaw, pulled my face toward their face. I kissed them back with a sudden drowning need, until several people started hooting and banging outside the door.</p> <p>..."They think we're making up," I explained. "Makeup sex."</p>

Page	Content
231	I erased the name while Hit It watched me, perched on her desk chair like a raven. I wrote, River, they/ them.
233	"This place is overrun with gross cis white dudes." She changed on her side of the room. Electra had an entire array of sequined tops for working out. "I knew this place was Wonder Bread, but the homogeny is downright debilitating. Most of my friends are Black back home. They said, 'Don't go there! You'll get brainwashed by privilege.'"
234	"Yeah, but is that weird? Because you are kind of white." She paused as if maybe she'd said something wrong. I shrugged; she was right. "But if you ask any of the tools here, they'd yell, 'Arab is not white.' And then scream terrorist and run around like brain-dead morons." ..."We're only white when people need us to be. It's more confusing than weird."
237	I put my goggles on, nodded, and we took over the water like a pod of penises.
241	"I get the biggest crushes on effeminate bisexual man."
242	"Cultural homophobia and all." But it was more than that, wasn't it? "Transphobia. Cissexism."
243	"I have a . . . friend who helped me figure out I have body dysphoria, mostly about my chest. I need a doctor or something. I need to change it, but I also don't want to talk about it. At all." "You have come to the right place." He pulled out a one-inch three-ring binder and handed it over. "That's a list of trans-friendly doctors, gynecologists, dentists, you name it. There's information in there about testosterone and gender-affirming surgery. Do me a favor and don't search for things online unless you have to. The internet is where transphobes go to spread hateful information. Yes, you can get your transition covered by insurance. No, it's not impossible. None of it is impossible. Some people only want you to think it is." I opened the binder randomly to a page on top surgery. The heading read, Female to Male/ Nonbinary (FTMX). There were pictures with the faces artfully covered. Breasts turned into chests. Impossible translated to possible as easily as before-and-after photos. I'd never let myself think of a future without binders and endless chest pain. That wasn't the kind of wild hope I could let myself have; I'd even resented Indy for bringing it up only half a year ago. But now, the possibility left me a new kind of breathless.q
248	"Like a neon glow stick. With the kind of blond hair and blue eyes that continue to haunt humanity with racist beauty ideals." ..."I'm a trans person, Kirk. It's called my dead name." ...He glanced over the open page on trans menstruation options, and I stole the binder and closed it. "Talk."
253	"And a few other oceans. There was some trash-fire law passed in some horrid middle state last week that protects bigots who shun trans people from retail establishments and restaurants. No biggie, America isn't Germany in the 1930s or anything. People got rightly furious on the internet, and then they were gift wrapped and delivered that trans James Dean picture of you. Rebel in a lane."
257	I watched them kiss from the length of the soccer field, and I found a pretty decent star and wished them well.
267	Further back, a few months, there were pictures of our bodies twined up without any identifying marks. Only I knew it was us.

Page	Content
270	<p>The next person rang out, “How do you know you’re queer if you’ve never had sex?”</p> <p>...“You don’t seem queer.”</p> <p>I drank.</p> <p>“My [insert random relative] is gay too.”</p> <p>I drank.</p> <p>“I can’t learn new pronouns. I’m too old.”</p> <p>I drank.</p> <p>“But you can get married now, so stop complaining.”</p> <p>I drank.</p> <p>“I met you by this name, so changing it is going to be really hard for me.”</p> <p>I drank.</p> <p>“Queer is a bad word to my generation.”</p> <p>I drank to the bottom of my cup on that one.</p> <p>By the time we’d gotten to “Just don’t tell Grandma,” I was truly thankful that I wasn’t drinking alcohol because I would have been absolutely tanked.</p>
278	<p>“Yes, but there’s only so many spots for this type of surgery at the medical center, and it’s just been so popular lately. It’s like your whole generation came out of the pandemic with different genders.”</p> <p>I put on my best smile, which was useless behind the mask. “I can assure you that none of us are signing up for the pain and expense of major surgery because it’s the cool thing to do.” My voice purred these days. God bless testosterone.</p>
279	<p>“The psychiatrist wrote it,” I reassured her. “He just wants proof that I saw a counselor for gender issues in high school, which I did. I’m just having a hard time tracking that person down.”</p>
280	<p>Not to mention I had a splendid hookup situation with Israel, a raging retro crush on Indigo Waits, and now . . . drum roll, please?</p> <p>A date for top surgery.</p>
281	<p>Dr. Jackson finally seemed satisfied. “For me, the hard part takes two hours. The hard part for you is two months. Two months is a long time to stay anywhere that’s not home.”</p> <p>Jeez, Louise, not everyone is privileged enough to have a home.</p>
284	<p>I tried not to punish him with my sudden, blinding dysphoria.</p>
288	<p>And then all the sudden, I was seeing Indy and me kissing fiercely in our prom outfits—the very last time we were together without California between us.</p>
298	<p>Accept others for being gender abusive and pro-captivity? Accept a culture that ruins animals and people alike in the name of capitalism?</p>
301	<p>By the light of a few thousand indoor stars, I kissed Indy. Her lips were soft, but firmer than I remembered. The other mouths I’d known over the last two years washed away, leaving only two: the Indy I knew and this new person.</p> <p>At first, we kissed as we always had, sweet with raw attentiveness. An earnestness of clasping hands and wanting sounds.</p>
302	<p>Indy laughed with a deep purr, hands tracing the lines of my harness beneath my jeans, their thigh pressing into my manhood. “And is this also, ‘thank you, Israel’?”</p> <p>“Nah.” My voice cracked cutely. “That’s all me. Though he did show me how to use it.”</p> <p>Indy made a starving sound, their hands finding all the new pieces of me with new energy. When we started kissing again, all the teenage kinks had been worked out. We made love</p>



Page	Content
	all ways, and no offense to the boy I used to be, but if intention is the true difference, we intended at an entirely new level. Indy was loud and verbal, and said that they loved me, loved me, loved me while we were shaking together, our bodies whole.
303	I sat up and placed kisses on her stomach.
309	Indy held me by the shoulders, gaze on my chest. "I need to see you shirtless." "Right now?" I asked. Indy guided me from behind, toward the front door. "I'm already going to have to run to make my flight. Inside. Strip."
310	I kissed them, more seriously than I'd been able to all week. There were tears on our lips, wetting the kiss, and then they left, and I dove into the last lap of my life without Indigo Waits.
325	It's okay if you do not understand the difference between gender, assigned sex, and sexual orientation. Blurring these lines has been the prized weapon of sexism, cissexism, and homophobia for centuries. The patriarchy and capitalism need you to tell other people who they are . . . so don't. Gen Z often embraces this PANTS metaphor: Assigned sex is about what's in your pants. Categories include female, intersex spectrum, male. Gender is how you feel about what's in your pants. Categories include transgender, nonbinary spectrum, cisgender, agender, two-spirit, man o' war, etc. Sexual orientation is about who you want in your pants and/ or how often. Categories include homo, pan, demi, bi, and hetero sexualities, as well as hyper, ace spectrum, and allo sexualities.

Profanity/Derogatory Term	Count
Ass	24
Bitch	1
Dick	10
Dyke	4
Fuck	31
Goddamn	1
Piss	4
Shit	33
Tit	1

## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings

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Study Programs Medium Genre Tags

Smart Search MAN O WAR

Temp List

1 Results

FIC MCC

Man o' war

McCarthy, Cory

Text-unmediated-volume (2022.)

Lexile: HD690L

Cory McCarthy.

utton Books

0 pages ;22 cm

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ender identity

self-actualization (Psychology)

ransgender people

irst loves

On a field trip to SeaPlanet, seventeen-year-old Arab-American high school swimmer River McIntyre has a chance encounter with Indy, a happy, healthy queer person, which sets off a wrenching journey of self-discovery, from internalized homophobia and gender dysphoria, through layers of coming out, affirmation surgery, and true love.

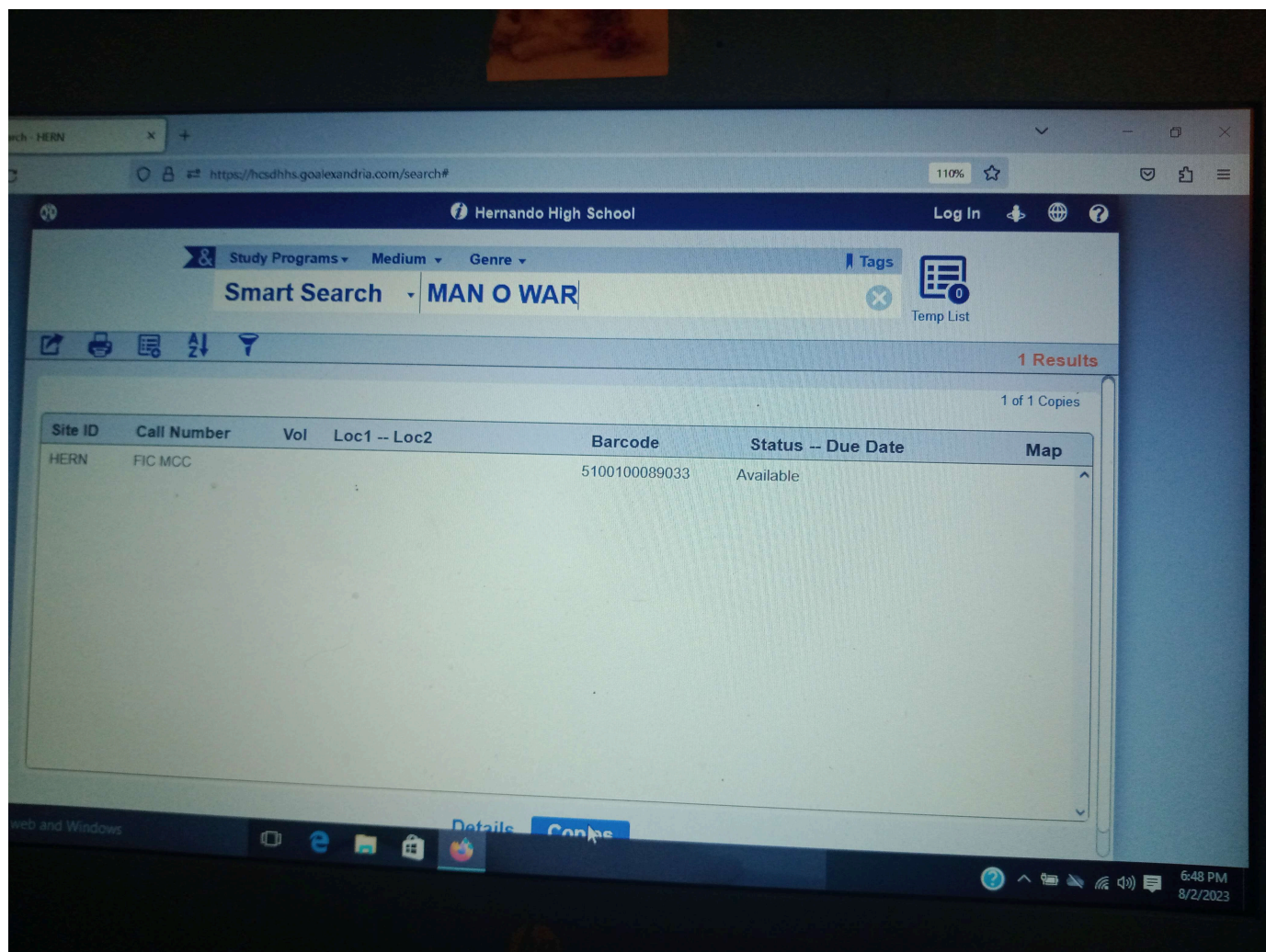
Awards Note: A Junior Library Guild selection

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<https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/cory-mccarthy/man-o-war-mccarthy/>

# MAN O' WAR

BY CORY MCCARTHY • RELEASE DATE: MAY 31, 2022

*A beautiful and relentless current of emotion.*

Trapped in Ohio and tortured by others' expectations of "normal," nonbinary Irish and Lebanese American River McIntyre can no more imagine freedom than the animals at the local aquarium can imagine the ocean.

That is, until an unexpected encounter propels them into the overwhelming waters of self-discovery. A man-of-war is not a jellyfish, and River McIntyre can't be the White daughter their Lebanese mother wants or please their swim coach, but they don't know why they are unhappy. When Indy Waits, a White, unapologetically queer former classmate, resurfaces during River's school field trip to the marine life theme park SeaPlanet, River confronts repressed memories and feelings by diving into the shark tank. At first, Indy wants nothing to do with the charismatic and self-destructive River, but their lives keep colliding as if pulled together by the tides. Spanning sophomore year of high school into adulthood, this blend of romance and coming-of-age story depicts a refreshingly messy journey of self-discovery and acceptance. Internalized racism and trauma create a fraught dynamic in River's relationship with their mother, which McCarthy navigates with nuance. Poignant, self-reflective prose is bolstered by carefully crafted, overarching marine themes and imagery. Love plays a significant role in River's growth, but neither dependence on a partner nor a dramatic, teen-movie coming-out moment are what carry them into a healthier life.

*A beautiful and relentless current of emotion. (Fiction. 14-18)*

**Pub Date:** May 31, 2022

**ISBN:** 978-0-593-35370-7

**Page Count:** 336

**Publisher:** Dutton

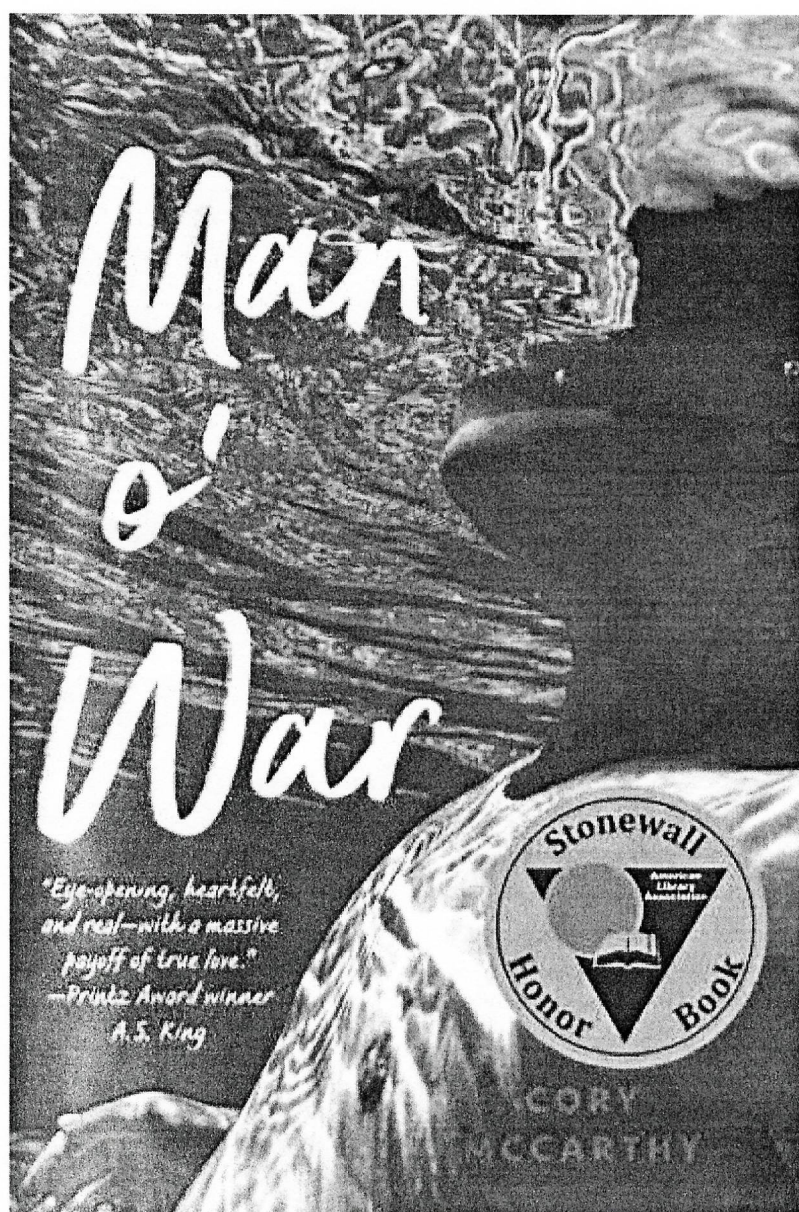
**Review Posted Online:** March 15, 2022

**Kirkus Reviews Issue:** April 1, 2022

**Categories:**



<https://teenlibrariantoolbox.com/2023/02/09/book-review-man-o-war-by-cory-mccarthy/>



When I'm reviewing books for professional publications, I stay quiet about them on social media. I'm always really excited once a review comes out to be able to talk about the book, finally! Here's one of my most recent reviews, which originally appeared in an issue of School Library Journal.

Dutton. May 2022. 336p. Tr \$18.99. ISBN 9780593353707.

★ **Gr 9 Up—Swim team phenom River McIntyre is caustic, impulsive, infinitely angry, and at war with the world—and with themselves.** River feels as trapped in small-town Ohio, and in their own body, as the ocean life at the local marine life theme park, SeaPlanet, must feel. It's at SeaPlanet where River first encounters nonbinary former classmate Indy, and River's world shifts, beginning to tentatively grapple with their internalized homophobia and self-destructive, self-negating survival tactics. The story follows River from sophomore year of high school to adulthood, skipping large intervals of time, a risky narrative tactic that McCarthy employs successfully. River's identity and labels change as years pass, but they remain adrift and aching, drowning in dysphoria and trauma responses. River cobbles together a wonderful chosen family, Indy comes and goes, and River briefly becomes a national sensation when a college newspaper article goes viral about River, now identifying as trans, not being allowed on the men's swim team. In this intimate and deeply character-driven story, the exceptional writing exquisitely captures River's cutting but self-protective voice. River is both venomous and vulnerable as they learn that life is about explorations, not definitions, and that coming out is not a linear process. **Though this is an intense and often painful read, McCarthy makes it clear that there is joy and love to be found in moving from the captivity of anger and pain to the liberation of being able to be exactly who you are.**



## Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days following the formation of the committee. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School HHS Date 4-9-24

Title Man-O-War

Author Cory McCarthy

### Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material

1 Keep

5 Remove

4-16-23

### Silent Voting Results:

3 Do Not Remove

3 Remove/Discontinue 4-9-23

Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
<p>If committee is recommending to limit access-</p> <p>_____ Grade Level</p> <p>_____ For Advance Course</p> <p>_____ Parent Permission</p>	<p>Basis for removal, check all that apply:</p> <p>_____ The materials is pornographic</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The materials is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS</p> <p>_____ The materials is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.</p> <p>_____ The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.</p>

# Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

4/10/24

Print Name	Position	Signature
Leechele Booker	Principal	Leechele Booker
Cindy Baron	District Media	Cindy Baron
Sue Lisk	Lay Person	Sue Lisk
Lori Sowers	Community Member	Lori Sowers
Lisa Steinkamp	Parent	Lisa Steinkamp
Tiffany Skinner	Parent	Tiffany Skinner

4/10/24

Administrator's Signature Leechele Booker Date 4/9/24



TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: April 12, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenge HHS 052-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, “Man O’ War” at Hernando High School. The review committee at Hernando High School has evaluated the book, "Man O’ War", written by Cory McCarthy based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is for the book to be removed from Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on May 7, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before May 7, 2024.



**A. Item Currently Budgeted -**

Account Name		<u>No Financial Impact</u>										
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

**B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -\*\***

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

**C. History**

Check one:

Prior Year Budget: ☐New for Current Year: ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$

**\*\* WHEN ITEM NOT CURRENTLY BUDGETED IS APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD, THIS WILL SERVE AS THE BUDGET AMENDMENT\*\***



# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

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**Agenda Item # 10. 24-2233**

5/7/2024

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### **Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Cemetery Boys" written by Aiden Thomas, in circulation and be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

### **Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to keep the book, "Cemetery Boys" written by Aiden Thomas, in circulation. This book is being challenged at Hernando High School.

Hernando High School's Review Committee met on February 6, 2024 and February 22, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 5-0 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book stay in circulation in Hernando County Schools.

Per Hernando County School District 2522 Policy requirements, the Superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to keep the book.

### **My Contact**

Kelly Downey

Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs

352-797-7000 ext. 280

downey\_k@hcsb.k12.fl.us

### **2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

### **Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.



## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605  
M4LHernando.CMRCChair@gmail.com

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Hernando County School. District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE: HHS “Cemetery Boys” (M4LHC –  
053/2023)

October 13, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 053-23) for “Cemetery Boys” which is currently located at Hernando High School’s media center. This book was discovered removed from copies on Alexandria back on August 2, 2023.

“Cemetery Boys” contains sexual age-inappropriate content: references to sexuality; alternate gender ideologies; violence; and profanity.

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently violates H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I’m calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book from Hernando High School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can’t be “disappeared” (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name) JT

Address : PO Box 1568 City Brooksville State FL Zip Code 34605

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: October 13, 2023 Author: Aiden Thomas

Title: Cemetery Boys

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Swoon Reads 2020

School(s) in which item is used: Hernando High School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames, etc. Attach additional pages if necessary) Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

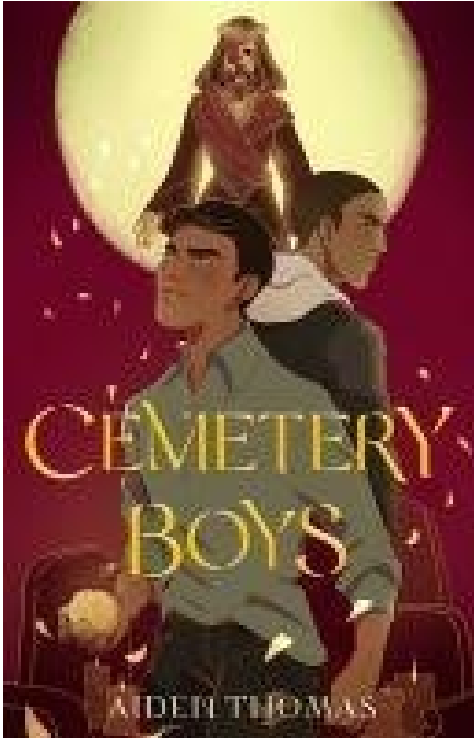
If yes, where? Name and date of publication: GoodReads 2020, 2021

Complainant's Signature

Julia Thomas

Date October 13, 2023

# CEMETERY BOYS



## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains references to sexuality; alternate gender ideologies; violence; and profanity.

*Young Adult*

**By Aiden Thomas**

ISBN: 978-1250250469

**2**/5

**Teen Guidance**  
BookLooks Review Rating

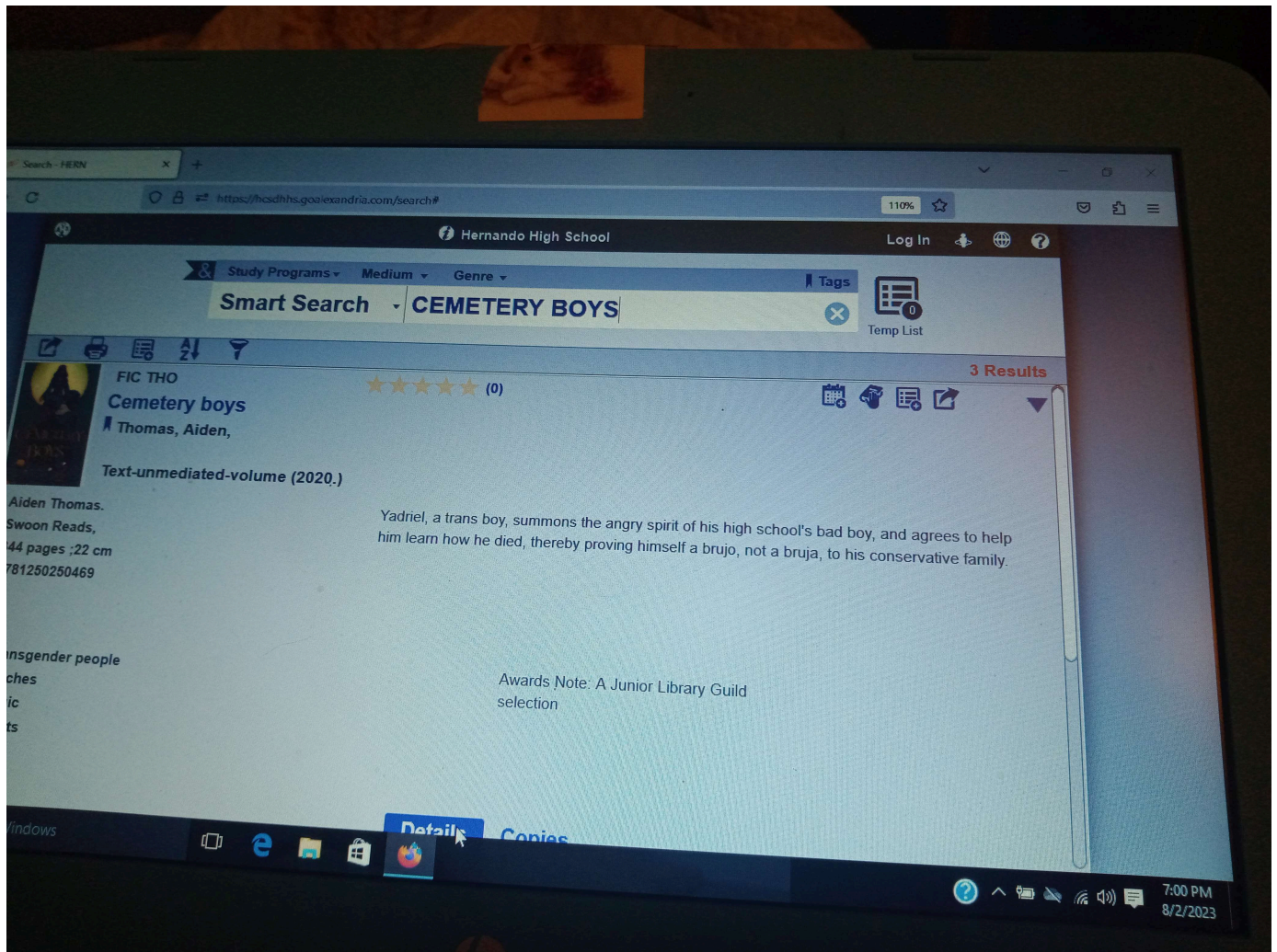


Page	Content
16	<p>Yadriel had spent years feeling misunderstood by everyone except for Maritza. When he had told her he was trans three years ago, she hadn't batted an eye. Ay, finally! she'd said, exasperated but smiling. I figured something was up, I was just waiting for you to spit it out. During that time, Maritza had been his reliable secret keeper, smoothly going back and forth between pronouns when they were alone, versus when they were around everyone else, until he was ready.</p> <p>It took him another year, when he was fourteen, to work up the courage to come out to his family. It hadn't gone nearly as well, and it was still a constant struggle to get them and the other brujx to use the right pronouns and to call him by the right name. himself a real brujo. With the help of his cousin and best friend Maritza, he performs the ritual himself, and then sets out to find the ghost of his murdered cousin and set it free.</p>
77	<p>"Oh..." Growing up in a multigenerational household and being part of a huge Latinx community, the concept of not having any family was both foreign and distressing.</p>

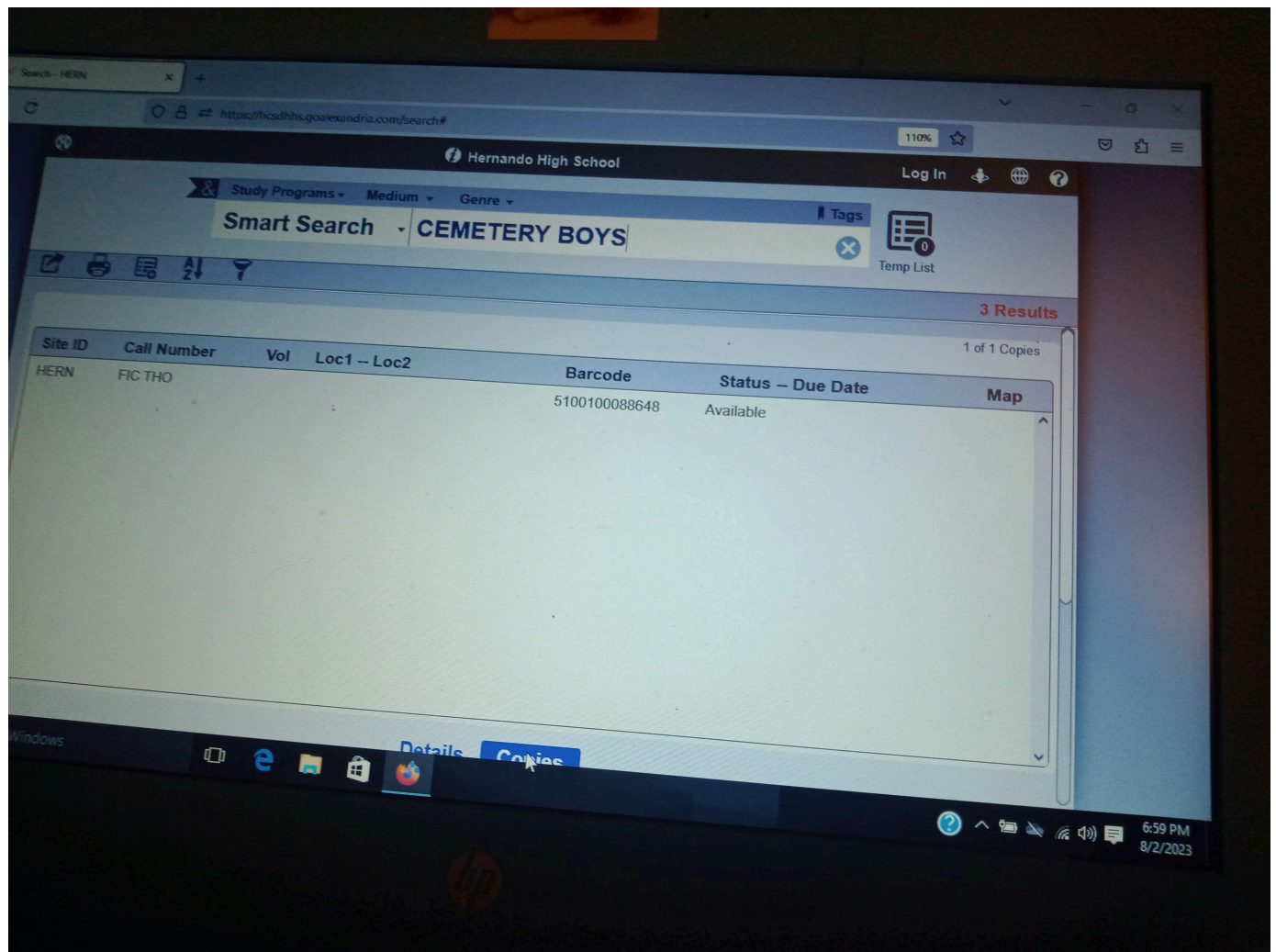
Profanity	Count
Fuck	2
Shit	2

## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>No Nudity</li> <li>No Profanity</li> <li>No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>No Profanity</li> <li>No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate Violence</li> <li>Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>Moderate Profanity</li> <li>Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explicit Violence</li> <li>Sexual Nudity</li> <li>Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aberrant Violence</li> <li>Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings







<https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/aiden-thomas/cemetery-boys/>

# CEMETERY BOYS

BY AIDEN THOMAS • RELEASE DATE: SEPT. 1, 2020

## *Heart-pounding.*

A gay, transgender brujo with burgeoning powers seeks answers about his cousin's death.

Sixteen-year-old Yadriel also wishes for acknowledgement from his community but unexpectedly finds himself entangled in the unresolved wishes of a strong-willed, good-looking spirit. He descends from a long line of brujx who have been granted magic power by Lady Death to heal the living and to guide spirits into the afterlife. Although he's grown up surrounded by a close-knit community, Yadriel feels alone, excluded indefinitely from a sacred rite of passage because he is transgender. When he senses that his cousin Miguel has died suddenly but the family can't locate him, Yadriel sees an opportunity to prove to everyone he's a true brujo by solving the mystery and releasing his cousin's lost spirit. His plan quickly falls apart, as he accidentally summons the spirit of Julian Diaz, a boy with unfinished business who died the same day as Miguel. Both the romance and mystery burn slow and hot until the climax. Stakes begin high, and the intensity only increases with a looming deadline and a constant risk that Julian might lose himself, turning malignant. The cast of characters represents a diversity of Latinx identities sharing a community in East Los Angeles. Julian is Colombian while Yadriel is Cuban and Mexican. Their romance provides joyful, ground-breaking representation for gay, transgender boys.

Heart-pounding. (*Fantasy*. 14-18)

**Pub Date:** Sept. 1, 2020

**ISBN:** 978-1-250-25046-9

**Page Count:** 352

**Publisher:** Swoon Reads/Macmillan

**Review Posted Online:** June 24, 2020

**Kirkus Reviews Issue:** July 15, 2020

**Categories:**

TEENS & YOUNG ADULT ROMANCE | TEENS & YOUNG ADULT PARANORMAL & SUPERNATURAL



Parents' Guide to

# Cemetery Boys

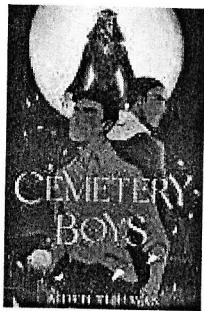
By Mandie Carroll, Common Sense Media Reviewer

age 14+

Enchanting queer Latinx fantasy has mystery, spirit-romance.

Book Aiden Thomas Fantasy 2020

Add your rating



Save

Parents Say: age 12+      1 reviews

Any Iffy Content?      Read more

Talk with Your Kids About...      Read more

A Lot or a Little?

What you will—and won't—find in this book.

Educational Value

A diverse Latinx community is represented. In the

Positive Messages

Be your authentic self; haters will either lose ou

### **Positive Role Models**

Main characters model unconditional acceptance, fi

### **Violence & Scariness**

Julian's spirit relives his murder by stabbing --

### **Sex, Romance & Nudity**

A slow-burn romance between same-gender characters

### **Language**

Regular swearing, mostly consisting of "s--t," and

### **Products & Purchases**

A few mentions of a Hydro Flask bottle and iPhones

### **Drinking, Drugs & Smoking**

Yadriel and Julian attend a beach bonfire where hi

### **Parents Need to Know**

Parents need to know that bestseller *Cemetery Boys*, by Aiden Thomas, is set in East Los Angeles and tells the story of 16-year-old Yadriel, who faces exclusion from his brujx community of healers (women) and spirit guides (men) because he is transgender. (*Bruja* means witch in Spanish.) He becomes a...

### **Community Reviews**

age 12+

Based on 1 parent review

MjJ. Adult

5 months ago

age 12+

A fun fantasy/romance that tells the story of a Latino trans man. I strongly recommend *Cemetery Boys* for anyone who likes fantasy and romance! For context, I read it as a part of an assignment for an undergraduate education class (I'm in college), so

Cemetery Boys was not something I likely would have picked up on my own. That being said, I'm very glad I read Cemetery Boys -- it ended up being very cute and enjoyable! Without spoiling anything, the protagonist, Yadriel, is a Latino trans man who comes from a family that has magical powers like healing and sending the dead to the afterlife. When Yadriel's cousin goes missing, he tries to summon his cousin's ghost and accidentally summons the ghost of Julian, a "bad boy" from his school. I don't want to give any more of the plot away, but I personally found the book just the right amount of dramatic and exciting to keep me interested. I should mention that this book contains scenes that depict transphobia, in case that is something that could potentially be very upsetting. None of the mentions or incidents of transphobia are extremely violent or graphic, but it is still something to be aware of. As a trans man, Yadriel has to navigate his school as a newly out person and his family as they try to accept him. We also see Yadriel get to experience the joys of finally being recognized for who he is, though! If you're looking for a story that prioritizes the story of a trans man, I think Cemetery Boys is right for you. Even if you're not explicitly looking for a story about a trans man, I would still recommend Cemetery Boys! The last thing I should mention is that Cemetery Boys features many characters that have recently lost friends or family, which can be difficult to read about. If any of that sounds interesting to you, please go to your local library or bookstore and give Cemetery Boys a chance!

Show more

### What's the Story?

CEMETERY BOYS begins as 16-year-old Yadriel, shunned by most of his Latinx brujx community because he is trans, takes matters into his own hands and successfully performs a quinceañera ritual on himself, becoming the brujo he knows he is. Immediately, he senses his cousin Miguel's death, and tries to summon his spirit, but accidentally summons the spirit of Julian, a classmate he barely knows, but who has also just died. Yadriel's cousin, Maritza, his ride-or-die companion, helps him and Julian try to unravel the mystery surrounding Julian and Miguel's deaths. They are on a tight deadline with Día de Muertos just a few days away (spirits must cross over to the afterlife before being able to come back and celebrate with their families). But Yadriel and Julian still manage to grow close, sparking a doomed, slow-burn romance. A plot twist puts the entire brujx community at risk of destruction, with only Yadriel and Maritza, both still inexperienced brujx, standing in the way.

Show more

### Is It Any Good?

Our review:

Parents say (1):

Kids say (3):

This book is an enchanting tour-de-force that portrays a vibrant, diverse Latinx community rooted in tradition and led by intensely likable, decidedly not traditional characters. *Cemetery Boys* is a triumph in terms of casting trans and gay characters whose entire lives don't revolve around being trans and gay. Yadriel and Julian, though practically opposites, are both compelling and relatable characters that readers can



identify with. They will, of course, be especially treasured by queer and trans readers who rarely see themselves cast as magical heroes.

The story is an education for those unfamiliar with Latinx culture, and a celebration for those who are. Author Aiden Thomas seamlessly weaves in cultural touchstones such as when Yadriel claims to be ill and his female relatives converge on him with home remedies like manzanilla tea, an egg to ward off the evil eye, and VapoRub. Extensive preparations for Dia de Muertos, where each element is given meaningful attention in the text, paints a colorful, lively picture of this important holiday. While some of the plot turns may be predictable, Thomas' beautiful writing, his compelling, full-of-personality characters, and tension-filled pacing makes this a must-read for just about anyone who likes a well-told story.

Show more

#### Talk to Your Kids About ...

- Families can talk about the characters' quests to be accepted for who they are in *Cemetery Boys*. How did Yadriel go about this? Where did Julian find acceptance and love before he died? What is Maritza's approach? Did you relate to any of the characters? How so?
- A diverse Latinx community helps make the smaller brujx community whole, with people from many different Latin American cultures and countries. What stories or traditions did you know about already? Which ones were new to you?
- *Cemetery Boys* uses Spanish words and phrases that are either partially translated, understood via context, or not translated at all. How did that affect your reading experience? Why do you think the author sometimes chose not to translate?

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

# Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days after its formation. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School Hernando High School Date 2/21/24

Title Cemetery Boys  
Author Aiden Thomas

## Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material

### Silent Voting Results:

5 Do Not Remove

0 Remove/Discontinue

Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
<p>If committee is recommending limiting access-</p> <p>_____ Grade Level</p> <p>_____ For Advance Course</p> <p>_____ Parent Permission</p>	<p>Basis for removal, check all that apply:</p> <p>_____ The material is pornographic</p> <p>_____ The material is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS</p> <p>_____ The material is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.</p> <p>_____ The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.</p>



# Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

Print Name	Position	Signature
Sue Hisk	Lay Person	Sue Hisk
Lori Sowers	Community Member	Lori Sowers
Leechelle Booker	Principal	Leechelle Booker
Cindy Bacon	District Media	Cindy Bacon
Lisa Steenkamp	parent	Lisa B Steenkamp

Administrator's Signature Leechelle Booker Date 2/22/24



TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: February 22, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenge HHS 053-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, "Cemetery Boys" at Hernando High School. The review committee at Hernando has evaluated the book, "Cemetery Boys", written by Aiden Thomas based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is that the book is not removed from Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on March 12, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before March 12, 2024.

**A. Item Currently Budgeted -**

Account Name		<u>No Financial Impact</u>										
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

**B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -\*\***

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

**C. History**

Check one:

Prior Year Budget: ☐New for Current Year: ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$

**\*\* WHEN ITEM NOT CURRENTLY BUDGETED IS APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD, THIS WILL SERVE AS THE BUDGET AMENDMENT\*\***



# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

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**Agenda Item # 11. 24-2237**

**5/7/2024**

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### **Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Forever" written by Judy Blume, in circulation and be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

### **Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to keep the book, "Forever" written by Judy Blume, in circulation. This book is being challenged at Nature Coast Technical, Central and Weeki Wachee High Schools.

Nature Coast Technical High School's Review Committee met on February 13, 2024 and February 21, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 5-2 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book stay in circulation in Hernando County Schools.

Per Hernando County School District 2522 Policy requirements, the Superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to keep the book.

### **My Contact**

Kelly Downey

Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs

352-797-7000 ext. 280

downey\_k@hcsb.k12.fl.us

### **2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

### **Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.



## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605

M4LHernando.CMRCChair@gmail.com

Hernando County School District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE: NCTHS “Forever” (M4LHC –  
067-/2023)

October 20, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 067-23) for “Forever” which is currently located at Nature Coast Technical High School’s media center. This book was discovered back on August 3, 2023.

“Forever” contains sexual age-inappropriate content; sexual encounters with minor children. “Forever” is considered an eighteen years and up reading material.

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently violates H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I’m calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book, from Nature Coast Technical High School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can’t be “disappeared” (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*



THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name) JT

Address : PO Box 1568 City Brooksville State FL Zip Code 34605

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: October 20, 2023 Author: Judy Blume

Title: Forever

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Atheneum Books  
1975

School(s) in which item is used: Nature Coast Technical High School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames, etc. Attach additional pages if necessary) Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

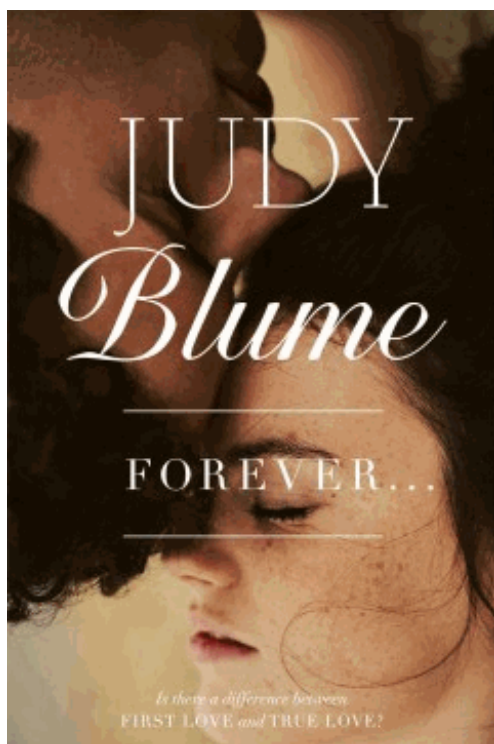
If yes, where? Name and date of publication: GoodReads 2023, 2021, 2013

Complainant's Signature

Julia Thomas

Date October 20, 2023

# FOREVER...



*Young Adult*

**By Judy Blume**

ISBN: 978-1481414425

## Summary of Concerns:

This book has sexually explicit excerpts involving minors.



**4**/5

**Not For Minors**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
0	A note to the Reader: For in-depth sexual and reproductive health information, contact the nearest Planned Parenthood health center by calling 1-800-230-PLAN.
1	Sybil Davison has a genius I.Q. and has been laid by at least six different guys.
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22	It occurred to me in the middle of the night that Michael asked if I was a virgin to find out what I expected of him. If I hadn't been one then he probably would have made love to me.
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29	"Are you still a virgin?" Erica asked. "Yes." "Is he?" "I don't know...I haven't asked." "I've been thinking," Erica said, "that it might not be a bad idea to get laid before college." "Just like that?" "Well...I'd have to be attracted to him, naturally." "What about love?"

Page	Content
	<p>"You don't need love to have sex."</p> <p>"But it means more that way."</p> <p>"Oh, I don't know. They say the first time's never any good anyway."</p> <p>"Which is why you should at least love him," I said.</p> <p>"Maybe...but I'd really like to get it over with."</p> <p>"What's the point?"</p> <p>"I'm always thinking about it...wondering who's going to be the one...like tonight, I kept picturing myself with Artie...and in school I sit in class thinking how it would be with every guy..."</p> <p>"Really?"</p> <p>"Yes...even the teachers...I wonder about them too...especially Mr. Frazier, since he never zips his fly all the way. Tell the truth, Kath...don't you think about it?"</p>
31	<p>"I mean it," Erica said, "we look at sex differently...I see it as a physical thing and you see it as a way of expressing love."</p>
41	<p>"Did you know that soft mattresses are no good for making love?"</p> <p>"Michael..."</p> <p>"Really...I mean it."</p> <p>"That's very interesting...now would you please leave so I can change."</p> <p>"Are you ashamed of your body, Katherine?"</p> <p>"No...of course not."</p> <p>"Then what's the difference if I sat?"</p> <p>"Oh..." I shook my head at him, turned away and unbuttoned my shirt. I pulled it off and unhooked my bra, which was also wet. Then I hesitated for a minute and slipped that off too. I reached for my dry bra and put it on. All that time neither of us said anything.</p> <p>Then Michael was behind me.</p> <p>"You promised..." I reminded him.</p> <p>"I'll hook it for you...that's all."</p> <p>"Don't bother."</p> <p>"It's no trouble. " But instead of hooking it he slid his hands around to my breasts and kissed the back of my neck.</p> <p>"Please, Michael...don't."</p> <p>"Why not, Kath?"</p> <p>"Because..."</p>
50	<p>We lay down on our rug and after a while, when Michael reached under my skirt I didn't stop him, not then and not when his hand was inside my underpants.</p> <p>"I want you so much," he said.</p> <p>"I want you too," I told him, "but I can't...I'm not ready, Michael..."</p> <p>"Yes, you are...you are...I can feel how ready you are."</p> <p>"No..." I pushed his hand away and sat up. "I'm talking about mentally ready."</p>
51	<p>"But your body says you want to..."</p> <p>"I have to control my body with my mind."</p> <p>"Oh, shit..." Michael said.</p> <p>"It's not easy for me either."</p> <p>"I know...I know..." He put his arm around me. "Look...we can satisfy each other</p>

Page	Content
	without the whole thing..." "We will...soon..."
51	After Michael went home I was in bed, trying to fall asleep, I thought about making love with him- the whole thing, like he said. Would I make noises like my mother? I can always tell when my parents are making love because they shut their bedroom door after they think Jamie and I are asleep. It's hard not to listen. My room is right next to theirs. Sometimes I'll hear them laughing softly and other times my mother will let out these little moans or call Roger...Roger....Even though I know it's natural and I'm glad my parents love each other I can't help feeling embarrassed. What would it be like to be in bed with Michael?
56	"Fathers have complexes about their little girls. They can't stand the thought of their precious darlings having sex." "You think that's what's bothering him?" "Absolutely. I has nothing to do with breaking your leg, like I said...it has to do with breaking your cherry."
64	Then Michael held me away and said, "I wasn't going to touch you tonight...just to prove I didn't get you up here for sex." "I'd have been disappointed," I told him. "I even wore my best nightgown. Do you like it?" "It covers so much of you but it's nice and soft." Michael reached over and turned out the lamp on the night table. "How do you work these crazy buttons?" he asked, trying to undo my nightgown. I unbuttoned them myself. "I want to feel you against me," Michael said and he took off the top of his pajamas. Then he lay down and put his arms around me. "Oh...it feels nice this way," I whispered, as my hands wandered across his naked shoulders and down his back. Michael kissed me and reached down between my legs but I caught his hand and moved it away. "No...not tonight..." "I don't care." "But I do." It wasn't so much that I didn't want him to touch me, because I did- it was just that I didn't think it was a good idea for either one of us to get carried away. "Michael...don't get too worked up...okay..." "I'm already worked up." He didn't have to tell me.
77	After we kissed for awhile he took off his pajama tope, then said, "Let's take yours off too...it's in the way." I slipped my nightgown over my head and dropped it to the floor. Then there were just my bikini pants and Michael's bottoms between us. We kissed again. Feeling him against me that way made me so excited I couldn't lie still. He rolled over on top of me and we moved together again and again and it felt so good I didn't ever want to stop- until I came. After a minute I reached for Michael's hand. "Show me what to do," I said. "Do whatever you want." "Help me, Michael...I feel so stupid." "Don't," he said, wiggling out of his pajama bottoms. He led my hand to his penis.



Page	Content
	<p>"Katherine...I'd like you to meet Ralph...Ralph, this is Katherine. She's a very good friend of mine."</p> <p>"Does every penis have a name?"</p> <p>"I can only speak for my own."</p> <p>In books penises are always described as hot and throbbing but Ralph felt like ordinary skin. Just his shape was different- that and the fact that he wasn't smooth, exactly- as if there a lot going on under the skin. I don't know why I'd been so nervous about touching Michael. Once I got over being scared I let my hands go everywhere. I wanted to feel every part of him.</p> <p>While I was experimenting, I asked, "Is this alright?"</p> <p>And Michael whispered, "Everything's right."</p> <p>When I kissed his face it was all sweaty and his eyes were half-closed. He took my hand and led it back to Ralph, showing me how to hold him, moving my hand up and down according to his rhythm. Soon Michael moaned and I felt him come- a pulsating feeling, a throbbing, like the books said- then wetness. Some of it got on my hand but I didn't let go of Ralph.</p>
86	<p>"We played strip poker on Saturday night."</p> <p>"You didn't!"</p> <p>Erica laughed. "Right down to our birthday suits."</p>
89	<p>He pulled me down next to him. "We can't do anything to help Artie, right now."</p> <p>"I suppose not..."</p> <p>"We can help Ralph, though," he said, moving my hand to his belt buckle.</p>
100	<p>We lay next to each other kissing, and soon Michael unbuttoned my sweater and I sat up and unhooked my bra for him. While I slipped out of both, Michael pulled his sweater over his head. Then he held me. "You feel so good," he said, kissing me everywhere. "I love to feel you next to me. You're as soft as 'Tash."</p>
101	<p>"Do belly buttons have a taste?" I asked.</p> <p>"Yours does...it's delicious...like the rest of you." He unbuckled my jeans, then his own.</p> <p>"Michael...I'm not sure...please..."</p> <p>"Shush...don't say anything."</p> <p>"But Michael..."</p> <p>"Like always, Kath...that's all..."</p> <p>We both left on our underpants but after a minute Michael was easing mine down and then his fingers began exploring me. I let my hands wander across his stomach and down his legs and finally I began to stroke Ralph.</p> <p>"Oh, yes...yes...." I said, as Michael made me come. And he came too.</p>
102	<p>And when we were naked, in each other's arms, I wanted to do everything- I wanted to feel him inside me. I don't know if he sensed that or not but when he whispered, "Please, Kath...please let's keep going..." I told him, "Yes, Michael...yes...but not here...not on the bed."</p>
103	<p>"Okay...okay..." he stood up. "I've got a rubber in my wallet...if I can just find it."</p> <p>He looked around for his pants, found them on the floor next to the bed, then had to put on the light to find the rubber. When he did he held it up. "Satisfied?" he asked, turning the light off again.</p> <p>"I will be when you put it on."</p>

Page	Content
	<p>He knelt beside me and rolled on the rubber. "Anything else?"</p> <p>"Don't be funny now...please..."</p> <p>"I won't...I won't..." he said and we kissed. Then he was on top of me and I felt Ralph, hard, against my thigh. Just when I thought, Oh God...we're really and truly going to do it, Michael groaned and said, "Oh no...no...I'm sorry...I'm so sorry..."</p> <p>"What's wrong?"</p> <p>"I cam...I don't know what to say. I came before I even got in. I ruined it...I ruined everything."</p>
105	<p>This time I try to relax and think of nothing- nothing but how my body felt- and then Ralph was pushing against me and I whispered, "Are you in...are we doing it?"</p> <p>"Not yet," Michael said, pushing harder. "I don't want to hurt you."</p> <p>"Don't worry...just do it!"</p> <p>"I'm trying, Kath...but it's very tight in there."</p> <p>"What should I do?"</p> <p>"Can you spread your legs some more...and maybe raise them a little?"</p> <p>"Like this?"</p> <p>"That's better...much better."</p> <p>I could feel him halfway inside me and then Michael whispered, "Kath...."</p> <p>"What?"</p> <p>"I think I'm going to come again."</p> <p>I felt a big thrust, followed by a quick sharp pain that made me suck in my breath. "Oh...oh," Michael cried, but I didn't come. I wasn't even close, "I'm sorry," he said, "I couldn't hold off."</p>
112	<p>In his discussion of question two he said that enjoyable love-making, culminating in orgasm, isn't easy. It usually requires mutual education. It takes time, effort, and patience to learn to make love.</p>
135	<p>"You're taking the Pill?"</p> <p>"Uh huh."</p> <p>"Since when?"</p> <p>"I got them the day you got sick."</p> <p>"But where...how..."</p> <p>"I went to Planned Parenthood in New York."</p>
139	<p>"Do you ever put it on your balls?" I asked.</p> <p>"I don't shave them," he said.</p> <p>"I read that in a book...this guy put after shave on his balls before he went out with his girlfriends."</p> <p>"Well...maybe I would too...if I thought anybody was going to smell them."</p> <p>"Who did you have in mind?"</p> <p>"Oh, I don't know...just anybody." He put the bottle on top of the toilet and unbuckled his jeans.</p> <p>"What are you doing?"</p> <p>"I'm going to try it now...so I'm ready...just in case."</p> <p>He stepped out of his jeans, then took off his underpants. "On second thought," he said, "why don't you do it for me?"</p> <p>"Me...?"</p>

Page	Content
	<p>"It was your idea in the first place."</p> <p>I felt funny about seeing Michael exposed from the waist down, because it's always been dark when we made love. I've touched him a lot but I've never looked carefully.</p> <p>He sensed my feelings because he said, "You want to know me inside out, don't you?"</p> <p>So I looked. His hair down there is almost the color as on his head, but curlier. Mine is very dark, much darker than on my head. "Hello Ralph..." I said, kneeling in front of Michael. Ralph was small and soft and just hung there. I shook some Moustache into the palm of my hand but when I reached out toward Michael, he caught my hand and said, "Don't...it stings..."</p> <p>"How do you know?"</p> <p>"I just do..."</p> <p>"But you said..." He didn't let me finish. Instead, he kneeled with me and as we kissed Ralph grew bigger and hard. I undressed myself, while Michael watched. Ralph stuck straight out, as if he was watching too. We mad love on the bathroom rug, but just when I was getting really excited, Michael came. I wondered what it would ever work out right between us.</p> <p>"I'm sorry," he said. "I just couldn't wait...it's been a few weeks."</p> <p>"That's okay."</p> <p>We got into bed and fell asleep for an hour and when we woke up Ralph was hard again. This time Michael made it last much longer and I got so carried away I grabbed his backside with both hands, trying to push him deeper and deeper into me- and I spread my legs as far apart as I could- and I raised my hips off the bed- and I moved with him, again and again and again- and at last, I came. I came right before Michael and as I did I made noises, just like my mother. Michael did too. While he was still on top of me, catching his breath, I started laughing. "I came..." I told him. "I actually came too."</p> <p>"I know," he said, "I felt it...is that what's so funny?"</p>
146	<p>"What's she going to do with a baby?"</p> <p>"Oh, she knows she can't keep it. She'll put it up for adoption as soon as it's born."</p> <p>"Then why have it in the first place?"</p> <p>"For the experience , she told me."</p>
146	<p>"I'd have an abortion...wouldn't you?"</p> <p>"In a minute..."</p>
169	<p>"I could have had an abortion but I wanted the experience of giving birth."</p>
174	<p>I kissed his ears, running my tongue around the edges. I used my hands on his body while I worked my way down, kissing his neck, his chest, his belly.</p> <p>"You're aggressive tonigt..."</p> <p>I hadn't thought about that until he said it. I was surprised myself. "Do you mind?"</p> <p>"I like it."</p> <p>I lay on top of him, feeling Ralph against my stomach. "Can we try it this way?" I whispered.</p> <p>"Any way you want," he said.</p>

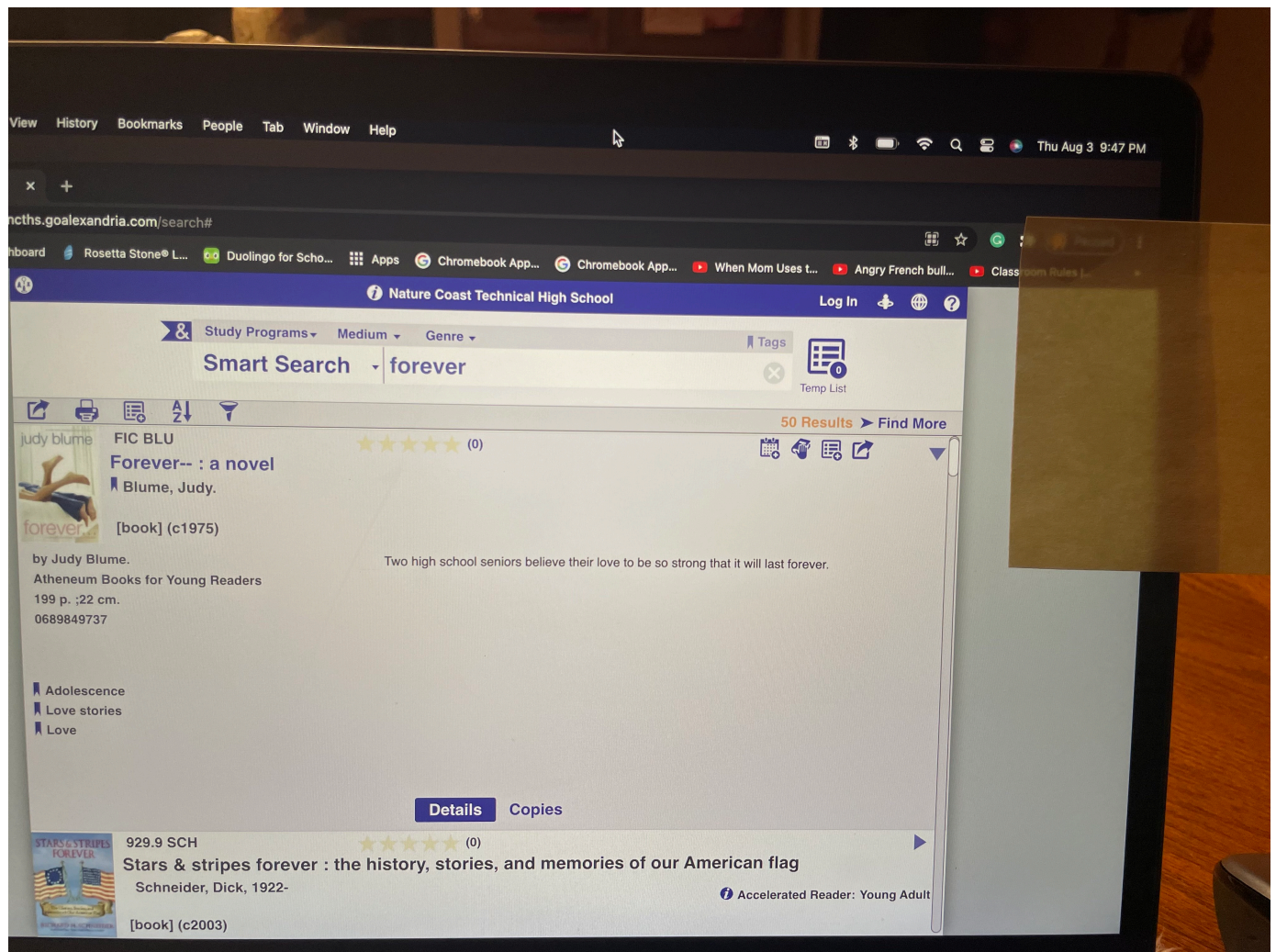
Page	Content
	I straddled him, helping Ralph find the right angle, and when he was inside me I moved slowly- up, down and around- up, down and around- until I couldn't control myself anymore. "Oh God...oh, Michael...now...now" And then I came. I came before he did. But I kept moving until he groaned and as he finished I came again, not caring about anything- anything but how good it felt.
176	And later, when everyone had gone home and Erica went to bed, Michael and I took a sleeping bag out to the beach and we made love.
189	Sometimes I dream that Michael and I are making love.
189	I dreamed I was with Theo. It was so real- I could smell him, taste him, feel him- and I wanted him so much. I did things to him that I have only read about.
202	We sat on the bed and as we kissed he unbuttoned my dress. All I had on under it was a pair of bikinis. He got out of his jeans, then his underpants. We lay side by side. Michael pushed my dress up, kissing me all the time. I couldn't really kiss him back. "I've missed you so much..." he said, "so much..." I didn't let my tongue wander into his mouth the way I used to. I just lay there, waiting. I couldn't let myself feel anything. He put his hand inside my dress and held my breasts, squeezing one, then the other. I thought of pretending. Some people do that. They think of other things while they're making love. They pretend they are with other partners. He ran his hand up the inside of my thigh, resting it between my legs. I didn't wiggle out of my bikinis.
206	So he shouted, "I humped everything in sight!"

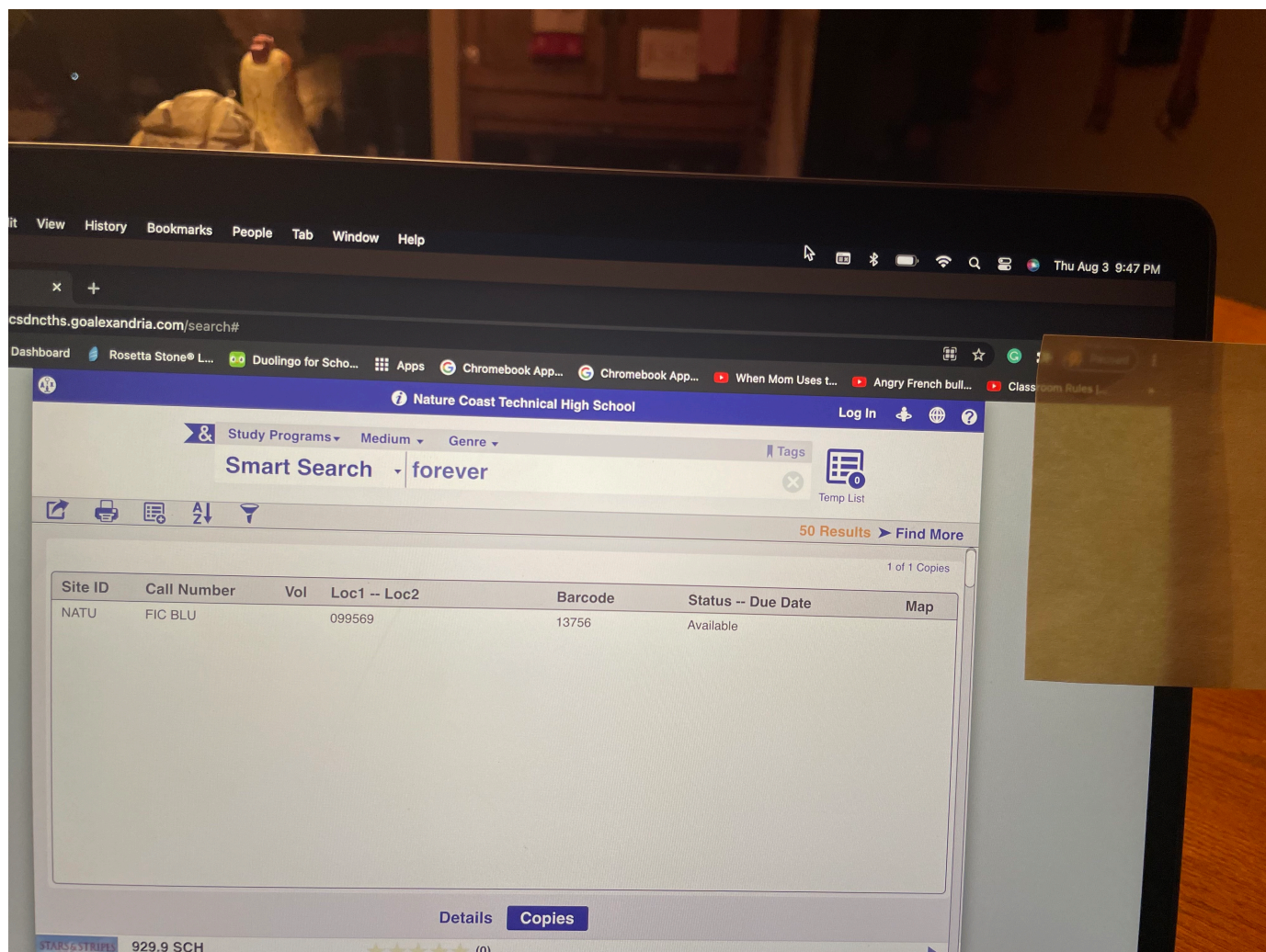
Profanity	Count
Bitch	1
Fuck	2
Shit	1

## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings











## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605

M4LHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Hernando County School District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

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October 20, 2023

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THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

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Request Initiated by (first and last name) JT

Address : PO Box 1568 City Brooksville State FL Zip Code 34605

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email (optional)

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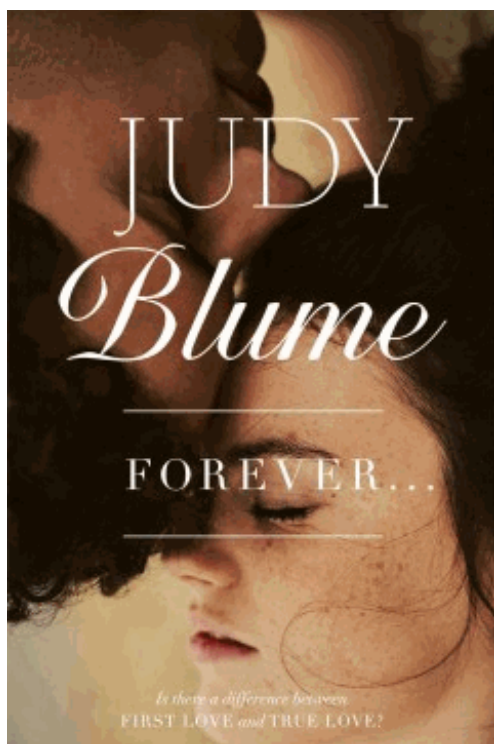
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Complainant's Signature

Julia Thomas

Date October 20, 2023

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**By Judy Blume**

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BookLooks Review Rating



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50	<p>We lay down on our rug and after a while, when Michael reached under my skirt I didn't stop him, not then and not when his hand was inside my underpants.</p> <p>"I want you so much," he said.</p> <p>"I want you too," I told him, "but I can't...I'm not ready, Michael..."</p> <p>"Yes, you are...you are...I can feel how ready you are."</p> <p>"No..." I pushed his hand away and sat up. "I'm talking about mentally ready."</p>
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56	"Fathers have complexes about their little girls. They can't stand the thought of their precious darlings having sex." "You think that's what's bothering him?" "Absolutely. I has nothing to do with breaking your leg, like I said...it has to do with breaking your cherry."
64	Then Michael held me away and said, "I wasn't going to touch you tonight...just to prove I didn't get you up here for sex." "I'd have been disappointed," I told him. "I even wore my best nightgown. Do you like it?" "It covers so much of you but it's nice and soft." Michael reached over and turned out the lamp on the night table. "How do you work these crazy buttons?" he asked, trying to undo my nightgown. I unbuttoned them myself. "I want to feel you against me," Michael said and he took off the top of his pajamas. Then he lay down and put his arms around me. "Oh...it feels nice this way," I whispered, as my hands wandered across his naked shoulders and down his back. Michael kissed me and reached down between my legs but I caught his hand and moved it away. "No...not tonight..." "I don't care." "But I do." It wasn't so much that I didn't want him to touch me, because I did- it was just that I didn't think it was a good idea for either one of us to get carried away. "Michael...don't get too worked up...okay..." "I'm already worked up." He didn't have to tell me.
77	After we kissed for awhile he took off his pajama tope, then said, "Let's take yours off too...it's in the way." I slipped my nightgown over my head and dropped it to the floor. Then there were just my bikini pants and Michael's bottoms between us. We kissed again. Feeling him against me that way made me so excited I couldn't lie still. He rolled over on top of me and we moved together again and again and it felt so good I didn't ever want to stop- until I came. After a minute I reached for Michael's hand. "Show me what to do," I said. "Do whatever you want." "Help me, Michael...I feel so stupid." "Don't," he said, wiggling out of his pajama bottoms. He led my hand to his penis.

Page	Content
	<p>"Katherine...I'd like you to meet Ralph...Ralph, this is Katherine. She's a very good friend of mine."</p> <p>"Does every penis have a name?"</p> <p>"I can only speak for my own."</p> <p>In books penises are always described as hot and throbbing but Ralph felt like ordinary skin. Just his shape was different- that and the fact that he wasn't smooth, exactly- as if there a lot going on under the skin. I don't know why I'd been so nervous about touching Michael. Once I got over being scared I let my hands go everywhere. I wanted to feel every part of him.</p> <p>While I was experimenting, I asked, "Is this alright?"</p> <p>And Michael whispered, "Everything's right."</p> <p>When I kissed his face it was all sweaty and his eyes were half-closed. He took my hand and led it back to Ralph, showing me how to hold him, moving my hand up and down according to his rhythm. Soon Michael moaned and I felt him come- a pulsating feeling, a throbbing, like the books said- then wetness. Some of it got on my hand but I didn't let go of Ralph.</p>
86	<p>"We played strip poker on Saturday night."</p> <p>"You didn't!"</p> <p>Erica laughed. "Right down to our birthday suits."</p>
89	<p>He pulled me down next to him. "We can't do anything to help Artie, right now."</p> <p>"I suppose not..."</p> <p>"We can help Ralph, though," he said, moving my hand to his belt buckle.</p>
100	<p>We lay next to each other kissing, and soon Michael unbuttoned my sweater and I sat up and unhooked my bra for him. While I slipped out of both, Michael pulled his sweater over his head. Then he held me. "You feel so good," he said, kissing me everywhere. "I love to feel you next to me. You're as soft as 'Tash."</p>
101	<p>"Do belly buttons have a taste?" I asked.</p> <p>"Yours does...it's delicious...like the rest of you." He unbuckled my jeans, then his own.</p> <p>"Michael...I'm not sure...please..."</p> <p>"Shush...don't say anything."</p> <p>"But Michael..."</p> <p>"Like always, Kath...that's all..."</p> <p>We both left on our underpants but after a minute Michael was easing mine down and then his fingers began exploring me. I let my hands wander across his stomach and down his legs and finally I began to stroke Ralph.</p> <p>"Oh, yes...yes...." I said, as Michael made me come. And he came too.</p>
102	<p>And when we were naked, in each other's arms, I wanted to do everything- I wanted to feel him inside me. I don't know if he sensed that or not but when he whispered, "Please, Kath...please let's keep going..." I told him, "Yes, Michael...yes...but not here...not on the bed."</p>
103	<p>"Okay...okay..." he stood up. "I've got a rubber in my wallet...if I can just find it."</p> <p>He looked around for his pants, found them on the floor next to the bed, then had to put on the light to find the rubber. When he did he held it up. "Satisfied?" he asked, turning the light off again.</p> <p>"I will be when you put it on."</p>

Page	Content
	<p>He knelt beside me and rolled on the rubber. "Anything else?"</p> <p>"Don't be funny now...please..."</p> <p>"I won't...I won't..." he said and we kissed. Then he was on top of me and I felt Ralph, hard, against my thigh. Just when I thought, Oh God...we're really and truly going to do it, Michael groaned and said, "Oh no...no...I'm sorry...I'm so sorry..."</p> <p>"What's wrong?"</p> <p>"I cam...I don't know what to say. I came before I even got in. I ruined it...I ruined everything."</p>
105	<p>This time I try to relax and think of nothing- nothing but how my body felt- and then Ralph was pushing against me and I whispered, "Are you in...are we doing it?"</p> <p>"Not yet," Michael said, pushing harder. "I don't want to hurt you."</p> <p>"Don't worry...just do it!"</p> <p>"I'm trying, Kath...but it's very tight in there."</p> <p>"What should I do?"</p> <p>"Can you spread your legs some more...and maybe raise them a little?"</p> <p>"Like this?"</p> <p>"That's better...much better."</p> <p>I could feel him halfway inside me and then Michael whispered, "Kath...."</p> <p>"What?"</p> <p>"I think I'm going to come again."</p> <p>I felt a big thrust, followed by a quick sharp pain that made me suck in my breath. "Oh...oh," Michael cried, but I didn't come. I wasn't even close, "I'm sorry," he said, "I couldn't hold off."</p>
112	<p>In his discussion of question two he said that enjoyable love-making, culminating in orgasm, isn't easy. It usually requires mutual education. It takes time, effort, and patience to learn to make love.</p>
135	<p>"You're taking the Pill?"</p> <p>"Uh huh."</p> <p>"Since when?"</p> <p>"I got them the day you got sick."</p> <p>"But where...how..."</p> <p>"I went to Planned Parenthood in New York."</p>
139	<p>"Do you ever put it on your balls?" I asked.</p> <p>"I don't shave them," he said.</p> <p>"I read that in a book...this guy put after shave on his balls before he went out with his girlfriends."</p> <p>"Well...maybe I would too...if I thought anybody was going to smell them."</p> <p>"Who did you have in mind?"</p> <p>"Oh, I don't know...just anybody." He put the bottle on top of the toilet and unbuckled his jeans.</p> <p>"What are you doing?"</p> <p>"I'm going to try it now...so I'm ready...just in case."</p> <p>He stepped out of his jeans, then took off his underpants. "On second thought," he said, "why don't you do it for me?"</p> <p>"Me...?"</p>



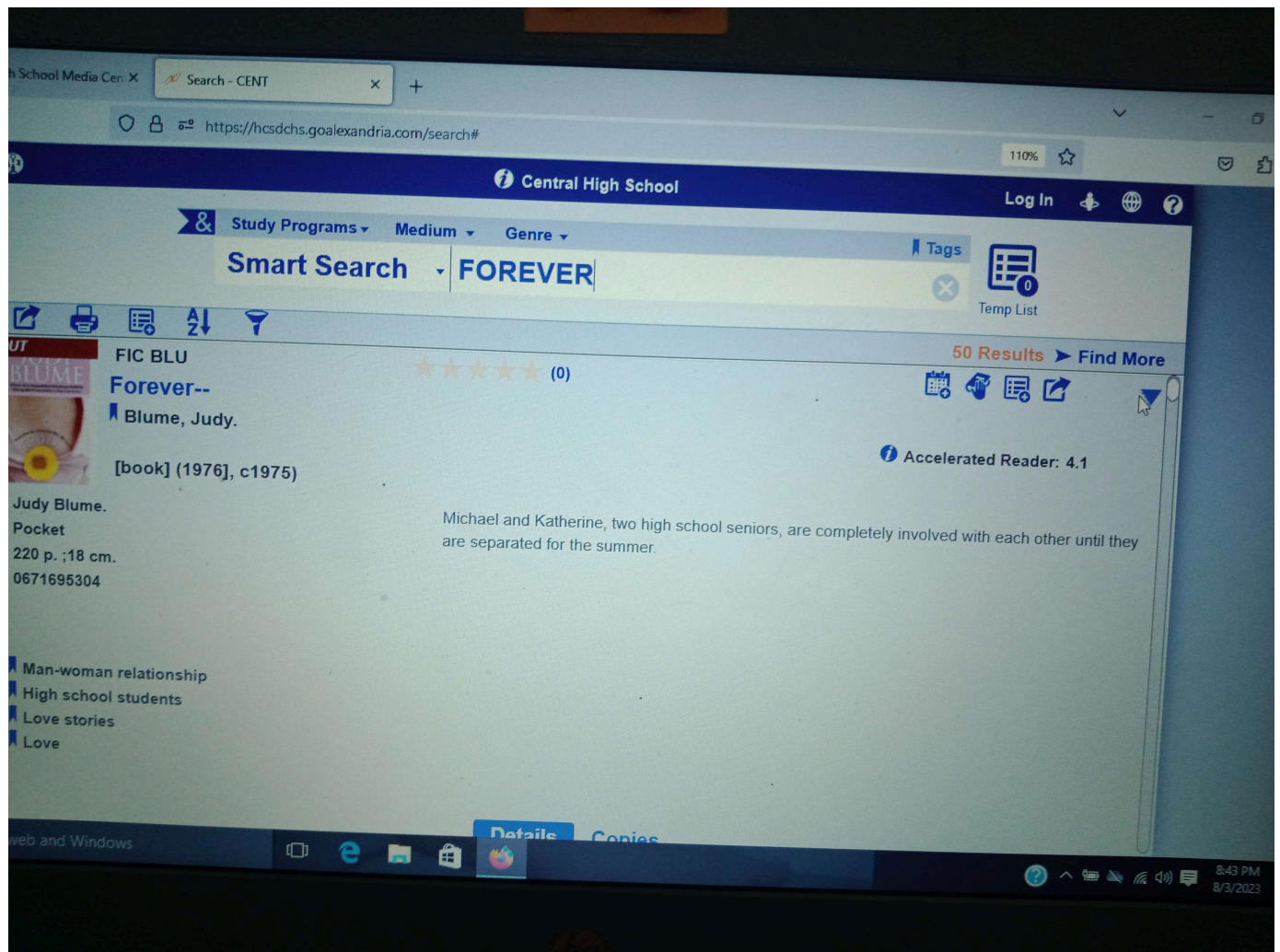
Page	Content
	<p>"It was your idea in the first place."</p> <p>I felt funny about seeing Michael exposed from the waist down, because it's always been dark when we made love. I've touched him a lot but I've never looked carefully.</p> <p>He sensed my feelings because he said, "You want to know me inside out, don't you?"</p> <p>So I looked. His hair down there is almost the color as on his head, but curlier. Mine is very dark, much darker than on my head. "Hello Ralph..." I said, kneeling in front of Michael. Ralph was small and soft and just hung there. I shook some Moustache into the palm of my hand but when I reached out toward Michael, he caught my hand and said, "Don't...it stings..."</p> <p>"How do you know?"</p> <p>"I just do..."</p> <p>"But you said..." He didn't let me finish. Instead, he kneeled with me and as we kissed Ralph grew bigger and hard. I undressed myself, while Michael watched. Ralph stuck straight out, as if he was watching too. We mad love on the bathroom rug, but just when I was getting really excited, Michael came. I wondered what it would ever work out right between us.</p> <p>"I'm sorry," he said. "I just couldn't wait...it's been a few weeks."</p> <p>"That's okay."</p> <p>We got into bed and fell asleep for an hour and when we woke up Ralph was hard again. This time Michael made it last much longer and I got so carried away I grabbed his backside with both hands, trying to push him deeper and deeper into me- and I spread my legs as far apart as I could- and I raised my hips off the bed- and I moved with him, again and again and again- and at last, I came. I came right before Michael and as I did I made noises, just like my mother. Michael did too. While he was still on top of me, catching his breath, I started laughing. "I came..." I told him. "I actually came too."</p> <p>"I know," he said, "I felt it...is that what's so funny?"</p>
146	<p>"What's she going to do with a baby?"</p> <p>"Oh, she knows she can't keep it. She'll put it up for adoption as soon as it's born."</p> <p>"Then why have it in the first place?"</p> <p>"For the experience , she told me."</p>
146	<p>"I'd have an abortion...wouldn't you?"</p> <p>"In a minute..."</p>
169	<p>"I could have had an abortion but I wanted the experience of giving birth."</p>
174	<p>I kissed his ears, running my tongue around the edges. I used my hands on his body while I worked my way down, kissing his neck, his chest, his belly.</p> <p>"You're aggressive tonigt..."</p> <p>I hadn't thought about that until he said it. I was surprised myself. "Do you mind?"</p> <p>"I like it."</p> <p>I lay on top of him, feeling Ralph against my stomach. "Can we try it this way?" I whispered.</p> <p>"Any way you want," he said.</p>

Page	Content
	I straddled him, helping Ralph find the right angle, and when he was inside me I moved slowly- up, down and around- up, down and around- until I couldn't control myself anymore. "Oh God...oh, Michael...now...now" And then I came. I came before he did. But I kept moving until he groaned and as he finished I came again, not caring about anything- anything but how good it felt.
176	And later, when everyone had gone home and Erica went to bed, Michael and I took a sleeping bag out to the beach and we made love.
189	Sometimes I dream that Michael and I are making love.
189	I dreamed I was with Theo. It was so real- I could smell him, taste him, feel him- and I wanted him so much. I did things to him that I have only read about.
202	We sat on the bed and as we kissed he unbuttoned my dress. All I had on under it was a pair of bikinis. He got out of his jeans, then his underpants. We lay side by side. Michael pushed my dress up, kissing me all the time. I couldn't really kiss him back. "I've missed you so much..." he said, "so much..." I didn't let my tongue wander into his mouth the way I used to. I just lay there, waiting. I couldn't let myself feel anything. He put his hand inside my dress and held my breasts, squeezing one, then the other. I thought of pretending. Some people do that. They think of other things while they're making love. They pretend they are with other partners. He ran his hand up the inside of my thigh, resting it between my legs. I didn't wiggle out of my bikinis.
206	So he shouted, "I humped everything in sight!"

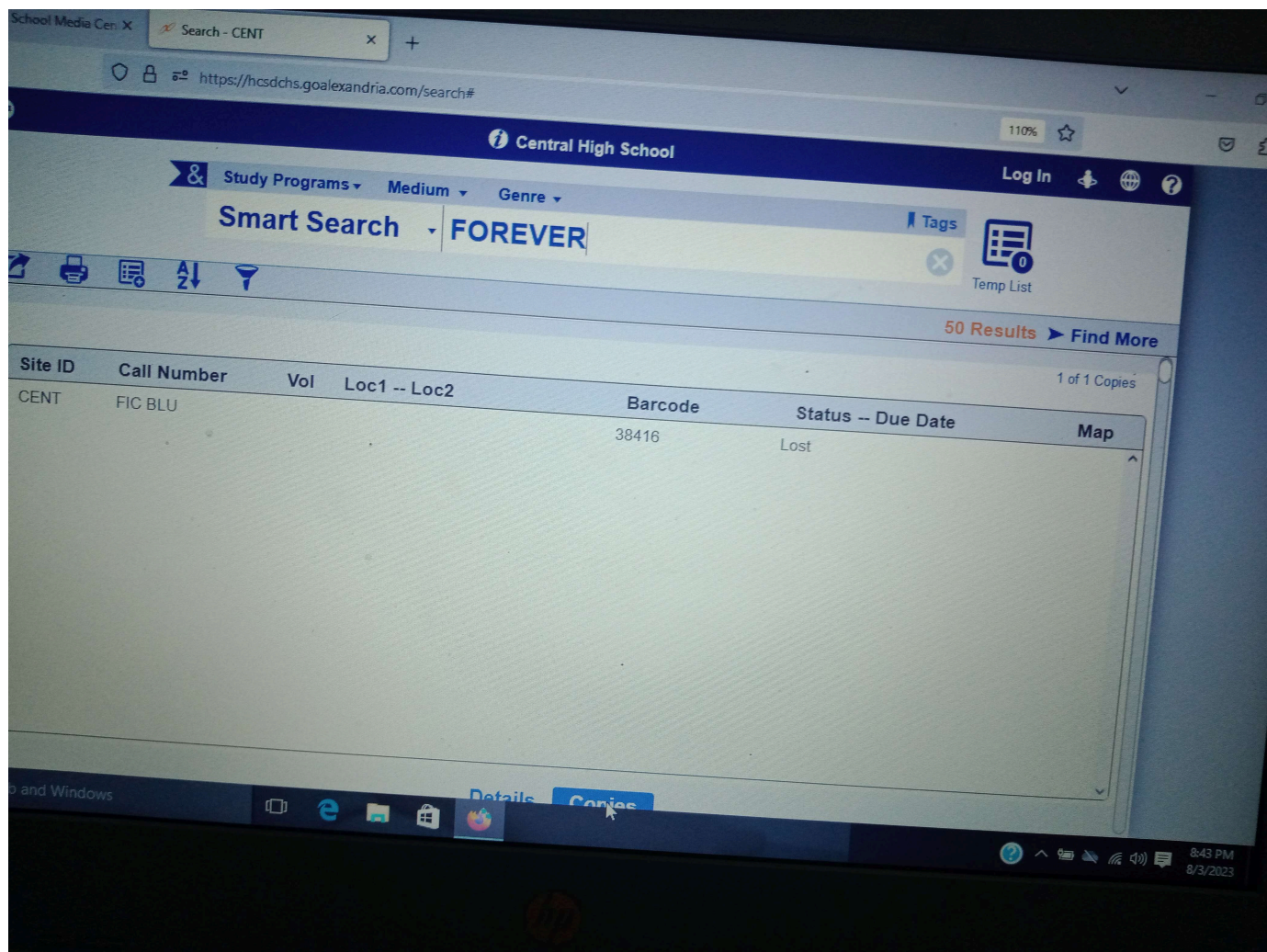
Profanity	Count
Bitch	1
Fuck	2
Shit	1

## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings











## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605

M4LHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Hernando County School District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE: WWHS “Forever” (M4LHC –  
070-2023)

October 20, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 070-23) for “Forever” which is currently located at Weeki. Wachee High School’s media center. This book was discovered back on August 3, 2023 to be lost.

“Forever” contains sexual age-inappropriate content; sexual encounters with minor children. “Forever” is considered an eighteen years and up reading material.

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently violates H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I’m calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book, from Weeki Wachee High School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and **H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can’t be “disappeared” (i.e., hidden) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.**

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name) JT

Address : PO Box 1568 City Brooksville State FL Zip Code 34605

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: October 20, 2023 Author: Judy Blume

Title: Forever

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Atheneum Books  
1975

School(s) in which item is used: Weeki Wachee School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames, etc. Attach additional pages if necessary) Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

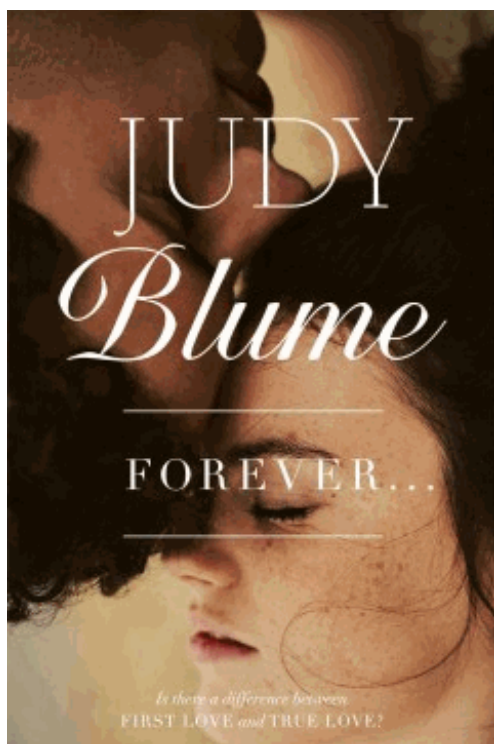
If yes, where? Name and date of publication: GoodReads 2023, 2021, 2013

Complainant's Signature

Julia Thomas

Date October 20, 2023

# FOREVER...



*Young Adult*

**By Judy Blume**

ISBN: 978-1481414425

## Summary of Concerns:

This book has sexually explicit excerpts involving minors.



**4**/5

**Not For Minors**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
0	A note to the Reader: For in-depth sexual and reproductive health information, contact the nearest Planned Parenthood health center by calling 1-800-230-PLAN.
1	Sybil Davison has a genius I.Q. and has been laid by at least six different guys.
3	At midnight Sybil flashed the lights on and off and Fred wished me a Happy New Year, then tried to stuff his tongue in my mouth. I kept my lips shut tight; while he was kissing me I was watching Michael kiss Elizabeth.
11	Before he let me out a Sybil's house, Michael stopped the car and kissed me again. "You're delicious," he said.
14	Sex was all he was ever interested in, which is why we broke up- because he threatened that if I wouldn't sleep with him he'd find somebody who would.
21	When we kissed again Michael used his tongue. I wanted him to. We sat together on the sofa for an hour. Michael moved his hands around on the outside of my sweater but when he tried to get under it I said, "No...let's save something for tomorrow." He didn't pressure me. He kissed my cheek, then my ear, and whispered, "Are you a virgin?"
22	It occurred to me in the middle of the night that Michael asked if I was a virgin to find out what I expected of him. If I hadn't been one then he probably would have made love to me.
26	He kissed my ears, my neck and my lips. Then he got up and walked across the room. "Lie down next to me Kath...here, in front of the fire."
26	He reached under my sweater and tried to unhook my bra but he had a lot of trouble and I wondered if I should help him out or just lie still and wait. He got it undone. His hands were cold at first but I didn't flinch. I pressed myself as tight against him as I could. "I'm crazy about you." He touched me and we kissed until the same record had played three times. But when he fumbled with the snap on my jeans I sat up and said, "No...not now...not with them in the other room."
29	"Are you still a virgin?" Erica asked. "Yes." "Is he?" "I don't know...I haven't asked." "I've been thinking," Erica said, "that it might not be a bad idea to get laid before college." "Just like that?" "Well...I'd have to be attracted to him, naturally." "What about love?"

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	<p>"You don't need love to have sex."</p> <p>"But it means more that way."</p> <p>"Oh, I don't know. They say the first time's never any good anyway."</p> <p>"Which is why you should at least love him," I said.</p> <p>"Maybe...but I'd really like to get it over with."</p> <p>"What's the point?"</p> <p>"I'm always thinking about it...wondering who's going to be the one...like tonight, I kept picturing myself with Artie...and in school I sit in class thinking how it would be with every guy..."</p> <p>"Really?"</p> <p>"Yes...even the teachers...I wonder about them too...especially Mr. Frazier, since he never zips his fly all the way. Tell the truth, Kath...don't you think about it?"</p>
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77	After we kissed for awhile he took off his pajama tope, then said, "Let's take yours off too...it's in the way." I slipped my nightgown over my head and dropped it to the floor. Then there were just my bikini pants and Michael's bottoms between us. We kissed again. Feeling him against me that way made me so excited I couldn't lie still. He rolled over on top of me and we moved together again and again and it felt so good I didn't ever want to stop- until I came. After a minute I reached for Michael's hand. "Show me what to do," I said. "Do whatever you want." "Help me, Michael...I feel so stupid." "Don't," he said, wiggling out of his pajama bottoms. He led my hand to his penis.

Page	Content
	<p>"Katherine...I'd like you to meet Ralph...Ralph, this is Katherine. She's a very good friend of mine."</p> <p>"Does every penis have a name?"</p> <p>"I can only speak for my own."</p> <p>In books penises are always described as hot and throbbing but Ralph felt like ordinary skin. Just his shape was different- that and the fact that he wasn't smooth, exactly- as if there a lot going on under the skin. I don't know why I'd been so nervous about touching Michael. Once I got over being scared I let my hands go everywhere. I wanted to feel every part of him.</p> <p>While I was experimenting, I asked, "Is this alright?"</p> <p>And Michael whispered, "Everything's right."</p> <p>When I kissed his face it was all sweaty and his eyes were half-closed. He took my hand and led it back to Ralph, showing me how to hold him, moving my hand up and down according to his rhythm. Soon Michael moaned and I felt him come- a pulsating feeling, a throbbing, like the books said- then wetness. Some of it got on my hand but I didn't let go of Ralph.</p>
86	<p>"We played strip poker on Saturday night."</p> <p>"You didn't!"</p> <p>Erica laughed. "Right down to our birthday suits."</p>
89	<p>He pulled me down next to him. "We can't do anything to help Artie, right now."</p> <p>"I suppose not..."</p> <p>"We can help Ralph, though," he said, moving my hand to his belt buckle.</p>
100	<p>We lay next to each other kissing, and soon Michael unbuttoned my sweater and I sat up and unhooked my bra for him. While I slipped out of both, Michael pulled his sweater over his head. Then he held me. "You feel so good," he said, kissing me everywhere. "I love to feel you next to me. You're as soft as 'Tash."</p>
101	<p>"Do belly buttons have a taste?" I asked.</p> <p>"Yours does...it's delicious...like the rest of you." He unbuckled my jeans, then his own.</p> <p>"Michael...I'm not sure...please..."</p> <p>"Shush...don't say anything."</p> <p>"But Michael..."</p> <p>"Like always, Kath...that's all..."</p> <p>We both left on our underpants but after a minute Michael was easing mine down and then his fingers began exploring me. I let my hands wander across his stomach and down his legs and finally I began to stroke Ralph.</p> <p>"Oh, yes...yes...." I said, as Michael made me come. And he came too.</p>
102	<p>And when we were naked, in each other's arms, I wanted to do everything- I wanted to feel him inside me. I don't know if he sensed that or not but when he whispered, "Please, Kath...please let's keep going..." I told him, "Yes, Michael...yes...but not here...not on the bed."</p>
103	<p>"Okay...okay..." he stood up. "I've got a rubber in my wallet...if I can just find it."</p> <p>He looked around for his pants, found them on the floor next to the bed, then had to put on the light to find the rubber. When he did he held it up. "Satisfied?" he asked, turning the light off again.</p> <p>"I will be when you put it on."</p>

Page	Content
	<p>He knelt beside me and rolled on the rubber. "Anything else?"</p> <p>"Don't be funny now...please..."</p> <p>"I won't...I won't..." he said and we kissed. Then he was on top of me and I felt Ralph, hard, against my thigh. Just when I thought, Oh God...we're really and truly going to do it, Michael groaned and said, "Oh no...no...I'm sorry...I'm so sorry..."</p> <p>"What's wrong?"</p> <p>"I cam...I don't know what to say. I came before I even got in. I ruined it...I ruined everything."</p>
105	<p>This time I try to relax and think of nothing- nothing but how my body felt- and then Ralph was pushing against me and I whispered, "Are you in...are we doing it?"</p> <p>"Not yet," Michael said, pushing harder. "I don't want to hurt you."</p> <p>"Don't worry...just do it!"</p> <p>"I'm trying, Kath...but it's very tight in there."</p> <p>"What should I do?"</p> <p>"Can you spread your legs some more...and maybe raise them a little?"</p> <p>"Like this?"</p> <p>"That's better...much better."</p> <p>I could feel him halfway inside me and then Michael whispered, "Kath...."</p> <p>"What?"</p> <p>"I think I'm going to come again."</p> <p>I felt a big thrust, followed by a quick sharp pain that made me suck in my breath. "Oh...oh," Michael cried, but I didn't come. I wasn't even close, "I'm sorry," he said, "I couldn't hold off."</p>
112	<p>In his discussion of question two he said that enjoyable love-making, culminating in orgasm, isn't easy. It usually requires mutual education. It takes time, effort, and patience to learn to make love.</p>
135	<p>"You're taking the Pill?"</p> <p>"Uh huh."</p> <p>"Since when?"</p> <p>"I got them the day you got sick."</p> <p>"But where...how..."</p> <p>"I went to Planned Parenthood in New York."</p>
139	<p>"Do you ever put it on your balls?" I asked.</p> <p>"I don't shave them," he said.</p> <p>"I read that in a book...this guy put after shave on his balls before he went out with his girlfriends."</p> <p>"Well...maybe I would too...if I thought anybody was going to smell them."</p> <p>"Who did you have in mind?"</p> <p>"Oh, I don't know...just anybody." He put the bottle on top of the toilet and unbuckled his jeans.</p> <p>"What are you doing?"</p> <p>"I'm going to try it now...so I'm ready...just in case."</p> <p>He stepped out of his jeans, then took off his underpants. "On second thought," he said, "why don't you do it for me?"</p> <p>"Me...?"</p>

Page	Content
	<p>"It was your idea in the first place."</p> <p>I felt funny about seeing Michael exposed from the waist down, because it's always been dark when we made love. I've touched him a lot but I've never looked carefully.</p> <p>He sensed my feelings because he said, "You want to know me inside out, don't you?"</p> <p>So I looked. His hair down there is almost the color as on his head, but curlier. Mine is very dark, much darker than on my head. "Hello Ralph..." I said, kneeling in front of Michael. Ralph was small and soft and just hung there. I shook some Moustache into the palm of my hand but when I reached out toward Michael, he caught my hand and said, "Don't...it stings..."</p> <p>"How do you know?"</p> <p>"I just do..."</p> <p>"But you said..." He didn't let me finish. Instead, he kneeled with me and as we kissed Ralph grew bigger and hard. I undressed myself, while Michael watched. Ralph stuck straight out, as if he was watching too. We mad love on the bathroom rug, but just when I was getting really excited, Michael came. I wondered what it would ever work out right between us.</p> <p>"I'm sorry," he said. "I just couldn't wait...it's been a few weeks."</p> <p>"That's okay."</p> <p>We got into bed and fell asleep for an hour and when we woke up Ralph was hard again. This time Michael made it last much longer and I got so carried away I grabbed his backside with both hands, trying to push him deeper and deeper into me- and I spread my legs as far apart as I could- and I raised my hips off the bed- and I moved with him, again and again and again- and at last, I came. I came right before Michael and as I did I made noises, just like my mother. Michael did too. While he was still on top of me, catching his breath, I started laughing. "I came..." I told him. "I actually came too."</p> <p>"I know," he said, "I felt it...is that what's so funny?"</p>
146	<p>"What's she going to do with a baby?"</p> <p>"Oh, she knows she can't keep it. She'll put it up for adoption as soon as it's born."</p> <p>"Then why have it in the first place?"</p> <p>"For the experience , she told me."</p>
146	<p>"I'd have an abortion...wouldn't you?"</p> <p>"In a minute..."</p>
169	<p>"I could have had an abortion but I wanted the experience of giving birth."</p>
174	<p>I kissed his ears, running my tongue around the edges. I used my hands on his body while I worked my way down, kissing his neck, his chest, his belly.</p> <p>"You're aggressive tonigt..."</p> <p>I hadn't thought about that until he said it. I was surprised myself. "Do you mind?"</p> <p>"I like it."</p> <p>I lay on top of him, feeling Ralph against my stomach. "Can we try it this way?" I whispered.</p> <p>"Any way you want," he said.</p>

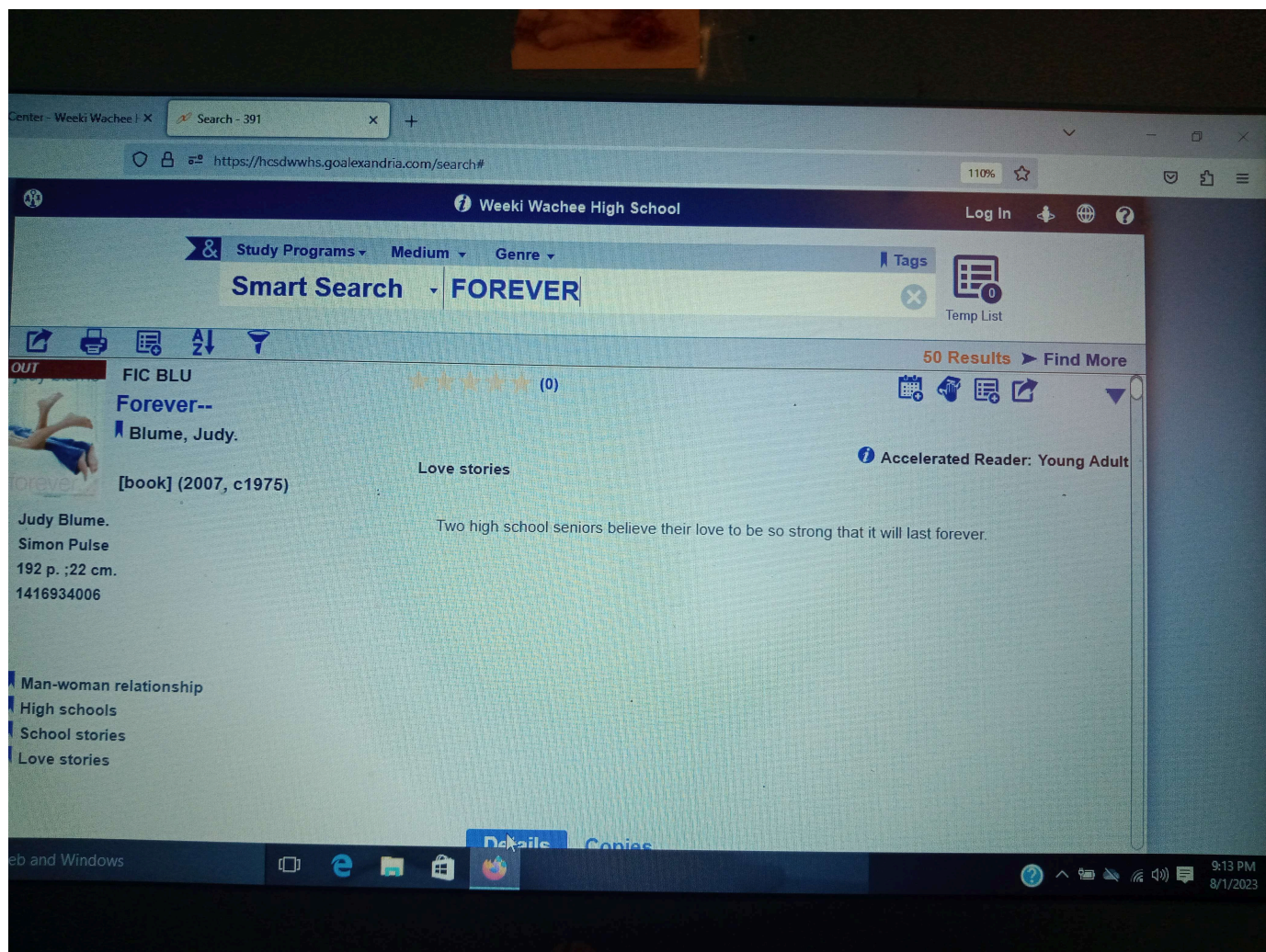
Page	Content
	I straddled him, helping Ralph find the right angle, and when he was inside me I moved slowly- up, down and around- up, down and around- until I couldn't control myself anymore. "Oh God...oh, Michael...now...now" And then I came. I came before he did. But I kept moving until he groaned and as he finished I came again, not caring about anything- anything but how good it felt.
176	And later, when everyone had gone home and Erica went to bed, Michael and I took a sleeping bag out to the beach and we made love.
189	Sometimes I dream that Michael and I are making love.
189	I dreamed I was with Theo. It was so real- I could smell him, taste him, feel him- and I wanted him so much. I did things to him that I have only read about.
202	We sat on the bed and as we kissed he unbuttoned my dress. All I had on under it was a pair of bikinis. He got out of his jeans, then his underpants. We lay side by side. Michael pushed my dress up, kissing me all the time. I couldn't really kiss him back. "I've missed you so much..." he said, "so much..." I didn't let my tongue wander into his mouth the way I used to. I just lay there, waiting. I couldn't let myself feel anything. He put his hand inside my dress and held my breasts, squeezing one, then the other. I thought of pretending. Some people do that. They think of other things while they're making love. They pretend they are with other partners. He ran his hand up the inside of my thigh, resting it between my legs. I didn't wiggle out of my bikinis.
206	So he shouted, "I humped everything in sight!"

Profanity	Count
Bitch	1
Fuck	2
Shit	1

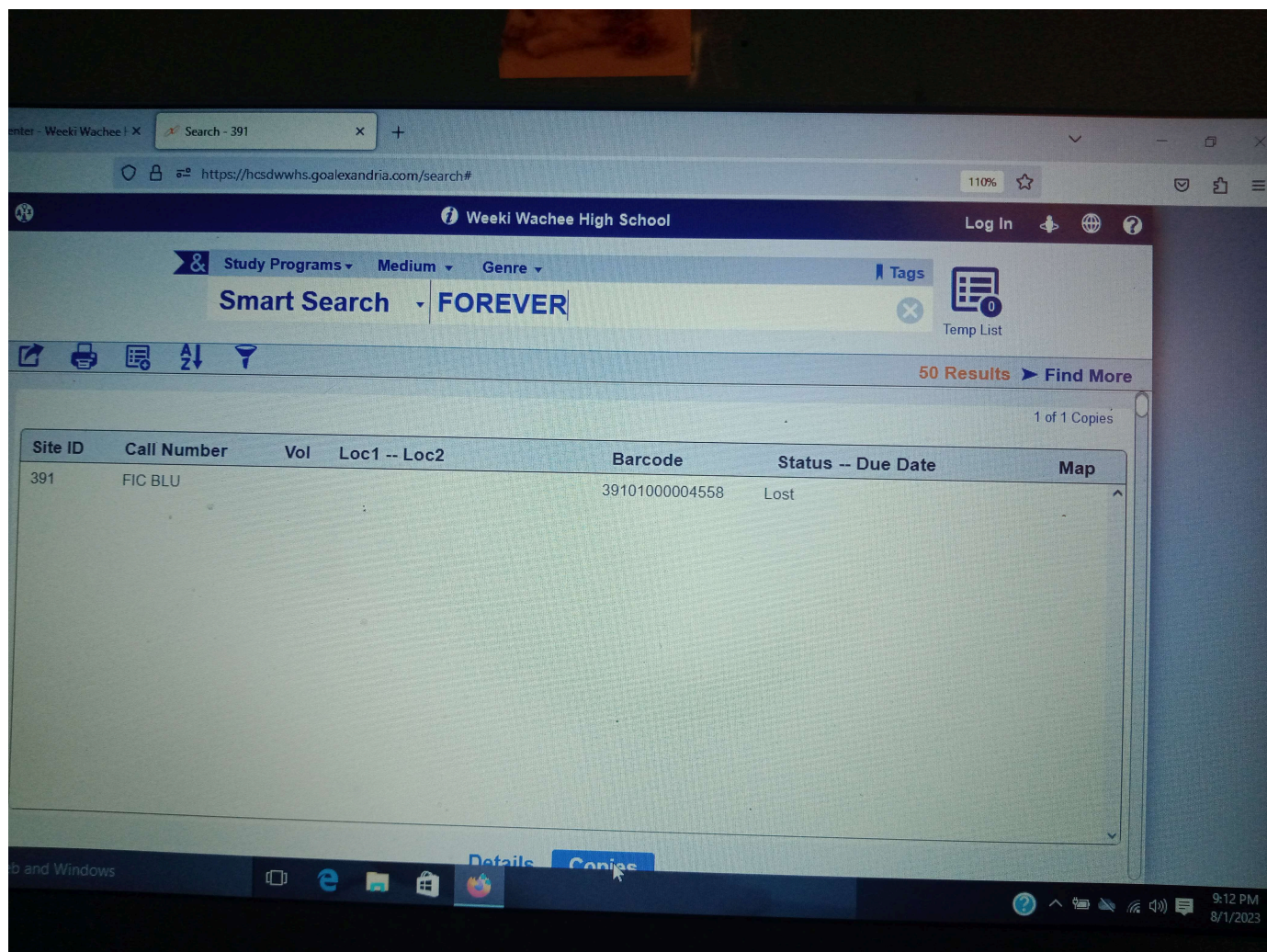


## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings







# FOREVER...

BY JUDY BLUME • RELEASE DATE: OCT. 20, 1975

Increasingly Judy Blume's books center on single topics and the topic here, as pronounced in the first sentence, is getting laid. Cath and Michael fall in love when both are high school seniors, and Blume leads up to it date by date and almost inch by inch (hand over sweater, hand under skirt...) and then, after the breakthrough, describes each session until the kinks in timing and such are straightened out. (There's also a word-for-word transcript of her Planned Parenthood interview and a letter from Grandma, who's heard she is "going steady," advising birth control.) For Cath though forever lasts only until her parents send her off to a summer camp job and she finds herself unwillingly attracted to the tennis counselor she's assisting; Michael takes it without much grace but Cath will never regret one single thing because it was all very special. "I think it's just that I'm not ready for forever." As usual with this immensely popular author, *Forever...* has a lot of easy, empathic verity and very little heft. Cath like Blume's other heroines is deliberately ordinary, which means here (despite friends, nice family, etc.) that outside of the love affair she's pretty much a blank. In fact this could be a real magnet for all those girls who took to *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret* just a few years ago and haven't changed all that much since. Another way of looking at *Forever...* is as an updated *Seventeenth Summer*.

**Pub Date:** Oct. 20, 1975

**ISBN:** 1416953914

**Page Count:** 214

**Publisher:** Bradbury

**Review Posted Online:** Oct. 15, 2011

**Kirkus Reviews Issue:** Oct. 1, 1975

**Categories:**

TEENS & YOUNG ADULT ROMANCE | TEENS & YOUNG ADULT SOCIAL THEMES

## **Forever...**

Judy Blume

**3.63**

61,127 ratings4,615 reviews

Katherine and Michael meet at a New Year's Eve party. They're attracted to each other, they grow to love each other. And once they've decided their love is forever, they make love.

It's the beginning of an intense and exclusive relationship, with a future all planned. Until Katherine's parents insist that she and Michael put their love to the test with a summer apart...

Forever is written for an older age group than Judy Blume's other novels for children. It caused a storm of controversy when it was first published because of its explicit sexual content.

Genres**Young AdultRomanceFictionContemporaryBanned BooksTeenClassics**

178 pages, Paperback

First published January 1, 1975



## Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days following the formation of the committee. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School Nature Coast Technical Date 2-21-24

Title Forever

Author Judy Blume

### Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material

#### Silent Voting Results:

5 Do Not Remove

2 Remove/Discontinue

Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
<p>If committee is recommending to limit access-</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Grade Level</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> For Advance Course</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent Permission</p>	<p>Basis for removal, check all that apply:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The materials is pornographic</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The materials is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The materials is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.</p>

# Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

Print Name	Position	Signature
Debbys Warrall	District	D Warrall
Marie Dahmer	community	Marie Dahmer
Debbie Stenstrom	lay person	Debbie Stenstrom
Misty Laushot	lay person	Misty Laushot
Jodi LaRocca	parent	Jodi LaRocca
Suzanne Hamle	Teacher	Suzanne Hamle
Toni-Ann Noyes	Principal	Toni-Ann Noyes

Administrator's Signature

Toni-Ann Noyes

Date

2/21/24



TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: February 22, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenges NCTHS 067-23 CHS 069-23 & WWHS 070-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, “Forever” at Nature Coast Technical High School, Central High School and Weeki Wachee High School. The review committee at Nature Coast has evaluated the book, "Forever", written by Judy Blume based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is that the book is not removed from Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on April 9, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before April 9, 2024.

**A. Item Currently Budgeted -**

Account Name		<u>No Financial Impact</u>								
Account Number										
		Fund	Function	Object	Cost Center	Project	Sub Project			
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$

Account Name										
Account Number										
		Fund	Function	Object	Cost Center	Project	Sub Project			
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$

**B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -\*\***

Funding Source							
Account Name							
Account Number							
		Fund	Function	Object	Cost Center	Project	Sub Project
Amount	\$						

Funding Source							
Account Name							
Account Number							
		Fund	Function	Object	Cost Center	Project	Sub Project
Amount	\$						

**C. History**

Check one:

Prior Year Budget: ☐New for Current Year: ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$

**\*\* WHEN ITEM NOT CURRENTLY BUDGETED IS APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD, THIS WILL SERVE AS THE BUDGET AMENDMENT\*\***



# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

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**Agenda Item # 12. 24-2241**

**5/7/2024**

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### **Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Nineteen Minutes" written by Jodi Picoult, in circulation and be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

### **Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to keep the book, "Nineteen Minutes" written by Jodi Picoult, in circulation. This book is being challenged at Springstead High School.

Springstead High School's Review Committee met on February 13, 2024 and February 21, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 7-0 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book stay in circulation in Hernando County Schools.

Per Hernando County School District 2522 Policy requirements, the Superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to keep the book.

### **My Contact**

Kelly Downey

Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs

352-797-7000 ext. 280

downey\_1@hcsb.k12.fl.us

### **2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

### **Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.





## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605  
M4LHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Hernando County School District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE: SHS “Nineteen Minutes” (M4LHC –  
0100/2023)

October 30, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 0100-23) for “*Nineteen Minutes*” which is currently located at Springstead High School’s media center. This book was discovered back on August 3, 2023.

“Nineteen Minutes” contains sexual age-inappropriate content: sexual activities; sexual nudity; profanity and derogatory terms; violence; controversial social and political commentary; controversial religious commentary; alternate sexualities; hate; abortion; and suicide commentary. This book shows a warning label for 18 years of age and up, and is not meant for K-12 schools

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently violates H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I’m calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book from Springstead High School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can’t be “disappeared” (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA  
Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name: JT

Address : PO Box 1568

City: Brooksville State: FL Zip Code: 34605

Telephone:      Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: October 30,2023 Author: Jodi Picoult

Title: "Nineteen Minutes"

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Atria Books 2007

School(s) in which item is used: Springstead High School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames,etc. Attach additional pages if necessary):

Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/orauthoritative critics?

Yes   X   No                   

If yes, where? Name and date of publication:

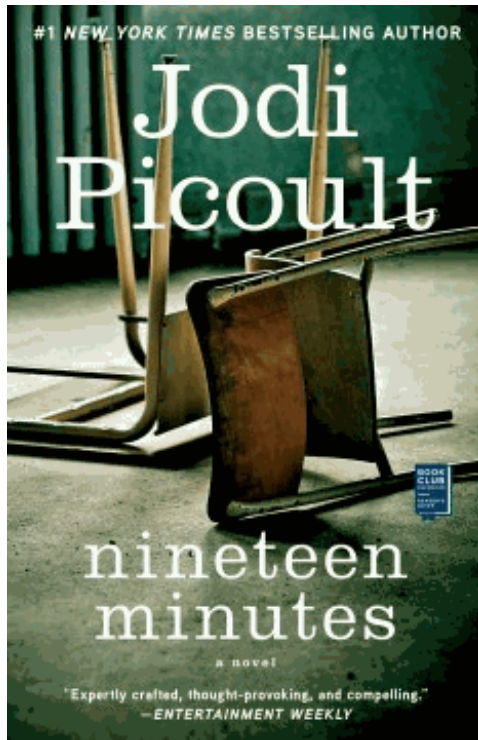
Barns and Noble 2013

Complainant's Signature:

Julia Thomas

Date: October 30, 2023

# NINETEEN MINUTES



## Book Summary:

The events leading up and the aftermath of a school shooting are uncovered.

## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains sexual activities; sexual nudity; profanity and derogatory terms; violence; controversial social and political commentary; controversial religious commentary; alternate sexualities; hate; abortion; and suicide commentary.

*Adult*

**By Jodi Picoult**

ISBN: 978-1-4165-3895-0



**4** / 5

**Not For Minors**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
4	By the time you read this, I hope to be dead. You can't undo something that's happened; you can't take back a word that's already been said out loud. You'll think about me and wish that you had been able to talk me out of this. You'll try to figure out what would have been the one right thing to say, to do. I guess I should tell you, Don't blame yourself; this isn't your fault, but that would be a lie.
9	Before leaving her room, though, she hesitated. She sank down onto her bed and rummaged underneath the nightstand for the Ziploc sandwich bag that she'd tacked to the wooden frame. Inside was a stash of Ambien—pirated one pill at a time from her mother's prescription for insomnia, so she'd never notice. It had taken Josie nearly six months to gather only fifteen pills, but she figured if she washed them down with a fifth of vodka, it would do the trick. It wasn't like she had a strategy, really, to kill herself next Tuesday, or when the snow melted, or anything concrete like that. ..She tacked the pills back beneath her nightstand and headed downstairs. As she walked into the kitchen to load up her backpack, she found her chemistry textbook still wide open—and a long-stemmed red rose marking her place.
16	At other times, it haunted Josie: like right now, when she was standing in the cafeteria line behind Natalie Zlenko, a dyke of the first order who, way back in second grade, had invited Josie over to play and had convinced her to pee on the front lawn like a boy. ...Near the condiment bar were the skanks, who drank black coffee and waited for the bus that would take them to the technical high school three towns over for their afternoon classes; and the druggies, already strung out by nine o'clock in the morning.
17	"The one whose boobs are two different sizes?" ..."The one who always carries a box of tissues for her allergies?" Josie said, sliding into a seat. "Or not," Haley said. "Guess who got sent to rehab for snorting coke." "Get out." "That's not even the whole scandal," Emma added. "Her dealer was the head of the Bible study group that meets after school."
20	Patrick sat at a red light in his unmarked police car, waiting to turn onto the highway. Beside him, on the passenger seat, was a paper bag with a vial of cocaine inside it. The dealer they'd busted at the high school had admitted it was cocaine, and yet Patrick had to waste half his day taking it to the state lab so that someone in a white coat could tell him what he already knew.
26	Apparently, Loomis had escalated his criminal résumé last night when he and two friends decided to go after a drug dealer who didn't bring them enough pot. They got high, hog-tied the guy, and threw him in the trunk. Loomis whacked the dealer over the head with a baseball bat, cracking his skull and sending him into convulsions.
27	Regular sex, for example, was equivalent (happinesswise) to getting a \$ 50,000 raise.

Page	Content
29	<p>It was not her place to judge a mother for the decision to give up a child. "We can talk about different options, then," Lacy said. At eleven weeks, Alex could still terminate the pregnancy if she wished.</p> <p>"I was going to have an abortion," Alex said, as if she'd read Lacy's mind. "But I missed my appointment." She glanced up. "Twice."</p> <p>Logan had told her to get rid of it. She'd scheduled an abortion, only to forget to write the date and time on her calendar. She rescheduled, but realized too late that her appointment conflicted with a final exam. After that, she'd gone to Logan. It's a sign, she'd said.</p> <p>Maybe, he told her, but it doesn't mean what you're thinking. Be reasonable, Logan had said. A single mother will never make it as a trial attorney. She'd have to choose between her career and this baby.</p> <p>What he really meant was that she'd have to choose between having the baby and having him.</p>
54	<p>Patrick looked at the part in the boy's hair. Had he brushed it that morning, thinking, Today's the day I'm going to kill ten students?</p>
55	<p>Every now and then Patrick and Guenther would grab a few beers together, consuming enough alcohol for the former bodybuilder to tell him stories of women offering to oil him up before a competition or good anecdotes about Arnold, before he became political.</p>
61	<p>He had represented a few students who'd been busted with pot in their glove compartments or who got caught drinking underage at the college in town.</p>
77	<p>"Stop being anti-kindergarten."</p> <p>"I'm not. In fact, I think everything you need to know about the law you learn in kindergarten. You know: Don't hit. Don't take what's not yours. Don't kill people. Don't rape them."</p>
101	<p>Thanks to the sedatives, so much of this seemed unreal—as if she were walking on the spongy floor of a dream—but the moment she thought of Matt, it became authentic and raw.</p> <p>She would never kiss Matt again.</p> <p>She would never hear him laugh.</p> <p>She would never feel the print of his hand on her waist, or read a note he'd slipped through the furrows of her locker, or feel her heart beat into his hand when he unbuttoned her shirt.</p>
110	<p>"We live in a country where American kids are dying because we're sending them overseas to kill people for oil. But when one sad, distraught child who doesn't see the beauty in life goes and wrongly acts on his rage by shooting up a school, people start pointing a finger at heavy metal music. The problem isn't with rock lyrics, it's with the fabric of this society itself."</p>
114	<p>Death wasn't something you could control. In fact, it would always have the upper hand.</p> <p>She ripped the plastic bag open into her palm and stuffed five of the pills into her mouth. She walked into the bathroom and ran the tap, stuck her head close to the faucet until the pills were swimming in the fishbowl of her bulging cheeks.</p> <p>Swallow, she told herself.</p>



Page	Content
	But instead, Josie fell in front of the toilet and spit the pills out. She emptied the rest of the pills, still clutched in her fist. She flushed before she could think twice.
121	Carnivore scoffed. "Because they say I raped some waitress, and then stabbed her."
131	The office of the Geek Squad, as Patrick affectionately referred to the tech guys who hacked into hard drives to find proof of pornography and downloads from The Anarchist Cookbook, was filled with computers.
132	Two quoted lyrics from the band Death Wish. "This is my personal favorite," Orestes said, and he scrolled down. From: DeathWish To: Hades1991 This town blows. This weekend there is a craft festival where old bags come to show off the tacky tacky shit they made. They should call it a CRAP festival. I'm gonna hide in the bushes outside the church. Target practice as they cross the street—ten points each! Yee ha!
147	Then, in a corner section, Peter would strip without having to listen to anyone make fun of the way his chest sort of caved in at the bottom, or having the elastic of his boxers twisted to give him a wedgie. They called him Peter Homo, instead of Peter Houghton, and even when he was the only one in the locker room he could still hear the slap of their high-fives and the laughter that rolled toward him like an oil slick. ...Peter turned his back to the other locker sections and skimmed off his uniform, then covered himself quickly with a towel. His heart was pounding. He could already imagine what everyone else saw when they looked at him, because he saw it, too, in the mirror: skin white as the belly of a fish; knobs sticking out of his spine and collarbones. Arms without a single rope of muscle. The last thing Peter did was take off his glasses and put them on the shelf of his open locker. It made everything blissfully fuzzy. He ducked his head and walked into the shower, pulling off his towel at the last possible minute. Matt and Drew were already soaping themselves up. Peter let the spray hit him in the forehead. He imagined being an adventurer on some wild white river, being pummeled by a waterfall as he was sucked into a vortex. When he wiped his eyes and turned around, he could see the blurred edges of the bodies that were Matt and Drew. And the dark patch between their legs—pubic hair. Peter didn't have any yet. Matt suddenly twisted sideways. "Jesus Christ. Stop looking at my dick." "Fucking fag," Drew said. ...Worse, what if he got hard right now, which was happening more and more lately? That would mean he was gay, wouldn't it? "I wasn't looking at you," Peter blurted. "I can't see anything." Drew's laughter bounced against the tile walls of the shower. "Maybe your dick's too small, Mattie."
148	He didn't think he felt those things about guys, either; but surely you had to be gay or straight. You couldn't be neither.

Page	Content
149	<p>Kelly Gamboni was twenty-one years old, orphaned, and had an IQ of 79. She had been gang-raped by three high school boys who were now awaiting trial at a juvy facility in Concord. Kelly lived at a group home for Catholics, so abortion was never an option. But now, an ER doctor had deemed it medically necessary to induce Kelly, at thirty-six weeks. She lay in the hospital bed with a nurse trying ineffectually to comfort her, as Kelly clutched a teddy bear. "Daddy," she cried, to a parent who had died years ago. "Take me home. Daddy, it hurts!"</p> <p>...Lacy looked at Kelly and then walked into the hall; it would do Kelly no good to have them fighting in front of her. "She came in complaining of wetting her underwear for two days. The exam was consistent with premature rupture of membranes," the doctor said. "She's afebrile and the fetal monitor tracing is reactive. It's completely reasonable to induce. And she signed off on the consent form."</p>
151	<p>She could feel her mother's eyes on her as she picked at her food. "What?" she challenged.</p> <p>"Well, you sounded like a spoiled brat, that's all."</p> <p>"Why? Because I don't like fish embryos sitting under my nose? You don't eat them either. I was at least being honest."</p> <p>"And I was being discreet," her mother said. "Don't you think that the waiter is going to tell the chef that Judge Cormier's daughter is a piece of work?"</p> <p>"Like I care?"</p> <p>"I do. What you do reflects on me, and I have a reputation I have to protect."</p> <p>"As what? A suck-up?"</p> <p>"As someone who's above criticism both in and out of the courtroom."</p> <p>Josie tilted her head to one side. "What if I did something bad?"</p> <p>"Bad? How bad?"</p> <p>"Let's say I was smoking pot," Josie said.</p> <p>..."What do you mean, turn you in?"</p> <p>"Call the cops. Hand over my stash." Josie grinned. "Of hash."</p>
154	"Mama's boy," they said. "Does she fight all your battles, homo?"
155	"A porcupine has pricks on the outside."
164	<p>By the time the screen fuzzed out again and her own face came on, Josie was crying. She knew what was coming; she remembered this part. The camera panned back and there was Matt, his arms around her as she sat on his lap on the sand. He had taken off his shirt, and Josie remembered that his skin had been warm where it pressed up against hers.</p> <p>...She watched Matt on the screen the way you might study an animal you had never seen before, if you had to memorize it and tell the world later what you'd found. Matt's hand splayed across her bare stomach, grazed the edge of her bikini top. She watched herself push him away, blush. "Not here," her voice said, a funny voice, a voice that didn't sound like Josie to her own ears. You never did, when you heard yourself on tape.</p> <p>"Then let's go somewhere else," Matt said.</p> <p>Josie rucked up the edge of her pajama top, until she could reach underneath. She spread her own hand across her belly. She edged her thumb up, like Matt had, to the curve of her breast. She tried to pretend it was him.</p>

Page	Content
176	The leader of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance was still in the hospital: Natalie Zlenko, a yearbook photographer, had come out as a lesbian after her freshman year, when she'd wandered into the GLAAD meeting in Room 233 to see if there was anyone else on this planet like herself.
206	Peter picked his way through the computer until he reached a well-hidden file of downloads and opened up the first porn site. "Is that . . . a dwarf?" Josie murmured. "And a donkey?" Peter tilted his head. "I thought it was a really big cat." "Either way, it's totally gross." She shuddered. "Ugh. How am I going to take a paycheck from that guy's hand now?" Then she looked down at Peter. ...Stop looking at me, homo. He did not tell Josie this, but when he'd first found Mr. Cargrew's porn site, he'd found himself staring at the guys, not the girls.
207	The survey had even considered time allocation: how long a person spent at work, how often he went to church, how many times a week he had sex and with how many partners.
212	"I never thought anything the homo said would be worth listening to, but bridges take you from one place to another," Matt said.
213	When Matt touched her lower lip with his thumb, Josie could feel it everywhere—from her fingertips to her throat to the heat between her legs.
215	Unlike most of the other sophomores who were occasional couples—random hookups at parties, best-friend-with-benefits situations—she and Matt were an item. Matt walked her to her classes and often left her at the door with a kiss that everyone watched.
217	He tumbled down the stone steps as Matt stood over him. "Get away from my girlfriend, homo," Matt said. "Go find a nice little boy to play with."
218	Matt," Peter said, coming up on his knees. "Do you have a big dick?" "Wouldn't you like to know," Matt said. "Not really." Peter staggered to his feet. "I just wondered if it was long enough for you to go fuck yourself." ...Peter shook his head, tears streaming down his cheeks, streaking the blood. "Get . . . off . . ." "I bet you wish you could," Matt sneered.
223	She felt Matt's lips move from her cheek to her neck to the spot behind her ear that always made her feel like she was dissolving. She was a novice at fooling around, but Matt had coaxed her further and further each time they were alone. It's your fault, he'd say, and give her that smile. If you weren't this hot, I'd be able to keep my hands off you. That alone was an aphrodisiac to Josie. Her? Hot? And—just as Matt had promised every time—it did feel good to let him touch her everywhere, to let him taste her. Every incremental intimacy with Matt felt as if she were falling off a cliff—that loss of breath, those butterflies in her stomach. ...Now she felt his hands moving under her T-shirt, slipping beneath the lace of her bra. Her legs tangled with his; he rubbed up against her. When Matt tugged up her shirt, so that the cool air feathered over her skin, she snapped back to reality. "We can't do this," she whispered.

Page	Content
	<p>Matt's teeth scraped over her shoulder.          "We're parked on the side of the road."          He looked up at her, drugged, feverish. "But I want you," Matt said, like he had a dozen times.          This time, though, she glanced up.          I want you.          ...She heard the rip of a foil condom packet—How long had he been carrying that around? Then he tore at his jeans and hiked up her skirt, as if he still expected her to change her mind. Josie felt Matt pulling aside the elastic of her underwear, the burn of his finger pushing inside her. This was nothing like the times before, when his touch had left a track like a comet over her skin; when she found herself aching after she told him she wanted to stop. Matt shifted his weight and came down on top of her again, only this time there was more burning, more pressure.          "Ow," she whimpered, and Matt hesitated.          "I don't want to hurt you," he said.          She turned her head away. "Just do it," Josie said, and Matt pushed his hips flush against hers. It was the kind of pain that—even though she was expecting it—made her cry out.          Matt mistook that for passion. "I know, baby," he groaned. She could feel his heartbeat, but from the inside, and then he started to move faster, bucking against her like a fish released from a hook onto a dock.          Josie wanted to ask Matt whether it had hurt the first time he had done it, too. She wondered if it always would hurt. Maybe pain was the price everyone paid for love. She turned her face into Matt's shoulder and tried to understand why, even with him still inside of her, she felt empty.</p>
225	<p>They weren't drinking—it was hockey season, and the players had to sign a contract with the coach—but Drew Girard had rented the uncut version of a teen sex comedy, and the guys were discussing who was hotter, Elisha Cuthbert or Shannon Elizabeth. "I wouldn't throw either of them out of bed," Drew said.</p>
228	<p>"All right," Matt said, "I'll take the homo."</p>
231	<p>It wasn't that he wanted to fool around with a guy—not yet, anyway. He just wanted to know what it was like to be among guys who were gay, and totally okay with it.          ...He stopped in front of a couple that was going at it in a dark corner. Seeing a guy kiss a guy was strange in real life. Sure, there were gay kisses on television shows—Big Moments that usually were controversial enough to get press, so that Peter knew when they were airing—and he'd sometimes watch them to see if he felt anything, watching them.          ...He didn't feel particularly excited, though. Curious, sure—did a beard scratch you when you were making out?—and not repulsed, but Peter couldn't say he felt with any great conviction that that was something he wanted to try, too.          The men broke away from each other, and one of them narrowed his eyes. "This ain't no peep show," he said, and he shoved Peter away.</p>
232	<p>"Rico, get my young friend here a drink. What would you like?"          Peter swallowed. "Pepsi?"          The man's teeth flashed. "Yeah, right."</p>

Page	Content
	<p>"I don't drink."</p> <p>"Ah," he said. "Here, then."</p> <p>He handed a pair of small tubes to Peter, and then took two for himself out of his pocket. There was no powder in them—just air. Peter watched him open the top, inhale deeply, then do the same with the second vial in his other nostril.</p> <p>Mimicking this, Peter felt his head spin, like the one time he'd drunk a six-pack when his parents had gone off to watch Joey play football. But unlike then, when he'd only wanted to fall asleep afterward, Peter now felt every cell of his body buzzing, wide awake.</p> <p>"My name's Kurt," the man said, holding out his hand.</p> <p>"Peter."</p> <p>"Bottom or top?"</p> <p>Peter shrugged, trying to look like he knew what the guy was talking about, when in fact he had no clue.</p> <p>"My God," Kurt said, his jaw dropping. "New blood."</p>
233	<p>"I don't bet for money. How about if I win, I get to take you home. And if you win, you get to take me home."</p> <p>...He was sure that the teacher would call his parents, or rip up his ID in front of him, or ask him why he thought coming to a gay bar in downtown Manchester was a good idea.</p>
235	<p>"I'm not gay."</p> <p>..."I'm not gay," Peter repeated more firmly, and he opened the car door and ran as fast as he could toward his house.</p> <p>..."Geez, Courtney. If I'd known that, I guess I would be having wild sex with you, except for the fact that I love Josie, and she's probably less than three feet away from you right now."</p>
249	<p>"Like, what if Sam tells you he's gay?"</p>
250	<p>"Ed thought that Peter might be trying out the gay and lesbian crowd."</p> <p>"So Peter came to talk to Ed about being gay?"</p> <p>"Oh, no. Ed sought Peter out. We all remember what it was like to be figuring out what was different about us, when we were his age. Worried to death that some other kid who was gay was going to come on to you and blow your cover."</p> <p>..."Gay people don't come clearly marked—it's not like having a different color skin or a physical disability. You learn to pick up on mannerisms, or looks that last just a little too long. You get pretty good at figuring out if someone's gay, or just staring at you because you are."</p> <p>...Peter may have been confused about his sexuality, but it was crystal clear to Ed," Philip said. "That boy is straight."</p> <p>..."I want to talk about the explosives," he said. "Where would a person get something like that?" "At <a href="http://www.boom.com">www.boom.com</a>," Peter answered.</p>
251	<p>Jordan just stared at him. "Well, it's not all that far from the truth," Peter said. "I mean, The Anarchist Cookbook is online. So are about ten thousand recipes for Molotov cocktails."</p>
252	<p>"Father Moreno, he's the priest who leads the church services here? He says that if you accept Jesus and repent, you get excused . . . like religion is just some giant freebie hall pass that gets you out of anything and everything. But see, that can't</p>



Page	Content
	be right . . . because Father Moreno also says that every life is worth something . . . and what about the ten kids who died?"
253	Brady had brought the movie—Josie couldn't even remember the name, but it was one of those movies that had come out after American Pie, hoping to make the same killing at the box office by taking naked girls and daredevil guys and what Hollywood imagined teenage life to be like, and tossing them together like some sort of cosmic salad.
271	It was a specific tangent of post-traumatic stress disorder, one that suggested a woman who'd been repeatedly victimized both mentally and physically might so constantly fear for her life that the line between reality and fantasy blurred, to the point where she felt threatened even when the threat was dormant, or in Joe Riccobono's case, as he lay sleeping off a three-day drinking spree.
279	She leaned forward—cleavage alert—and met Peter's eyes.
285	She wiped her eyes on her sleeve. Lewis would tell her, of course, that it was only sex, not love. That it didn't mean anything.
287	"—so I was already worried about not making it to the top. As it turned out, that wasn't a problem. It was coming back down, because climbing up with the rope between my legs, I got a massive boner."
293	Jordan leaned over her, kissing Selena until—he hoped—she had forgotten she was in the throes of making fun of him. "Let's have another baby," he whispered. "I'm still nursing the first one!" "Then let's practice having another one." There was no one in the world quite like his wife, Jordan thought—statuesque and stunning, smarter than he was (not that he'd ever admit it to her face), and so perfectly attuned to him that he nearly had to concede his skepticism and believe that psychics truly did walk among us. He buried his face in the spot he loved best on Selena: the part where the nape of her neck ran into her shoulder, where her skin was the color of maple syrup and tasted even sweeter.
306	"If I won't let you buy me a drink," Alex said, "then what makes you think I'd take a bottle of wine from you?" Patrick grinned. "I'm not giving it to you. I'm going to open it, and you might just choose to borrow some."
309	You might not even realize it, but your bodies are choreographed: a touch on the hip, a stroke of the hair. A staccato kiss, break away, a longer one, his hand slipping under your shirt. ...It's just the way you've learned to fit, and it's why, when you've been with one guy for a long time, your teeth do not scrape together when you kiss; you do not bump noses or elbows. ...When they started making out, he'd lean in and look at her as if he couldn't possibly see any other part of the world. ...Then he'd kiss her, so slowly that there was hardly pressure on her mouth, until she was the one pushing against him for more. He worked his way down her body, from mouth to neck, from neck to breasts, and then his fingers would do a search-and-rescue mission below the waistband of her jeans. The whole thing lasted about ten minutes, and then Matt would roll off her and take the condom

Page	Content
	<p>out of his wallet so they could have sex.</p> <p>Not that Josie minded any of it. If she was going to be honest, she liked the pattern. It felt like a roller coaster—going up that hill, knowing what was coming next on track and knowing, too, that she couldn't do anything to stop it.</p> <p>They were in her living room, in the dark, with the television on for background noise. Matt had already peeled off her clothes, and now he was leaning over her like a tidal wave, pulling down his boxers. He sprang free and settled between Josie's legs.</p> <p>"Hey," she said, as he tried to push into her. "Aren't you forgetting something?"</p> <p>"Aw, Jo. Just once, I don't want there to be anything between us."</p> <p>His words could melt her just as surely as his kiss or his touch; she already knew that by now. She hated that rubbery smell that permeated the air the moment he ripped open the Trojan packet and stayed on his hands until they were finished. And God, did anything feel better than having Matt inside her? Josie shifted just a little, felt her body adjust to him, and her legs trembled.</p> <p>... "Every time you have sex, you can get pregnant or you can not get pregnant," her mother said. "That's fifty-fifty. So don't fool yourself into thinking that if you only do it once without protection, the odds are in your favor."</p> <p>Josie pushed at Matt. "I don't think we should do this," she whispered.</p> <p>"Have sex?"</p> <p>"Have sex without . . . you know. Anything."</p> <p>He was disappointed, Josie could tell by the way his face froze for just a moment. But he pulled out and fished for his wallet, found a condom. Josie took it out of his hand, tore open the package, helped him put it on. "One day," she began, and then he kissed her, and Josie forgot what she was going to say.</p>
311	<p>She had gone with a friend to a march at the statehouse in Concord and stood on the steps with a sisterhood of women who held up signs: I'M PRO-CHOICE AND I VOTE... AGAINST ABORTION? DON'T HAVE ONE.</p>
313	<p>"He pinned her hands over her head and ground his hips against hers. She could feel his erection, hot against her stomach. It wasn't the way it normally was, but Josie had to admit that it was exciting. She couldn't remember ever feeling so heavy, as if her heart were beating between her legs. She clawed at matt's back to bring him closer. "Yeah," he groaned, and he pushed her thighs apart. And then suddenly Matt was inside her, pumping so hard that she scooted backward on the carpet, burning the backs of her legs. "Wait," Josie said, trying to roll away beneath him, but he clamped his hand over her mouth and drove harder and harder until Josie felt him come. Semen, stick and hot, pooled on the carpet beneath her.</p>
313	<p>They were on the floor of the living room and they were nearly naked. Josie could taste beer on Matt's breath, but she must have tasted like that, too. They'd both drunk a few at Drew's—not enough to get wasted, just buzzed, enough so that Matt's hands seemed to be all over her at once, so that his skin set fire to hers. She'd been floating along pleasantly in a haze of the familiar. Yes, Matt had kissed her—one short one, then a longer, hungry kiss, as his hand worked open the clasp on her bra. She lay lazy, spread beneath him like a feast, as he pulled off her jeans. But then, instead of doing what usually came next, Matt reared over her</p>

Page	Content
	<p>again. He kissed her so hard that it hurt. “Mmmph,” she said, pushing at him. “Relax,” Matt murmured, and then he sank his teeth into her shoulder. He pinned her hands over her head and ground his hips against hers. She could feel his erection, hot against her stomach.</p> <p>It wasn’t the way it normally was, but Josie had to admit that it was exciting. She couldn’t remember ever feeling so heavy, as if her heart were beating between her legs. She clawed at Matt’s back to bring him closer.</p> <p>“Yeah,” he groaned, and he pushed her thighs apart. And then suddenly Matt was inside her, pumping so hard that she scooted backward on the carpet, burning the backs of her legs.</p> <p>“Wait,” Josie said, trying to roll away beneath him, but he clamped his hand over her mouth and drove harder and harder until Josie felt him come.</p> <p>Semen, sticky and hot, pooled on the carpet beneath her.</p>
315	<p>She’d already tried to get details out of Josie last night about Matt—important things, like how big a dick he had and if he had a clue how to use it—but Josie had gone all Hilary Duff on her and acted like she’d never heard the word sex before.</p>
321	<p>He was standing, in fact, behind Peter; and in one smooth stroke he hooked his thumbs into the loops of Peter’s pants and yanked them down to his ankles. Peter’s skin was moon-white under the harsh fluorescent lamps of the cafeteria, his penis a tiny spiral shell on a sparse nest of pubic hair. He immediately covered his genitals with his lunch bag, and as he did, he dropped his milk carton. It spilled on the floor between his feet.</p> <p>“Hey, look at that,” Drew said. “Premature ejaculation.”</p>
322	<p>Then Josie got out of bed and booted up her computer. She Googled abortifacient—the word she’d looked up yesterday, the one that meant something that terminates a pregnancy.</p> <p>...Josie had toyed with contacting her father again, which would have taken an enormous helping of humility. He hadn’t wanted Josie born, so theoretically, he’d probably go out of his way to help her have an abortion.</p> <p>...Some she already knew: the old wives’ tales about sticking a knitting needle up inside her, or drinking laxatives or castor oil. Some she’d never imagined: douching with potassium, swallowing gingerroot, eating unripe pineapple. And then there were the herbs: oil infusions of calamus, mugwort, sage, and wintergreen; cocktails made out of black cohosh and pennyroyal. Josie wondered where you even got these things—it wasn’t like they were in the aisle next to the aspirin at CVS.</p> <p>Herbal remedies, the website said, worked 40–45 percent of the time. Which, she supposed, was at least a start.</p> <p>She leaned closer, reading.</p> <p>Don’t start herbal treatment after the sixth week of pregnancy.</p> <p>Keep in mind these are not reliable ways to end pregnancy.</p> <p>Drink the teas day and night, so you don’t ruin the progress you made during the day.</p> <p>Catch the blood and add water to dilute it, and look at the clots and tissue to make sure the placenta has passed.</p> <p>Josie grimaced.</p>

Page	Content
	<p>Use 1/2 to 1 teaspoon of the dried herb per cup of water, 3–4 times a day. Don't confuse tansy with tansy ragwort, which has been fatal to cows that have eaten it growing nearby.</p> <p>Then she found something that looked less, well, medieval: vitamin C. Surely that couldn't be too bad for her? Josie clicked on the link. Ascorbic acid, eight grams, for five days. Menstruation should begin on the sixth or seventh day.</p> <p>Josie got up from her computer and went into her mother's medicine cabinet. There was a big white bottle of vitamin C, along with smaller ones of acidophilus, vitamin B12, and calcium supplements.</p> <p>She opened the bottle and hesitated.</p>
326	<p>Why was Wonder Woman always so bodacious? If you were a 38DD, would you honestly go leaping off buildings and fighting crime without a good jogging bra? Thinking of that reminded Josie that she could barely put on her own bra these days, her breasts were so tender. And that made her recall the pregnancy test that she'd wrapped up in paper towels and thrown away outside in the garbage can so her mother wouldn't find it.</p>
329	<p>She woke up, breathless, and realized that she still felt wet. She sat up, lifted up the covers, and saw the pool of blood beneath her.</p> <p>After three positive pregnancy tests, after her period was three weeks late—she was miscarrying.</p> <p>Thankgodthankgodthankgod. Josie buried her face in the sheets and started to cry.</p>
340	<p>"Every time you have sex, you can get pregnant or you can not get pregnant. That's fifty-fifty."</p>
349	<p>For example, the birth of your child was one thing when you were happily married and planning a family; it was something entirely different when you were sixteen and had gotten a girl knocked up.</p>
405	<p>"Yes. Peter loved his parents, but didn't feel he could rely on them for protection."</p> <p>"Protection from what?"</p> <p>"Troubles in school, feelings he was having, suicide ideation."</p>
410	<p>Matt put the car into reverse and lurched backward. You want to stay? You want to be a slut?</p> <p>...His voice trailed her to the front door: Good. Why would I want to go out with a fucking whore, anyway?</p>
411	<p>On his desk was a bottle of Tylenol and another one, open, of Jim Beam. Josie faced him. Did you—</p> <p>But Matt wrapped his arms around her. He smelled of liquor. You told me not to. I'd do anything for you.</p>
413	<p>"You said that Peter was suffering from suicide ideation."</p> <p>"Yes."</p> <p>"So he wanted to kill himself?"</p> <p>"Yes. That's very common for patients with PTSD."</p>

Profanity	Count
Ass	14
Bitch	6
Dick	7
Fag/Faggot	6
Fuck	47
Goddamn	5
Piss	5
Pussy	2
Shit	22



## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings

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Nineteen minutes: a novel

Picoult, Jodi, 1966-

[book] (2007)

Jodi Picoult.  
Atria Books  
vi, 455 p. ; 24 cm.  
0743496728

View Links: Sample text

Accelerated Reader:  
Lexile: AD

The people of Sterling, New Hampshire, are forever changed after a shooting at the high school leaves ten people dead, and the judge presiding over the trial tries to remain unbiased, even though her daughter witnessed the events and was friends with the assailant.

School shootings  
High school students -- Crimes against  
Women judges  
New Hampshire

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F.W. Springstead High School

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# Nineteen Minutes

Jodi Picoult

4.16

366,899 ratings 19,057 reviews

In nineteen minutes, you can mow the front lawn, color your hair, watch a third of a hockey game. In nineteen minutes, you can bake scones or get a tooth filled by a dentist; you can fold laundry for a family of five....In nineteen minutes, you can stop the world, or you can just jump off it. In nineteen minutes, you can get revenge.

Sterling is a small, ordinary New Hampshire town where nothing ever happens -- until the day its complacency is shattered by a shocking act of violence. In the aftermath, the town's residents must not only seek justice in order to begin healing but also come to terms with the role they played in the tragedy. For them, the lines between truth and fiction, right and wrong, insider and outsider have been obscured forever. Josie Cormier, the teenage daughter of the judge sitting on the case, could be the state's best witness, but she can't remember what happened in front of her own eyes. And as the trial progresses, fault lines between the high school and the adult community begin to show, destroying the closest of friendships and families.

Nineteen Minutes is New York Times bestselling author Jodi Picoult's most raw, honest, and important novel yet. Told with the straightforward style for which she has become known, it asks simple questions that have no easy answers: Can your own child become a mystery to you? What does it mean to be different in our society? Is it ever okay for a victim to strike back? And who -- if anyone -- has the right to judge someone else?

Genres **Fiction** **Contemporary** **Chick Lit** **Adult** **Drama** **Adult Fiction** **Young**

**Adult**

...more

440 pages, Hardcover

First published March 5, 2007



Amazon

## Customer Review



Mary

### **3.0 out of 5 stars Difficult subject yet thought provoking**

Reviewed in the United States on July 23, 2023

**Verified Purchase**

I knew that 19 minutes was about both a school shooting as well as the aftermath of how the small town copes after the shooting. This my fourth book by Picoult, and I have picked up on the trend of her writing by the second book, you can see that they are formulaic in plot design and pace.

Picoult writes books that are easy to read, yet usually compelling topics that are presented in a way that easily spark thought and discussion. Picoult shapes her story by providing various perspectives. We are able to put the story together from Peter's perspective as well as that of his parents, Judge Alex Cormier, Cormier's daughter Josie – a student in the school on that day, Patrick – a detective on the case, Jordan – Peter's attorney. We are able to see all the characters as "human" – sympathetic but faulted. This makes it easy to guess what the "big twist" at the end of her book will be. I don't see myself giving any more of her books that I read more than 3 stars, because whereas I typically give the books credit for broaching difficult topics and presenting them in such a way to make the reader think, I don't think they're written in a particularly creative style. The first book of hers I read, "Small Great Things" which I thought was GREAT - because I hadn't read anything like it before. The subsequent books, as mentioned above, were just like the previous in form...and admittedly function. The three stars is solely credit for tackling the difficult topics and because her writing isn't bad, it's just not original anymore. How many times can you see the same magic trick, and still be surprised at the end?

I cannot say I loved this book although I sure did love aspects of it. I felt the twists really took away from some of the book's power. This book did not need any of twists I felt.

2 people found this helpful



# NINETEEN MINUTES

BY JODI PICOULT • RELEASE DATE: MARCH 6, 2007

*Though all the surface elements are in place, Picoult falters in her exploration of what turns a quiet kid into a murderer.*

Picoult's 14th novel (after *The Tenth Circle*, 2006, etc.) of a school shooting begins with high-voltage excitement, then slows by the middle, never regaining its initial pace or appeal.

Peter Houghton, 17, has been the victim of bullying since his first day of kindergarten, made all the more difficult by two factors: In small-town Sterling, N.H., Peter is in high school with the kids who've tormented him all his life; and his all-American older brother eggs the bullies on. Peter retreats into a world of video games and computer programming, but he's never able to attain the safety of invisibility. And then one day he walks into Sterling High with a knapsack full of guns, kills ten students and wounds many others. Peter is caught and thrown in jail, but with over a thousand witnesses and video tape of the day, it will be hard work for the defense to clear him. His attorney, Jordan McAfee, hits on the only approach that might save the unlikable kid—a variation of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder caused by bullying. Thrown into the story is Judge Alex Cormier, and her daughter Josie, who used to be best friends with Peter until the popular crowd forced the limits of her loyalty. Also found dead was her boyfriend Matt, but Josie claims she can't remember anything from that day. Picoult mixes McAfee's attempt to build a defense with the mending relationship of Alex and Josie, but what proves a more intriguing premise is the response of Peter's parents to the tragedy. How do you keep loving your son when he becomes a mass murderer? Unfortunately, this question, and others, remain, as the novel relies on repetition (the countless flashbacks of Peter's victimization) rather than fresh insight. Peter fits the profile, but is never fully fleshed out beyond stereotype. Usually so adept at shaping the big stories with nuance, Picoult here takes a tragically familiar event, pads it with plot, but leaves out the subtleties of character.

Though all the surface elements are in place, Picoult falters in her exploration of what turns a quiet kid into a murderer

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

# Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days following the formation of the committee. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School Springstead H.S. Date 2/21/24

Title Nineteen Minutes

Author Jodi Picoult

## Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material

### Silent Voting Results:

7 Do Not Remove

0 Remove/Discontinue

Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
<p>If committee is recommending to limit access-</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Grade Level</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> For Advance Course</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent Permission</p>	<p>Basis for removal, check all that apply:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The materials is pornographic</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The materials is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The materials is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.</p>

# Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

Print Name	Position	Signature
Dana Pearce	Principal	Dana Pearce
Kyra Taaffe	Lay Person	Kyra Taaffe
Kelly Downey	District Staff	Kelly Downey
Shelley Kennedy	Community	Shelley Kennedy
Rose Carson	Media Para	Rose Carson
Heather Carter	Teacher	Heather Carter
John Dink	Parent	John Dink
Administrator's Signature		Date
Dana Pearce		2/21/24





TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: February 21, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenge SHS 0100-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, "Nineteen Minutes" at Springstead High School. The review committee at Springstead has evaluated the book, "Nineteen Minutes", written by Jodi Picoult based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is that the book is not removed from Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on April 23, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before April 23, 2024.

B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -**						
Funding Source	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 1.2em; width: 100%;"></div>					
Account Name	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 1.2em; width: 100%;"></div>					
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Amount	\$ <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 1.2em; width: 100%;"></div>					

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	Fund	Function	Object	Cost Center	Project	Sub Project
Amount	\$ <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 1.2em; width: 100%;"></div>					

**C. History**

Check one:

**Prior Year Budget:** ☐

**New for Current Year:** ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

266





# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

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**Agenda Item # 13. 24-2242**

5/7/2024

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### **Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Kingdom of Ash" written by Sarah Maas, in circulation and be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

### **Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to keep the book, "Kingdom of Ash" written by Sarah Maas, in circulation. This book is being challenged at Central High School.

Central High School' Review Committee met on March 1, 2024 and March 14, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 4-1 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book stay in circulation in Hernando County Schools.

Per Hernando County School District 2522 Policy requirements, the superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to keep the book.

### **My Contact**

Kelly Downey

Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs

352-797-7000 ext. 280

downey\_k@hcsb.k12.fl.us

### **2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

### **Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.



## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605  
M4LHernando.CMRCChair@gmail.com

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Hernando County School. District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE: CHS “Kingdom of Ash ” (M4LHC –  
0110/2023)

November 1, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 0110-23) for "Kingdom of Ash" which is currently located at Central High School's media center. This book was discovered in Alexandria back on July 21, 2023

"Kingdom of Ash " contains sexual age-inappropriate contents: violence; profanity; and explicit sexual activities; and sexual nudity. This book shows a warning label for 18 years of age and up, and is not meant for K-12 schools

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently violates H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I'm calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book from Central High School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can't be "disappeared" (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name) JT

Address : PO Box 1568 City Brooksville State FL Zip Code 34605

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: November 1, 2023 Author: Sarah J. Maas

Title: Kingdom of Ash

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Bloomsbury 2018

School(s) in which item is used: Central High School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames, etc. Attach additional pages if necessary) Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

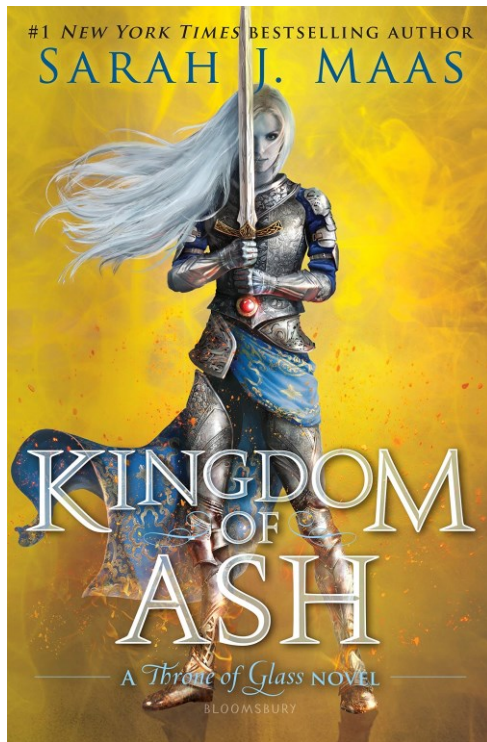
If yes, where? Name and date of publication: GoodReads 2021. 2018

Complainant's Signature

Julia Thomas

Date November 1, 2023

# KINGDOM OF ASH



## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains violence; mild profanity; and explicit sexual activities; sexual nudity.

*Young Adult*

**By Sarah J. Maas**

ISBN: 978-1-61963-611-8



**4** /5

**Not For Minors**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
67	<p>He brushed a kiss to the column of her neck, a precise reminder of how, exactly, Yrene had awoken him. And what they'd spent a good hour around dawn doing.</p> <p>Just the warmed silk of her skin against his lips was enough to heat his chilled bones. "We can go back to bed, if you want," he murmured.</p> <p>Yrene let out a soft, breathless sound that had his hands aching to roam along her bundled-up body. Even with time pressing upon them, hurrying them northward, he'd loved learning all her sounds—loved coaxing them from her.</p>
349	<p>She smiled despite that truth. "I'm ready to be kissed again, Prince."</p> <p>He let out a dark chuckle and muttered, "Thank the gods," before he lowered his mouth to hers.</p> <p>The kiss was gentle—light. Letting her decide how to guide it. So she did.</p> <p>Sliding her arms around Rowan's neck, Aelin pressed herself against him, arching into his touch as his hands roamed along her back. Yet his mouth remained featherlight on hers. Sweet, exploratory kisses. He'd do it all night, if that was what she wished.</p> <p>Mate. He was her mate, and she was finally</p> <p>...With a growl, Rowan swept her into his arms, never tearing his mouth from hers as he carried her to the bed and set her down gently. Off came their boots, their jackets and shirts and pants. And then he was with her, the strength and heat of him pouring into her bare skin.</p> <p>She couldn't touch him fast enough, feel enough of him against her. Even when his mouth roved down her neck, licking over that spot where his claiming marks had been. Even when he roamed farther, worshipping her breasts as she arched up into each lick and suckle. Even when he knelt between her legs, his shoulders spreading her thighs wide, and tasted her, over and over, until she was writhing beneath him.</p> <p>But something primal in her went quiet and still as Rowan rose over her again, and their eyes locked.</p> <p>"You're my mate," he said, the words near-guttural. He nudged at her entrance, and she shifted her hips to draw him in, but he remained where he was. Withholding what she ached for until he heard what he needed.</p> <p>Aelin tipped back her head, baring her neck to him. "You're my mate." Her words were a breathless rush. "And I am yours."</p> <p>Rowan thrust into her in a mighty stroke as he plunged his teeth into the side of her neck. She cried out at the claiming, release already barreling along her spine, but he began moving. Moving, while his teeth remained in her, and she moaned with each drive of his hips, the sheer size of him a decadence she would never be able to get enough of. She dragged her nails down his muscled back, then lower, feeling every powerful stroke of him into her.</p> <p>Rowan withdrew his teeth from her neck, and Aelin claimed his mouth in a savage kiss, her blood a coppery tang on his tongue.</p> <p>He went wild at that, hoisting her hips to angle himself deeper, harder. The world might have been burning around them for all she cared, all he cared, too.</p> <p>"Together, Aelin," he promised, and she heard the rest of the words in every place their bodies joined. Together they would face this, together they would find a way.</p> <p>Release crested within her once more, a shimmering brightness.</p> <p>And just when it broke, Aelin sank her teeth into Rowan's neck, claiming him as he'd claimed her.</p> <p>His blood, powerful and wind-kissed, filled her mouth, her soul, and Rowan roared as release</p>



Page	Content
	shattered through him, too. For long minutes, they lay tangled in each other.
435	He ran a hand down the back of her head, his fingers twining in her hair before he murmured in her ear, "Come to bed." Heat flared through her body. "We've a battle to launch tomorrow. Again." "And a day of death has made me want to hold you," the prince said, giving her that disarming grin she had no defenses against. Especially as he added, "And do other things with you." Nesryn's toes curled in her boots.
484	Rowan came up behind his mate and pressed a kiss to her neck. Right to where his new claiming marks lay. ...Another kiss to her neck.
535	He left her jacket open, the swells of her breasts just visible between the lapels. They rose and fell in an uneven rhythm that only turned more unsteady as she reached between them and began to remove his own jacket.
537	He ran his fingers over the scar. Over it, and then up her stomach. Up and up, her skin pebbling beneath his touch, until he halted just over her heart. Until he laid his palm flat against it, the curve of her breast rising to meet his hand with each unsteady breath she took. ...So Dorian brushed his mouth against hers. Manon let out a small sound. Dorian kissed her again, and her tongue met his, hungry and searching. Then her hands were plunging into his hair, both of them rising onto their knees to meet halfway. She moaned, her hands sliding from his hair down his chest, down to his pants. She stroked him through the material, and Dorian groaned into her mouth. Time spun out, and there was only Manon, a living blade in his arms. Their pants joined their shirts and jackets on the ground, and then he was laying her upon his bedroll. Manon drew her hands from him to remove the glittering crown atop her head, but he halted her with a phantom touch. "Don't," he said, voice near-guttural. "Leave it on." Her eyes turned to molten gold, going heavy-lidded as she writhed, tipping her head back. His mouth went dry at the beauty that threatened to undo him, the temptation that his every instinct roared to claim. Not the body, but what she had offered. He almost said yes, then. Was almost selfish enough, greedy enough for her, that he nearly said yes. Yes, he would take her as his queen. So he might never have to say farewell to this, so that this magnificent, fierce witch might remain by his side for all his days. Manon reached for him, fingers digging into his shoulders, and Dorian rose over her, finding her mouth in a plundering kiss. A shift of her hips, and he was buried, the heated silk of her enough to make him forget that they had a camp around them, or kingdoms to protect. He did not bother with phantom touches. He wanted her all for himself, skin to skin. Every thrust into her, Manon answered with a rolling, demanding movement of her own. Stay. The word echoed in each breath. Dorian took one of her legs and hefted it higher, angling him closer. He groaned at the perfection of it, and Manon swallowed the sound with a kiss of her own, a hand clamping on his backside to propel him harder, faster. Dorian gave Manon what she wanted. Gave himself what he wanted. Over and over and

Page	Content
	<p>over.</p> <p>Manon's breathing was as ragged as Dorian's when they pulled apart at last. She could barely move her limbs, barely get down enough air as she gazed at the tent ceiling. Dorian, as spent as she, didn't bother to try to speak.</p>
555	<p>A soft groan came out of him as she continued to look her fill. Asking for things that he sure as hell was in no shape to give her. And that she might not yet be ready to give him, declarations aside.</p> <p>He was immediately challenged to prove his resolve as Elide ran slightly shaking fingers across the new scar on his abdomen.</p> <p>...Another one of those small smiles curved her lips, and Lorcan's hands tightened in the sheets with the effort it took not to taste that smile, to worship it with his own mouth.</p>
556	<p>Lorcan held absolutely still as she brought her mouth to his. Brushed her lips across his own.</p> <p>...Too shaken by that soft, beautiful kiss to bother with words, he lay back down.</p> <p>...This kiss lingered. Her mouth traced his, and at the slight pressure of her lips, the gentle request, he answered with his own.</p> <p>The taste of her threatened to undo him entirely, and the tentative brush of her tongue against his own drew another rolling purr from deep in his chest. But Lorcan let Elide explore him, slowly and sweetly, giving her whatever she asked.</p> <p>And when her mouth became more insistent, when her breathing turned ragged, he slipped a hand around her neck to cup her nape. She opened for him, and at her low moan, Lorcan thought he'd fly out of his skin.</p> <p>His hand slipped from her nape to run down her back, savoring the warm, unbreakable body beneath the layers of clothes. Elide arched into the touch, another of those small noises coming from her. As if she'd been just as starved for him.</p>
568	<p>He brought her hands to his mouth for a swift kiss. "And</p> <p>...Rowan nipped at her nose. "I do keep a tally, Princess. Of all the horrible things that come out of your mouth."</p> <p>Her toes curled, and she dragged her fingers through his hair, luxuriating in the silken strands.</p> <p>...Rowan smirked, as if sensing Gavriel's swift exit, too. Then his hand flattened on her abdomen, his mouth grazing the underside of her jaw. "I've been thinking of some ways."</p> <p>But the hand he'd set on her belly pushed down just enough that Aelin let out an oomph.</p>
570	<p>Though unlike those months this spring, when Aelin set down her plate between her feet, she slid her arms around Rowan's neck and his mouth instantly met hers.</p> <p>No, it was certainly not at all like their time at Mistward as she crawled into Rowan's lap, not entirely caring that anyone might stride up or down the stairs, and kissed him silly.</p> <p>They halted, breathless and wild-eyed, before she could decide that it really wouldn't be a bad idea to unfasten his pants right there, or that his hand, discreetly and lazily rubbing that damned spot between her thighs, should be inside her.</p>
727	<p>Elide bit her lip, her breasts becoming heavy, tingling. "I might slip."</p> <p>His eyes drifted down her body, but he made no move. "A dangerous time, bath time."</p> <p>Elide found it in herself to walk toward the copper tub. He trailed a few feet behind, giving her space. Letting her steer this.</p> <p>Elide halted beside the tub, steam wafting past. She tugged the hem of her shirt from her pants.</p> <p>Lorcan watched every move. She wasn't entirely certain he was breathing.</p>

Page	Content
	<p>But—her hands stalled. Uncertain. Not of him, but this rite, this path.</p> <p>“Show me what to do,” she breathed.</p> <p>“You’re doing just fine,” Lorcan ground out.</p> <p>But she gave him a helpless look, and he prowled closer. His fingers found the loose hem of her shirt. “May I?” he asked quietly.</p> <p>Elide whispered, “Yes.”</p> <p>Lorcan still studied her eyes, as if reading the sincerity of that word. Deeming it true.</p> <p>Gently, he pulled the fabric from her. Cool air kissed her skin, pebbling it. The flexible band around her breasts remained, but Lorcan’s gaze remained on her own. “Tell me what you want next,” he said roughly.</p> <p>Hand shaking, Elide grazed a finger over the band.</p> <p>Lorcan’s own hands shook as he unbound it. As he revealed her to the air, to him.</p> <p>His eyes seemed to go wholly black as he took in her breasts, her uneven breathing.</p> <p>“Beautiful,” he murmured.</p> <p>Elide’s mouth curled as the word settled within her. Gave her enough courage that she lifted her hands to his jacket and began unbuckling, unbuttoning. Until Lorcan’s own chest was bare, and she ran her fingers over the smattering of dark hair across the sculpted planes.</p> <p>“Beautiful,” she said.</p> <p>Lorcan trembled—with restraint, with emotion, she didn’t know. That darling purr of his rumbled into her as she pressed her mouth against his pectoral.</p> <p>His hand drifted to her hair, each stroke unbinding her braid. “We only go as far and long as you want,” he said. Yet she dared to glance down his body—to what strained under his pants.</p> <p>Her mouth went dry. “I—I don’t know what I’m doing.”</p> <p>“Anything you do will be enough,” he said. She lifted her head, scanning his face. “Enough for what?”</p> <p>Another half smile. “Enough to please me.” She scoffed at the arrogance, but Lorcan brushed his mouth against her neck. His hands bracketed her waist, his thumbs grazing her ribs. But no higher.</p> <p>Elide arched into the touch, a small sound escaping her as his lips brushed just beneath her ear. And then his mouth found hers, gentle and thorough.</p> <p>Her hands twined around his neck, and Lorcan lifted her, carrying her not to the bath, but to the cot behind them, his lips never leaving hers.</p> <p>Home. This, with him. This was home, as she had never had. For however long they might share it. A</p> <p>nd when Lorcan laid her out on the cot, his breathing as uneven as her own, when he paused, letting her decide what to do, where to take this, Elide kissed him again and whispered, “Show me everything.”</p> <p>So Lorcan did.</p>
730	<p>She’d taken one look at the spread wings—a hawk’s wings—across her back and kissed him. Kissed him until his own clothes were gone, and she was astride him, neither bothering with words, or capable of finding them.</p>
824	<p>He gripped her waist in one hand, the other plunging into her hair, and tipped her head back as his mouth met hers.</p> <p>The kiss seared her down to her ever-changing bones, and she wrapped her arms around his neck as she held him tightly.</p>

Page	Content
	<p>Alone in the dark, quiet hall, death squatting on the battlefield nearby, Lysandra gave herself to that searing kiss, to Aedion, unable to stop her moan as his tongue flicked against hers. The sound was his unleashing, and Aedion twisted them, backing her against the wall. She arched, desperate to feel him against all of her. He growled into her mouth, and the hand at her hip slid to her thigh, hoisting it around his waist as he ground into her, exactly where she needed him.</p> <p>Aedion tore his mouth from hers and began to explore her neck, her jaw, her ear. She breathed his name, running her hands down his powerful back as it flexed under her touch. More. More. More.</p> <p>More of this life, this fire to burn away all shadows.</p> <p>More of him.</p> <p>Lysandra slid her hands to his chest, fingers digging into the breast of his jacket, seeking the warm skin beneath. Aedion only nipped at her ear, dragged his teeth along her jaw, and seized her mouth in another plundering kiss that had her moaning again.</p> <p>Footsteps scuffed down the hall, along with a pointed cough, and Aedion stilled.</p> <p>Loud—they must have been so loud—</p> <p>But Aedion didn't budge, though Lysandra unwrapped her leg from around his waist. Just as the sentry walked past, eyes down.</p> <p>Walked past quickly.</p> <p>Aedion tracked the man the entire time, nothing human in Aedion's eyes. An apex predator who had found his prey at last.</p> <p>No, not prey. Never with him.</p> <p>But his partner. His mate.</p> <p>When the sentry had vanished around the corner, no doubt running to tell everyone what he'd interrupted, when Aedion leaned to kiss her again, Lysandra halted him with a gentle hand to his mouth. "Tomorrow," she said softly.</p> <p>Aedion let out a snarl—though one without any bite.</p> <p>"Tomorrow," she said, and kissed him on the cheek, stepping out of his arms. "Live through tomorrow, fight through tomorrow, and we'll ... continue."</p> <p>His breathing was ragged, eyes wary. "Was this from pity?" A broken, miserable question.</p> <p>Lysandra slid her hand against his stubble-coated cheek and pressed her mouth against his. Let herself taste him again. "It is because I am sick of all this death. And I needed you."</p> <p>Aedion made a low, pained sound, so Lysandra kissed him a final time. Went so far as to run her tongue along the seam of his lips. He opened for her, and then they were tangled in each other again, teeth and tongues and hands roaming, touching, tasting.</p>
830	<p>Rowan had taken the time last night to reacquaint her with certain parts of that body. And his own. Had spent a long while doing so, too. Until that haunted look had vanished, until she was writhing beneath him, burning while he moved in her. He hadn't stopped his tears from falling, even when they'd turned to steam before they hit her body, and there had been tears on her own face, bright as silver in the flame, while she'd held him tight.</p> <p>Yet this morning, when he'd nuzzled her awake with kisses to her jaw, her neck, that haunted look had returned. And lingered.</p>
834	<p>A soft, swift kiss was their only greeting.</p>
843	<p>So Aedion leaned in, and kissed Lysandra, kissed the woman who should have been his wife, his mate, one last time. "I love you."</p>
931	<p>To kiss his cheeks, then his mouth. Loving, gentle touches.</p>

Page	Content
939	Elide waved him off, but Lorcan kissed her. ...He swept her up into his arms, raining kisses over her face. As if some final, chained part of him had been freed.
966	Right before the queen threw her arms around Rowan and kissed him.
976	Rowan brushed a kiss to her mouth.
977	Rowan laughed, and kissed her again. ...Aelin kissed him again and took his hand, guiding him into the castle. Into their home.

Profanity	Count
Ass	8
Bitch	13
Piss	10
Prick	5
Shit	19



## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings

Central High School

Log In


Study Programs Medium Genre

Tags

Smart Search kingdom of ash

Temp List

5 Results



FIC MAA

Kingdom of ash

Maas, Sarah J.

[book] (2018.)

★★★★★ (0)

Fantasy fiction

Sarah J. Maas.

Bloomsbury,

984 p. :map ;25 cm.

9781619636101


"With Aelin locked in an iron coffin by Queen of the Fae, Maeve, Aedion and Lysandra struggle to defend Terrasen, Chaol, Manon, and Dorian face their own fates, and Rowan seeks his captured wife and queen"—Provided by publisher.

Kings and rulers

Fairies

Details

Copies



FIC WES

Kingdom of ash and briars

West, Hannah 1990-

★★★★★ (0)

93°F Sunny

2:56 PM 7/21/2023

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Study Programs Medium Genre

Tags

Smart Search kingdom of ash

Temp List

5 Results

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CENT	FIC MAA			502053	Available	

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Kingdom of ash and briars

West, Hannah 1990-

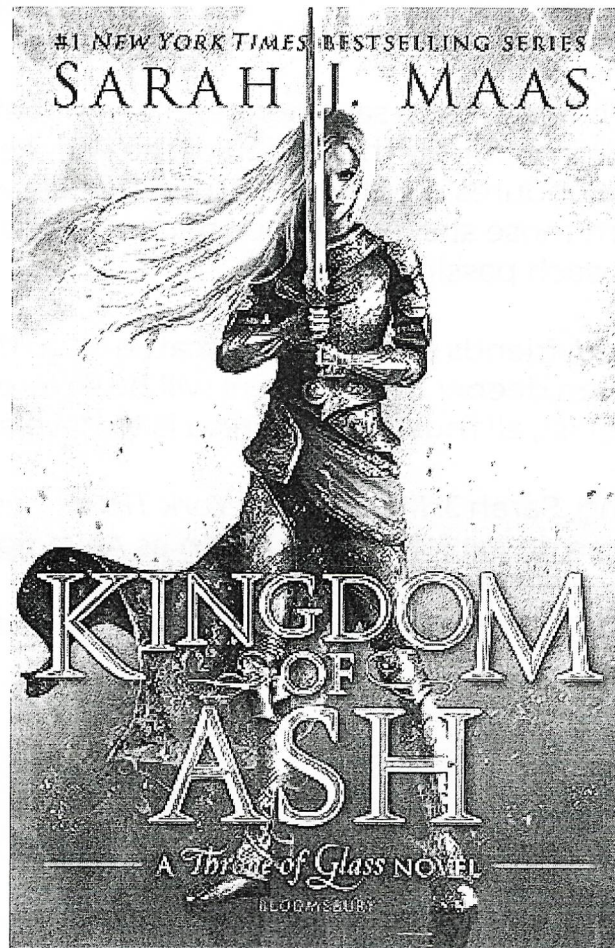
★★★★★

(0)

arch

93°F Sunny

3:03 PM



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Follow the author

## Kingdome of Ash Book review

Aelin Galathynius has vowed to save her people — but at a tremendous cost. Locked within an iron coffin by the Queen of the Fae, Aelin must draw upon her fiery will as she endures months of torture. The knowledge that yielding to Maeve will doom those she loves keeps her from breaking, but her resolve is unraveling with each passing day...

With Aelin captured, friends and allies are scattered to different fates. Some bonds will grow even deeper, while others will be severed forever. As destinies weave together at last, all must fight if Erilea is to have any hope of salvation.

Years in the making, Sarah J. Maas's *New York Times* bestselling Throne of Glass series draws to an explosive conclusion as Aelin fights to save herself—and the promise of a better world.

Genres **Fantasy****Young Adult****Romance****Fae****New Adult****Fiction****Magic**  
...more

980 pages, Hardcover

First published October 23, 2018





Sarah J. MaasSarah J. Maas  
[Follow](#)

## Kingdom of Ash (Throne of Glass, 7) Hardcover

– October 23, 2018

by [Sarah J. Maas](#) (Author)

---

Years in the making, Sarah J. Maas's #1 *New York Times* bestselling Throne of Glass series draws to an epic, unforgettable conclusion. Aelin Galathynius's journey from slave to king's assassin to the queen of a once-great kingdom reaches its heart-rending finale as war erupts across her world. . .

Aelin has risked everything to save her people-but at a tremendous cost. Locked within an iron coffin

by the Queen of the Fae, Aelin must draw upon her fiery will as she endures months of torture. Aware that yielding to Maeve will doom those she loves keeps her from breaking, though her resolve begins to unravel with each passing day...

With Aelin captured, Aedion and Lysandra remain the last line of defense to protect Terrasen from utter destruction. Yet they soon realize that the many allies they've gathered to battle Erawan's hordes might not be enough to save them. Scattered across the continent and racing against time, Chaol, Manon, and Dorian are forced to forge their own paths to meet their fates. Hanging in the balance is any hope of salvation-and a better world.

And across the sea, his companions unwavering beside him, Rowan hunts to find his captured wife and queen-before she is lost to him forever.

As the threads of fate weave together at last, all must fight, if they are to have a chance at a future. Some bonds will grow even deeper, while others will be severed forever in the explosive final chapter of the Throne of Glass series



THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

# Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days following the formation of the committee. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School Central High Date 3/14/24

Title Kingdom of Ash

Author Sarah Maas

## Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material

### Silent Voting Results:

4 Do Not Remove

1 Remove/Discontinue

Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
<p>If committee is recommending to limit access-</p> <p><u>      </u> Grade Level</p> <p><u>      </u> For Advance Course</p> <p><u>      </u> Parent Permission</p>	<p>Basis for removal, check all that apply:</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is pornographic</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.</p> <p><u>      </u> The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.</p>

Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

Print Name

Position

Signature

Kelly Downey	District	Kelly Downey
Lore Adesso	Asst. Principal	Lore Adesso
Maria Gebhardt	Lay	Maria Gebhardt
Susan Pribil	Community	Susan Pribil
Nanette Billick	Parent	Nanette Billick

Administrator's Signature

Lore Adesso

Date

3-14-24



TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: March 20, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenge CHS 0110-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, “Kingdom of Ash” at Central High School. The review committee at Central High School has evaluated the book, "Kingdom of Ash", written by Sarah Maas based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is that the book is not removed from Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on May 7, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before May 7, 2024.



**A. Item Currently Budgeted -**

Account Name		<u>No Financial Impact</u>								
Account Number										
		Fund	Function	Object	Cost Center	Project	Sub Project			
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$

Account Name										
Account Number										
		Fund	Function	Object	Cost Center	Project	Sub Project			
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$

**B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -\*\***

Funding Source							
Account Name							
Account Number							
		Fund	Function	Object	Cost Center	Project	Sub Project
Amount	\$						

Funding Source							
Account Name							
Account Number							
		Fund	Function	Object	Cost Center	Project	Sub Project
Amount	\$						

**C. History**

Check one:

Prior Year Budget: ☐New for Current Year: ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$

**\*\* WHEN ITEM NOT CURRENTLY BUDGETED IS APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD, THIS WILL SERVE AS THE BUDGET AMENDMENT\*\***



# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

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**Agenda Item # 14. 24-2243**

5/7/2024

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### **Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Spinning" written by Tillie Walden, in circulation and be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

### **Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to keep the book, "Spinning" written by Tillie Walden, in circulation. This book is being challenged at Hernando High School.

Hernando High School's Review Committee met on February 21, 2024 and March 5, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 5-0 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book stay in circulation in Hernando County Schools.

Per Hernando County School District 2522 Policy requirements, the Superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to keep the book.

### **My Contact**

Kelly Downey

Supervisor of literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs

352-797-7000 ext. 280

downey\_k@hcsb.k12.fl.us

### **2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

### **Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.



## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605  
M4LHernando.CMRCChair@gmail.com

Hernando County School District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE: HHS "Spinning" (M4LHC – 056/2023)

October 13, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 056-23) for "Spinning" which is currently located at Hernando High School's media center. This book was discovered on Alexandria back on August 5, 2023.

"Spinning" contains sexual age-inappropriate content; nudity; alternate sexualities; hate commentary involving homophobia; violence involving attempting sexual assault; and profanity. This book clearly has a warning label for 18 years of age and up.

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently violates H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I'm calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book from Hernando High School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can't be "disappeared" (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name) JT

Address : PO Box 1568 City Brooksville State FL Zip Code 34605

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: October 13, 2023 Author: Tillie Walden

Title: Spinning

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Macmillan imprint First Second 2017

School(s) in which item is used: Hernando High School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames, etc. Attach additional pages if necessary) Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

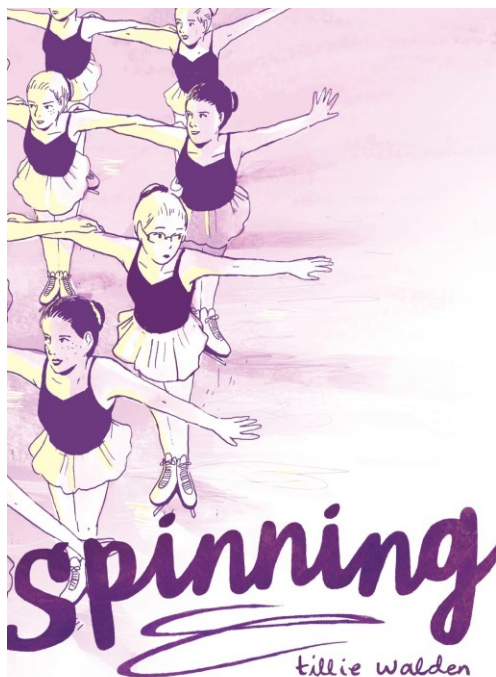
If yes, where? Name and date of publication: GoodReads 2017, 2020

Complainant's Signature

Julia Thomas

Date October 13, 2023

# SPINNING



*Young Adult*

**By Tillie Walden**

ISBN: 978-1-250-17624-0

## Book Summary:

A short biography of a young female competitive figure skater.

## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains nudity; alternate sexualities; hate commentary involving homophobia; violence involving attempting sexual assault; and profanity.

## CONTENT WARNING

You are about to access material that may contain content of an ADULT nature. These files may include pictures and materials that some viewers may find offensive. If you are under the age of 18, or if such material offends you or if it is illegal for you to view these materials, please exit now.

**3** /5

**Minor Restricted**  
BookLooks Review Rating



Page	Content
10	I had known I was gay since I was 5. ...A teacher's aide had shown me how to hold your sleeve when you put your jack on. I still remember her hands on my shoulders. I didn't have a word to describe it yet, but in that moment I knew.
117	I started getting invited to sleepovers and birthday parties. Make-out sessions were common at these sleepovers, though they were considered "experimentation" and homophobia still managed to be rampant. And, of course, the girl I actually wanted to kiss never came to these gatherings.
197	The illustrations on this page depict two young women sitting on a bed watching a video titled, "How to kiss a girl" on a laptop. A man on the video says, "START BY HODING HER HAND." ..."MOVE TOWARD HER SLOWLY" "SLOWLY PART YOUR LIPS AND..."
198	The illustration on the top of this page depicts the two young women described above, kissing.  A first love is important to anyone. But when you're both young and gay and in the closet, it's something else entirely.
200	I was scared to be gay. I was scared to be in Texas. I was scared of all the hate I saw on YouTube videos and that I knew existed.  The illustration on the bottom of the page depicts the same two young women described above with their faces moving toward each other.
202	The two young women described above are walking in a grassy area. "We were all in the alley behind her house." "What?" "Grace made us...Do stuff." "Like what?" "Like take our clothes off and kiss and stuff while she watched. She had a notebook with all the stuff she was gonna make us do." "That's really messed up."
241	I didn't know which hurt more: the fact that she was gone or the fact that I was still scared of people finding out I was gay.
246	The illustration on this page depicts a drawing of two people kissing with a heart behind them.
248	I knew these girls would spread the news about the freshman lesbian.
252	"What'd you do this week sweetie?" "I came out...like um...of the closet, like." "I know, I understand, sweetie." "like, 'cause I'm gay." "That's wonderful."
267	"I hate how my nipples show through." "Dude, band-aids."

Page	Content
288	Tillie is sitting across a table from a young man looking at a laptop. The illustrations on the middle of the page depict the young man turning his laptop around to show Tillie the nude woman kneeling with her left arm behind her head. <i>See Figure 1.</i>
294	The illustration on the top of this page depicts the same young man described above sitting in a chair. His left hand is holding Tillie's pencil near his groin. He is saying, "Get your pencil."  The illustration on the bottom of the page depicts Tillie leaning backwards in her chair sweating profusely.
295	Tillie is talking to the young man described above, "Give it back."  The illustration on the middle-left side of the page depicts a zoomed in view of young man's groin as his hands holds the pencil. He is saying, "You gotta get it."
298	The illustration on the top of the page depicts Tillie and the young man above. He is grabbing her right wrist and left upper arm as she is fighting him back.  The illustration on the bottom of the page depicts Tillie lying on her side on the ground while the young man is standing up with his back to her. The laptop with the nude woman is shown on the table.
371	The illustrations on the page depict Tillie ice skating with a leotard and skirt on.  The judges can see my crotch. So can the audience.

Profanity	Count
Dick	1
Fuck	12
Goddammit	1
Shit	3

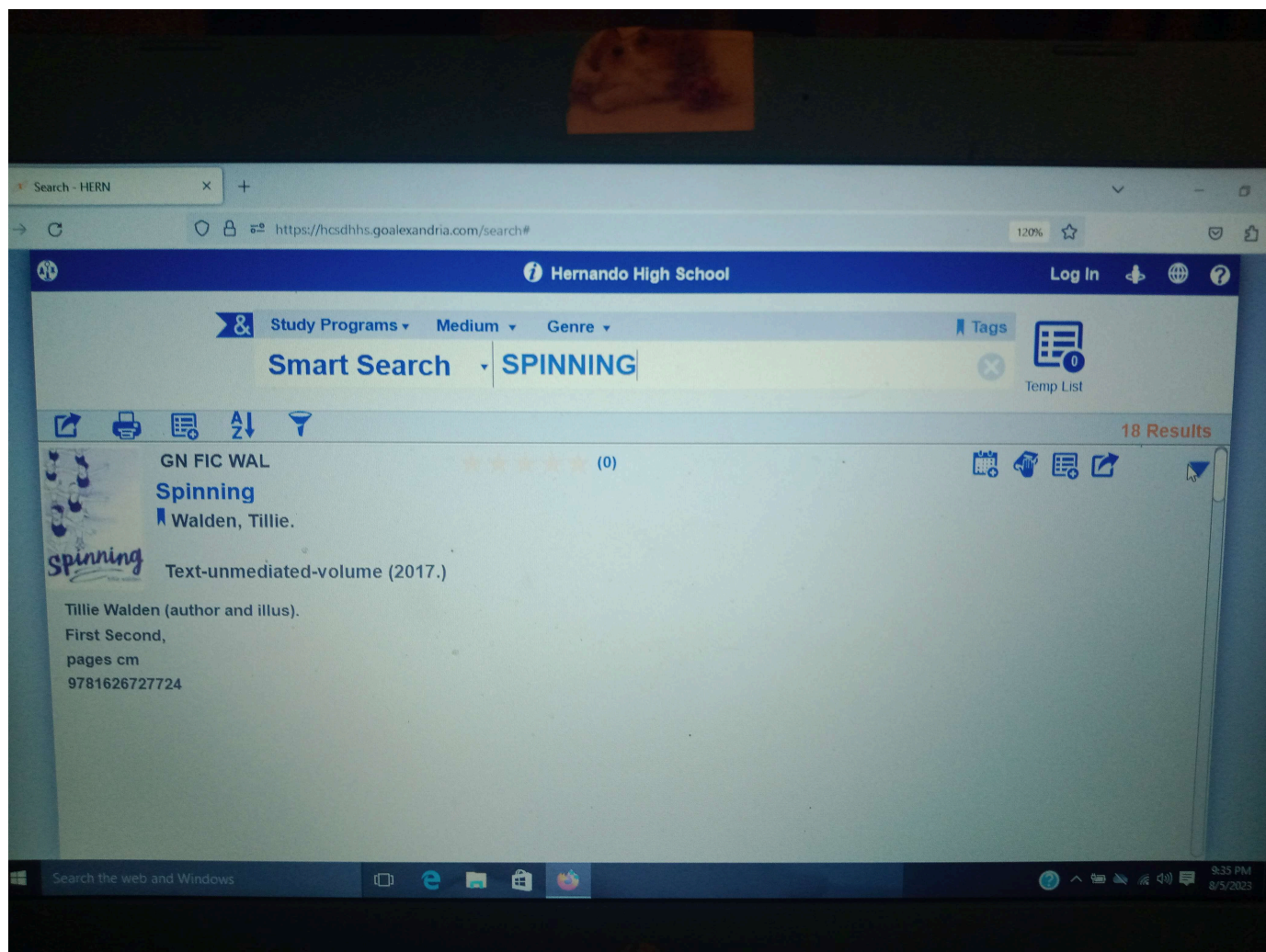


288

Figure 1

## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings





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# SPINNING

BY TILLIE WALDEN; ILLUSTRATED BY TILLIE WALDEN • RELEASE DATE: SEPT. 12, 2017

## *A quiet powerhouse of a memoir.*

Graphic novelist Walden recounts her years coming-of-age as a competitive ice skater.

Tillie Walden knew she was gay since she was 5, which was also when she began ice skating. This memoir recounts the years from when she's 11 to when she reaches her late teens, as her life marches on through fledgling romances, moving halfway across the country, bullying, and various traumas with skating as her only constant. Her story is largely insular, with her family only visible in the periphery, even with regard to her skating. Walden's recollections tend to meander at times, with an almost stream-of-consciousness feel about them; her taciturn introspection mixed with adolescent ennui creates a subdued, yet graceful tone. For a young author (Walden is in her early 20s), she is remarkably adept at identifying the seminal moments of her life and evincing their impacts on her trajectory. Her two-toned art is lovely and spare, utilizing the occasional splash of an accenting color to heighten visual interest. She draws herself as a blonde, bespectacled, white girl, a depiction that brings Harriet Welsch to mind. Walden deems herself "a creator who is happy making a book without all the answers," and while she may not solve any of life's great conundrums, her offering is intimate and compelling.

*A quiet powerhouse of a memoir. (Graphic memoir. 13-adult)*

**Pub Date:** Sept. 12, 2017

**ISBN:** 978-1-62672-772-4

**Page Count:** 400

**Publisher:** First Second

**Review Posted Online:** July 16, 2017

**Kirkus Reviews Issue:** Aug. 1, 2017

**Categories:**

TEENS & YOUNG ADULT ENTERTAINMENT & SPORTS | GENERAL GRAPHIC NOVELS & COMICS | BIOGRAPHY & MEMOIR | TEENS & YOUNG ADULT FICTION

# Spinning by Tillie Walden

## Product Overview

*From Follett*

An autobiographical comic of ten years in the life of cartoonist, Tillie Walden, focusing on her time as a figure skater.

## Product Details

- **Publisher:** First Second
- **Publication Date:** September 12, 2017
- **Format:** FollettBound Glued
- **Edition:** First edition 2017.
- **Dewey:** 796.91
- **Classifications:** Nonfiction
- **Description:** 395 pages : chiefly color illustrations ; 22 cm
- **ISBN-10:** 1-54900-470-0 (originally 1-62672-940-9)
- **ISBN-13:** 978-1-54900-470-4 (originally 978-1-62672-940-7)
- **LCCN:** 2016-961586
- **Follett Number:** 1020GK5
- **Audience:** Young Adult
- **Ages:** 14-18
- **Booklist:** Grades 8-11
- **Kirkus:** Ages 13-adult
- **Publishers Weekly:** Ages 14-up
- **School Library Journal:** Gr 6-Up
- **ATOS Book Level:** 3.1
- **AR Interest Level:** UG
- **AR Points:** 1
- **AR Quiz:** 191881EN
- **Reading Counts Level:** 4.4
- **Reading Counts Points:** 5
- **Lexile:** GN410L

## Reviews & Awards

- **Booklist** starred, 07/01/17
- **Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books**, 10/01/17
- **Horn Book Guide**, 04/01/18
- **Horn Book Magazine**, 11/01/17
- **Kirkus Reviews** starred, 08/01/17
- **New York Times**, 12/03/17
- **Publishers Weekly** starred, 07/17/17
- **School Library Journal**, 09/01/17
- **Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA)**, 08/01/17

## Full-Text Reviews

*Booklist* starred (July 2017 (Vol. 113, No. 21))



Grades 8-11. Award-winning Walden's first book-length work traces her childhood spent in the competitive figure-skating world, and although most of her memoir happens in skating rinks or at competitions, that element ultimately becomes the backdrop for a deeper story about her coming out and coming-of-age. In delicate, evocative artwork, rendered exclusively in purple with yellow highlights, Walden relates the struggles of moving to a new city in middle school, dealing with a particularly cruel bully, feeling scared to be open about her homosexuality, and so on, all while gradually becoming disillusioned with skating. She uses negative space to great effect, elegantly depicting her loneliness and isolation while simultaneously emphasizing how deeply she feels unable to speak up for herself. Subtle hints of her burgeoning interest in art, depicted in small, fine-lined doodles encroaching on the edges of panels and pages, are a tantalizing glimpse into what readers know she'll become. All these feelings play out compellingly on the ice, and chapter-heading descriptions of skating moves seem to hint at Walden's larger emotional development. The overall effect is quiet and lyrical—there aren't many huge epiphanies, and conflicts disappear rather quickly—but Walden's cumulative growth and courage to speak up for what she actually wants are unmistakable and deeply satisfying. A stirring, gorgeously illustrated story of finding the strength to follow one's own path.

### Taken from the **Paperback**.

*Horn Book Guide starred (Spring 2018)*

In this layered graphic memoir, former competitive figure skater Walden looks back at her childhood. Mostly bluish-purple pencil drawings reflect young Tillie's mood: skating rarely brings her joy, she's bullied, family relationships are strained, she's hiding her homosexuality, she struggles academically, and she's sexually assaulted. Walden's growing interest in art is a recurring theme throughout her memoir; occasional incompletely drawn figures are clearly deliberate.

### Taken from the **Paperback**.

*Horn Book Magazine (November/December, 2017)*

In a graphic memoir, former competitive figure skater and synchronized skater Walden looks back at her twelve years growing up in the world of competitive sports. The shadowy, cool bluish-purples of most of the pencil drawings reflect young Tillie's mood for much of the narrative: although she's committed to her skating, it rarely brings her joy. Meanwhile, she's being bullied; her family relationships are strained; she feels the need to hide her homosexuality; she struggles academically; and she is sexually assaulted by her SAT tutor. The skating world serves mainly as a well-realized backdrop for a story about holding secrets in and going against expectations. Walden, whose growing interest in art is a recurring theme throughout her memoir, knows when to let this book's art or text be spare and when to interrupt the purple sleepiness with a pop of golden yellow; the occasional incompletely drawn figures are clearly deliberate, whether to protect her own memory or someone else's anonymity. She sometimes only hints at her motivations, giving the impression that, like many adolescents, she's not fully sure what they are. The result is much more layered than the "tell-all about the seedy world of glittering young ice skaters" that, according to the author's note, Walden (now only a few years removed from the events) originally intended to create. shoshana flax

### Taken from the **Paperback**.

*Kirkus Reviews starred (August 1, 2017)*

Graphic novelist Walden recounts her years coming-of-age as a competitive ice skater. Tillie Walden knew she was gay since she was 5, which was also when she began ice skating. This memoir recounts the years from when she's 11 to when she reaches her late teens, as her life marches on through fledgling romances, moving halfway across the country, bullying, and various traumas with skating as her only constant. Her story is largely insular, with her family only visible in the periphery, even with regard to her skating. Walden's recollections tend to meander at times, with an almost stream-of-consciousness feel about them; her taciturn introspection mixed with adolescent ennui creates a subdued, yet graceful tone. For a young author (Walden is in her early 20s), she is remarkably adept at identifying the seminal moments of her life and evincing their impacts on her trajectory. Her two-toned art is lovely and spare, utilizing the occasional splash of an accenting color to heighten visual interest. She draws herself as a blonde, bespectacled, white girl, a depiction that brings Harriet Welsch to mind. Walden deems herself "a creator who is happy making a book without all the answers," and while she may not solve any of life's great conundrums, her offering is intimate and compelling. A quiet powerhouse of a memoir. (Graphic memoir. 13-adult)

Taken from the **Hardcover**.

*Publishers Weekly (July 17, 2017)*

In an elegant, contemplative, and somber graphic memoir, *Walden (The End of Summer)* immerses readers in an adolescence dominated by competitive figure skating. The story stretches over several years, during which time Walden vacillates between embracing the routine of early morning practices and the rush of competition, and a near-constant feeling of otherness, due in large part to her attraction to girls, which she hides from her family and peers. "It wasn't the thrill or freedom I felt that I remember," she notes after making a romantic connection with a friend. "It was the fear." Chapters open with illustrations of spins and jumps, the movements delicately mapped, paired with commentary that, at times, gives insight into Walden's personal life; of the frustrating axel, she writes, "As I would turn to go into it I would wish and hope with everything I had that this time it would work." A palette of deep purple, splashed with yellow, underscores the loneliness that permeates Walden's story, and her careful attention to facial expressions and body language makes readers intimately aware of what she is feeling. A haunting and resonant coming-of-age story. Ages 14-up. Agent: Seth Fishman, Gernert Company. (Sept.) © Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.

Taken from the **Paperback**.

*School Library Journal (September 1, 2017)*

Gr 6 Up-A graphic memoir about competitive ice skating, growing up, and coming out. Walden spent much of her youth on the ice, at practices and competitions, and in locker rooms among friends, frenemies, and competitors. In this deeply personal reflection, the author/illustrator is unflinching in her examination of what drove her passion for the sport, the embarrassments and experiences that marked pivotal moments in her development, and how she eventually came out to family and friends as a young teen. The art is economical, with a simple indigo and white palette with very occasional splashes of yellow, lending the book an appropriately cold tone; readers will shiver with empathy as Walden steps onto the rink in the early morning before the sun rises. While her drive and commitment to being the best athlete is evident (at one point, she describes sleeping in her practice clothes on top of her blankets, not allowing herself to get warm so that the early morning transition would be easier), the details about some of her relationships are held at arm's length and only hinted at, most notably the strained relationship with her mother. A scene in which a male tutor sexually harasses Walden and attempts a physical assault is affecting and may spark deeper discussion. Her first romantic relationship is both tender and heartbreaking. VERDICT An honest and intimate coming-of-age story that will be appreciated by tweens and young teens, especially those in competitive sports.-Kiera Parrott, *School Library Journal* © Copyright 2017. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

Taken from the **Hardcover**.



THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

**Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials**

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days after its formation. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School Hernando High School Date 3/5/24

Title Spinning  
Author tillie Walden

**Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material**

**Silent Voting Results:**

5 Do Not Remove

0 Remove/Discontinue

Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
<p>If committee is recommending limiting access-</p> <p>_____ Grade Level</p> <p>_____ For Advance Course</p> <p>_____ Parent Permission</p>	<p>Basis for removal, check all that apply:</p> <p>_____ The material is pornographic</p> <p>_____ The material is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS</p> <p>_____ The material is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.</p> <p>_____ The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.</p>

# Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

Print Name	Position	Signature
Lori Sowers	Community Member	Lori Sowers
Lisa Steinkamp	parent	Lisa B Steinkamp
Sue Lisk	Lay Person	Sue Lisk
Leechele Booker	Principal	Leechele Booker
Cindy Baron	District Media	Cindy Baron

Administrator's Signature Leechele Booker Date 3/5/24



TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: March 7, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenge HHS 056-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, “Spinning” at Hernando High School. The review committee at Hernando High has evaluated the book, "Spinning", written by Tillie Walden based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is that the book is not removed from Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on April 23, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before April 23, 2024.

**A. Item Currently Budgeted -**

Account Name		<u>No Financial Impact</u>										
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

**B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -\*\***

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

**C. History**

Check one:

Prior Year Budget: ☐New for Current Year: ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$

**\*\* WHEN ITEM NOT CURRENTLY BUDGETED IS APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD, THIS WILL SERVE AS THE BUDGET AMENDMENT\*\***



# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

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**Agenda Item # 15. 24-2244**

5/7/2024

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### **Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Little and Lion" written by Brandy Colbert, in circulation and be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

### **Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to keep the book, "Little and Lion" written by Brandy Colbert, in circulation. This book is being challenged at Hernando High School.

Hernando High School's Review Committee met on March 6, 2024 and March 14, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 4-1 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book stay in circulation in Hernando County Schools.

Per Hernando County School District 2522 Policy requirements, the Superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to keep the book.

### **My Contact**

Kelly Downey

Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs

352-797-7000 ext. 280

downey\_k@hcsb.k12.fl.us

### **2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

### **Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.





## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605  
M4LHernando.CMRCC0pq+++1hair@gm

ail.com

Hernando County School District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, 34601

RE: HHS “Little and Lion” (M4LHC –  
096/2023)

October 29, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 096-23) for “Little and Lion ” which is currently located at Hernando High School’s media center. This book was discovered in Alexandria back on July 22,2023

“*Little and Lion*” contains sexual age-inappropriate content: sexual activities; alternate sexualities; and profanity/derogatory terms. This book shows a warning label for 18 years of age and up.

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I’m calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book from Hernando High School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can’t be “disappeared” (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA  
Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name: JT

Address : PO Box 1568

City: Brooksville State: FL Zip Code: 34605

Telephone:      Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: October 29, 2023 Author: Brandy Colbert

Title: "Little and Lion "

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Little Brown & Co. 2017)

School(s) in which item is used: Hernando High School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames, etc. Attach additional pages if necessary):

Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes   X   No                   

If yes, where? Name and date of publication:

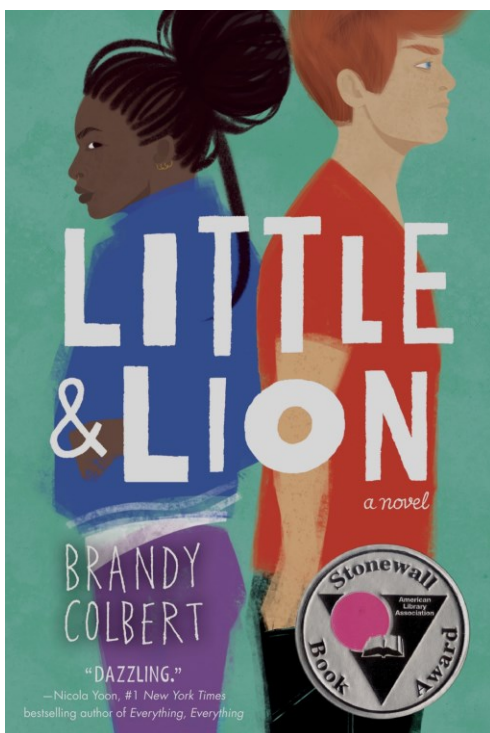
Good Read 2020, 2017

Complainant's Signature:

Julia Thomas

Date: October 29, 2023

# LITTLE AND LION



## Book Summary:

A high school girl learns more about herself and her sexuality while helping care for her mentally ill brother.

## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains explicit sexual activities; alternate sexualities; and profanity/derogatory term.

*Young Adult*

**By Brandy Colbert**

ISBN: 9780316348980



**3** /5

**Minor Restricted**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
52	<p>"You and me? First of all, you're not my type; your boobs are way too big. But also, it's not like that, Suzette. Like, you start making out with girls and so we have to make out because I like girls, too."</p> <p>...But I'd only ever kissed boys, and only two at that, and always with our clothes on.</p>
53	<p>"Says the girl who's known she was a lesbian since the day she was born," I say, rolling my eyes. "I was eight, smartass," she replies.</p> <p>...There's still too much I don't understand, like why, even though everything I did with Iris felt good, I was still so shy about kissing or touching her first. Even after weeks of fooling around.</p>
86	<p>I stop somewhere along the smooth line of her neck. Which doesn't do much to calm my nerves; it only makes me wonder what it would feel like to kiss her there.</p>
87	<p>Before Iris, I thought I liked guys exclusively, even though the little experience I had with them felt more like playing doctor. I haven't been attracted to any other girls... until now.</p> <p>...Even before I met Iris, I was tired of all the jokes and assumptions I'd heard about bisexual people: that they're just being greedy or doing it for attention or trying it on for size "before they cross over to full-on gay."</p>
94	<p>"I don't know anything except that I like Emil and I like a girl and I guess that means I'm bisexual, but... am I? Shouldn't I know for sure? You know you're straight. Dee knows she's gay. Other people know they don't fit into either of those categories...."</p> <p>..."It just feels... People don't really care if you like more than one person if you're gay or straight, but if you say you're bi, it's different. Like the same rules don't apply."</p>
106	<p>"I would totally try to get with him if I liked dudes."</p> <p>..."I'm just saying, I get why you're looking at him like he's your last chance on earth for sex."</p>
109	<p>"No fair," Grace says, splashing us as she finds her footing. "Black people aren't supposed to be able to swim."</p> <p>...Grace laughs and wipes a few strands of green hair from her forehead. "I just mean... you know. Black people don't, like, swim."</p>
138	<p>Would we sneak off to the back room to kiss, or would we flirt with each other all day, letting the tension build up until we could leave the shop for the evening?</p>
147	<p>Emil slides his hand slowly up my arm, sending goose bumps tingling up and down my skin. Catherine is downstairs and Lionel is waiting in the car, but I want to kiss Emil so badly that I don't care. And when he leans forward, I don't overthink it. My eyes close as his lips brush the slope of one cheekbone and then the other, followed by the spot below my right ear. He pauses and I wonder where he will go next, take in a breath as his mouth falls down to my neck and along the line of my chin before he kisses my lips. Slowly. Softly.</p> <p>I kiss him back, resting one hand on his shoulder while I run a fingertip along the perimeter of his ear. I bump against a hearing aid and pull back, starting to apologize, but he shakes his head and kisses me again and then his arms wrap around my waist as he draws me closer. I like that I can feel his body heat through his T-shirt and how his skin smells like blankets and sleep, and I wonder if that's the scent I'd wake up to if we spent the night together. My skin burns even more at the thought.</p> <p>Emil's hands move down my waist, sliding just under the thin fabric of my tank top to touch me on either side of my spine, and I realize he's searching for my dimples of Venus, the indentations in the small of my back. He must have seen them when I was in my bikini. "I like these," he murmurs.</p>

Page	Content
	<p>I like you.</p> <p>I kiss him harder so I won't be tempted to say it aloud.</p>
149	<p>Iris and I are careful—until we aren't.</p> <p>We've been locking our door at night because sometimes we fall asleep before one of us can move back to our own bed, and the girls on our floor don't always knock before they come in. We never touch outside our locked dorm room.</p> <p>...I wake up in her bed and yawn, my mouth cottony from too much vodka.</p> <p>...And now she's spooning me, her cheek flat against my back, and I flush for a moment when I remember what I said last night. That I told her no one has ever made me feel the way she does.</p> <p>...When that doesn't work she uses her lips, kissing along my naked skin, but I eventually, reluctantly pull away.</p>
153	<p>"I should have told everyone I was gay when I first got here." She pauses, then: "Did you know I was president of my middle school's gay-straight alliance? A couple of people told me they came out to their parents because I was so brave, so open. What would they think if they could see me now?"</p> <p>...A couple of times Iris said we should walk out of our room holding hands, or kiss each other in the common room, and I'd agree in the moment.</p> <p>...When I was lying with my head against her shoulder and her arm was draped over my side, her fingertips tracing invisible patterns along the slope of my hip.</p>
156	<p>Iris turns and we look at each other, finally, her light brown eyes connecting with my own. "Do you... Did you ever feel like I was taking advantage of you?"</p> <p>Her voice is so small that I want to go over and wrap my arms around her and kiss her until the pain goes away.</p> <p>..."Never," I say firmly. "Not once."</p> <p>"But we always drank. I know it made you more comfortable, and maybe that wasn't right... to be with you like that."</p>
158	<p>We weren't even close to being the biggest drinkers in our dorm, but she kept a bottle of raspberry-flavored vodka under her bed that we sipped from during second semester. She'd procured it with the help of her older sister when she was home over winter break, smuggled back to school in a giant duffel bag with her lacrosse gear.</p> <p>So when DeeDee says she'd like to get drunk because she's fighting with Alicia and I'm the only person she wants to see, I immediately think of Iris, the relationship between girls and liquor. Iris and I stopped drinking when everything fell apart between us, and it never occurred to me to use alcohol as a coping mechanism. We drank raspberry vodka on the nights I wanted to be closer to her.</p> <p>DeeDee comes over armed with a fifth of spiced rum tucked in her overnight bag, and when she shows it to me up in my room, it reminds me so much of Iris that for a moment I can't breathe.</p>
162	<p>"The worst is over," I say, remembering what Iris told me when we drank together for the first time. I didn't think she could possibly be right, as medicinally awful as the vodka had tasted. But each drink went down smoother after that first one, every single time, even if I never did grow to like the taste.</p> <p>I grab the bottle, tip it back, and send the honey-colored fire tearing down my throat. This particular bottle of rum is so not fucking around. But I swallow it down; stick out my tongue and cough a bit as I hand it back to Dee.</p>
164	<p>"So, it's not about liking guys and girls?" She takes another drink of rum and Lion passes so now it's my turn, but I'm already feeling so hot inside that I don't know if another drink is a good idea.</p>



Page	Content
165	Maybe I'm bi, maybe I'm queer, maybe I'll never like another girl besides Iris and Rafaela. ... "I'm just mad about Alicia. And this rum is really strong. And I thought—well, after you told me what happened with Emil..."
167	Because technically, Iris and I were never a couple. Not in the traditional sense. We were locked doors and long, slow kisses that tasted of raspberry vodka and promises to keep whatever happened in our dorm between us.
168	"They wrote on our door. The word dykes," I say, grabbing the bottle from the center of our triangle. I take a long swig and it burns my tongue but it doesn't hurt so much going down this time. My body takes well to the liquor—to its warmth and the silent but steadfast promise that whatever I say out loud next won't hurt as much as it did at the time.
169	"I can't believe you went to such a homophobic school," DeeDee says, shaking her head. "It wasn't, though. Lots of people were out and there's a gay-straight alliance and... it wasn't even everyone on our floor. But the bigots made sure we all knew how they felt. Iris and I were new to Dinsmore and they'd been there a whole year before us and... it sounds stupid now, but it was easier not to stand up to them." "Well, I still can't believe they treated you like that."
172	He goes ahead of me down the stairs and I wonder, for a moment, if he's taken something—a pill, maybe, or even coke, though he once told me he has no intention of putting anything up his nose.
180	Rafaela and I held hands in public and kissed in public and when we were alone, I wasn't shy about touching her first.
181	I tie my apron around my waist and notice hers isn't even fastened. The strings dangle freely on either side of her. My eyes travel upward, to the black tank she's wearing with the oversized armholes that reveal the sides of a hot-pink bra underneath.
191	"But I don't know if I'll ever talk to my mom again. Even if she got over the abortion, she wouldn't exactly agree with my lifestyle."
192	I see Iris's face as she hovers over me, her breasts bare and her blond curls messy and damp from our sweat. ... "You've kissed a girl? Brava!" Rafaela cheers, and it feels a bit like she's mocking me, but at least she doesn't think I'm a bigot. "Did you like it?" I nod. "So... are you bi?" "Pan," she says, and when I don't say anything right away, she clarifies, "Pansexual?" ... "I just don't really believe in restricting love to one or two genders."
206	Emil is right behind me, and before I can tell him to wait for me to find the light, his hands are on my hips. Turning me around to face him. I can't see him, but I can tell he is smiling, just from his energy. I like the moment before we kiss; his warmth becomes my warmth, and its combined force envelops me before I even touch him, like we're in a cocoon built for two. Emil gathers my dreads in one hand and pushes them away from my shoulders. His lips start at my neck and graze across my earlobe, and my skin ripples with goose bumps as his mouth meets my own. We stand in place for a while. A breeze skips across the night, lighting on our skin and fluttering the chimes above the back porch as we kiss. We feel our way across the room and onto the futon, and then we're lying down. I silently marvel at how Emil's lips can touch mine in the softest, sweetest way, and then in the next instant leave me breathless. We pull apart after a while and we are still. The room is softly lit by the dim moonlight filtering in through the windows, and I look at the outline of Emil beside me, run my fingertip along his temple and over the hearing aid behind his left ear.

Page	Content
	<p>I trail my finger down his neck and shoulder and along the soft part of his arm until he shivers. He lightly catches my arm by the wrist and pulls it toward him, and I rest my palm flat on his chest, against his heart.</p> <p>"Suzette," he says with an ache in his voice.</p> <p>It's cool up here, almost cold, but I want to be as close to him as possible, so I begin to unbutton his shirt. Once the buttons are undone, he shrugs it off and peels off his undershirt, too. I sit up and turn my back to him, holding my dreads up with one hand while I gesture with the other to the zipper that falls down the back of my dress. Emil has it undone in seconds and, when I point to the clasp, my bra, too.</p> <p>I slowly push down the top of my dress and toss my bra to the floor, and I almost wish the moon were hidden behind clouds tonight because when I turn back around he's looking at me so intently that it makes me self-conscious. I want to cross my arms over my chest; no one has seen me without clothes on since Iris, and she was the first. But I sit here, completely still, and I let him look at me.</p> <p>I breathe out as he touches my breasts, first with his hands and then with his mouth. It feels so good that I moan softly, and I'm embarrassed at being so audible, but he kisses just above my navel and says my name again. I lie back and his hands move to my thighs, to the hem of my dress and then under it. He bends his head to kiss between my legs and I jerk away.</p>
210	<p>He leans over to kiss the apples of my cheeks. Then he presses his mouth to mine, just as the wind chimes dance their way through a new song.</p>
211	<p>We didn't have sex, but we would have, if I hadn't stopped it.</p>
221	<p>"Well, he said it feels like he's known me his whole life, and I know how cheesy that sounds. Guys have said it before and it felt like they were just trying to get into my pants. But... I believe him. And I feel the same way."</p>
222	<p>She kneels next to me. My skin is warm and the coolness of her fingertips makes me shiver. Her lips find me, too, and it's the second night we've done this, but this time I'm not so tense. I let myself lean into her and my mouth opens with hers and I kiss her like I wanted to the first time. Her palms slip behind my neck and she pulls me closer, kissing me so deeply I feel as if I might burst into flames. I push my fingers through her curls, thinking how strange and good this is, how unexpected even though it's the second time.</p> <p>..."What are we doing?" It's the same question I asked last night, except I remember the mild panic in my voice, shocked that one minute we'd been drinking and complaining about the girls on our floor and the next I was pressed against the wall, her lips moving in a swift line from my chin to my collarbone. Tonight there is no panic, just lazy wonder; more of an excuse to prolong what's happening rather than stop it.</p> <p>..."I didn't know you were into girls," she says as we remove our shirts, as my hands slide hesitantly over the side of her body.</p> <p>"I didn't, either," I say, and when I look at her, she smiles.</p> <p>When we're both in just our underwear, we sit on the edge of her bed for a while. Just looking at each other.</p> <p>"You can touch me," she says.</p> <p>And I do, because it's odd that I've been around other girls my whole life and never felt like this. So many gym periods and sleepovers spent changing in front of one another and I never felt this urge. The citrus shower gel I've smelled on her since our first morning at Dinsmore is different now. It is so distinctly her and it is the best thing I've ever smelled and I keep dipping my head toward the space between her collarbone and her neck to fill my nose with the scent.</p>

Page	Content
	<p>My hand shakes as my fingers skate across Iris's skin—her incredibly soft skin. I slide my fingers across the smoothness of her stomach and linger around her breasts until she exhales and kisses me again. After a few moments, she takes my hand in her own and holds them both over her heart.</p> <p>"I've been with other girls," she says. "I've only been with girls."</p> <p>"I know."</p> <p>...I move her hand to my chest. "No one has ever done this to me."</p> <p>She gently pushes me back on the bed and we start kissing again and when her hand moves between my legs I don't stop her. When my breathing changes, when she asks if I want her to stop, but it is so clear she doesn't want to stop, I say no. And when we're lying there, after the space around us has transformed from a small, dark dorm room into an explosion of fireworks only I can see and then back again, she asks if it was okay.</p> <p>"That was amazing," I say, breathless and wondering if I should feel more embarrassed about what just happened. One of the boys I kissed back in L.A. had tried to put his hand down my jeans and I got too nervous, so I pushed him away. He seemed to know what he was doing up to that point, but I can't imagine anyone ever making me feel as good as Iris did.</p> <p>"Lily and Bianca would be losing their shit right now," she says, kissing my shoulder.</p> <p>Should I be losing my shit? Maybe, but the only thing I feel nervous about is how inexperienced I am, how I don't know if Iris expects me to return the favor tonight.</p> <p>"Lily and Bianca need to get laid," I say, and Iris laughs with me.</p>
237	He kisses me, directly on the lips, and I think how good it feels, to be so open about what we're becoming... whatever that is.
242	Justin finds us in the dining room next to a half dozen types of tequila. He's carefully holding three plastic cups of beer, the foam almost brimming over the top.
245	I was nervous in the tree house when we drank the rum with DeeDee, but that was controlled.
246	<p>Even as the crisp, cold beer starts to soften the edges of the room, it's impossible to relax.</p> <p>...They're always attached to each other in some way: Lionel grabbing her hand or Rafaela standing behind him with her arms around his waist, her cheek flat against his back; after he takes his turn at flip cup he swivels around and they kiss for a few beats longer than necessary.</p>
249	<p>She touches the center of my top lip, briefly rests her finger in the little groove right under my nose ring, and I close my eyes out of instinct, like the moment I know I'm about to be kissed. I hold my breath while she glides the tip of her finger around the edge of my mouth.</p> <p>"You have great lips," she says, and I finally open my eyes, finally exhale.</p> <p>...We look in the mirror together with our matching lips, and I think how easy it would be to kiss her now.</p>
251	<p>I think that if I'd made a move, she would have kissed me back. That we might be pressed against the cool marble sinks, touching and still kissing and not just wanting.</p> <p>...He kisses me in response. Soft and sweet and unexpected, square on the lips. I kiss him back, and when we pull away, I smile.</p> <p>...Just then a guy lopez over from the porch and announces to the entire line of people waiting for the keg: "Fight! In the garage!"</p>
263	<p>He kisses me first this time and makes up for the kiss he didn't return. His lips are warm and understanding as they meet mine, as if he knows how much I need to be needed tonight.</p> <p>I take my time removing his clothes, stopping to touch the parts of his body I haven't seen before.</p> <p>He sucks in a breath and releases it unevenly as my fingers glide across his skin. I've never seen a</p>

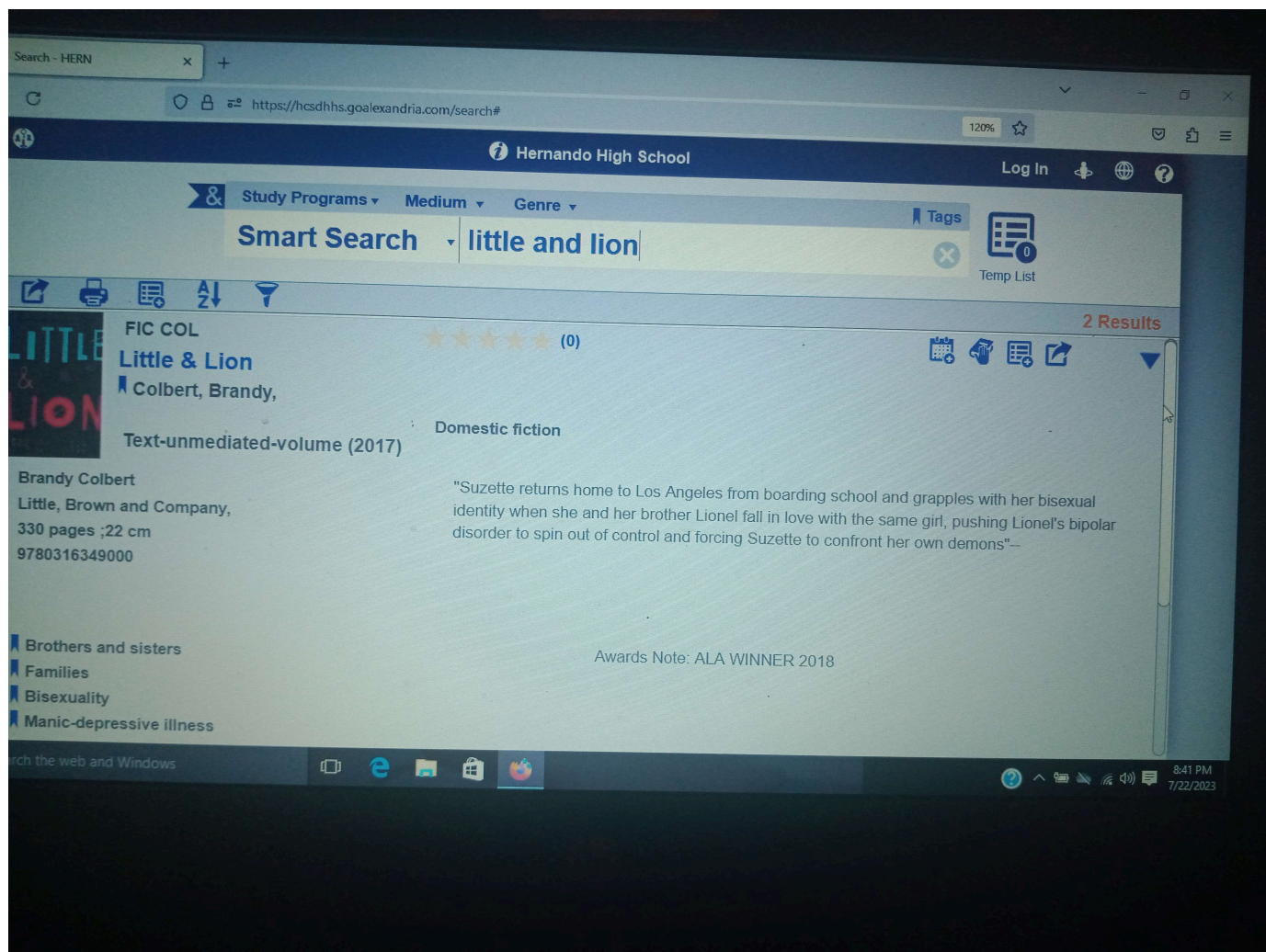
Page	Content
	<p>boy completely naked; even when we were up in the tree house that night, Emil never took off his boxers. Now he strokes the dimples at the small of my back as I look at him a little too long. I ask if he has a condom and he nods, grabs one from his jeans on the floor. But he stops and asks if I'm sure before he puts it on. I'm no surer of what I'm doing than when I was with Iris, but like when I was with her, this feels right.</p> <p>We go slow, and still sometimes it is so uncomfortable I have to bite my lip to keep from whimpering. I don't want him to think he's hurting me because he's so gentle the whole time, as if my body is sculpted of glass. He kisses and kisses me, and each time our lips meet, I think the strangest thing about being so close to Emil is that it's not strange at all.</p> <p>And I don't think about Iris. Not until we're done and he is wrapped around me like a spoon, his arms holding me tight like she used to, like he'll never let me go.</p>
266	"The last time I saw that guy, he said he was going to 'fuck the gay' out of me."
280	<p>"And we brought blankets and booze." Rafaela points to the canvas backpack on her shoulders. "Oh, and I got a joint from Alicia."</p>
281	Rafaela doesn't wait for us to respond before she confirms this with a kiss.
283	I can't find it next to me, and when I start searching the blanket, I look up and find Rafaela and Lionel making out. Not short, sweet kisses like before, but full-on lips melded together, his hands tangled in her hair with hers draped lazily around his waist. They're practically lying back on the blanket and it all makes my stomach turn, but I can't stop watching, either.
307	<p>I put my hands on either side of his face, lean in, and kiss him softly. He's still for a moment and I freeze, wondering if he's going to refuse me completely. But then his hands find the small of my back, grazing over my dimples of Venus.</p> <p>Emil kisses me back and I know he believes me.</p>
317	<p>Dee rolls her eyes. "She said she could sense that I was bored. Restless. Said I should go sow my wild oats, like I'm some dude who can't keep his dick in his pants."</p> <p>... "Said like a dude who can't keep his dick in his pants."</p>
320	We move toward each other. We kiss. I'm worried it's going to feel like a good-bye, like a farewell to everything we built this summer. But it's sweet. Hopeful. And I feel certain that it won't be our last.

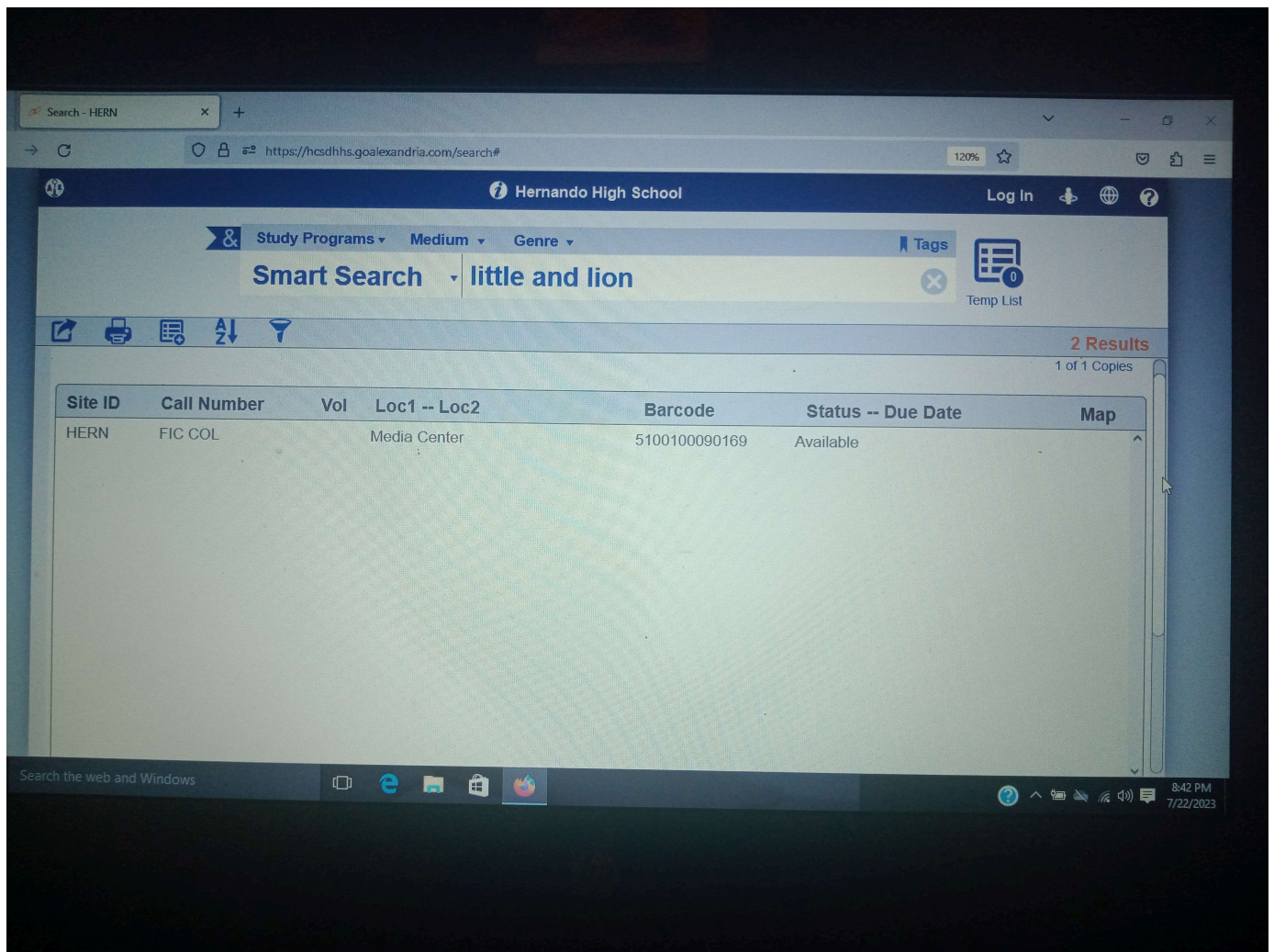
Profanity/Derogatory Term	Count
Ass	13
Bitch	1
Dick	4
Dyke	2
Fuck	51
Goddamn	1
Piss	6
Shit	56
Tit	1

## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings









# LITTLE & LION

BY BRANDY COLBERT • RELEASE DATE: AUG. 8, 2017

*Readers will empathize with Suzette as she explores both her sexuality and the tricky line between honesty and betrayal.*

Sixteen-year-old Suzette was sent to boarding school when her bookish older brother, Lionel, was diagnosed with bipolar disorder, but now she's back in Los Angeles for the summer.

Despite the strange looks their family attracts—Suzette and her mom are black, while Lionel and his dad are white—Lionel and Suzette were always close before Lionel's diagnosis. With Suzette back home, Lionel confides in her that he's going off his medication. Fearing that to divulge his secret will ruin any chance of rebuilding their bond, Suzette keeps quiet even though she feels responsible for her brother's well-being. Simultaneously, Suzette balances her blooming feelings for Emil Choi, a sunny, biracial (black/Korean) boy with *Ménière's* disease, and for Rafaela, a pansexual Latina—whom, disastrously, Lionel is also falling for. To make matters worse, Suzette is still grappling with a homophobic act that exposed her relationship with her white boarding school roommate, Iris. Suzette's engrossing present-tense narration intertwines with sporadic—but pertinent—flashback chapters. Colbert (*Pointe*, 2014) sensitively confronts misconceptions about mental illness, bisexuality, and intersectional identity ("people have too many questions when you're black and Jewish," thinks Suzette). A vibrantly depicted Los Angeles and a rich, though at-times unwieldy cast of characters create a convincing world.

Readers will empathize with Suzette as she explores both her sexuality and the tricky line between honesty and betrayal. (*Fiction*. 14-18)

**Pub Date:** Aug. 8, 2017

**ISBN:** 978-0-316-34900-0

<https://www.amazon.com/Little-Lion-Brandy-Colbert/dp/0316349011>

## Little & Lion Paperback – July 3, 2018

by Brandy Colbert (Author)

4.4 4.4 out of 5 stars\_ 366 ratings

[See all formats and editions](#)

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### A stunning novel on love, identity, loss, and redemption.

When Suzette comes home to Los Angeles from her boarding school in New England, she's isn't sure if she'll ever want to go back. L.A. is where her friends and family are (as well as her crush, Emil). And her stepbrother, Lionel, who has been diagnosed with bipolar disorder, needs her emotional support.

But as she settles into her old life, Suzette finds herself falling for someone new...the same girl her brother is in love with. When Lionel's disorder spirals out of control, Suzette is forced to confront her past mistakes and find a way to help her brother before he hurts himself--or worse.

"*Little and Lion* is beautifully insightful, honest, and compassionate. Brandy's ability to find larger meaning in small moments is nothing short of dazzling." -- Nicola Yoon, #1 *New York*

*Times* bestselling author of *Everything, Everything*

Read less

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1. Print length

**352 pages**

2. Language

**English**

3. Publisher

**Little, Brown Books for Young Readers**

4. Publication date

**July 3, 2018**

5. Grade level

**9 and up**

## Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days following the formation of the committee. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School Hernando High School Date March 14, 2024

Title Little and Lion

Author Brandy Gilbert

### Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material

#### Silent Voting Results:

4 Do Not Remove

1 Remove/Discontinue

Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
<p>If committee is recommending to limit access-</p> <p><u>      </u> Grade Level</p> <p><u>      </u> For Advance Course</p> <p><u>      </u> Parent Permission</p>	<p>Basis for removal, check all that apply:</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is pornographic</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.</p> <p><u>      </u> The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.</p>



Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

Print Name

Position

Signature

Penny Hewitt-Schragl Media Specialist Penny Hewitt-Schragl

Stacey Swihart Assistant Principal Stacey Swihart

Lori Howie Lay Person Lori Howie

Pam Everett Community Member Pam Everett

Tiffany Skinner Parent Tiffany Skinner

Administrator's Signature Stacey Swihart Date 3/14/2024



TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: March 20, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenge HHS 096-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, "Little and Lion" at Hernando High School. The review committee at Hernando High School has evaluated the book, "Little and Lion", written by Brandy Colbert based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is that the book is not removed from Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on - May 7, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before May 7, 2024.

**A. Item Currently Budgeted -**

Account Name		<u>No Financial Impact</u>										
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

**B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -\*\***

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

**C. History**

Check one:

Prior Year Budget: ☐New for Current Year: ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$

**\*\* WHEN ITEM NOT CURRENTLY BUDGETED IS APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD, THIS WILL SERVE AS THE BUDGET AMENDMENT\*\***



# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

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**Agenda Item # 16. 24-2245**

5/7/2024

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**Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "A Court of Thorns and Roses" written by Sarah Maas, in circulation and be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to keep the book, "A Court of Thorns and Roses" written by Sarah Maas, in circulation. This book is being challenged at Central High School.

Central High School's Review Committee met on March 14, 2024 and April 3, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 5-0 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book stay in circulation in Hernando County Schools.

Per Hernando County School District 2522 Policy requirements, the Superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to keep the book.

**My Contact**

Kelly Downey

Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs

352-797-7000 ext. 280

downey\_k@hcsb.k12.fl.us

**2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

**Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.



## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605  
M4LHernando.CMRCChair@gmail.com

Hernando County School District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE: CHS “A Court of Thorns and Roses”  
(M4LHC – 0111/2023)

November 1, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 0111-23) for “A Court of Thorns and Roses” which is currently located at Central High School’s media center. This book was discovered in Alexandria back on July 21, 2023

“A Court of Thorns and Roses” contains sexual age-inappropriate contents: graphic violence; explicit sexual nudity; obscene sexual activities; and profanity. This book shows a warning label for 18 years of age and up, and is not meant for K-12 schools

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently violates H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I’m calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book from Central High School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can’t be “disappeared” (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*



THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA  
Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name: JT

Address : PO Box 1568

City: Brooksville State: FL Zip Code: 34605

Telephone:      Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: November 1, 2023 Author: Sarah Maas

Title: "A Court of Thorns and Roses

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Bloomsbury 2020. 2015

School(s) in which item is used: Central High School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames,etc. Attach additional pages if necessary):

Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes   X   No                   

If yes, where? Name and date of publication:

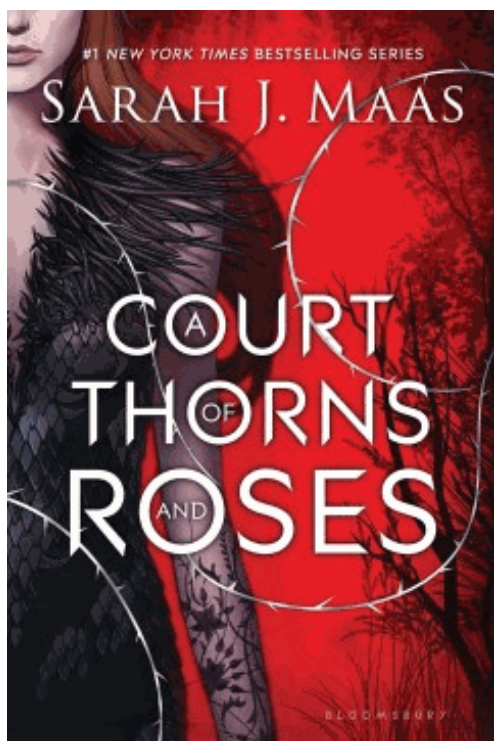
Good Read 2023. 2021

Complainant's Signature:

Julia Thomas

Date: November 1, 2023

# A COURT OF THORNS AND ROSES



*Young Adult*

**By Sarah J. Maas**

ISBN:978-1-61963-518-0

## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains graphic violence; explicit sexual nudity; obscene sexual activities; and mild profanity.

## CONTENT WARNING

You are about to access material that may contain content of an ADULT nature. These files may include pictures and materials that some viewers may find offensive. If you are under the age of 18, or if such material offends you or if it is illegal for you to view these materials, please exit now.

**4**/5

**Not For Minors**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
172	His lips were smooth against my skin, his breath warm, and my knees buckled as he lifted my other hand to his mouth and kissed it, too. Kissed it carefully- in a way that made heat begin pounding in my core, between my legs.
197	His bite lightened, and his tongue caressed the places his teeth had been. He didn't move- he just remained in that spot, kissing my neck. Intently, territorially, lazily. Heat pounded between my legs, and as he ground his body against me, against every aching spot, a moan slipped past my lips. ...More- I wanted the hardness of his body crushing against mine; I wanted his mouth and teeth and tongue on my bare skin, on my breasts, between my legs. Everywhere- I wanted him everywhere.
229	His lips brushed mine- testing, soft and warm. He pulled back a little. He was still staring at me, and I stared right back as he kissed me again, harder, but nothing like the way he'd kissed my neck. He withdrew more fully this time and watched me. "That's it?" I demanded, and he laughed and kissed me fiercely. My hands went around his neck, pulling him closer, crushing myself against him. His hands roved my back, playing in my hair, grasping my waist, as if he couldn't touch enough of me at one.
232	He could have me right there, on top of that table. I wanted his broad hands running over my bare skin, wanted his teeth scraping against my neck, wanted his mouth all over me.
239	"She has the most delicious thoughts about you, Tamlin" he said. "She's wondered about the feeling of your fingers on her thighs- between them, too." He chuckled. Even as he said my most private thoughts, even as I burned with outrage and shame, I trembled at the grip still on my mind. Rhysand turned to the High Lord. "I'm curious: Why did she wonder if it would feel good to have you bite her breast the way you bit her neck?"
245	He pulled me onto his lap, holding me tightly against him as his lips parted mine. I became aware of every pore in my body when his tongue entered my mouth. ...I pushed Tamlin onto the bed, straddling him, pinning him as if it would somehow keep me from leaving, as if it would make time stop entirely. His hands rested on my hips, and their heat singed me through the thin silk of my nightgown. My hair fell around our faces like a curtain. I couldn't kiss him fast enough, hard enough to express the rushing need within me. He growled softly and deftly flipped us over, spreading me beneath him as he wrenched his lips from my mouth and made a trail of kisses down my neck. ...My back arched as he reached the spot he'd once bitten, and I dragged my hands through his hair, savoring the silken smoothness. He traced the arc of my hipbones, lingering at the edge of my undergarments. My nightgown had become hitched around my waist, but I didn't care. I hooked my bare legs around his, running my feet down the hard muscles of his calves. He breathed my name onto my chest, one of his hands exploring the plane of my torso, rising up to the slope of my breast. I trembled, anticipating the feel of his hand there, and his mouth found mine again as his fingers stopped just below. His kissing was slower this time- gentler. The fingertips of his other hand slipped

Page	Content
	<p>beneath the waist of my undergarment, and I sucked in a breath. He hesitated at the sound, pulling back slightly. But I bit his lip in a silent command that had him growling into my mouth. With one long claw, he shredded through silk and lace, and my undergarment fell away in pieces. The claw retracted, and his kisses deepened as his fingers slid between my legs, coaxing and teasing. I ground against his hand, yielding completely to the writhing wildness that had roared alive inside me, and breathed his name onto his skin. He paused again- his fingers retracting- but I grabbed him, pulling him further on top of me. I wanted him now- I wanted the barriers of our clothing to vanish, I wanted to taste his sweat, wanted to become full of him. "Don't stop," I gasped out.</p> <p>"I-" he said thickly, resting his brow between my breasts as he shuddered. "If we keep going, I won't be able to stop at all."</p> <p>I sat up and he watched me, hardly breathing. But I kept my eyes on his, my own breathing becoming steady as I raised my nightgown over my head and tossed it to the floor. Utterly naked before him, I watched his gaze travel to my bare breasts, peaked against the chill night, to my abdomen, to between my thighs. A ravenous, unyielding sort of hunger passed over his face. I bent a leg and slid it to the side, a silent invitation. He let out a low growl- and slowly, with predatory intent, raised his gaze to mine again.</p> <p>The full force of that wild, unrelenting High Lord's power focused solely on me- and I felt the storm contained beneath his skin, so capable of sweeping away everything I was, even in its lessened state. But I could trust him, trust myself to weather that mighty power. I could throw all that I was at him he wouldn't balk. "Give me everything," I breathed.</p> <p>He lunged, a beast freed of its tether.</p> <p>We were a tangle of limbs and teeth, I tore at his clothes until they were on the floor, then tore at his skin until I marked him down his back, his arms. His claws were out, but devastatingly gentle on my hips as he slid down between my thighs and feasted on me, stopping only after I shuddered and fractured. I was moaning his name when he sheathed himself inside me in a powerful, slow thrust that had me splintering around him.</p> <p>We moved together, unending and wild and burning, and when I went over the edge the next time, he roared and went with me.</p>
247	...and when I awoke a few hours later, we made love again, lazily and intently, a slow-burning smolder to the wildfire of earlier. Once we were both spent, panting and sweat-slicked, we lay in silence for a time...
346	<p>...they stripped me naked, bathed me thoroughly, and then- to my horror- began to paint my body.</p> <p>...Things only worsened when they painted more intimate parts of me...</p>
348	...my face burned as I silently bemoaned the too-sheer fabric of my dress. Beneath it, my breasts were visible to everyone, the paint hardly leaving anything to the imagination...
375	The music was Tamlin's fingers strumming my body...
378	I couldn't kiss him deeply enough, couldn't hold him tightly enough, couldn't touch enough of him.

Page	Content
	<p>...I tore at his shirt, needing to feel the skin beneath one last time, and I had to stifle the moan that rose up in me as he grasped my breast. I didn't want him to be gentle- because what I felt for him wasn't at all like that. What I felt was wild and hard and burning, and so he was with me.</p> <p>He tore his lips from mine and bit my neck-</p> <p>...I had to grind my teeth to keep myself from moaning and giving us away.</p> <p>...My fingers grappled with his belt buckle, and his mouth found mine again. Our tongues danced-...</p> <p>...I wanted him- here.</p> <p>I hooked a leg around his middle, needing to be closer, and he ground his hips harder against me, crushing me into the icy wall. I pried the belt buckle loose, whipping the leather free, and Tamlin growled his desire in my ear-...</p> <p>...I tossed away his belt and started fumbling for his pants.</p> <p>...But the air became a cold kiss upon my skin- upon my exposed breasts.</p>
379	Rhysand chuckled. "If you're that desperate for release, you should have asked me."
380	...and then his lips were crushing mine. His tongue pried my mouth open, forcing himself into me, into the space where I could still taste Tamlin. I pushed and thrashed, but he held firm, his tongue sweeping over the roof of my mouth, against my teeth, claiming my mouth, claiming me-
411	<p>His ragged breath was the only sound- and his hands soon began roaming across my back and sides, caressing and teasing and baring me to him. When my traveling fingers reached his mouth, he bit down on one, sucking it into his mouth. It didn't hurt, but the bite was hard enough for me to meet his eyes again. To realize that he was done waiting- and so was I.</p> <p>He eased me onto the bed, murmuring my name against my neck, the shell of my ear, the tips of my fingers. I urged him- faster, harder. His mouth explored the curve of my breast, the inside of my thigh.</p> <p>A kiss for each day we'd spent apart, a kiss for every wound and terror, a kiss for the ink etched into my flesh, and for all the days we would be together after this. Days, perhaps, that I no longer deserved. But I gave myself again to that fire, threw myself into it, into him, and let myself burn.</p>

Profanity	Count
Ass	5
Bitch	1
Piss	2
Prick	10
Shit	9



## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings

Central High School

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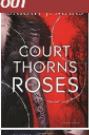


Study Programs Medium Genre

Smart Search court of thorn

Tags

Temp List

5 Results

	<b>FIC MAA</b> <b>A court of thorns and roses</b> Maas, Sarah J. Fantasy fiction [book] (2020.)	★★★★★ (0)	
	<b>FIC MAA VOL 1</b> <b>A court of thorns and roses</b> Maas, Sarah J. A Court of Thorns and Roses; 1 Fantasy fiction [book] (2015)	★★★★★ (0)	
	<b>FIC MAA VOL 2</b> <b>A court of mist and fury</b> Maas, Sarah J. Maas, Sarah J. A court of thorns and roses; 2 Fantasy fiction [book] (2016.) <a href="#">Cover image</a>	★★★★★ (0)	
	<b>FIC MAA VOL 3</b> <b>A court of wings and ruin</b> Maas, Sarah J. Court of thorns and roses; 3	★★★★★ (0)	

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# A COURT OF THORNS AND ROSES

## From the Court of Thorns and Roses series , Vol. 1

BY SARAH J. MAAS • RELEASE DATE: MAY 5, 2015

*Sexy and romantic.*

A wild new take on “Beauty and the Beast” in a world where humans and the faeries who once enslaved them live separated by a wall erected under Treaty.

Feyre keeps her once-great, now-impoverished family fed—but just barely—by hunting. On a desperate trip, she kills a large wolf that’s actually a fae, which she learns when a large beast tears into their cottage demanding the murderer. For retribution, he brings her to the faerie lands she grew up hating and fearing—with reason, as many dangerous faeries love tormenting humans. She learns truths and lies about faeries, who have been afflicted by a mysterious, magical blight. When not in beast form, Tamlin is beautiful, powerful, and one of the seven High Lords of faerie. Their romantic courtship sizzles with sexual tension before reaching a consensual consummation conveyed in appropriately brutish language (Tamlin is a shape-shifter, after all). Feyre knows the fae are keeping dangerous secrets from her, but by the time she finds out the truth it might be too late. In the end, it’s Feyre who must face nigh-impossible trials and cruel court games to save Tamlin. The plot is not without its occasional weak moments, most notably a late exposition dump and a too-easy final riddle. Nevertheless, the sexual tension and deadly action are well-supported by Maas’ expertly drawn, multidimensional characters and their nuanced interpersonal dynamics. A satisfying conclusion to the storyline leaves the door open for future books.

*Sexy and romantic. (Fantasy. 14 & up)*



<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/50659467-a-court-of-thorns-and-roses>

*A Court of Thorns and Roses #1*

# A Court of Thorns and Roses

Sarah J. Maas

## **Goodreads Choice Award**

### **Nominee for Best Young Adult Fantasy & Science Fiction (2015)**

When nineteen-year-old huntress Feyre kills a wolf in the woods, a terrifying creature arrives to demand retribution. Dragged to a treacherous magical land she knows about only from legends, Feyre discovers that her captor is not truly a beast, but one of the lethal, immortal faeries who once ruled her world.

At least, he's not a beast all the time.

As she adapts to her new home, her feelings for the faerie, Tamlin, transform from icy hostility into a fiery passion that burns through every lie she's been told about the beautiful, dangerous world of the Fae. But something is not right in the faerie lands. An ancient, wicked shadow is growing, and Feyre must find a way to stop it, or doom Tamlin—and his world—forever.

From bestselling author Sarah J. Maas comes a seductive, breathtaking book that blends romance, adventure, and faerie lore into an unforgettable read.

## Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days following the formation of the committee. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School Central High School Date 4-3-24

Title Court of Thorns and Roses

Author Sarah Maas

### Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material

#### Silent Voting Results:

5 Do Not Remove

0 Remove/Discontinue

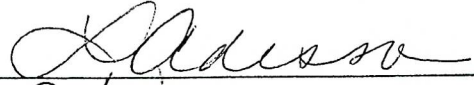
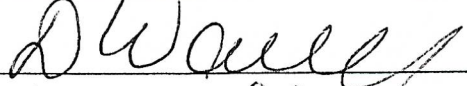
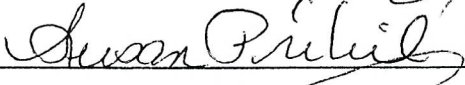


Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
<p>If committee is recommending to limit access-</p> <p><u>      </u> Grade Level</p> <p><u>      </u> For Advance Course</p> <p><u>      </u> Parent Permission</p>	<p>Basis for removal, check all that apply:</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is pornographic</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.</p> <p><u>      </u> The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.</p>

Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

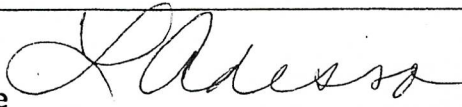
Print Name

Position

Signature

Lore Adesso	Asst. Principal	
Debbye Warrell	District	
Susan Pribil	Community	
Maria Gebhardt	Lay Person	
Nanette Billick	Parent	

Administrator's Signature



Date

4-3-24



TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: April 4, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenge CHS 0111-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, "A Court of Thorns and Roses" at Central High School. The review committee at Central High School has evaluated the book, "A Court of Thorns and Roses ", written by Sarah Maas based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is that the book is not removed from Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on May 7, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before May 7, 2024.

**A. Item Currently Budgeted -**

Account Name		<u>No Financial Impact</u>										
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

**B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -\*\***

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

**C. History**

Check one:

Prior Year Budget: ☐New for Current Year: ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$

**\*\* WHEN ITEM NOT CURRENTLY BUDGETED IS APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD, THIS WILL SERVE AS THE BUDGET AMENDMENT\*\***





# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

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**Agenda Item # 17. 24-2246**

5/7/2024

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### **Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Opposite of Innocent" written by Sonya Sones, in circulation and be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

### **Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to keep the book, "Opposite of Innocent" written by Sonya Sones, in circulation. This book is being challenged at Hernando High School.

Hernando High School's Review Committee met on April 9, 2024 and April 17, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 4-2 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book stay in circulation in Hernando County Schools.

Per Hernando County School District 2522 Policy requirements, the Superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to keep the book.

### **My Contact**

Kelly Downey  
Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs  
352-797-7000 ext. 280  
downy\_k@hcsb.k12.fl.us

### **2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

### **Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.



## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605  
M4LHernando.CMRCC0pq+++1hair@gm

ail.com

Hernando County School District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, 34601

RE: HHS “Opposite of Innocent” (M4LHC  
– 0101/2023)

October 31, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 0101-23) for “Opposite of Innocent” which is currently located at Hernando High School’s media center. This book was discovered in Alexandria back on July 22, 2023

“Opposite of Innocent” contains sexual age-inappropriate content: Pedophilia, Grooming, sexual assault and rape on a minor. Mental and emotional abuse. This book shows a warning label for 18 years of age and up.

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I’m calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book from Hernando High School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can’t be “disappeared” (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA  
Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name: JT

Address : PO Box 1568

City: Brooksville State: FL Zip Code: 34605

Telephone:      Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: October 31, 2023 Author: Sonya Sones

Title: "Opposite of Innocent"

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Harper Teen 2018

School(s) in which item is used: Hernando High School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames,etc. Attach additional pages if necessary):

Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes   X   No                   

If yes, where? Name and date of publication:

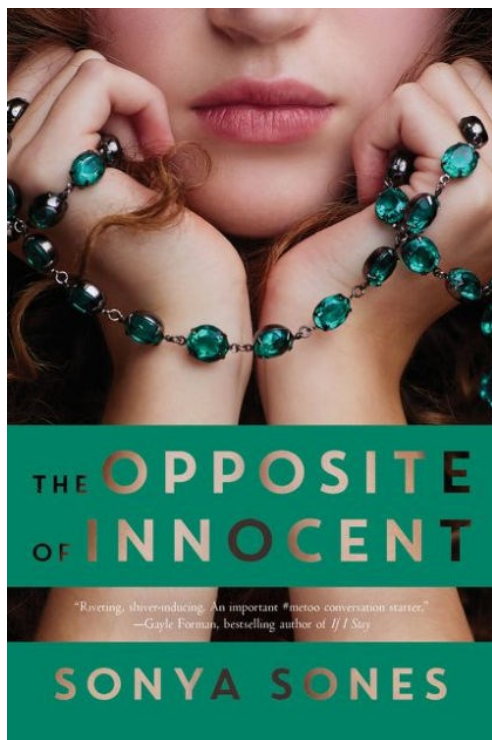
Good Read 2019, 2018

Complainant's Signature:

Julia Thomas

Date: October 31, 2023

# THE OPPOSITE OF INNOCENT



*Young Adult*

**By Sonya Sones**

ISBN: 9780062370334



## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains sexual activities.

**3** /5

**Minor Restricted**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
66	Suddenly he's cupping my face in the palms of his hands, looking into my eyes like he's searching for an answer, our faces only inches apart. And now he's kissing my lashes...my cheeks...my chin...Now he's leaning in and gently pressing his lips to mine.
68	"I'm sorry," he whispers. "I shouldn't have done that." "Oh yes you should have," I say.
69	Just as he leans in for a second kiss, we hear Alice yawning, and we have to wrench ourselves apart.
72	He opens the cellar door and when he rests his palm on the small of my back to guide me down in to the dark, it feels like a spark igniting a flame that's singeing me right through my tee. ...When we get to the bottom step I reach for the light switch. But Luke covers it with his hand. Then he turns me around to face him, tips my head back, and leans in to kiss me. Only he doesn't kiss me. He just bring his lips close to mine- so close I can feel him breathing. "Are you sure about this?" he whispers. "Positive," I whisper back. Then he finally lets his lips touch mine, and his kiss ripples all through me, like perfect circles on the surface of a secret pond.
89	Then he lays out what he calls the 'ground rules.' I don't really like the idea of him giving me rules. He's acting like he's my dad or something. But I guess they make sense. He says we can't call each other on the phone. Someone might overhear us. He says we can't send emails or texts either. Someone might read them. And handwritten notes are out of the question. "How about telepathy?" I ask. "Is telepathy okay?" He laughs and says, "Absolutely not." "Then how will we communicate?" I ask. "Here's how," he says. And he leans in for a kiss.
108	I watch as Mom bundles Alice into the car. Then, the second they drive away, I race to my door, yank it open-and there's Luke, standing right in front of me with this huge grin on his face. He says he's sorry Alice isn't feeling well. But not that sorry. He gathers me into his arms and kisses me with such force that our teeth crash together. He's breathing hard, pressing his hips against mine.
131	'Well," he says, letting his lips brush my ear, "then I guess we shouldn't kiss." But there are other things we can do. We can't let this stroke of good fortune slip through our fingers.
136	He starts kissing my neck, then kissing my shoulder, then kissing his way down my arm, kissing and kissing and kissing till he reached my hand. Then he spreads open my palm, pressing his lips into the center of it. It's so romantic, I can hardly stand it. And no, it's not just my throat that's on fire. But all of a sudden Luke stops kissing my palm and presses my hand down onto his knee. He sucks in a sharp breath. The he takes hold of my wrist and begins guiding my fingers, guiding them up along his thigh, guiding them so slowly....up...and...up...and up...toward...toward...
140	I try to pull away but Luke just tightens his grip on my wrist and starts murmuring about how long he's waited, how long he's waited for me to touch him like this, and about how the kissing's been lovely, the kissing's been brilliant, but a man needs more, more than just kissing, and he'll go mad, stark raving mad if we don't take things to the next level. Then suddenly-he reaches down with his free hand and

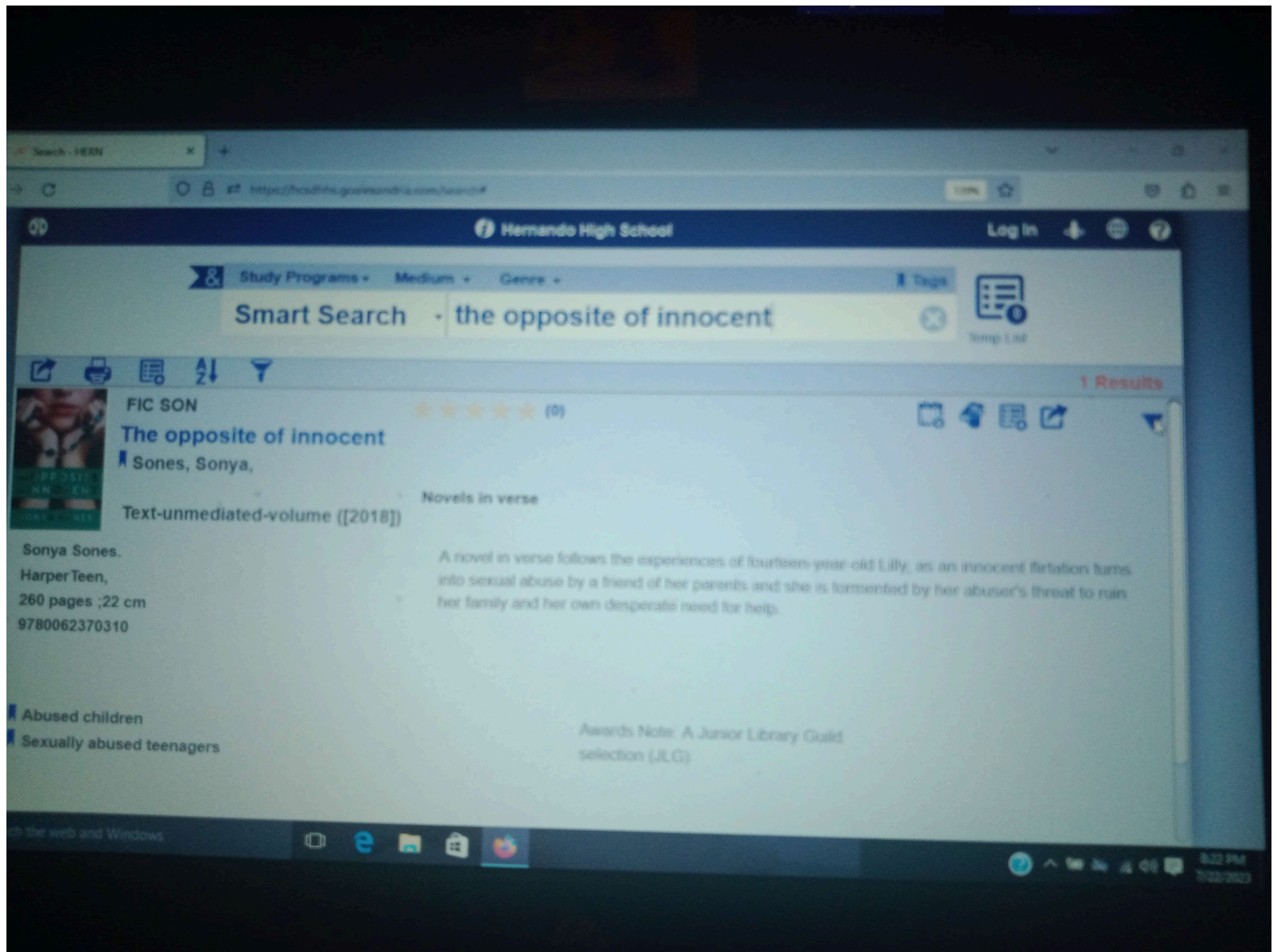


Page	Content
	<p>with one smooth motion, he unzips his fly. But just as he's about to press my hand down onto his boxers, I hear myself saying, "Stop!" in this weird strangled voice. And that's when I finally manage to wrench my wrist free. Luck lets out this awful groan. I shrink away from him, pulling my knees up to my chest. He rakes his fingers through his hair. "I don't get it," he says. "I thought you wanted to make me feel good. I thought you were a woman. But maybe you're still just a kid." His words burn like a slap across the face. "I'm not a kid, Luck. I'm not." "Then please, Lily. Touch me. Touch me like a woman touches a man." I look into his dark eyes and realize there's tears in them. Tears. I can't stand it. I can't stand making Luke this unhappy. I squeeze my eyes closed, so I can't see my parents watching, (the parents' pictures were hanging on the wall). Then I grit my teeth and let him ease my hand onto him, fighting back tears of my own. He moans and whispers the words I've waited to all my life to hear him say: "I love you, Lily, I love you...I love you..."</p>
144	<p>He sighs like he's never felt anything so good in his life. Then suddenly he gasps, and scrunches up his face, almost like he's in agony or something. A second later, his head drops back against the couch, and I realize he's finished. As he sits there with his eyes closed, catching his breath, I get this weird feeling-like he's forgotten I'm even here. And a couple pf minutes after that, his mouth falls open and he starts snoring. I turn away from him and curl up into a ball on the cushion beside him.</p>
148	<p>He ushers me into the backseat with him, kisses me for a while, then unzips his pants and asks me to do the same thing I did last time. When I reach for him he moans, then locks his hands behind his head and starts telling me he loves me.</p>
150	<p>When we got there, he tugged me into the backseat, unzipped his fly, and asked me to do the same thing as the last two times. But even though he said he loved me, being with him didn't seem as romantic as it used to be-back when all we were doing was kissing. And his kisses felt...different today. He pressed so hard it was like he was trying to pulverize my lips with his. So hard I wanted to pull away and say, "you're hurting me!" but he might have thought I was acting like a kid if I did that.</p>
152	<p>We've been meeting in secret for a couple of weeks now. Last week, he only managed to take me to the parking lot twice. Which was two times more than I wanted to go. But today when we went, there was caution tape stretched across the entrance, and a sign saying the mall is officially closed. Luke banged his hands on the steering wheel and cursed. I heaved a secret sigh of relief. "Guess we'll have to improvise," he said, more to himself than to me. Then he drove us down the dirt road that winds into the woods behind the 7-Eleven. And for some reason, doing it to him there made me feel even lonelier than usual.</p> <p>...he's really just driving around, scouring the city for places where we can "have our privacy," as he refers to it. I refer to it as places where we can "get me to do it to him."</p>
175	<p>He's kissing me. Kissing me so softly so sweetly, just like he used to, way back in the beginning. "When you were a kid," he whispers. "I promised I'd wait for you." The he kisses me again as says, "you were so worth the wait." And it's lucky we're not outside, or I'd float right up out of my seat into the sky.</p> <p>...When we finally come up for air I ask, in my flirtiest voice, "Aren't you supposed to be tutoring me?" "There's is an awful lot I want to teach you," he says, as he</p>

Page	Content
	<p>unzips his fly, a smile spreads across his face-a smile that somehow reminds me of the Big Bad Wolf. "But today," he says, taking hold of my hand, "we'll just review what you already know." And he presses my fingers down onto him, this weird combination of relief and revulsion washes over me.</p> <p>...When it's over he zips up his fly and puts his arm around my shoulder.</p>
181	<p>A few days later Loke's waiting after school again, to drive me to the library for our second weekly "tutoring" session. We go up to the same study room as before and he pulls the blinds closed. He starts kissing me right away. But there're those crushing kind of kisses. Not the romantic kins. He backs me up against the wall and grinds his body against mine till it feels like I'm getting black and blue. "I've been trying to take is slow," he whispers. "Trying so hard...But I'm not sure I can go on like this much longer." "I'm not either," I say. And as he eases me down onto the chair next to his, and unzips his fly, he's completely unaware that my words mean the opposite of his.</p>
205	<p>I'm feeling so light-headed now the room's blurring around me, like I'm riding a merry-go-round that's spinning way too fast. I'm so dizzy I have to lie down. I shut my eyes and let myself drift a little on the satin sheets...Then Luke's lips are brushing across my forehead...my lashes...my cheeks...And now he's pressing them to mine...Gently...So gently...Like the very first time we kissed...I feel Luke's hand drifting over my shoulders...I feel Luke's hands gliding along my thighs...I feel Luke's hands sliding up under my skirt!</p> <p>...My eyes pop open. The champagne lurches in my stomach. I try to push his hands away, but suddenly my panties are around my ankles and I'm struggling to sit up, but he's easing down onto me, pinning me under the crushing dead weight of his body.</p> <p>...He starts fumbling wit his fly. Tugging at his jeans and everything's happening so fast as now his cold hands are on my knees and he's trying to spread my legs apart but I'm clamping them together, clawing at his fingers, trying to pry them off me, and all the while he's kissing my neck, murmuring, "come on, Lily. You want this. You know you do. I've waited so long for you. I can't wait a minute more. I love you...I love you so much."</p> <p>...And that's when I hear three voices-the voices of my heart and my mind and my body. And all of them are screaming just one word. Nooooo! It's so earsplitting it shocks Luke into pulling back. And the second he does I'm slam both fists into his chest and shove him off me. Then I leap up from the bed but he grabs my wrist and yanks me back down and now his arms are closing around ne and every muscle in my body is tensing, bracing for what's coming next.</p>
218	<p>I feel Luke's lips on my neck again. And this time, when he places his icy fingers onto my knees I don't even try to pry them off...</p>
237	<p>Luke kisses me. Hard. Though not so hard that I'll look like I've been kissed. Then he smiles a terrible smile and pulls the Murphy bed down from the wall. I see the pink satin sheets and clench my teeth. Luke says he needs me. He says he wants me. He says I'm his dream come true.</p>

## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings





Search - HERN

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Hernando High School

Log In

Study Programs Medium Genre

Smart Search the opposite of innocent

Tags

Temp List

1 Results

Site ID	Call Number	Vol	Loc1 -- Loc2	Barcode	Status -- Due Date	Map
HERN	FIC SON			5100100088151	Available	
HERN	FIC SON			1302998	Available	

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8:22 PM 7/22/2023



# Kirkus Review

## THE OPPOSITE OF INNOCENT

BY SONYA SONES • RELEASE DATE: SEPT. 4, 2018

*A quick moving and emotionally charged but ultimately underdeveloped novel that explores an important subject.*

A young woman is sexually abused by a close family friend in this latest novel in verse from veteran poet Sones (*Saving Red*, 2016, etc.).

Fourteen-year-old Lily has long harbored a crush on her father's friend Luke and is thrilled to learn that he is going to stay with her family upon his return from a research trip to Kenya. She fervently hopes that he'll see she is no longer a little kid, "Now / I feel more like a butterfly— / a butterfly who can't decide / which wings to wear." Initially, Lily is thrilled when he seems to be returning her interest, but this gives way to palpable dread and shame as he pushes her into progressively more threatening situations. Factors that often play into sexual abuse emerge within this harrowing story, including Luke's grooming of Lily from a young age and his use of threats to keep her from telling anyone. She becomes isolated from her best friends, Rose and Taylor, and she is already accustomed to her father's hurtful emotional absence from her life. While realistic, these details sometimes feel a bit rote. All of the main characters seem to be white by default; Luke is English, Taylor is gay, and a caring teacher of Lily's is described as having brown skin.

A quick moving and emotionally charged but ultimately underdeveloped novel that explores an important subject. (*Verse novel. 14-18*)

## The Opposite of Innocent – Goodreads Review

Sonya Sones

3.71

1,380 ratings 319 reviews

**Poignant and chilling by turns, *The Opposite of Innocent* is award-winning author Sonya Sones's most gripping novel in verse yet. It's the story of a girl named Lily, who's been crushing on a man named Luke, a friend of her parents, ever since she can remember.**

Luke has been away for two endless years, but he's finally returning today. Lily was only twelve when he left. But now, at fourteen, she feels transformed. She can't wait to see how Luke will react when he sees the new her. And when her mother tells her that Luke will be staying with them for a while, in the bedroom right next to hers, her heart nearly stops.

Having Luke back is better than Lily could have ever dreamed. His lingering looks set Lily on fire. Is she just imagining them? But then, when they're alone, he kisses her. Then he kisses her again. Lily's friends think anyone *his* age who wants to be with a fourteen-year-old must be really messed up. Maybe even dangerous. But Luke would never do anything to hurt her...would he?

In this powerful tale of a terrifying leap into young adulthood, readers will accompany Lily on her harrowing journey from hopelessness to hope.

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

# Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days after its formation. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School Hernando High School Date 4-17-21

Title Opposite of Innocent

Author Sonya Sones

## Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material

### Silent Voting Results:

4 Do Not Remove

2 Remove/Discontinue

Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
<p>If committee is recommending limiting access-</p> <p>_____ Grade Level</p> <p>_____ For Advance Course</p> <p>_____ Parent Permission</p>	<p>Basis for removal, check all that apply:</p> <p>_____ The material is pornographic</p> <p>_____ The material is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS</p> <p>_____ The material is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.</p> <p>_____ The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.</p>

# Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

Print Name

Position

Signature

Leechele Booker	Principal	Leechele Booker
Cindy Barson	District Media	Cindy Barson
Sue Lisk	Lay person	Sue Lisk
Lori Sawers	Community Member	Lori Sawers
Lisa Steinkamp	Parent	Lisa Steinkamp
Tiffany Skinner	Parent	Tiffany Skinner

Administrator's Signature

Leechele Booker

Date

4/17/24





TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: April 18, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenge HHS 0101-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, "Opposite of Innocent" at Hernando High School. The review committee at Hernando High School has evaluated the book, "Opposite of Innocent", written by Sonya Sones based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is that the book is not removed from Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on May 7, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before May 7, 2024.

**A. Item Currently Budgeted -**

Account Name		No Financial Impact								
Account Number		Fund	Function	Object	Cost Center	Project	Sub Project			
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$

Account Name										
Account Number		Fund	Function	Object	Cost Center	Project	Sub Project			
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$

**B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -\*\***

Funding Source						
Account Name						
Account Number	Fund	Function	Object	Cost Center	Project	Sub Project
Amount \$						

Funding Source						
Account Name						
Account Number	Fund	Function	Object	Cost Center	Project	Sub Project
Amount \$						

**C. History**

Check one:

Prior Year Budget: ☐New for Current Year: ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$

\*\* WHEN ITEM NOT CURRENTLY BUDGETED IS APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD, THIS WILL SERVE AS THE BUDGET AMENDMENT\*\*



# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

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**Agenda Item # 18. 24-2250**

5/7/2024

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**Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Chosen" written by P.C. Cast and Kristin Cast, in circulation and be made available to students in Hernando County Schools.

**Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to keep the book, "Chosen" written by P.C. Cast and Kristin Cast, in circulation. This book is being challenged at Nature Coast Technical High School.

Nature Coast High School's Review Committee met on March 20, 2024 and April 10, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 4-3 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book stay in circulation in Hernando County Schools.

Per Hernando County School District 2522 Policy requirements, the Superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to keep the book.

**My Contact**

Kelly Downey

Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs

352-797-7000ext. 280

downey\_k@hcsb.k12.fl.us

**2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

**Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.



## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605  
M4LHernando.CMRCC0pq+++1hair@gm

ail.com

Hernando County School. District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, 34601

RE: NCTHS “The Chosen” (M4LHC –  
094/2023)

October 29, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 094-23) for “*The Chosen*” which is currently located at Nature Coast Technical School’s media center. This book was discovered in Alexandria back on July 22, 2023

“*The Chosen*” contains sexual age-inappropriate content: sexual activities; nudity, student- teacher relationship, discrimination, and bullying. This book shows a warning label for 18 years of age and up.

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I’m calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book from Nature Coast Technical School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can’t be “disappeared” (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA  
Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name: JT

Address : PO Box 1568

City: Brooksville State: FL Zip Code: 34605

Telephone:      Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: October 29, 2023 Author: PC Cast

Title: "Chosen "

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: St. Martin's Griffin: First edition (March 4, 2008)

School(s) in which item is used: Nature Coast Technical High School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames, etc. Attach additional pages if necessary):

Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes\_\_\_X\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_

If yes, where? Name and date of publication:

Good Read 2020, 2018

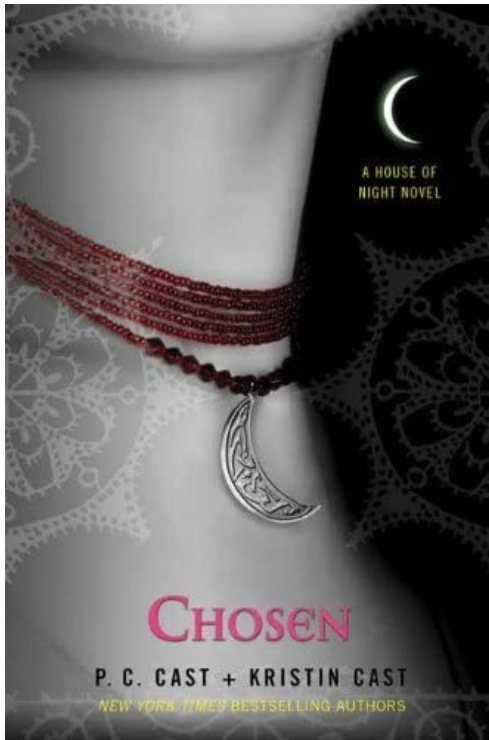
Complainant's Signature:

Julia Thomas

Date: October 29, 2023



# CHOSEN



## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains sexual activities and nudity.

*Young Adult*

**By P.C. Cast and Kristin Cast**

ISBN: 9781429974660



**3**  
/5

**Minor Restricted**  
BookLooks Review Rating

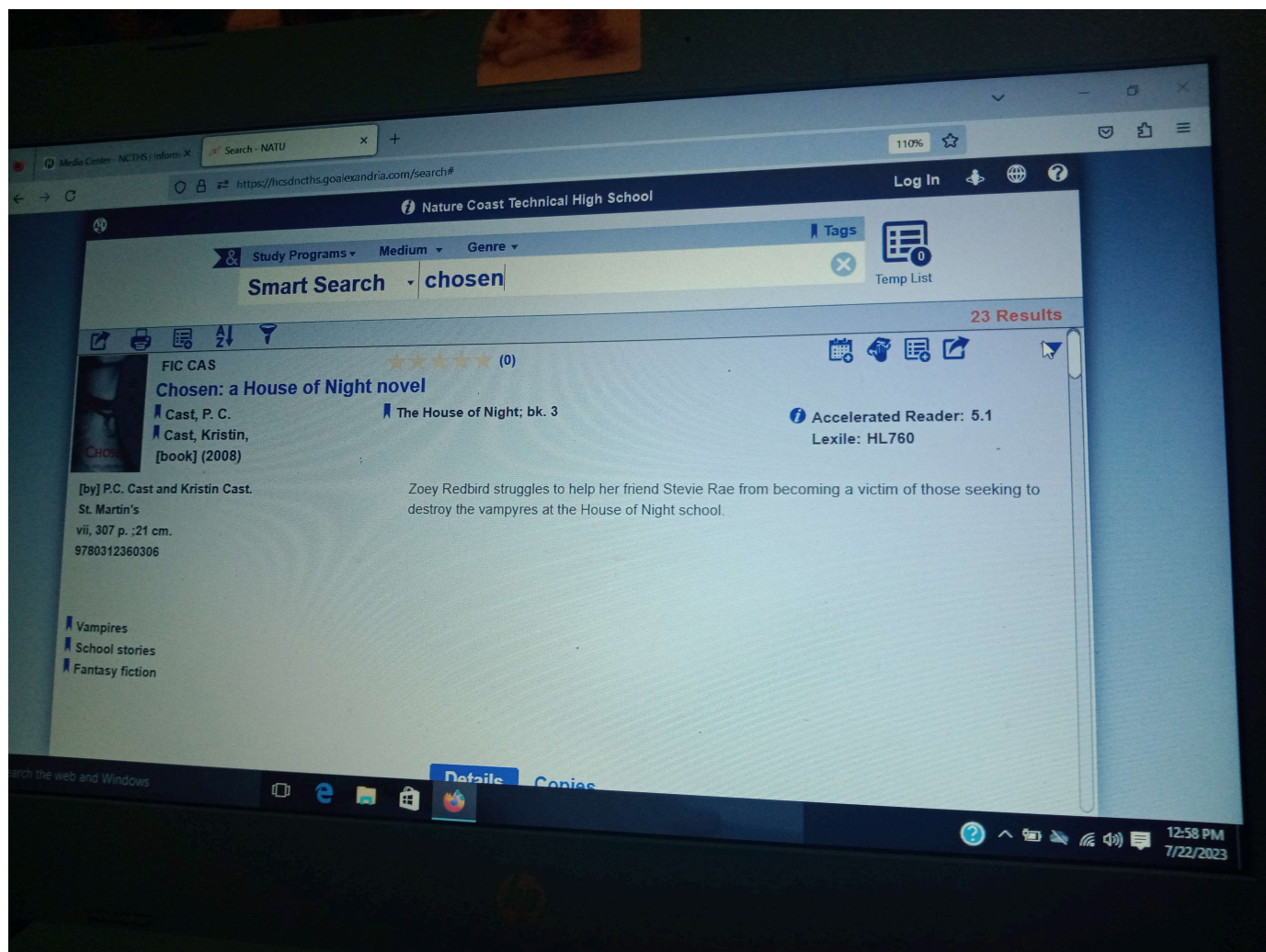
Page	Content
58	<p>He smiled and suddenly his arms were back around me, only this time he bent to kiss me. He tasted as good as he smells, so the kiss was nice and somewhere in the middle of it I realized how long it had been since Erik and I had a good hot make-out session. I mean, I'm no ho like Aphrodite, but I'm not a nun either ...I let my fingers play with the back of his neck where his dark hair brushes down thick and a little curly. My fingernails teased the soft skin there, and I felt him shiver and heard the little moan in the back of his throat.</p> <p>..."You feel so good," he whispered against my lips.</p> <p>..."So do you," I whispered back. Pressing myself against him I deepened the kiss. And then on impulse (ho-ish impulse at that) I took his hand from the small of my back and moved it up so that it was cupping the side of my breast. He moaned again and his kiss got harder and hotter. He slid his hand down and under my sweater, and then back up so that he had my breast in his hand, bare except for my lacy black bra.</p> <p>...Okay, I'll admit it. I liked him touching my boob. It felt good. It especially felt good that I was proving to Erik that I hadn't rejected him. I moved so that he could get a better feel and somehow that little, innocent (well, semi-innocent) movement caused our mouths to slip and my front tooth nicked his bottom lip.</p>
78	<p>"More than I can tell you," he said. Then he dropped the book-he'd still been holding it-and framed my face in his hands, so that his thumbs rested close to my lips and his fingers splayed back into my hair. "I believe it's my turn for a birthday kiss.</p> <p>...He claimed my mouth and at the same time it felt like he claimed my body and soul. Okay, Erik was a good kisser. And I've been kissing Heath since I was in third grade and he was in forth, so Heath's kisses were familiar and good. Loren was a man. When he kissed me there was none of the awkward hesitation I was used to. His lips and tongue said he knew exactly what he wanted and he also knew how to get it. And a weird, magical thing happened to me. I wasn't just some kid anymore when I kissed him back. I was a woman, mature and powerful, and I knew what I wanted and how to get it, too. When the kiss ended both of us were breathing hard. Loren still held my face in his hands, but he's moved away just far enough so that we could look into each other's eyes again.</p> <p>..."I shouldn't have done that," he said.</p> <p>..." I know." I said, but that didn't stop me from staring boldly at him. I was still clutching the stupid healing rituals and spells book with one hand, but my other hand was resting on his chest. Slowly I spread my fingers so that they slid within the open neck of his button-up shirt to touch his naked skin. He shivered and I felt that shiver somewhere deep inside me.</p> <p>..."This is going to be complicate," he said.</p> <p>..." I know," I repeated.</p> <p>..."But I don't want to stop."</p> <p>..."Neither do I," I said.</p> <p>..."No one can know about us. At least not yet."</p> <p>..."Okay," I nodded, not sure what there was to know about, but understanding that the thought of his asking me to sneak around with him made a weird knot form in the pit of my stomach.</p>

Page	Content
	...He kissed me again. This time his lips were sweet and warm and very, very gentle, and I felt the weird knot dissolving. "I almost forgot," he whispered against my lips. "I have something for you." He gave me one more fast kiss...
161	Before I could say anything, he bent and kissed me, long and deep. His tongue met mine and I could taste wine and a seductive hint of blood in his mouth. After what seemed like a long time he lifted his mouth from mine. His eyes were dark and he was breathing deeply.
241	<p>He kisses got longer, hotter.</p> <p>...I wanted to tell him, but my head was spinning and it was hard for me to think, let alone talk.</p> <p>..."I'll show you how much we can share...how completely we can be together," he said.</p> <p>....Loren took the hand he was fisting in my hair and pulled at his shirt so that the buttons popped, exposing his chest. Then he drew his thumbnail slowly over his left breasts, leaving behind a line of perfect scarlet. The scent of his blood wrapped around me.</p> <p>..."Drink," he said.</p> <p>I couldn't stop myself. I lowered my face to his chest and tasted him. His blood surged through me. It was different than Heath's-not as hot, not as rich. But it was more powerful. It pounded through me, along with a desire that was red and urgent. I moved against his body, wanting more and more."</p> <p>"Now it's my turn, I have to taste you!" Loren said.</p> <p>...Before I realized what he was doing he'd wrenched off my dress. I didn't have a chance to freak about the fact that he was seeing me in nothing but my bra and panties because he took his thumb and this time sliced it across my breasts. I gasped at the sharp pain, and then his lips were on me and he was drinking my blood and the pain was replaced by waves of amazing pleasure so intense that all I could do was moan. Loren tore at his clothes while he drank me, and I helped him. All I knew was that I had to have him. Everything was all heat and sensation and desire. His hands and mouth were everywhere and still I couldn't get enough of him.</p>
253	<p>I wanted to remind him that Stevie Rae really didn't have much time, but his lips were on mine again and all I could think about was how good he felt against my body...that I could feel his pulse speeding up...that my heart was beating in time with his. Our kisses deepened and his hands moved down my body. I rocked against him, thinking about heat and blood and nothing but Loren...Loren...Loren-...A weird choking noise broke through the haze of heat that was engulfing me. Dreamily, I turned my head as Loren trailed kisses down my naked throat, and a jolt of horror shocked through my body.</p>
262	"She's easy to lead around. A shiny present here, a pretty compliment there, and you have true love and a popped cherry sacrificed to the god of deception and hormones." Loren laughed again. "Young girls are so ridiculous-so predictably easy."

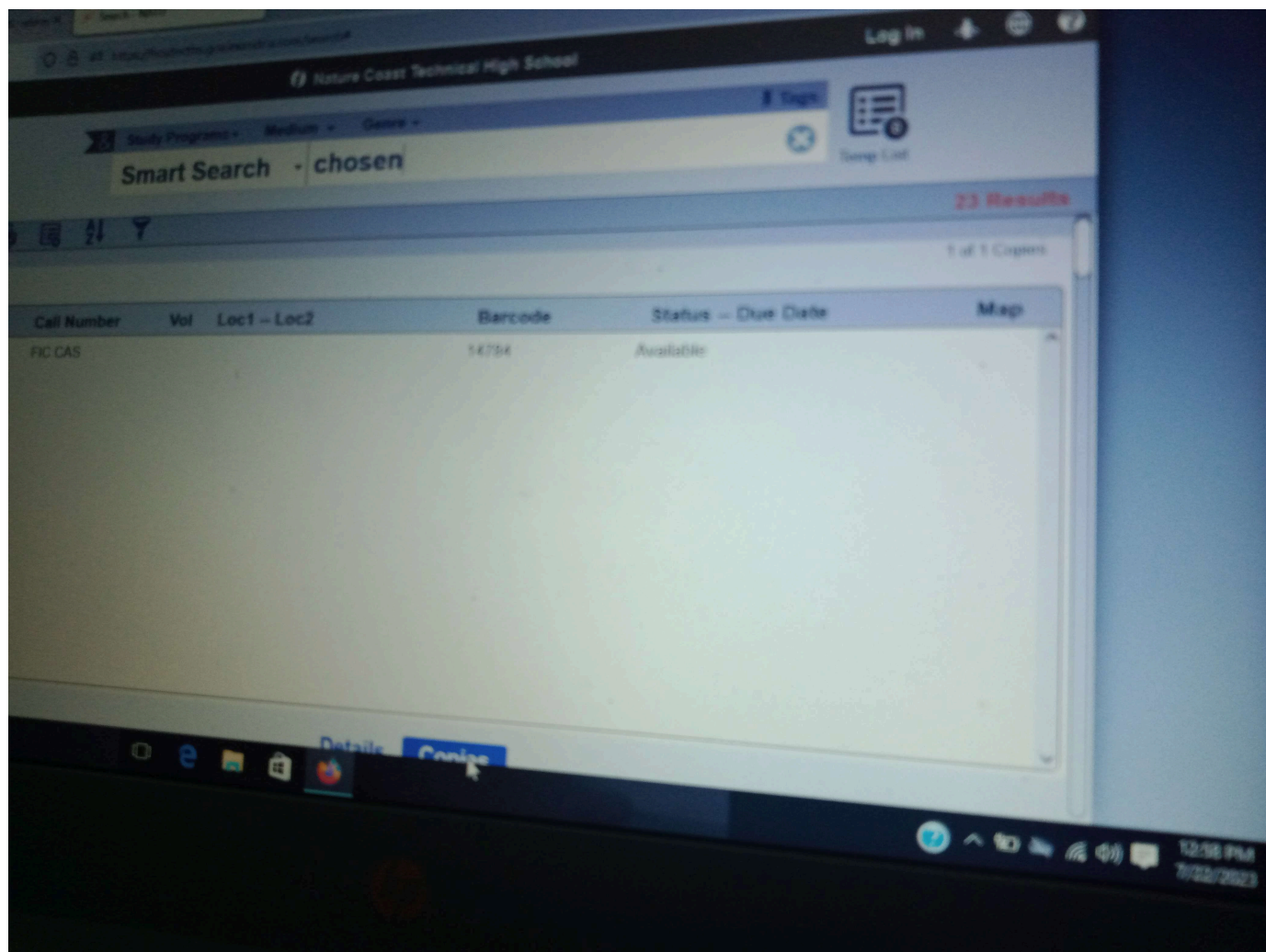
## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings









## Chosen: A House of Night Novel (House of Night Novels, 3) Hardcover – September 29, 2009

by P. C. Cast (Author), Kristin Cast (Author)

4.7 4.7 out of 5 stars 3,179 ratings

Book 3 of 12: House of Night

Bloodlust and dark forces are at work at the House of Night...

Fledgling vampyre Zoey Redbird's adventures at the school are about to take a mysterious turn. Those who appear to be her friends are turning out to be enemies. And oddly enough, sworn enemies are also turning into friends. So begins the gripping third installment of this "highly addictive series" (*Romantic Times*), in which Zoey's mettle will be tested like never before. Her best friend, Stevie Rae, is undead and struggling to maintain a grip on her humanity. Zoey doesn't have a clue how to help her, but she does know that anything she and Stevie Rae discover about the secretive and sinister power that's turning dead fledglings into bloodsucking monsters must be kept secret from everyone else at the House of Night, where trust has become a rare commodity.

Speaking of rare: Zoey finds herself in the very unexpected position of having three boyfriends. Mix in more than a little forbidden desire to the equation and the situation has the potential to spell social disaster of massive proportions. Then, vampyres start turning up dead. Really dead. It looks like the People of Faith, and Zoey's horrid step-loser in particular, are tired of living side-by-side with vampyres. But, as Zoey and her friends find out, things are not always what they seem...

*Chosen is the third in the House of Night series by P. C. Cast and Kristin Cast.*

## Chosen

P.C. Cast, Kristin Cast

**3.91**

241,346 ratings4,837 reviews

Dark forces are at work at the House of Night and Zoey Redbird's adventures at the school take a mysterious turn. Her best friend, Stevie Rae, is undead and struggling to maintain a grip on her humanity. Zoey finds herself in the very unexpected and rare situation of having three boyfriends. Mix a little bloodlust into the equation and the situation has the potential to spell social disaster. Just when it seems things couldn't get any tougher, vampyres start turning up dead. Really dead. It looks like the People of Faith are tired of living side-by-side with vampyres. But, as Zoey and her friends so often find out, how things appear rarely affects the truth...

Genres**Young**

**AdultVampiresFantasyParanormalRomanceFictionSupernatural**

**...more**

307 pages, Paperback

First published March 4, 2008

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days after its formation. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School: Nature Coast Technical High School Date: April 10, 2024.  
Title: Chosen  
Author: PC Cast and Kristin Cast

Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material

Silent Voting Results:

4 Do Not Remove 3 Remove/Discontinue

Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
<p>If committee is recommending limiting access-</p> <p>_____ Grade Level</p> <p>_____ For Advance Course</p> <p>_____ Parent Permission</p>	<p>Basis for removal, check all that apply:</p> <p>_____ The material is pornographic</p> <p>_____ The material is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS</p> <p>_____ The material is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.</p> <p>_____ The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.</p>



## Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

Print Name

Position

Signature

Principal, Nature Coast

LouAnn Noyes

Technical High School

District Media Specialist

Penny Hunt Lakso

Lay Person

Heather Stewart  
Shirley Jones

Community Member

Marie Palmer

Parent

Jodi LaRecca

Parent

Administrator's Signature

LouAnn Noyes

Date

4/10/24





TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: April 12, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenge NCTHS 094-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, "Chosen" at Nature Coast Technical High School. The review committee at Nature Coast Technical High School has evaluated the book, "Chosen ", written by P.C. Cast and Kristin Cast based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is that the book is not removed from Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on June 11, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before June 11, 2024.

**A. Item Currently Budgeted -**

Account Name		<u>No Financial Impact</u>										
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

**B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -\*\***

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

**C. History**

Check one:

Prior Year Budget: ☐New for Current Year: ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$

**\*\* WHEN ITEM NOT CURRENTLY BUDGETED IS APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD, THIS WILL SERVE AS THE BUDGET AMENDMENT\*\***



# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

---

**Agenda Item # 19. 24-2235**

5/7/2024

---

**Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Life Is Funny" written by E.R. Frank, in circulation and be made available to students in grades 9-12 in Hernando County High Schools.

**Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to keep the book, "Life Is Funny" written by E.R. Frank, in circulation and be made available to students in grades 9-12 in Hernando County High Schools. This book is being challenged at Nature Coast Technical High School.

Nature Coast Technical High School's Review Committee met on February 5, 2024 and February 13, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 6-1 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book stay in circulation and be made available to students in grades 9-12 in Hernando County High Schools.

Per Hernando County School District 2522 Policy requirements, the Superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to keep the book.

**My Contact**

Kelly Downey

Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs

352-797-7000 ext. 280

downey\_k@hcsb.k12.fl.us

**2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

**Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.



## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605  
M4LHernando.CMRCChair@gmail.com

---

Hernando County School District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE: NCTHS "Life is Funny" (M4LHC –  
059/2023)

October 14, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 059-23) for "Life is Funny" which is currently located at Nature Coast Technical High School's media center. This book was discovered on Alexandria back on August 1, 2023.

"Life is Funny" contains sexual age-inappropriate content such as; sexual activities; bestiality commentary; profanity and derogatory remarks/terms. This book clearly has a warning label for 18 years of age and up.

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently violates H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I'm calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book from Nature Coast Technical High School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can't be "disappeared" (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name) JT

Address : PO Box 1568 City Brooksville State FL Zip Code 34605

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: October 14, 2023 Author: ER Frank

Title: Life is Funny

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Puffin Books 2002, 2000

School(s) in which item is used: Nature Coast Technical High School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames, etc. Attach additional pages if necessary) Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgment of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, where? Name and date of publication: GoodReads 2016, 2019

Complainant's Signature

Julia Thomas

Date October 14, 2023



# LIFE IS FUNNY



*Young Adult*

**By E.R. Frank**

ISBN: 9781481431651

## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains sexual activities; beastiality commentary; profanity and derogatory terms.

## CONTENT WARNING

You are about to access material that may contain content of an ADULT nature. These files may include pictures and materials that some viewers may find offensive. If you are under the age of 18, or if such material offends you or if it is illegal for you to view these materials, please exit now.

**4** / 5

**Not For Minors**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
25	And then the other thing is what do I do if I don't want my brother Nick, to be touching me on my privacy every night and he comes and does it anyway?
122	Ms. Hudson can suck my wad, she want, but I got to stay awhile 'cause if I get slammed, all they gonna find be my moms, nodding of Fourth Avenue or fucking some dick promising a white Christmas, then what they going to do with Mickey? They put him is some goddamn hours in Queens, they got all kind of other kids beat the shit out of him, mess him, make him fuck they cat. Ms. Hudson want me to shit on her so she could fix me to leave, but I not going nowhere. 'Cause I not at school, I be on Fourth selling shit, lifting shit. School safer. Nobody don't fuck with me 'cause I got fifteen in a month, and I be big.
172	"Uh huh," I go, and we're down to the carpet strip of the floor with all those millions of nice books watching, and oh, Lord, I am on her, she's pressing up, I'm pressing down, wet mouth and warm skin under thin girl shirt, my palm stroking, brushing everywhere, sweaty fingers edging into my pants, crawling to my hard, hard dick, holding, squeezing, pressing, feeling, fingers stop and I want to cry, but she's pulling my hand to her jeans, unzip, panties, elastic, heat, slippery, sweaty fingers pushing mine inside, sliding, gliding, hips moving, one finger, two finders, rocking, moaning, pulling, pushing, oh, Lord, oh, Lord, beautiful Keisha wet hot pussy fucking my fingers, please, please, please let my dick, and then someone's at my back snatching me up, and Keisha screams, and on her feet so fast, and we run, pants open, shirts off, through the books, the musty dusty tree soot smell, winding, weaving, breathing hard from sex and fear.
178	And I go, "Feel this," and put her hand on my jeans over my hard dick. ...She laughs and goes, "Well damn. That's nothing new." And I look at her deep eyes and her big old feet, and then we're kissing, watery tongues, springy lips, tugging, pulling, and we lie down, and she peels off my shirt, and I unbutton her shot, pretty mini, and soon we're all skin to skin, warm, sexy mouth and hands brushing, stroking over tits and ass and stomach, lost, mush brain, heat, curves, sucking, rocking, slipping, swollen, wet, shiny pussy, pushing, pulsing, breathing, moaning, straining thick dick, hat smells like salt balloons, sticky, rolling over aching stiff thing, shy sly fingers, oh, Lord, its tip kissing her melting slit, slide glides in, deep, swallowed, sucked, rocking, aching, bucking, pumping, fucking, oh, Lord, Jesus, God, Allah, Buddha, Keisha, thank you.
221	"They pay me a lot of money for the way I look. They pay me more the more skin I show. Do you know how many porn producers have called my agent?" ...Nuh uh." ..."Uh." She nods. ..."Shit," I tell her. "I'd probably let you take picture of me butt naked eating a banana and taking a shit if you offered me enough money. ..."So do you want to fuck him?" ..."Did you fuck him?" ..."Yeah."

Profanity/Derogatory Terms	Count
Ass	15
Bitch	27
Dick	17
Fuck	60
Nigger	2
Pussy/Cunt/Put	8
Shit	20

## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings



Search - NATU

110%

https://hcsdncths.goalexandria.com/search#

Nature Coast Technical High School




Log In

Study Programs Medium Genre Tags

Smart Search life is funny

Temp List

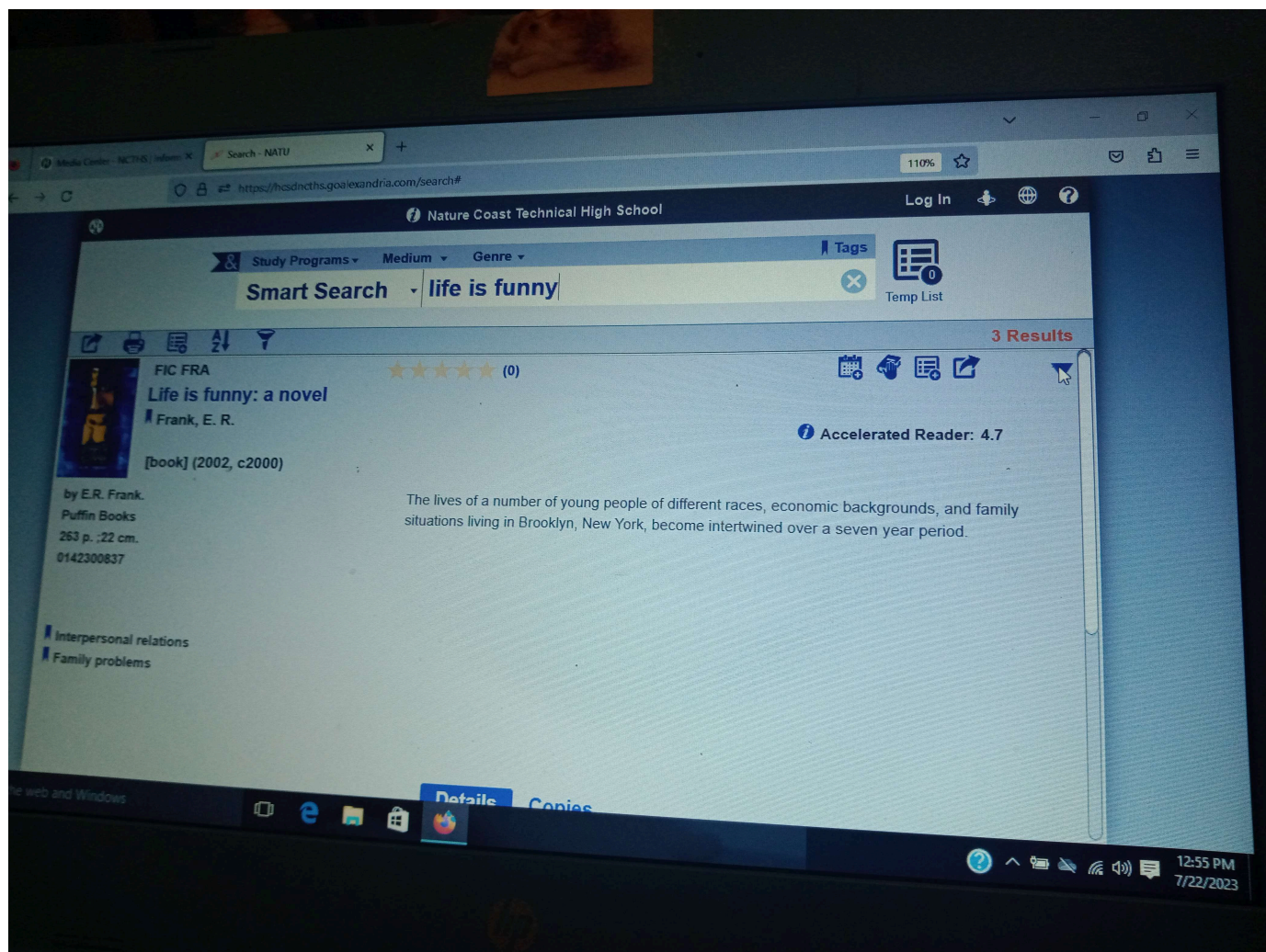
3 Results

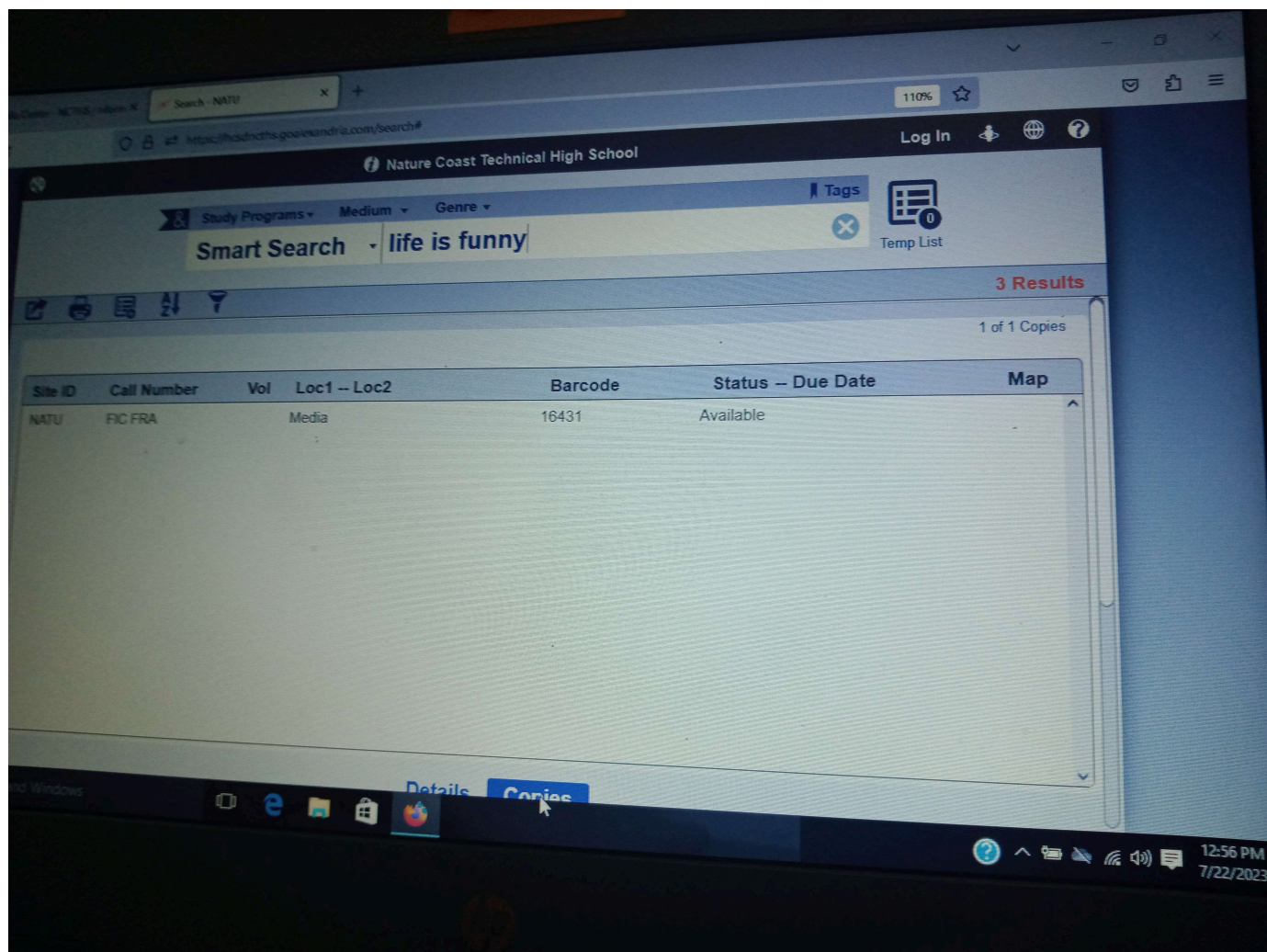
	FIC FRA <b>Life is funny: a novel</b> Frank, E. R. [book] (2002, c2000)	★★★★★ (0)	Accelerated Reader: 4.7
	FIC FRA <b>Life is funny: a novel</b> Frank, E. R. [book] (2000)	★★★★★ (0)	Accelerated Reader: 4.7 Lexile: 830
	741.56 SOP <b>Garry Trudeau: Doonesbury and the aesthetics of satire</b> Soper, Kerry. [book] (c2008)	★★★★★ (0) Great comics artists.	Accelerated Reader: Lexile: AD

Windows

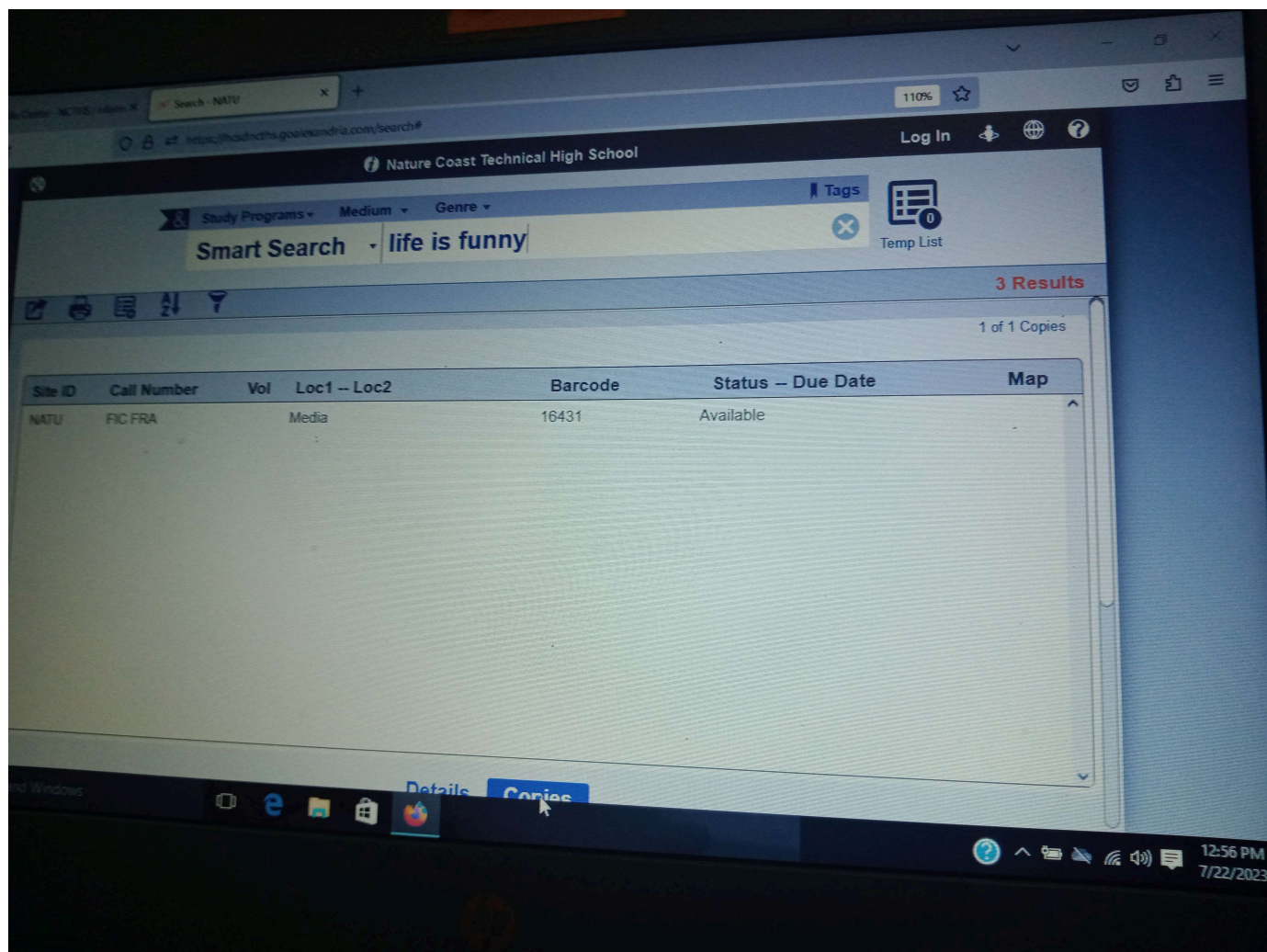
12:55 PM  
7/22/2023











<https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/er-frank/life-is-funny/>

# LIFE IS FUNNY

BY E.R. FRANK • RELEASE DATE: APRIL 1, 2000

This raw portrayal of 11 New York City high school students of various ages and races quickly belies its ironic title. Frank's first novel convincingly portrays seven years in the lives of these kids as they fight, mature, and cope with alcoholic, abusive, even insane parents. Each character's story eventually intertwines with those of other characters as they all escape their emotional prisons. Eric, a hostile special ed. student whose mother is a hopeless drug addict, frames the narrative. He finds salvation in his love for his little brother Mickey and in a teacher who helps reunite the two into a caring foster home after child-protection authorities separate them. Then there's Drew, who seems to have everything, but whose wealthy father beats his wife. Or Monique, whose life turns around when Hector comes into it. Divided into years, seven in all, each section is then divided again into narratives by two of the protagonists. Each voice is distinct, but the underlying message is one and the same: underneath the street smarts and the rough talk are real kids, with much more to them than can be seen on the surface. Realistic language, rough and profane, fierce situations that are nearly too much to bear, and a savagely honest portrayal of the nature of the interconnectedness of life make this not a novel for the faint of heart or timid reader. But those who embark upon this intriguing mosaic will come away rewarded and inspired by the strength and fortitude of its characters. An astounding first effort. (*Fiction. YA*)

**Pub Date:** April 1, 2000

**ISBN:** 0-7894-2634-X

**Page Count:** 263

**Publisher:** DK Publishing

**Review Posted Online:** May 19, 2010

**Kirkus Reviews Issue:** May 1, 2000

**Categories:**

TEENS & YOUNG ADULT FICTION



# Life is Funny

**E. R. Frank. DK Publishing (Dorling Kindersley), \$19.99 (263pp)  
ISBN 978-0-7894-2634-5**

Eleven kids with distinct voices and individual struggles narrate Frank's impressive debut novel, yet each of the interlocking stories springs to life with tender details. The book follows a loosely connected group of Brooklyn students over a seven-year period. The author initially introduces a few characters in a kind of pastiche, then renders them in fuller portraits, such as Keisha, who reveals that her brother is "touching me on my privacy every night" and, in a chapter four years later, experiences a healthy relationship with a peer. Other characters deal with physically abusive or absent parents, an unwanted pregnancy or a friend's suicide, but as the title indicates, each tale is tempered by humor. Readers will empathize with their struggles, but more than that, they will be inspired by the strength of their spirits and their willingness to love. Eric, another character introduced in a kind of broad brushstroke at the beginning, metamorphoses in one of the novel's most memorable stories. His mother is a drug addict, and he becomes the caretaker for his little brother, Mickey ("He tell all the little bugs he see at school he don't need no daddy 'cause he gots me," says Eric). The brothers reappear in the last chapter, narrated by their new foster-sister, Linnette, who calls Eric a "hatchet murder face," intimidated by his bottled-up anger. When he literally reaches out to her at the end, she delicately describes her reaction as "my voice high and melting, my insides all unfrozen." The language is gritty, and some of the story lines will be intense for young readers, but this is ultimately an uplifting book about resilience, loyalty and courage. Ages 12-up. (Apr.



THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

# Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days following the formation of the committee. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School Nature Coast Technical Date 2-13-24

Title Life is Funny

Author E.R. Frank

## Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material

### Silent Voting Results:

6 Do Not Remove

1 Remove/Discontinue

Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
<p>If committee is recommending to limit access-</p> <p><u>      </u> Grade Level</p> <p><u>      </u> For Advance Course</p> <p><u>      </u> Parent Permission</p>	<p>Basis for removal, check all that apply:</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is pornographic</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.</p> <p><u>      </u> The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.</p>

# Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

Print Name

Position

Signature

Debbie Warrell District

D. Warrell

Toni-Ann Hayes Principal

Toni-Ann Hayes

Misty Lausht Lay Person

Misty Lausht

Debbie Stenstrom Lay Person

Debbie Stenstrom

Jodi LaRocca parent

Jodi LaRocca

Suzanne Thorne Teacher

Suzanne Thorne

Marie Dahmer community

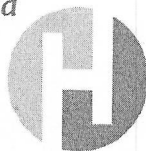
Marie Dahmer

Administrator's Signature

Toni-Ann Hayes

Date

2/13/24



**HERNANDO  
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Learn it. Love it. Live it.

Superintendent: John Stratton

Board Chairperson: Linda Prescott

Vice Chairperson: Susan Duval

Board Members:

Gus Guadagnino

Mark Johnson

Shannon Rodriguez

TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: February 14, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenge NCTHS 059-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, "Life Is Funny" at Nature Coast Technical High School. The review committee at Nature Coast has evaluated the book, "Life Is Funny", written by E.R. Frank based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is that the book is not removed from Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on April 9, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before April 9, 2024.

**A. Item Currently Budgeted -**

Account Name		<u>No Financial Impact</u>										
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

Account Name												
Account Number												
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\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

**B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -\*\***

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

**C. History**

Check one:

Prior Year Budget: ☐New for Current Year: ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$

**\*\* WHEN ITEM NOT CURRENTLY BUDGETED IS APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD, THIS WILL SERVE AS THE BUDGET AMENDMENT\*\***



# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

---

**Agenda Item # 20. 24-2236**

5/7/2024

---

### **Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Life Is Funny" written by E.R. Frank, in circulation, but limit access to students in grade 8 at the middle school level for Hernando County Schools.

### **Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to keep the book, "Life Is Funny" written by E.R. Frank, in circulation, but limit access to students in grade 8 at the middle school level for Hernando County Schools. This book is being challenged at Challenger K-8.

Challenger K-8's Review Committee met on February 29, 2024 and March 5, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 7-0 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book stay in circulation at the middle school level with limited access for 8<sup>th</sup> grade in Hernando County Schools.

Per Hernando County School district 2522 Policy requirements, the Superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to keep the book in circulation, but limit access to students in grade 8 at the middle school level.

### **My Contact**

Kelly Downey  
Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs  
352-797-7000 ext. 280  
downey\_k@hcsb.k12.fl.us

### **2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

### **Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.





## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605

M4LHernando.CMRCChair@gmail.com

Hernando County School District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE: CK8 "Life is Funny" (M4LHC –  
089/2023)

October 28, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 089-23) for "Life is Funny" which is currently located at Challenger K8 School's media center. This book was discovered back on July 22, 2023.

"Life is Funny" has a warning label marked for ages 18 to adult clearly stating the contents are not for underage children 6 to 13 years of age. This book contains sexual activities; sexual nudity; mild profanity; and explicit violence.

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently violates H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I'm calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book, from Challenger K8 School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can't be "disappeared" (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name) JT

Address : PO Box 1568 City Brooksville State FL Zip Code 34605

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: October 28, 2023 Author: ER Frank

Title: Life is Funny

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Puffin Books 2002, 2000

School(s) in which item is used: Challenger K8 School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames, etc. Attach additional pages if necessary) Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, where? Name and date of publication: GoodReads 2019, 2016

Complainant's Signature

Julia Thomas

Date October 28, 2023

# LIFE IS FUNNY



*Young Adult*

**By E.R. Frank**

ISBN: 9781481431651

## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains sexual activities; beastiality commentary; profanity and derogatory terms.

## CONTENT WARNING

You are about to access material that may contain content of an ADULT nature. These files may include pictures and materials that some viewers may find offensive. If you are under the age of 18, or if such material offends you or if it is illegal for you to view these materials, please exit now.

**4** / 5

**Not For Minors**  
BookLooks Review Rating

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172	"Uh huh," I go, and we're down to the carpet strip of the floor with all those millions of nice books watching, and oh, Lord, I am on her, she's pressing up, I'm pressing down, wet mouth and warm skin under thin girl shirt, my palm stroking, brushing everywhere, sweaty fingers edging into my pants, crawling to my hard, hard dick, holding, squeezing, pressing, feeling, fingers stop and I want to cry, but she's pulling my hand to her jeans, unzip, panties, elastic, heat, slippery, sweaty fingers pushing mine inside, sliding, gliding, hips moving, one finger, two finders, rocking, moaning, pulling, pushing, oh, Lord, oh, Lord, beautiful Keisha wet hot pussy fucking my fingers, please, please, please let my dick, and then someone's at my back snatching me up, and Keisha screams, and on her feet so fast, and we run, pants open, shirts off, through the books, the musty dusty tree soot smell, winding, weaving, breathing hard from sex and fear.
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Profanity/Derogatory Terms	Count
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Fuck	60
Nigger	2
Pussy/Cunt/Put	8
Shit	20



## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings

Challenger K-8 School

Study Programs Medium Genre

Smart Search life is funny

Tags Temp List

6 Results

**F Fra**  
**Life is funny: a novel**  
Frank, E. R.  
[book] (2002, c2000)

by E.R. Frank.  
Puffin Books  
263 p. ;22 cm.  
0142300837

Reading Counts: 6.1  
Lexile: 830

The lives of a number of young people of different races, economic backgrounds, and family situations living in Brooklyn, New York, become intertwined over a seven year period.

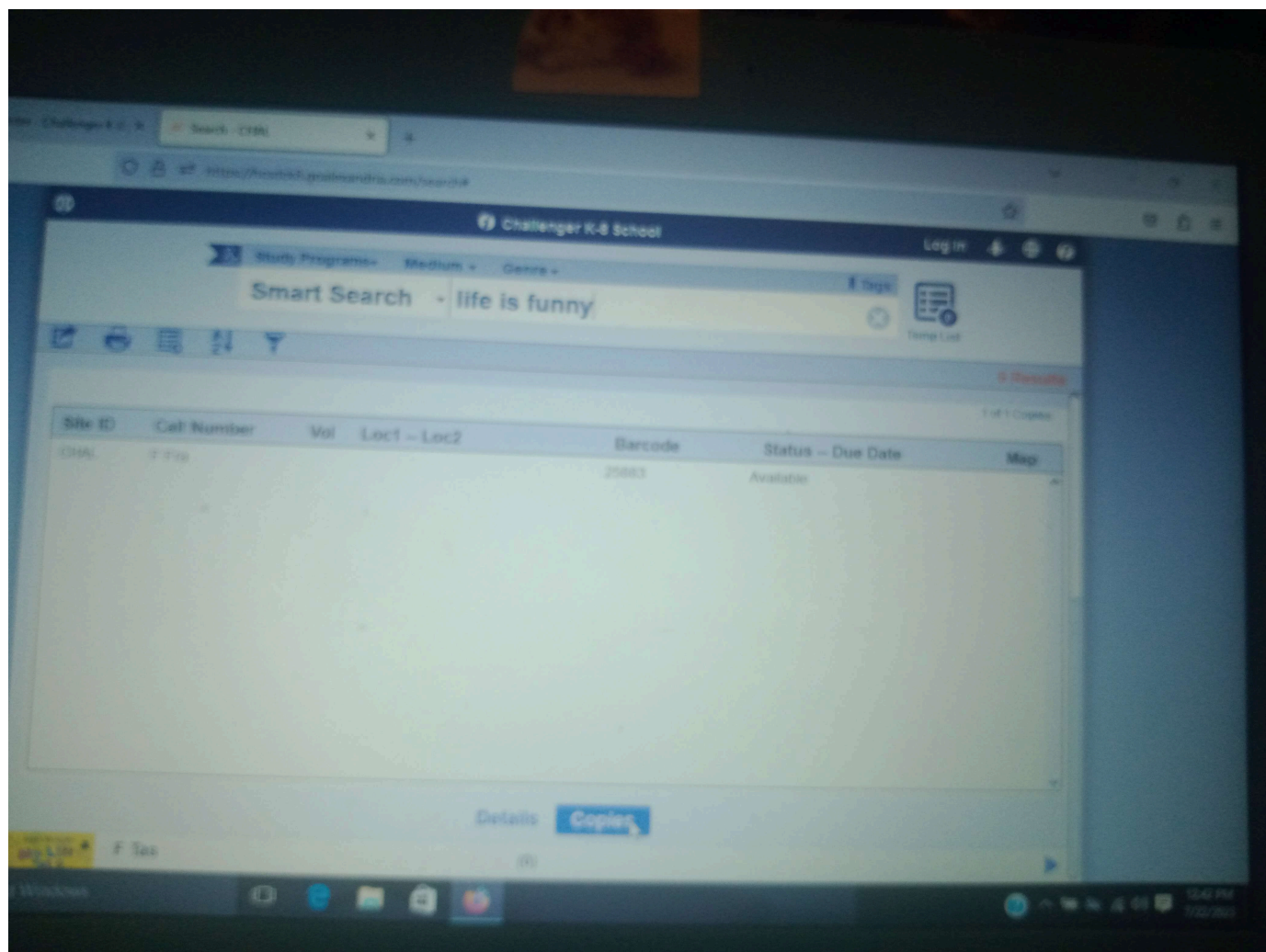
Interpersonal relations  
Family problems

Details Copies

F Tas (0)

Windows

12:42 PM  
7/22/2023





<https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/er-frank/life-is-funny/>

# LIFE IS FUNNY

BY E.R. FRANK • RELEASE DATE: APRIL 1, 2000

This raw portrayal of 11 New York City high school students of various ages and races quickly belies its ironic title. Frank's first novel convincingly portrays seven years in the lives of these kids as they fight, mature, and cope with alcoholic, abusive, even insane parents. Each character's story eventually intertwines with those of other characters as they all escape their emotional prisons. Eric, a hostile special ed. student whose mother is a hopeless drug addict, frames the narrative. He finds salvation in his love for his little brother Mickey and in a teacher who helps reunite the two into a caring foster home after child-protection authorities separate them. Then there's Drew, who seems to have everything, but whose wealthy father beats his wife. Or Monique, whose life turns around when Hector comes into it. Divided into years, seven in all, each section is then divided again into narratives by two of the protagonists. Each voice is distinct, but the underlying message is one and the same: underneath the street smarts and the rough talk are real kids, with much more to them than can be seen on the surface. Realistic language, rough and profane, fierce situations that are nearly too much to bear, and a savagely honest portrayal of the nature of the interconnectedness of life make this not a novel for the faint of heart or timid reader. But those who embark upon this intriguing mosaic will come away rewarded and inspired by the strength and fortitude of its characters. An astounding first effort. (*Fiction. YA*)

**Pub Date:** April 1, 2000

**ISBN:** 0-7894-2634-X

**Page Count:** 263

**Publisher:** DK Publishing

**Review Posted Online:** May 19, 2010

**Kirkus Reviews Issue:** May 1, 2000

**Categories:**

TEENS & YOUNG ADULT FICTION

# Life is Funny

**E. R. Frank. DK Publishing (Dorling Kindersley), \$19.99 (263pp)  
ISBN 978-0-7894-2634-5**

Eleven kids with distinct voices and individual struggles narrate Frank's impressive debut novel, yet each of the interlocking stories springs to life with tender details. The book follows a loosely connected group of Brooklyn students over a seven-year period. The author initially introduces a few characters in a kind of pastiche, then renders them in fuller portraits, such as Keisha, who reveals that her brother is "touching me on my privacy every night" and, in a chapter four years later, experiences a healthy relationship with a peer. Other characters deal with physically abusive or absent parents, an unwanted pregnancy or a friend's suicide, but as the title indicates, each tale is tempered by humor. Readers will empathize with their struggles, but more than that, they will be inspired by the strength of their spirits and their willingness to love. Eric, another character introduced in a kind of broad brushstroke at the beginning, metamorphoses in one of the novel's most memorable stories. His mother is a drug addict, and he becomes the caretaker for his little brother, Mickey ("He tell all the little bugs he see at school he don't need no daddy 'cause he gots me," says Eric). The brothers reappear in the last chapter, narrated by their new foster-sister, Linnette, who calls Eric a "hatchet murder face," intimidated by his bottled-up anger. When he literally reaches out to her at the end, she delicately describes her reaction as "my voice high and melting, my insides all unfrozen." The language is gritty, and some of the story lines will be intense for young readers, but this is ultimately an uplifting book about resilience, loyalty and courage. Ages 12-up. (Apr.



THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

# Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days following the formation of the committee. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School Challenger K8 Date 3-5-24

Title Life is Funny  
Author E.R. Frank

## Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material

### Silent Voting Results:

7 ~~1~~ Do Not Remove

0 Remove/Discontinue

Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
<p>If committee is recommending to limit access-</p> <p><u>8<sup>th</sup></u> Grade Level</p> <p><u>      </u> For Advance Course</p> <p><u>      </u> Parent Permission</p>	<p>Basis for removal, check all that apply:</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is pornographic</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.</p> <p><u>      </u> The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.</p>

# Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

Print Name

Position

Signature

Rosemarie Maiorini	principal	Rosemarie Maiorini
Melinda Reiter	lay	M Reiter
Melissa Nieto	Middle school teacher/parent	M Nieto
Schandell Hill	Media	Schandell Hill
Julie Noyes	community representative	Julie Noyes
Lauren Schumacher	Assistant Principal	Lauren Schumacher
Debbie Warren	District	Debbie Warren

Administrator's Signature

Rosemarie Maiorini

Date

3/5/24



TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: March 6, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenge CK8 089-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, "Life Is Funny" at Challenger K-8. The review committee at Challenger K-8 has evaluated the book, "Life Is Funny", written by E.R. Frank based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is to limit access to grade 8 at the middle school level in Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on April 9, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before April 9, 2024.

**B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -\*\***

Funding Source \_\_\_\_\_

Account Name \_\_\_\_\_

Account Number \_\_\_\_\_

Fund                      Function                      Object                      Cost Center                      Project                      Sub Project

Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**C. History**

Check one:

**Prior Year Budget:** ☐

**New for Current Year:** ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

405



# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

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**Agenda Item # 21. 24-2239**

5/7/2024

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**Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Queen of Shadows" written by Sarah Maas, in circulation and be made available to students in grades 9-12 in Hernando County High Schools.

**Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to keep the book, "Queen of Shadows" written by Sarah Maas, in circulation and be made available to students in grades 9-12 in Hernando County High Schools. This book is being challenged at Central and Weeki Wachee High Schools.

Central High School's Review Committee met on February 15, 2024 and March 1, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 4-1 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book stay in circulation and be made available to students in grades 9-12 in Hernando County High Schools.

Per Hernando County School District 2522 Policy requirements, the Superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to keep the book.

**My Contact**

Kelly Downey

Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs

352-797-7000 ext. 280

downey\_k@hcsb.k12.fl.us

**2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

**Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.





## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605  
M4LHernando.CMRCChair@gmail.com

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Hernando County School District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE: CHS "Queen of Shadows" (M4LHC –  
079/2023)

October 21, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 079-23) for "Queen of Shadows" which is currently located at Central High School's media center. This book was discovered in Alexandria back on July 21, 2023.

"Queen of Shadows" contains sexual age-inappropriate content; inexplicit sexual nudity; sexual activities; violence; and profanity. This book clearly has a warning label for 18 years of age and up and should not be in any K8 or middle school to be exact.

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently violates H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I'm calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book from Central High School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can't be "disappeared" (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name) JT

Address : PO Box 1568 City Brooksville State FL Zip Code 34605

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: October 21, 2023 Author: Sarah J. Maas

Title: Queen of Shadows

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Bloomsbury 2016

School(s) in which item is used: Central High School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames, etc. Attach additional pages if necessary) Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, where? Name and date of publication: GoodReads 2020

Complainant's Signature

Julia Thomas

Date October 21, 2023

# QUEEN OF SHADOWS



*Young Adult*

**By Sarah J. Maas**

ISBN: 978-1-61963-605-7

## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains inexplicit sexual nudity; sexual activities; violence; and profanity.

## CONTENT WARNING

You are about to access material that may contain content of an ADULT nature. These files may include pictures and materials that some viewers may find offensive. If you are under the age of 18, or if such material offends you or if it is illegal for you to view these materials, please exit now.

**3** / 5

**Minor Restricted**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
203	Asterin gave her a look that made Elide wonder if she could see through the homespun dress to the bandage she used to flatten her full breasts into an unnoticeable chest.
258	<p>He wasn't like other men—not even close. There was so little she could do to jar him, taunt him. A naked body was a naked body. Especially hers.</p> <p>...She rolled over. "You mean to tell me the females in Doranelle don't have scandalous nightclothes? Or anywhere else in the world?"</p> <p>..."My encounters with other females usually didn't involve parading around in nightclothes."</p> <p>"And what clothes did they involve?"</p> <p>"Usually, none at all."</p>
277	Kaltain had been shoved up against the wall, the neck of that too-flimsy gown tugged to the side, her breast nearly out. There was such emptiness on her face—as if she weren't even there at all.
338	<p>It was what Arobynn wanted—for her to think of him as she rubbed the oil into every inch of her skin. For her breasts, her thighs, her neck to smell like almond—his chosen scent.</p> <p>His scent, because he knew that a Fae male had come to stay with her, and all signs pointed to their being close enough for scent to matter to Rowan.</p>
379	Blood stained Lysandra's skin and matted her hair, and patches had soaked through the thin silk robe that did little to hide her nakedness.
399	The pink silk clung to her waist and slid over her hips as she approached the bed, revealing the glorious length of her bare legs, still lean and tan from all the time they'd spent outdoors this spring. A strip of pale yellow lace graced the plunging neckline, and he tried—gods damn him, he honestly tried—not to look at the smooth curve of her breasts as she bent to climb into bed.
400	<p>They were both really damn lucky that she currently couldn't shift into her Fae form and smell what was pounding through his blood. It had been hard enough to conceal it from her until now. Aedion's knowing looks told him enough about what her cousin had detected.</p> <p>He'd seen her naked before—a few times. And gods, yes, there had been moments when he'd considered it, but he'd mastered himself. He'd learned to keep those useless thoughts on a short, short leash. Like that time she'd moaned at the breeze he sent her way on Beltane—the arch of her neck, the parting of that mouth of hers, the sound that came out of her—</p> <p>She was now lying on her side, her back to him.</p> <p>"About last night," he said through his teeth.</p> <p>"It's fine. It was a mistake."</p> <p>Look at me. Turn over and look at me.</p> <p>But she remained with her back to him, the moonlight caressing the silk bunched over the dip of her waist, the slope of her hip.</p>
404	<p>"That dress suits you." She jerked her chin toward Lysandra's chest. "And does wonders for them, too. The poor men in here can't stop looking."</p> <p>"Trust me, having larger ones isn't a blessing. My back hurts all the time." Lysandra frowned down at her full breasts. "As soon as I get my powers back, these things will be the first to go."</p>
434	<p>Yet there he was, his hand a brand on her bare shoulder, his body nearly covering hers. "You have nothing to be sorry for," she whispered. "I trust you, Rowan."</p> <p>He gave her a barely perceptible nod.</p> <p>"I missed you," he said quietly, his gaze darting between her mouth and eyes. "When I was in Wendlyn. I lied when I said I didn't. From the moment you left, I missed you so much I went out of my mind. I was glad for the excuse to track Lorcan here, just to see you again. And tonight, when</p>

Page	Content
	<p>he had that knife at your throat ..." The warmth of his callused finger bloomed through her as he traced a path over the cut on her neck. "I kept thinking about how you might never know that I missed you with only an ocean between us. But if it was death separating us ... I would find you. I don't care how many rules it would break. Even if I had to get all three keys myself and open a gate, I would find you again. Always."</p> <p>She blinked back the burning in her eyes as he reached between their bodies and took her hand, guiding it up to lay against his tattooed cheek.</p> <p>It was an effort to remember how to breathe, to focus on anything but that smooth, warm skin. He didn't tear his eyes away from hers as she grazed her thumb along his sharp cheekbone. Savoring each stroke, she caressed his face, that tattoo, never breaking his stare, even as it stripped her naked.</p> <p>I'm sorry, he still seemed to say.</p> <p>She kept her stare locked on his as she let go of his face and slowly, making sure he understood every step of the way, tilted her head back until her throat was arched and bared before him. "Aelin," he breathed. Not in reprimand or warning, but ... a plea. It sounded like a plea. He lowered his head to her exposed neck and hovered a hair's breadth away.</p> <p>She arched her neck farther, a silent invitation.</p> <p>Rowan let out a soft groan and grazed his teeth against her skin.</p> <p>One bite, one movement, was all it would take for him to rip out her throat.</p> <p>His elongated canines slid along her flesh—gently, precisely. She clenched the sheets to keep from running her fingers down his bare back and drawing him closer.</p> <p>He braced one hand beside her head, his fingers twining in her hair.</p> <p>"No one else," she whispered. "I would never allow anyone else at my throat." Showing him was the only way he'd understand that trust, in a manner that only the predatory, Fae side of him would comprehend. "No one else," she said again.</p> <p>He let out another low groan, answer and confirmation and request, and the rumble echoed inside her. Carefully, he closed his teeth over the spot where her lifeblood thrummed and pounded, his breath hot on her skin.</p> <p>She shut her eyes, every sense narrowing on that sensation, on the teeth and mouth at her throat, on the powerful body trembling with restraint above hers. His tongue flicked against her skin.</p> <p>She made a small noise that might have been a moan, or a word, or his name. He shuddered and pulled back, the cool air kissing her neck. Wildness—pure wildness sparked in those eyes.</p> <p>Then he thoroughly, brazenly surveyed her body, his nostrils flaring delicately as he scented exactly what she wanted.</p> <p>Her breathing turned ragged as he dragged his stare to hers—hungry, feral, unyielding.</p> <p>"Not yet," he said roughly, his own breathing uneven. "Not now."</p> <p>"Why?" It was an effort to remember speech with him looking at her like that. Like he might eat her alive. Heat pounded through her core.</p> <p>"I want to take my time with you—to learn ... every inch of you. And this apartment has very, very thin walls. I don't want to have an audience," he added as he leaned down again, brushing his mouth over the cut at the base of her throat, "when I make you moan, Aelin."</p> <p>Oh, by the Wyrd. She was in trouble. So much rutting trouble. And when he said her name like that ...</p> <p>"This changes things," she said, hardly able to get the words out.</p> <p>"Things have been changing for a while already. We'll deal with it." She wondered how long his resolve to wait would last if she lifted her face to claim his mouth with her own, if she ran her fingers down the groove of his spine. If she touched him lower than that. But—</p>



Page	Content
	...He swallowed again, slowly peeling himself away from her and strode to the closet to dress. Honestly, it was an effort not to leap after him and rip that damn towel away.
503	Asterin unbuttoned her jacket and shrugged it off into the flowers. She removed her shirt, and the one beneath, until her golden skin glowed in the sunlight, her breasts full and heavy. Asterin turned, and Manon fell to her knees in the grass. There, branded on Asterin's abdomen in vicious, crude letters was one word: UNCLEAN
517	"Am I? I still serve my queen, even if she cannot see it. Who was the one who abandoned her the first time a pretty human thing opened her legs—"
525	But he got out of bed, risking all of one step, drinking down the sight of the long, bare legs; the curve of her breasts, peaked despite the balmy summer night; the bob of her throat as she swallowed.
526	She tried and failed to smile. He leaned in, sliding a hand around her waist, the lace and silk smooth against his fingers, her body warm and firm beneath it, and whispered in her ear, "Even when we're apart tomorrow, I'll be with you every step of the way. And every step after—wherever that may be." She sucked in a shuddering breath, and he pulled back far enough for them to share breath. Her fingers shook as she brushed them against his mouth, and his control nearly shredded apart right there. ..."Bastard," she murmured, and kissed him. Her mouth was soft and warm, and he bit back a groan. His body went still—his entire world went still—at that whisper of a kiss, the answer to a question he'd asked for centuries. He realized he was staring only when she withdrew slightly. His fingers tightened at her waist.
593	The two waiting guards sniggered, eyes on the flap of the robe that fell open as she kicked, revealing her thighs, her stomach, everything to them. Elide sobbed, even as she knew the tears would do her no good. They just laughed, devouring her with their eyes—
611	Rowan burst out laughing. She glared at him again as she sat up, the movement agonizing, exhausting. She was naked save for the clean undergarments someone had stuffed her into, but she supposed she was decent enough. He'd seen every part of her, anyway.
613	They were sitting on the bed, Aelin in Rowan's lap, the Fae warrior's arms locked around her as he looked at her the way she deserved to be looked at. And when they kissed, deeply, without hesitation—
614	She'd lost track of how long they'd kissed for, how long she'd lost herself in him. But then she'd taken his hand and laid it on her breast, and he'd growled in a way that made her toes curl and her back arch ... and then wince at the remnant of pain flickering in her body. He had pulled back at that wince, and when she'd tried to convince him to keep going, he'd told her that he had no interest in bedding an invalid, and since they'd already waited this long, she could cool her heels and wait some more. Until she was able to keep up with him, he'd added with a wicked grin. Aelin shoved away the thought with another glare in Rowan's direction, loosed a steadying breath, and pushed down on the handle.
644	She would have preferred a little more privacy, especially with Rowan, who kept looking at her in that way that made her want to combust. Sometimes when no one was watching, he'd sneak up behind her and nuzzle her neck or tug at her earlobe with his teeth, or just slide his arms around

Page	Content
	her and hold her against him, breathing her in. One night—just one gods-damned night with him was all she wanted. They didn't dare stop at an inn, so she was left to burn, and to endure Lysandra's quiet teasing.
653	She would never forget how those guards had leered at her naked body, why her uncle had sold her to Duke Perrington.
657	She was delicately built, small enough that he might have thought her barely past her first bleed were it not for the full breasts beneath her close-fitting leathers.

Profanity	Count
Ass	28
Bitch	11
Piss	28
Prick	14
Shit	60

## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>No Nudity</li> <li>No Profanity</li> <li>No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>No Profanity</li> <li>No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate Violence</li> <li>Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>Moderate Profanity</li> <li>Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explicit Violence</li> <li>Sexual Nudity</li> <li>Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>Sexual Activities <small>No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</small></li> <li>Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aberrant Violence</li> <li>Explicit Sexual Activities <small>Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</small></li> <li>Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings



Central High School

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Study Programs Medium Genre

Tags

Smart Search queen of shadows

Temp List

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Central High School

Log In

Study Programs Medium Genre

Smart Search queen of shadows

Tags

Temp List

7 Results

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2:47 PM 7/21/2023



## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605  
M4LHernando.CMRCChair@gmail.com

Hernando County School District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE: WWHS "Queen of Shadows" (M4LHC  
– 080/2023)

October 21, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 080-23) for "Queen of Shadows" which is currently located at Weeki Wachee High School's media center. This book was discovered in Alexandria back on July 19, 2023.

"Queen of Shadows" contains sexual age-inappropriate content; inexplicit sexual nudity; sexual activities; violence; and profanity. This book clearly has a warning label for 18 years of age and up and should not be in any K8 or middle school to be exact.

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently violates H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I'm calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book from Weeki Wachee High School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can't be "disappeared" (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

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Date of Request: October 21, 2023 Author: Sarah J. Maas

Title: Queen of Shadows

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Bloomsbury 2016

School(s) in which item is used: Weeki Wachee High School

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Complainant's Signature

Julia Thomas

Date October 21, 2023

# QUEEN OF SHADOWS



*Young Adult*

**By Sarah J. Maas**

ISBN: 978-1-61963-605-7

## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains inexplicit sexual nudity; sexual activities; violence; and profanity.

## CONTENT WARNING

You are about to access material that may contain content of an ADULT nature. These files may include pictures and materials that some viewers may find offensive. If you are under the age of 18, or if such material offends you or if it is illegal for you to view these materials, please exit now.

**3** /5

**Minor Restricted**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
203	Asterin gave her a look that made Elide wonder if she could see through the homespun dress to the bandage she used to flatten her full breasts into an unnoticeable chest.
258	<p>He wasn't like other men—not even close. There was so little she could do to jar him, taunt him. A naked body was a naked body. Especially hers.</p> <p>...She rolled over. "You mean to tell me the females in Doranelle don't have scandalous nightclothes? Or anywhere else in the world?"</p> <p>..."My encounters with other females usually didn't involve parading around in nightclothes."</p> <p>"And what clothes did they involve?"</p> <p>"Usually, none at all."</p>
277	Kaltain had been shoved up against the wall, the neck of that too-flimsy gown tugged to the side, her breast nearly out. There was such emptiness on her face—as if she weren't even there at all.
338	<p>It was what Arobynn wanted—for her to think of him as she rubbed the oil into every inch of her skin. For her breasts, her thighs, her neck to smell like almond—his chosen scent.</p> <p>His scent, because he knew that a Fae male had come to stay with her, and all signs pointed to their being close enough for scent to matter to Rowan.</p>
379	Blood stained Lysandra's skin and matted her hair, and patches had soaked through the thin silk robe that did little to hide her nakedness.
399	The pink silk clung to her waist and slid over her hips as she approached the bed, revealing the glorious length of her bare legs, still lean and tan from all the time they'd spent outdoors this spring. A strip of pale yellow lace graced the plunging neckline, and he tried—gods damn him, he honestly tried—not to look at the smooth curve of her breasts as she bent to climb into bed.
400	<p>They were both really damn lucky that she currently couldn't shift into her Fae form and smell what was pounding through his blood. It had been hard enough to conceal it from her until now. Aedion's knowing looks told him enough about what her cousin had detected.</p> <p>He'd seen her naked before—a few times. And gods, yes, there had been moments when he'd considered it, but he'd mastered himself. He'd learned to keep those useless thoughts on a short, short leash. Like that time she'd moaned at the breeze he sent her way on Beltane—the arch of her neck, the parting of that mouth of hers, the sound that came out of her—</p> <p>She was now lying on her side, her back to him.</p> <p>"About last night," he said through his teeth.</p> <p>"It's fine. It was a mistake."</p> <p>Look at me. Turn over and look at me.</p> <p>But she remained with her back to him, the moonlight caressing the silk bunched over the dip of her waist, the slope of her hip.</p>
404	<p>"That dress suits you." She jerked her chin toward Lysandra's chest. "And does wonders for them, too. The poor men in here can't stop looking."</p> <p>"Trust me, having larger ones isn't a blessing. My back hurts all the time." Lysandra frowned down at her full breasts. "As soon as I get my powers back, these things will be the first to go."</p>
434	<p>Yet there he was, his hand a brand on her bare shoulder, his body nearly covering hers. "You have nothing to be sorry for," she whispered. "I trust you, Rowan."</p> <p>He gave her a barely perceptible nod.</p> <p>"I missed you," he said quietly, his gaze darting between her mouth and eyes. "When I was in Wendlyn. I lied when I said I didn't. From the moment you left, I missed you so much I went out of my mind. I was glad for the excuse to track Lorcan here, just to see you again. And tonight, when</p>



Page	Content
	<p>he had that knife at your throat ..." The warmth of his callused finger bloomed through her as he traced a path over the cut on her neck. "I kept thinking about how you might never know that I missed you with only an ocean between us. But if it was death separating us ... I would find you. I don't care how many rules it would break. Even if I had to get all three keys myself and open a gate, I would find you again. Always."</p> <p>She blinked back the burning in her eyes as he reached between their bodies and took her hand, guiding it up to lay against his tattooed cheek.</p> <p>It was an effort to remember how to breathe, to focus on anything but that smooth, warm skin. He didn't tear his eyes away from hers as she grazed her thumb along his sharp cheekbone. Savoring each stroke, she caressed his face, that tattoo, never breaking his stare, even as it stripped her naked.</p> <p>I'm sorry, he still seemed to say.</p> <p>She kept her stare locked on his as she let go of his face and slowly, making sure he understood every step of the way, tilted her head back until her throat was arched and bared before him. "Aelin," he breathed. Not in reprimand or warning, but ... a plea. It sounded like a plea. He lowered his head to her exposed neck and hovered a hair's breadth away.</p> <p>She arched her neck farther, a silent invitation.</p> <p>Rowan let out a soft groan and grazed his teeth against her skin.</p> <p>One bite, one movement, was all it would take for him to rip out her throat.</p> <p>His elongated canines slid along her flesh—gently, precisely. She clenched the sheets to keep from running her fingers down his bare back and drawing him closer.</p> <p>He braced one hand beside her head, his fingers twining in her hair.</p> <p>"No one else," she whispered. "I would never allow anyone else at my throat." Showing him was the only way he'd understand that trust, in a manner that only the predatory, Fae side of him would comprehend. "No one else," she said again.</p> <p>He let out another low groan, answer and confirmation and request, and the rumble echoed inside her. Carefully, he closed his teeth over the spot where her lifeblood thrummed and pounded, his breath hot on her skin.</p> <p>She shut her eyes, every sense narrowing on that sensation, on the teeth and mouth at her throat, on the powerful body trembling with restraint above hers. His tongue flicked against her skin.</p> <p>She made a small noise that might have been a moan, or a word, or his name. He shuddered and pulled back, the cool air kissing her neck. Wildness—pure wildness sparked in those eyes.</p> <p>Then he thoroughly, brazenly surveyed her body, his nostrils flaring delicately as he scented exactly what she wanted.</p> <p>Her breathing turned ragged as he dragged his stare to hers—hungry, feral, unyielding.</p> <p>"Not yet," he said roughly, his own breathing uneven. "Not now."</p> <p>"Why?" It was an effort to remember speech with him looking at her like that. Like he might eat her alive. Heat pounded through her core.</p> <p>"I want to take my time with you—to learn ... every inch of you. And this apartment has very, very thin walls. I don't want to have an audience," he added as he leaned down again, brushing his mouth over the cut at the base of her throat, "when I make you moan, Aelin."</p> <p>Oh, by the Wyrd. She was in trouble. So much rutting trouble. And when he said her name like that ...</p> <p>"This changes things," she said, hardly able to get the words out.</p> <p>"Things have been changing for a while already. We'll deal with it." She wondered how long his resolve to wait would last if she lifted her face to claim his mouth with her own, if she ran her fingers down the groove of his spine. If she touched him lower than that. But—</p>

Page	Content
	...He swallowed again, slowly peeling himself away from her and strode to the closet to dress. Honestly, it was an effort not to leap after him and rip that damn towel away.
503	Asterin unbuttoned her jacket and shrugged it off into the flowers. She removed her shirt, and the one beneath, until her golden skin glowed in the sunlight, her breasts full and heavy. Asterin turned, and Manon fell to her knees in the grass. There, branded on Asterin's abdomen in vicious, crude letters was one word: UNCLEAN
517	"Am I? I still serve my queen, even if she cannot see it. Who was the one who abandoned her the first time a pretty human thing opened her legs—"
525	But he got out of bed, risking all of one step, drinking down the sight of the long, bare legs; the curve of her breasts, peaked despite the balmy summer night; the bob of her throat as she swallowed.
526	She tried and failed to smile. He leaned in, sliding a hand around her waist, the lace and silk smooth against his fingers, her body warm and firm beneath it, and whispered in her ear, "Even when we're apart tomorrow, I'll be with you every step of the way. And every step after—wherever that may be." She sucked in a shuddering breath, and he pulled back far enough for them to share breath. Her fingers shook as she brushed them against his mouth, and his control nearly shredded apart right there. ..."Bastard," she murmured, and kissed him. Her mouth was soft and warm, and he bit back a groan. His body went still—his entire world went still—at that whisper of a kiss, the answer to a question he'd asked for centuries. He realized he was staring only when she withdrew slightly. His fingers tightened at her waist.
593	The two waiting guards sniggered, eyes on the flap of the robe that fell open as she kicked, revealing her thighs, her stomach, everything to them. Elide sobbed, even as she knew the tears would do her no good. They just laughed, devouring her with their eyes—
611	Rowan burst out laughing. She glared at him again as she sat up, the movement agonizing, exhausting. She was naked save for the clean undergarments someone had stuffed her into, but she supposed she was decent enough. He'd seen every part of her, anyway.
613	They were sitting on the bed, Aelin in Rowan's lap, the Fae warrior's arms locked around her as he looked at her the way she deserved to be looked at. And when they kissed, deeply, without hesitation—
614	She'd lost track of how long they'd kissed for, how long she'd lost herself in him. But then she'd taken his hand and laid it on her breast, and he'd growled in a way that made her toes curl and her back arch ... and then wince at the remnant of pain flickering in her body. He had pulled back at that wince, and when she'd tried to convince him to keep going, he'd told her that he had no interest in bedding an invalid, and since they'd already waited this long, she could cool her heels and wait some more. Until she was able to keep up with him, he'd added with a wicked grin. Aelin shoved away the thought with another glare in Rowan's direction, loosed a steadying breath, and pushed down on the handle.
644	She would have preferred a little more privacy, especially with Rowan, who kept looking at her in that way that made her want to combust. Sometimes when no one was watching, he'd sneak up behind her and nuzzle her neck or tug at her earlobe with his teeth, or just slide his arms around

Page	Content
	her and hold her against him, breathing her in. One night—just one gods-damned night with him was all she wanted. They didn't dare stop at an inn, so she was left to burn, and to endure Lysandra's quiet teasing.
653	She would never forget how those guards had leered at her naked body, why her uncle had sold her to Duke Perrington.
657	She was delicately built, small enough that he might have thought her barely past her first bleed were it not for the full breasts beneath her close-fitting leathers.

Profanity	Count
Ass	28
Bitch	11
Piss	28
Prick	14
Shit	60

## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings

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Queen of shadows : a Throne of glass novel

Maas, Sarah J.,

Text-unmediated-volume (2015.)

Accelerated Reader: 6

Lexile: 830L

Sarah J. Maas.

Bloomsbury,

648 pages :map ;24 cm.

9781619636040

"Everyone Celaena Sardothien loves has been taken from her. Embracing her identity as Aelin Galathynius, Queen of Terrasen, Celaena returns to the empire--for vengeance, to rescue her once-glorious kingdom, and to confront the shadows of her past"--

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# QUEEN OF SHADOWS

From the Throne of Glass series , Vol. 4

BY SARAH J. MAAS • RELEASE DATE: SEPT. 1, 2015

*Impossible to put down.*

Having cast off her Celaena identity, Aelin returns to Adarlan to reclaim her crown.

Leaving Rowan behind after *Heir of Fire* (2014), Aelin arrives determined to stop the king's deadly demons, the Valg. She seeks out her former master from her assassin days, the charismatic and devious Arobynn, and also finds Chaol, but there's no happy reunion between the two. (Chaol fans shouldn't worry—while he and Aelin may not see eye to eye, he has prominent storylines and character growth.) Aelin's most pressing priority is the rescue of her cousin Aedion, slated for execution at Prince Dorian's birthday as an obvious trap for her. As for Dorian, he's imprisoned in his own body by the Valg controlling him—Chaol holds hope that he can be saved; Aelin knows how unlikely that is. Meanwhile, Wing Leader Manon, head of Adarlan's wyvern-riding witch army, finds growing dissent at the commands she is given, leading to tough choices. At times believability is stretched (fugitives travel around the city freely, one or two heroes defeat large groups of enemies), but character motivations and interactions—friendships, romances, and others—are always nuanced and on point, especially as Aelin's growing maturity offers her new perspectives on old acquaintances. The ending leaves readers poised for the next installment.

Impossible to put down. (*Fantasy. 14 & up*)

**Categories:**

TEENS & YOUNG ADULT SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY | TEENS & YOUNG ADULT  
ROMANCE | TEENS & YOUNG ADULT FICTION

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*Throne of Glass #4*

# Queen of Shadows

Sarah J. Maas

4.58

588,909 ratings 42,552 reviews

**Goodreads Choice Award**

**Winner for Best Young Adult Fantasy & Science Fiction (2015)**

*An alternative cover edition for this ISBN can be found [here](#).*

Everyone Celaena Sardothien loves has been taken from her. But she's at last returned to the empire—for vengeance, to rescue her once-glorious kingdom, and to confront the shadows of her past...

She has embraced her identity as Aelin Galathynius, Queen of Terrasen. But before she can reclaim her throne, she must fight.

She will fight for her cousin, a warrior prepared to die for her. She will fight for her friend, a young man trapped in an unspeakable prison. And she will fight for her people, enslaved to a brutal king and awaiting their lost queen's triumphant return.

The fourth volume in the *New York Times* bestselling series continues Celaena's epic journey and builds to a passionate, agonizing crescendo that might just shatter her world.

Genres **Fantasy** **Young Adult** **Romance** **Magic** **Fae** **Fiction** **Young Adult**  
**Fantasy**  
...more

645 pages, Hardcover

First published September 1, 2015

**Queen of Shadows by Sarah J. Mass**

**Genre:** Young Adult, Fantasy

**Publishing Info:** September 2015 by Bloomsbury

**Pages:** 648

**Star Rating:** 5/5

*Back Cover Summary:*

*Celaena Sardothien is cloaked in her assassin's hood once more. She is back in Rifthold, but this time she is no one's slave. She must delve into her most painful memories and fight for her survival, while resisting a smouldering passion that might very well consume her heart. And she will face her former master, the King of Assassins, again – to wreak revenge for a decade of pain...*

\*This review will be spoiler-free for *Queen of Shadows* but may include spoilers for the previous books in the series\*

*Queen of Shadows* is the fourth book in the Throne of Glass series and the best instalment I've read so far. It brought together all the threads that Maas has been weaving for the previous three books and, well, it was pretty epic.

In *Heir of Fire*, Celaena was away in Wenlyn learning to use her magic. While I enjoyed the training sequences, I so loved seeing her in Rifthold in *Queen of Shadows*, back where everything started. This book brings the story full circle, as she finally confronts her past with Arobynn. Our protagonist grew a lot in *Heir of Fire*, and now she finally seems to have transformed into Aelin. Her character hasn't changed completely, but I could see she was a different person to the Celaena we saw in *Throne of Glass*, and we get to see her become the queen she is.

Manon was introduced as a new character in *Heir of Fire*. I loved her story in the third book, but her storyline didn't intersect with any of the other characters' stories, so I was wondering where Maas was going with this one. In *Queen of Shadows*, however, we get to see more clearly how her storyline relates to the wider plot. This is another character who we see slowly shift over the course of the series. I really appreciate how Maas slowly develops her characters.

Maas manages to juggle a lot of different characters and POVs in this book. We get to see through the eyes of the characters we already know and love, but also some new ones. Lysandra was a real surprise for me. She hardly featured in the previous books in the series, but had a much bigger role in *Queen of Shadows*. We learn more about her past and her personality, and I was surprised to find how much I enjoyed reading her character. What's also great about this book is not just the individual characters, but their relationships with each other – the romantic, the platonic, the bromances and the frenemies. I couldn't get enough of them.

Even though this is the longest book in the series so far, it didn't *feel* long. I sped through the pages because I just didn't want to put it down – Maas kept me hooked all the way through.

*Queen of Shadows* wraps up a lot of the plot points from the previous books and has an epic finale. In some ways, it felt like the final book in the series. But some new twists and revelations means the story isn't quite finished yet, and I'm excited to see what direction Maas propels the characters in for the rest of the series

# BOOK REVIEW: QUEEN OF SHADOWS BY SARA J. MAAS

*April 25, 2016*

## Non-Spoilery:

So if you haven't read the Throne of Glass Series then I don't know what you're doing with your life but you're doing something wrong. Sara J. Maas's Queen of Shadows is the fourth book in the series and it is flawless. Go read it and come back because trust me you do not want to be spoiled for this one.

## Spoilers Ahead!

Ok so Queen of Shadows where do I even begin. Let me tell you I have never been so indecisive about picking an OTP for a book. Normally I start a book, and if there's any kind of love triangle I am immediately attached to one of the guys and I will stick with him the entire series. In the Throne of Glass series I was lost. First book, I couldn't decide if I like Dorian of Chaol better but as the relationship between Dorian and Celaena developed I was ok with that. Then in Crown of Midnight, I was all for team Chaol. Then that literally fell apart and I didn't think I would like book 3 because she was leaving both of them behind. Introducing Rowan. But of course in Heir of Fire we were reminded so many times that their feeling for each other weren't romantic so how disappointed was I when she was leaving without him at the end.

And now here we are in Queen of Shadows and the Aelin Rowan relationship is just perfect. I have never had to wait 4 books to see a romance realized and been totally ok with it. It was perfect. They are the ULTIMATE OTP. The silent conversations, the sass, the fierce protectiveness of each other is flawless.

So let's start by talking about some of the characters in this book. Now I've said it before in my Heir of Fire book review but I'll say it again. In Heir of Fire when we first started getting all these new narrators, I did not think I would like that at all. I was already made Dorian, Chaol and Celaena were separated and I thought adding new characters like Sorcha and Manon would be terrible. Well how wrong was I? In Queen of Shadows we get to stick with Manon but we also get Elide, which is set with Manon.

I love Manon. And I don't know how many series you can say that the author made you fall in love with a witch who eats the hearts of men, but there you go. Manon and her 13 are in a tricky spot in this one, and her story is much more political than it was in the last book. But we also get a lot of fierce character development from her and see her stepping away from the constant obedience she has always had. We also see her form a relationship with Elide which is nice to watch.



But hands down the BEST Manon scene we get in this entire book is when her and Aelin finally meet and have a showdown for the ages. Manon was going to let them go, I really believe that and then Aelin had to go and poke the bear and god their fight was glorious. First Rowan getting shot and sending Aelin into an all out rage. Then the two of them telling their generals to stand down so they can go toe to toe. It was amazing. And then of course the whole fight I don't know what to do because I'm not ready to lose either of these characters and what happens but Aelin goes back and SAVES Manon! In Heir of Fire I was worried that these 2 would be on different sides one day but right there was the first hint of potential for an alliance.

And then later I love how Manon repays her life debt by telling Aelin about Dorian. And speaking of Dorian...Manon and Dorian anyone? At first I wasn't sure how I felt about that but now I am all for it. I think they'd be great together because Manon reminds me of Aelin and Dorian needs a tough partner who won't sugar coat everything for him. I love that she was the only one able to reach him at all and that last Dorian scene we get with him seeing Manon on his wall...uhg feels.

Ok then the other character I just want to touch on quickly while we're talking about Manon is Elide. She's the new character introduced this book and I do like her. Her parts weren't the most interesting but I was always very worried for her trying to sneak around and when she did get caught and locked away I was worried Manon wouldn't find her because what are the chances we get through a book like this with everyone in tact? I thought maybe she'd be the expendable character like Sorcha but she made it and now we have some kind of Elide Aelin reunion to look forward to next book.

But that's all I have to say about that. The other character we see in this book in a new light is Lyssandra. She is amazing. Not only do her and Aelin realize they have more in common than they realize, but we figure out that she is a shapeshifter and Aelin accepts her for that and then they proceed to have so many beautiful moments. I love the way she always sweeps into the room and none of them every notice her. I love that she had her ward and then when she gets kidnapped, her rescue mission is easily one of the best scenes in the entire book. And then Aelin lets her kill Aboryn and I love that she does not hesitate and then the next morning we see her being a fabulous actress. Not to mention the fact that she saves Aedion, Lorcan and Rowan as a freaking snow leopard and then vomits all over an already angry Lorcan. She also has 2 really beautiful moments with Aelin. The first when Aelin pays off her debts and Aelin calls her an ugly crier and the other when she makes her a Lady and it's full of humor with her asking if she's proposing to her but its so beautiful how their friendship develops in this story because she is really the only female friend Aelin has had since Nehemiah.

We also get a lot more Aedion in this book. I was so glad that Maas didn't make us wait until the end of the book to reduce Aedion and that we got it over with relatively quick. Aedion was just kind of there for a lot of the book. Once Rowan arrived he was often overshadowed by him in a way. But all the scenes of Rowan and Aedion having their little

male dominance disputes were adorable. I love when Aelin tells them not to pee on her furniture and then when Rowan tells Aedion he'll kill him if he speaks to her like that again. But also the brotherhood he and Rowan build is great and it really shows at the end in the battle. Rowan dropping the bomb on us that Gavriel is Aedion's father was a bit of a shock. I feel kind of bad for him the whole story because he's almost always left out of the plans but he is so sassy and always has witty retorts ready which are always great. I also love that he points out that Rowan and Aelin's silent conversations are actually annoying to everyone else around. Anyone else think he and Lyssandra are destined to be a thing?

Now a quick bit about Chaol. I wasn't sure what to expect from him this book. Last book we saw him being a rebel and planning and scheming with Aedion but he hasn't seen Aelin since he figured out who she was. And I was really disappointed in him at first. He's so mean. He calls her a monster, blames her for what happened to Dorian, and basically refuses to work with her at the beginning. Now he comes around and I'm happy for him that he has Nesyren. But I was hoping that even though I didn't want them to get back together romantically, their relationship might still be in tact since he did tell her he loves her at the end of the last book and it did seem like he was pining after her a bit in *Heir of Fire*. But whatever. I couldn't believe how stupid he was when he went off alone looking for Dorian but we'll forgive him because it led to the Manon Aelin showdown. But what do we think of his legs? I think he'll be healed eventually but I feel like it won't be right away.

Ok now onto probably the greatest character to read the entire book: Rowan. I was so excited when he finally made his appearance and I was so thankful that we didn't have to wait the entire book to see him. He is so fiercely protective in this book but we also get so many humorous scenes between him and Aelin, like when he gets up to dump a pitcher of water over his head to calm his sex drive or whenever Aelin calls him pissy and his first thought is "I'm not being pissy". We also have some really beautiful moments from him. When they go to see Aboryn and he thanks him for the oil because his skin was feeling a little dry I had to close the book and squeal in delight for a moment. Also when she sneaks out and he is so mad but at the same time sees that she is in his shirt. Then the piano scene, visiting Sam's grave, all of it. When he gets shot we get such emotion from Aelin and all I could think was it's about time. When he tells her not to touch him like that I was so mad. Because of course we knew he wants her and she assumes all the wrong things and I was afraid that he ruined it but fortunately it didn't last that long and then they finally start allowing their feelings for each other to show. I was so worried for him in the ending fight scene because he was not doing that well. But then also when she gets stabbed and he feels such agony \*hit me right in the feels\*.

Ok that's enough for characters, and I know I did not even do a spotlight on Aelin, but she's in everyone else's and I just want to talk about some scenes:

First: The nightgowns. I just about died when she decided that she would show him how inappropriate she could be and scandalized him with her night clothes. But then at the end of the scene where she manages to dig up a solid gold one and really wows him.

The hair washing scene. It's cute with her yelling at Rowan for trying to wash his hair with soap, but also just because she ends up washing his hair and practically has him purring.

The dress. The fact that she practically knocks him off his feet in her dragon dress but then the entire scene they're with Arobynn is great. Rowan using the oil, Arobynn noticing how they stare at each other, their silent conversation during dinner about her lack of undergarments, and then missing a question from Arobynn because she's too busy making googoo eyes at Rowan \*swoon\*

The ring scene with Arobynn. Once he put that ring on her finger I totally bought it and I was so concerned. I didn't know how much of the book we were going to have to spend with Arobynn controlling her but I was not pleased and then when she just took it off once they got back and was disappointed he wasn't more created I was so shocked and confused and felt like Aedion in the fact that I felt very out of the loop.

Then of course the fight scene with Manon is flawless. The fact that when she goes back for Manon she says "If I die because of you, I'll beat the shit out of you in hell". It's lines like those that make Sara J Maas such a pleasure to read. She always injects the best wit and sarcasm into every scene and it just takes it to a new level.

At the end the scene with Lyssandra getting the ring and territory is beautiful but I already talked about that. But besides that the fact that she turns into a snow leopard when Aedion tries to wake them up and then he dumps water on them is just one of those whimsical scenes that makes this book such a pleasure to read.

Also when Aelin and Rowan are finally having their moment at the end and Aedion comes in and almost ruins it but Rowan slams the door in his face with his wind and we just get on a line all its own "Point taken". I know I sound like such a broken record saying that these little moments just make this book amazing but they really do which is why I would easily call Queen of Shadows my Top Book of 2015 and why the Throne of Glass series will always be one of my top, if not my favorite, series of all time.

Absolutely recommend, 5 stars, 100% better than I ever could have imagined. What I love about this series is I'm always surprised. The next book never goes how I imagine it will and it always works. Sarah J Maas, whatever it is you do, keep doing it because it's amazing.

## Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days following the formation of the committee. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School Central High Date 3-1-24

Title Queen of Shadows

Author Sarah Maas

### Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material

#### Silent Voting Results:

4 Do Not Remove

1 Remove/Discontinue

Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
<p>If committee is recommending to limit access-</p> <p><u>      </u> Grade Level</p> <p><u>      </u> For Advance Course</p> <p><u>      </u> Parent Permission</p>	<p>Basis for removal, check all that apply:</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is pornographic</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.</p> <p><u>      </u> The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.</p>

# Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

Print Name

Position

Signature

Debbie Warrell	District	D Warrell
Lore Adesso	AP	L Adesso
Nanette Billick	Parent	N Billick
Maria Gebhardt	Teacher/Lay	M Gebhardt
Susan Pribil	community member	S Pribil

Administrator's Signature

*L Adesso*

Date

3-1-24





TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: March 4, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenge CHS 079-23 & WWHS 080-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, “Queen of Shadows” at Central High School and Weeki Wachee High School. The review committee at Central has evaluated the book, "Queen of Shadows", written by Sarah Maas based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is that the book is not removed from Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on April 23, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before April 23, 2024.

**A. Item Currently Budgeted -**

Account Name		<u>No Financial Impact</u>										
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

**B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -\*\***

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

**C. History**

Check one:

Prior Year Budget: ☐New for Current Year: ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$

**\*\* WHEN ITEM NOT CURRENTLY BUDGETED IS APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD, THIS WILL SERVE AS THE BUDGET AMENDMENT\*\***



# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

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**Agenda Item # 22. 24-2240**

5/7/2024

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**Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Queen of Shadows" written by Sarah Maas, in circulation and be made available to students in grades 6-8 in Hernando County Middle Schools.

**Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to keep the book, "Queen of Shadows" written by Sarah Maas, in circulation and be made available to students in grades 6-8 in Hernando County Middle Schools. This book is being challenged at Challenger K-8 and D.S. Parrott Middle School.

Challenger K-8's Review Committee met on March 14, 2024 and March 21, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 5-0 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book stay in circulation and be made available to students in grades 6-8 in Hernando County Middle Schools.

Per Hernando County School District 2522 Policy requirements, the Superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to keep the book.

**My Contact**

Kelly Downey

Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs

352-797-7000 ext. 280

downey\_k@hcsb.k12.fl.us

**2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

**Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.



## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605  
M4LHernando.CMRCChair@gmail.com

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Hernando County School District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE: CK8 "Queen of Shadows" (M4LHC –  
058/2023)

October 13, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 058-23) for "Queen of Shadows" which is currently located at Challenger K8 School's media center. This book was discovered on Alexandria back on July 22, 2023.

"Queen of Shadows" contains sexual age-inappropriate content; inexplicit sexual nudity; sexual activities; violence; and profanity. This book clearly has a warning label for 18 years of age and up and should not be in any K8 or middle school to be exact.

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently violates H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I'm calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book from Challenger K8 School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can't be "disappeared" (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name) JT

Address : PO Box 1568 City Brooksville State FL Zip Code 34605

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: October 13, 2023 Author: Sarah J. Maas

Title: Queen of Shadows

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Bloomsbury 2016

School(s) in which item is used: Challenger K8School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames, etc. Attach additional pages if necessary) Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, where? Name and date of publication: GoodReads 2020

Complainant's Signature

Julia Thomas

Date October 13, 2023



# QUEEN OF SHADOWS



*Young Adult*

**By Sarah J. Maas**

ISBN: 978-1-61963-605-7

## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains inexplicit sexual nudity; sexual activities; violence; and profanity.

## CONTENT WARNING

You are about to access material that may contain content of an ADULT nature. These files may include pictures and materials that some viewers may find offensive. If you are under the age of 18, or if such material offends you or if it is illegal for you to view these materials, please exit now.

**3** / 5

**Minor Restricted**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
203	Asterin gave her a look that made Elide wonder if she could see through the homespun dress to the bandage she used to flatten her full breasts into an unnoticeable chest.
258	<p>He wasn't like other men—not even close. There was so little she could do to jar him, taunt him. A naked body was a naked body. Especially hers.</p> <p>...She rolled over. "You mean to tell me the females in Doranelle don't have scandalous nightclothes? Or anywhere else in the world?"</p> <p>..."My encounters with other females usually didn't involve parading around in nightclothes."</p> <p>"And what clothes did they involve?"</p> <p>"Usually, none at all."</p>
277	Kaltain had been shoved up against the wall, the neck of that too-flimsy gown tugged to the side, her breast nearly out. There was such emptiness on her face—as if she weren't even there at all.
338	<p>It was what Arobynn wanted—for her to think of him as she rubbed the oil into every inch of her skin. For her breasts, her thighs, her neck to smell like almond—his chosen scent.</p> <p>His scent, because he knew that a Fae male had come to stay with her, and all signs pointed to their being close enough for scent to matter to Rowan.</p>
379	Blood stained Lysandra's skin and matted her hair, and patches had soaked through the thin silk robe that did little to hide her nakedness.
399	The pink silk clung to her waist and slid over her hips as she approached the bed, revealing the glorious length of her bare legs, still lean and tan from all the time they'd spent outdoors this spring. A strip of pale yellow lace graced the plunging neckline, and he tried—gods damn him, he honestly tried—not to look at the smooth curve of her breasts as she bent to climb into bed.
400	<p>They were both really damn lucky that she currently couldn't shift into her Fae form and smell what was pounding through his blood. It had been hard enough to conceal it from her until now. Aedion's knowing looks told him enough about what her cousin had detected.</p> <p>He'd seen her naked before—a few times. And gods, yes, there had been moments when he'd considered it, but he'd mastered himself. He'd learned to keep those useless thoughts on a short, short leash. Like that time she'd moaned at the breeze he sent her way on Beltane—the arch of her neck, the parting of that mouth of hers, the sound that came out of her—</p> <p>She was now lying on her side, her back to him.</p> <p>"About last night," he said through his teeth.</p> <p>"It's fine. It was a mistake."</p> <p>Look at me. Turn over and look at me.</p> <p>But she remained with her back to him, the moonlight caressing the silk bunched over the dip of her waist, the slope of her hip.</p>
404	<p>"That dress suits you." She jerked her chin toward Lysandra's chest. "And does wonders for them, too. The poor men in here can't stop looking."</p> <p>"Trust me, having larger ones isn't a blessing. My back hurts all the time." Lysandra frowned down at her full breasts. "As soon as I get my powers back, these things will be the first to go."</p>
434	<p>Yet there he was, his hand a brand on her bare shoulder, his body nearly covering hers. "You have nothing to be sorry for," she whispered. "I trust you, Rowan."</p> <p>He gave her a barely perceptible nod.</p> <p>"I missed you," he said quietly, his gaze darting between her mouth and eyes. "When I was in Wendlyn. I lied when I said I didn't. From the moment you left, I missed you so much I went out of my mind. I was glad for the excuse to track Lorcan here, just to see you again. And tonight, when</p>

Page	Content
	<p>he had that knife at your throat ..." The warmth of his callused finger bloomed through her as he traced a path over the cut on her neck. "I kept thinking about how you might never know that I missed you with only an ocean between us. But if it was death separating us ... I would find you. I don't care how many rules it would break. Even if I had to get all three keys myself and open a gate, I would find you again. Always."</p> <p>She blinked back the burning in her eyes as he reached between their bodies and took her hand, guiding it up to lay against his tattooed cheek.</p> <p>It was an effort to remember how to breathe, to focus on anything but that smooth, warm skin. He didn't tear his eyes away from hers as she grazed her thumb along his sharp cheekbone. Savoring each stroke, she caressed his face, that tattoo, never breaking his stare, even as it stripped her naked.</p> <p>I'm sorry, he still seemed to say.</p> <p>She kept her stare locked on his as she let go of his face and slowly, making sure he understood every step of the way, tilted her head back until her throat was arched and bared before him. "Aelin," he breathed. Not in reprimand or warning, but ... a plea. It sounded like a plea. He lowered his head to her exposed neck and hovered a hair's breadth away.</p> <p>She arched her neck farther, a silent invitation.</p> <p>Rowan let out a soft groan and grazed his teeth against her skin.</p> <p>One bite, one movement, was all it would take for him to rip out her throat.</p> <p>His elongated canines slid along her flesh—gently, precisely. She clenched the sheets to keep from running her fingers down his bare back and drawing him closer.</p> <p>He braced one hand beside her head, his fingers twining in her hair.</p> <p>"No one else," she whispered. "I would never allow anyone else at my throat." Showing him was the only way he'd understand that trust, in a manner that only the predatory, Fae side of him would comprehend. "No one else," she said again.</p> <p>He let out another low groan, answer and confirmation and request, and the rumble echoed inside her. Carefully, he closed his teeth over the spot where her lifeblood thrummed and pounded, his breath hot on her skin.</p> <p>She shut her eyes, every sense narrowing on that sensation, on the teeth and mouth at her throat, on the powerful body trembling with restraint above hers. His tongue flicked against her skin.</p> <p>She made a small noise that might have been a moan, or a word, or his name. He shuddered and pulled back, the cool air kissing her neck. Wildness—pure wildness sparked in those eyes.</p> <p>Then he thoroughly, brazenly surveyed her body, his nostrils flaring delicately as he scented exactly what she wanted.</p> <p>Her breathing turned ragged as he dragged his stare to hers—hungry, feral, unyielding.</p> <p>"Not yet," he said roughly, his own breathing uneven. "Not now."</p> <p>"Why?" It was an effort to remember speech with him looking at her like that. Like he might eat her alive. Heat pounded through her core.</p> <p>"I want to take my time with you—to learn ... every inch of you. And this apartment has very, very thin walls. I don't want to have an audience," he added as he leaned down again, brushing his mouth over the cut at the base of her throat, "when I make you moan, Aelin."</p> <p>Oh, by the Wyrd. She was in trouble. So much rutting trouble. And when he said her name like that ...</p> <p>"This changes things," she said, hardly able to get the words out.</p> <p>"Things have been changing for a while already. We'll deal with it." She wondered how long his resolve to wait would last if she lifted her face to claim his mouth with her own, if she ran her fingers down the groove of his spine. If she touched him lower than that. But—</p>

Page	Content
	...He swallowed again, slowly peeling himself away from her and strode to the closet to dress. Honestly, it was an effort not to leap after him and rip that damn towel away.
503	Asterin unbuttoned her jacket and shrugged it off into the flowers. She removed her shirt, and the one beneath, until her golden skin glowed in the sunlight, her breasts full and heavy. Asterin turned, and Manon fell to her knees in the grass. There, branded on Asterin's abdomen in vicious, crude letters was one word: UNCLEAN
517	"Am I? I still serve my queen, even if she cannot see it. Who was the one who abandoned her the first time a pretty human thing opened her legs—"
525	But he got out of bed, risking all of one step, drinking down the sight of the long, bare legs; the curve of her breasts, peaked despite the balmy summer night; the bob of her throat as she swallowed.
526	She tried and failed to smile. He leaned in, sliding a hand around her waist, the lace and silk smooth against his fingers, her body warm and firm beneath it, and whispered in her ear, "Even when we're apart tomorrow, I'll be with you every step of the way. And every step after—wherever that may be." She sucked in a shuddering breath, and he pulled back far enough for them to share breath. Her fingers shook as she brushed them against his mouth, and his control nearly shredded apart right there. ..."Bastard," she murmured, and kissed him. Her mouth was soft and warm, and he bit back a groan. His body went still—his entire world went still—at that whisper of a kiss, the answer to a question he'd asked for centuries. He realized he was staring only when she withdrew slightly. His fingers tightened at her waist.
593	The two waiting guards sniggered, eyes on the flap of the robe that fell open as she kicked, revealing her thighs, her stomach, everything to them. Elide sobbed, even as she knew the tears would do her no good. They just laughed, devouring her with their eyes—
611	Rowan burst out laughing. She glared at him again as she sat up, the movement agonizing, exhausting. She was naked save for the clean undergarments someone had stuffed her into, but she supposed she was decent enough. He'd seen every part of her, anyway.
613	They were sitting on the bed, Aelin in Rowan's lap, the Fae warrior's arms locked around her as he looked at her the way she deserved to be looked at. And when they kissed, deeply, without hesitation—
614	She'd lost track of how long they'd kissed for, how long she'd lost herself in him. But then she'd taken his hand and laid it on her breast, and he'd growled in a way that made her toes curl and her back arch ... and then wince at the remnant of pain flickering in her body. He had pulled back at that wince, and when she'd tried to convince him to keep going, he'd told her that he had no interest in bedding an invalid, and since they'd already waited this long, she could cool her heels and wait some more. Until she was able to keep up with him, he'd added with a wicked grin. Aelin shoved away the thought with another glare in Rowan's direction, loosed a steadying breath, and pushed down on the handle.
644	She would have preferred a little more privacy, especially with Rowan, who kept looking at her in that way that made her want to combust. Sometimes when no one was watching, he'd sneak up behind her and nuzzle her neck or tug at her earlobe with his teeth, or just slide his arms around

Page	Content
	her and hold her against him, breathing her in. One night—just one gods-damned night with him was all she wanted. They didn't dare stop at an inn, so she was left to burn, and to endure Lysandra's quiet teasing.
653	She would never forget how those guards had leered at her naked body, why her uncle had sold her to Duke Perrington.
657	She was delicately built, small enough that he might have thought her barely past her first bleed were it not for the full breasts beneath her close-fitting leathers.

Profanity	Count
Ass	28
Bitch	11
Piss	28
Prick	14
Shit	60



## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings

Challenger K-8 | Search - CHAL

https://hcsdck8.goalexandria.com/search#

Challenger K-8 School Log In

Study Programs Medium Genre

Smart Search Queen of shadows

Tags Temp List

4 Results

J F Maa

Queen of shadows: a Throne of glass novel

Maas, Sarah J.

Text-unmediated-volume (2016.)

Fantasy fiction

Image

Reading Counts: 5.4

Sarah J. Maas.

Bloomsbury.

648 pages :map ;22 cm.

9781619636064

Everyone Celaena Sardothien loves has been taken from her, but she's at last returned to the empire, for vengeance, to rescue her once-glorious kingdom, and to confront the shadows of her past.

Assassins

Identity

Identity (Psychology)

Details Copies

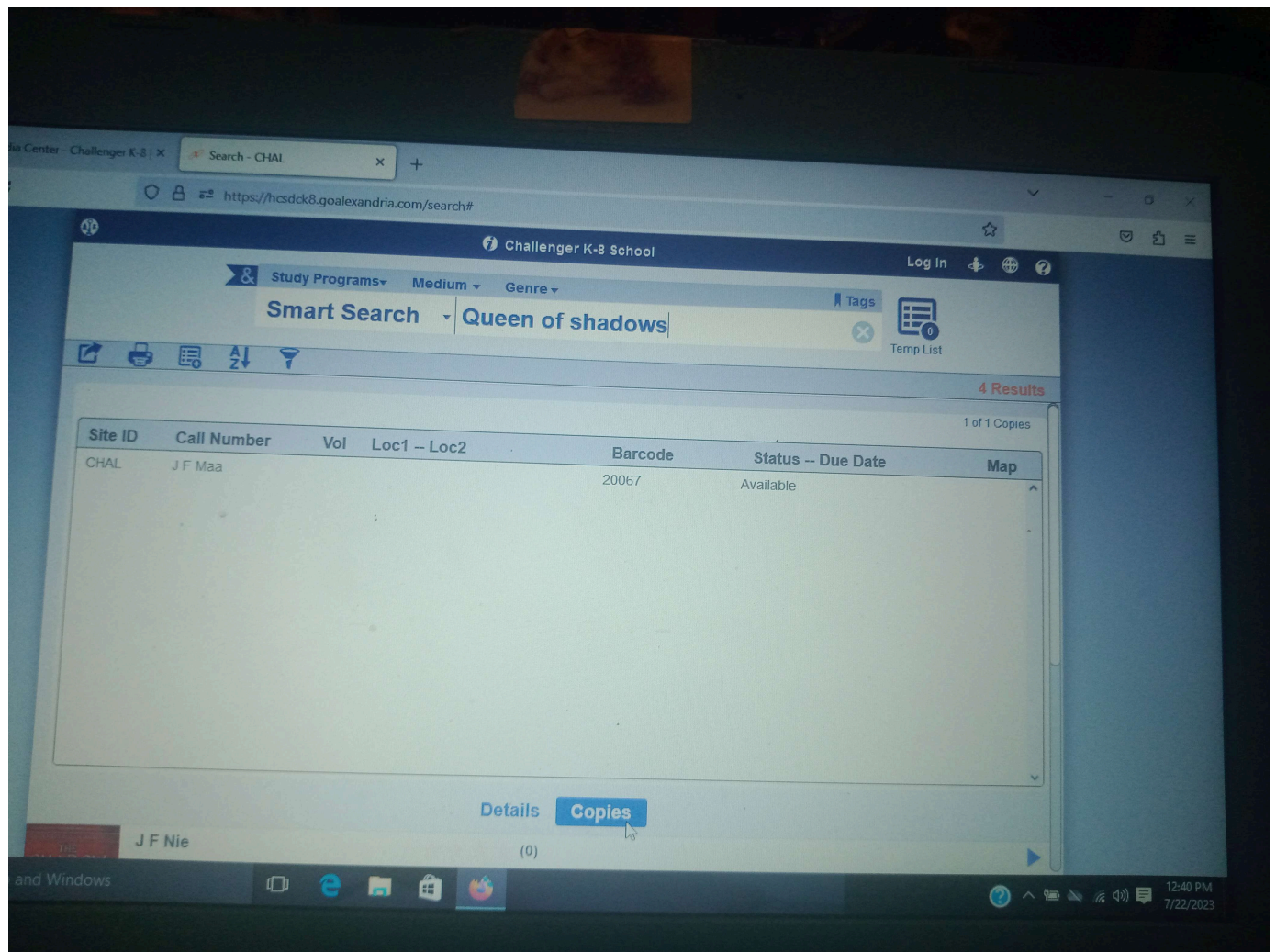
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Windows

12:39 PM 7/22/2023







## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605  
M4LHernando.CMRCChair@gmail.com

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Hernando County School District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE: DSPMS "Queen of Shadows" (M4LHC  
– 078/2023)

October 21, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 078-23) for "Queen of Shadows" which is currently located at D.S Parrott Middle School's media center. This book was discovered on Alexandria back on July 19, 2023.

"Queen of Shadows" contains sexual age-inappropriate content; inexplicit sexual nudity; sexual activities; violence; and profanity. This book clearly has a warning label for 18 years of age and up and should not be in any K8 or middle school to be exact.

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently violates H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I'm calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book from D.S Parrott Middle School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can't be "disappeared" (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name) JT

Address : PO Box 1568 City Brooksville State FL Zip Code 34605

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: October 21, 2023 Author: Sarah J. Maas

Title: Queen of Shadows

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Bloomsbury 2016

School(s) in which item is used: D.S Parrott Middle School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames, etc. Attach additional pages if necessary) Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, where? Name and date of publication: GoodReads 2020

Complainant's Signature

Julia Thomas

Date October 20, 2023



# QUEEN OF SHADOWS



*Young Adult*

**By Sarah J. Maas**

ISBN: 978-1-61963-605-7

## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains inexplicit sexual nudity; sexual activities; violence; and profanity.

## CONTENT WARNING

You are about to access material that may contain content of an ADULT nature. These files may include pictures and materials that some viewers may find offensive. If you are under the age of 18, or if such material offends you or if it is illegal for you to view these materials, please exit now.

**3** / 5

**Minor Restricted**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
203	Asterin gave her a look that made Elide wonder if she could see through the homespun dress to the bandage she used to flatten her full breasts into an unnoticeable chest.
258	<p>He wasn't like other men—not even close. There was so little she could do to jar him, taunt him. A naked body was a naked body. Especially hers.</p> <p>...She rolled over. "You mean to tell me the females in Doranelle don't have scandalous nightclothes? Or anywhere else in the world?"</p> <p>..."My encounters with other females usually didn't involve parading around in nightclothes."</p> <p>"And what clothes did they involve?"</p> <p>"Usually, none at all."</p>
277	Kaltain had been shoved up against the wall, the neck of that too-flimsy gown tugged to the side, her breast nearly out. There was such emptiness on her face—as if she weren't even there at all.
338	<p>It was what Arobynn wanted—for her to think of him as she rubbed the oil into every inch of her skin. For her breasts, her thighs, her neck to smell like almond—his chosen scent.</p> <p>His scent, because he knew that a Fae male had come to stay with her, and all signs pointed to their being close enough for scent to matter to Rowan.</p>
379	Blood stained Lysandra's skin and matted her hair, and patches had soaked through the thin silk robe that did little to hide her nakedness.
399	The pink silk clung to her waist and slid over her hips as she approached the bed, revealing the glorious length of her bare legs, still lean and tan from all the time they'd spent outdoors this spring. A strip of pale yellow lace graced the plunging neckline, and he tried—gods damn him, he honestly tried—not to look at the smooth curve of her breasts as she bent to climb into bed.
400	<p>They were both really damn lucky that she currently couldn't shift into her Fae form and smell what was pounding through his blood. It had been hard enough to conceal it from her until now. Aedion's knowing looks told him enough about what her cousin had detected.</p> <p>He'd seen her naked before—a few times. And gods, yes, there had been moments when he'd considered it, but he'd mastered himself. He'd learned to keep those useless thoughts on a short, short leash. Like that time she'd moaned at the breeze he sent her way on Beltane—the arch of her neck, the parting of that mouth of hers, the sound that came out of her—</p> <p>She was now lying on her side, her back to him.</p> <p>"About last night," he said through his teeth.</p> <p>"It's fine. It was a mistake."</p> <p>Look at me. Turn over and look at me.</p> <p>But she remained with her back to him, the moonlight caressing the silk bunched over the dip of her waist, the slope of her hip.</p>
404	<p>"That dress suits you." She jerked her chin toward Lysandra's chest. "And does wonders for them, too. The poor men in here can't stop looking."</p> <p>"Trust me, having larger ones isn't a blessing. My back hurts all the time." Lysandra frowned down at her full breasts. "As soon as I get my powers back, these things will be the first to go."</p>
434	<p>Yet there he was, his hand a brand on her bare shoulder, his body nearly covering hers. "You have nothing to be sorry for," she whispered. "I trust you, Rowan."</p> <p>He gave her a barely perceptible nod.</p> <p>"I missed you," he said quietly, his gaze darting between her mouth and eyes. "When I was in Wendlyn. I lied when I said I didn't. From the moment you left, I missed you so much I went out of my mind. I was glad for the excuse to track Lorcan here, just to see you again. And tonight, when</p>

Page	Content
	<p>he had that knife at your throat ..." The warmth of his callused finger bloomed through her as he traced a path over the cut on her neck. "I kept thinking about how you might never know that I missed you with only an ocean between us. But if it was death separating us ... I would find you. I don't care how many rules it would break. Even if I had to get all three keys myself and open a gate, I would find you again. Always."</p> <p>She blinked back the burning in her eyes as he reached between their bodies and took her hand, guiding it up to lay against his tattooed cheek.</p> <p>It was an effort to remember how to breathe, to focus on anything but that smooth, warm skin. He didn't tear his eyes away from hers as she grazed her thumb along his sharp cheekbone. Savoring each stroke, she caressed his face, that tattoo, never breaking his stare, even as it stripped her naked.</p> <p>I'm sorry, he still seemed to say.</p> <p>She kept her stare locked on his as she let go of his face and slowly, making sure he understood every step of the way, tilted her head back until her throat was arched and bared before him. "Aelin," he breathed. Not in reprimand or warning, but ... a plea. It sounded like a plea. He lowered his head to her exposed neck and hovered a hair's breadth away.</p> <p>She arched her neck farther, a silent invitation.</p> <p>Rowan let out a soft groan and grazed his teeth against her skin.</p> <p>One bite, one movement, was all it would take for him to rip out her throat.</p> <p>His elongated canines slid along her flesh—gently, precisely. She clenched the sheets to keep from running her fingers down his bare back and drawing him closer.</p> <p>He braced one hand beside her head, his fingers twining in her hair.</p> <p>"No one else," she whispered. "I would never allow anyone else at my throat." Showing him was the only way he'd understand that trust, in a manner that only the predatory, Fae side of him would comprehend. "No one else," she said again.</p> <p>He let out another low groan, answer and confirmation and request, and the rumble echoed inside her. Carefully, he closed his teeth over the spot where her lifeblood thrummed and pounded, his breath hot on her skin.</p> <p>She shut her eyes, every sense narrowing on that sensation, on the teeth and mouth at her throat, on the powerful body trembling with restraint above hers. His tongue flicked against her skin.</p> <p>She made a small noise that might have been a moan, or a word, or his name. He shuddered and pulled back, the cool air kissing her neck. Wildness—pure wildness sparked in those eyes.</p> <p>Then he thoroughly, brazenly surveyed her body, his nostrils flaring delicately as he scented exactly what she wanted.</p> <p>Her breathing turned ragged as he dragged his stare to hers—hungry, feral, unyielding.</p> <p>"Not yet," he said roughly, his own breathing uneven. "Not now."</p> <p>"Why?" It was an effort to remember speech with him looking at her like that. Like he might eat her alive. Heat pounded through her core.</p> <p>"I want to take my time with you—to learn ... every inch of you. And this apartment has very, very thin walls. I don't want to have an audience," he added as he leaned down again, brushing his mouth over the cut at the base of her throat, "when I make you moan, Aelin."</p> <p>Oh, by the Wyrd. She was in trouble. So much rutting trouble. And when he said her name like that ...</p> <p>"This changes things," she said, hardly able to get the words out.</p> <p>"Things have been changing for a while already. We'll deal with it." She wondered how long his resolve to wait would last if she lifted her face to claim his mouth with her own, if she ran her fingers down the groove of his spine. If she touched him lower than that. But—</p>

Page	Content
	...He swallowed again, slowly peeling himself away from her and strode to the closet to dress. Honestly, it was an effort not to leap after him and rip that damn towel away.
503	Asterin unbuttoned her jacket and shrugged it off into the flowers. She removed her shirt, and the one beneath, until her golden skin glowed in the sunlight, her breasts full and heavy. Asterin turned, and Manon fell to her knees in the grass. There, branded on Asterin's abdomen in vicious, crude letters was one word: UNCLEAN
517	"Am I? I still serve my queen, even if she cannot see it. Who was the one who abandoned her the first time a pretty human thing opened her legs—"
525	But he got out of bed, risking all of one step, drinking down the sight of the long, bare legs; the curve of her breasts, peaked despite the balmy summer night; the bob of her throat as she swallowed.
526	She tried and failed to smile. He leaned in, sliding a hand around her waist, the lace and silk smooth against his fingers, her body warm and firm beneath it, and whispered in her ear, "Even when we're apart tomorrow, I'll be with you every step of the way. And every step after—wherever that may be." She sucked in a shuddering breath, and he pulled back far enough for them to share breath. Her fingers shook as she brushed them against his mouth, and his control nearly shredded apart right there. ..."Bastard," she murmured, and kissed him. Her mouth was soft and warm, and he bit back a groan. His body went still—his entire world went still—at that whisper of a kiss, the answer to a question he'd asked for centuries. He realized he was staring only when she withdrew slightly. His fingers tightened at her waist.
593	The two waiting guards sniggered, eyes on the flap of the robe that fell open as she kicked, revealing her thighs, her stomach, everything to them. Elide sobbed, even as she knew the tears would do her no good. They just laughed, devouring her with their eyes—
611	Rowan burst out laughing. She glared at him again as she sat up, the movement agonizing, exhausting. She was naked save for the clean undergarments someone had stuffed her into, but she supposed she was decent enough. He'd seen every part of her, anyway.
613	They were sitting on the bed, Aelin in Rowan's lap, the Fae warrior's arms locked around her as he looked at her the way she deserved to be looked at. And when they kissed, deeply, without hesitation—
614	She'd lost track of how long they'd kissed for, how long she'd lost herself in him. But then she'd taken his hand and laid it on her breast, and he'd growled in a way that made her toes curl and her back arch ... and then wince at the remnant of pain flickering in her body. He had pulled back at that wince, and when she'd tried to convince him to keep going, he'd told her that he had no interest in bedding an invalid, and since they'd already waited this long, she could cool her heels and wait some more. Until she was able to keep up with him, he'd added with a wicked grin. Aelin shoved away the thought with another glare in Rowan's direction, loosed a steadying breath, and pushed down on the handle.
644	She would have preferred a little more privacy, especially with Rowan, who kept looking at her in that way that made her want to combust. Sometimes when no one was watching, he'd sneak up behind her and nuzzle her neck or tug at her earlobe with his teeth, or just slide his arms around

Page	Content
	her and hold her against him, breathing her in. One night—just one gods-damned night with him was all she wanted. They didn't dare stop at an inn, so she was left to burn, and to endure Lysandra's quiet teasing.
653	She would never forget how those guards had leered at her naked body, why her uncle had sold her to Duke Perrington.
657	She was delicately built, small enough that he might have thought her barely past her first bleed were it not for the full breasts beneath her close-fitting leathers.

Profanity	Count
Ass	28
Bitch	11
Piss	28
Prick	14
Shit	60



## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings

D. S. Parrott Middle School

Log In

Study Programs
Medium
Genre
Tags

Smart Search
queen of Shadows
Temp List

2 Results

Maas, Sarah J.  
[book] (2015)  
Sarah J. Maas.  
Bloomsbury  
648 p. :map ;24 cm.  
9781619636040

Fantasy fiction  
Image  
Reading Counts: 5.4  
Lexile: 830  
Everyone Celaena Sardothien loves has been taken from her; but she's at last returned to the empire, for vengeance, to rescue her once-glorious kingdom, and to confront the shadows of her past.

Assassins  
Identity  
Identity (Psychology)

Details
Copies

DSP FIC Nie  
The shadow throne  
★★★★★ (0)

Search

76°F Mostly clear

12:11 AM  
7/19/2023

D. S. Parrott Middle School

Log In

Study Programs
Medium
Genre
Tags

Smart Search
queen of Shadows
Temp List

2 Results

Site ID	Call Number	Vol	Loc1 -- Loc2	Barcode	Status -- Due Date	Map
PARR	DSP FIC Maa			24101055512551	Checked out -- 4/19/2018	

Details
Copies

DSP FIC Nie
The shadow throne
★★★★★ (0)

o search

76°F Mostly clear
12:11 AM 7/19/2023

<https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/sarah-j-maas/queen-of-shadows-maas/>

# QUEEN OF SHADOWS

## From the Throne of Glass series , Vol. 4

BY SARAH J. MAAS • RELEASE DATE: SEPT. 1, 2015

*Impossible to put down.*

Having cast off her Celaena identity, Aelin returns to Adarlan to reclaim her crown.

Leaving Rowan behind after *Heir of Fire* (2014), Aelin arrives determined to stop the king's deadly demons, the Valg. She seeks out her former master from her assassin days, the charismatic and devious Arobynn, and also finds Chaol, but there's no happy reunion between the two. (Chaol fans shouldn't worry—while he and Aelin may not see eye to eye, he has prominent storylines and character growth.) Aelin's most pressing priority is the rescue of her cousin Aedion, slated for execution at Prince Dorian's birthday as an obvious trap for her. As for Dorian, he's imprisoned in his own body by the Valg controlling him—Chaol holds hope that he can be saved; Aelin knows how unlikely that is. Meanwhile, Wing Leader Manon, head of Adarlan's wyvern-riding witch army, finds growing dissent at the commands she is given, leading to tough choices. At times believability is stretched (fugitives travel around the city freely, one or two heroes defeat large groups of enemies), but character motivations and interactions—friendships, romances, and others—are always nuanced and on point, especially as Aelin's growing maturity offers her new perspectives on old acquaintances. The ending leaves readers poised for the next installment.

Impossible to put down. (*Fantasy. 14 & up*)

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/76707900-queen-of-shadows>

# Queen of Shadows

Sarah J. Maas

4.60

729,378 ratings 53,027 reviews

**Goodreads Choice Award**

**Winner for Best Young Adult Fantasy & Science Fiction (2015)**

*An alternative cover edition for this ISBN can be found [here](#).*

Everyone Celaena Sardothien loves has been taken from her. But she's at last returned to the empire—for vengeance, to rescue her once-glorious kingdom, and to confront the shadows of her past...

She has embraced her identity as Aelin Galathynius, Queen of Terrasen. But before she can reclaim her throne, she must fight.

She will fight for her cousin, a warrior prepared to die for her. She will fight for her friend, a young man trapped in an unspeakable prison. And she will fight for her people, enslaved to a brutal king and awaiting their lost queen's triumphant return.

The fourth volume in the *New York Times* bestselling series continues Celaena's epic journey and builds to a passionate, agonizing crescendo that might just shatter her world.



THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

# Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days following the formation of the committee. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School Challenger K8 Date 3-21-24

Title Queen of Shadows

Author Sarah Maas

## Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material

### Silent Voting Results:

5 Do Not Remove

0 Remove/Discontinue

Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
<p>If committee is recommending to limit access-</p> <p><u>      </u> Grade Level</p> <p><u>      </u> For Advance Course</p> <p><u>      </u> Parent Permission</p>	<p>Basis for removal, check all that apply:</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is pornographic</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.</p> <p><u>      </u> The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.</p>

# Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

Print Name

Position

Signature

Rosemarie Maiorini	Principal	Rosemarie Maiorini
Debbie Warren	District	D Warren
Schandel Hill	Lay	Schandel Hill
Victoria Spina	Community	Victoria Spina
Beth Bernado	Parent	Beth Bernado

Administrator's Signature

Rosemarie Maiorini

Date

3/21/24



TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: April 1, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenge CK8 058-23 & DSPMS 078-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, “Queen of Shadows” at Challenger K-8 and D.S. Parrott Middle School. The review committee at Challenger K-8 has evaluated the book, "Queen of Shadows", written by Sarah Maas based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is that the book is not removed from Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on May 7, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before May 7, 2024.

B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -\*\*

Funding Source

Account Name

Account Number

Amount \$

Fund

Function

Object

Cost Center

Project

Sub Project

Funding Source

Account Name

Account Number

Amount \$

Fund

Function

Object

Cost Center

Project

Sub Project

**C. History**

Check one:

**Prior Year Budget:** ☐

**New for Current Year:** ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

465



# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

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**Agenda Item # 23. 24-2247**

5/7/2024

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**Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Tower of Dawn" written by Sarah Maas, in circulation and be made available to students in grades 9-12 in Hernando County High Schools.

**Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to keep the book, "Tower of Dawn" written by Sarah Maas, in circulation and be made available to students in grades 9-12 in Hernando County High Schools. This book is being challenged at Central High School.

Central High School's Review Committee met on February 15, 2024 and March 1, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 3-2 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book stay in circulation and be made available to students in grades 9-12 in Hernando County High Schools.

Per Hernando County School District 2522 Policy requirements, the Superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to keep the book.

**My Contact**

Kelly Downey

Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs

352-797-7000 ext. 280

downey\_k@hcsb.k12.fl.us

**2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

**Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.





## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605

M4LHernando.CMRCChair@gmail.com

Hernando County School. District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE: CHS "Tower of Dawn" (M4LHC –  
0103/2023)

October 31, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 0102-23) for "Tower of Dawn" which is currently located at Central High School's media center. This book was discovered back on July 21, 2023.

"Tower of Dawn" has a warning label marked for ages 18 and above. This book contains sexual activities; sexual nudity; mild profanity; and explicit violence.

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently violates H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I'm calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book, from Central High School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can't be "disappeared" (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name) JT

Address : PO Box 1568 City Brooksville State FL Zip Code 34605

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: October 31, 2023 Author: Sarah Maas

Title: Tower of Dawn

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Bloomsbury 2017,

School(s) in which item is used: Central High School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames, etc. Attach additional pages if necessary) Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

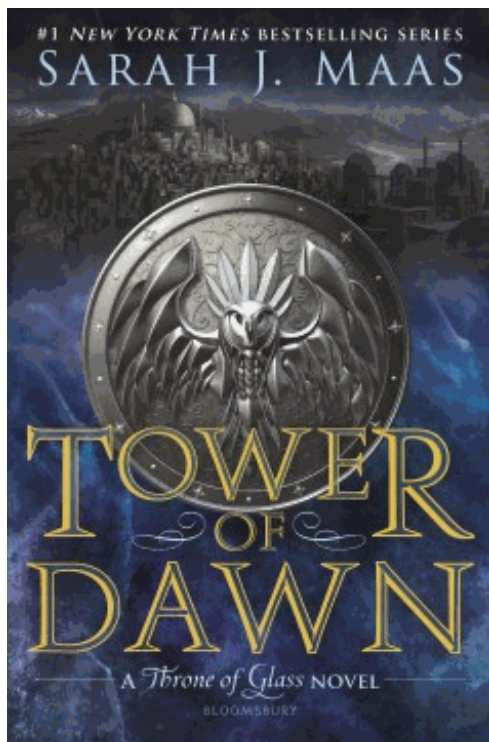
If yes, where? Name and date of publication: GoodReads 2020

Complainant's Signature

Julia Thomas

Date October 31, 2023

# TOWER OF DAWN



*Young Adult*

**By Sarah J. Maas**

ISBN: 978-1-68119-580-3

## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains sexual activities; sexual nudity; mild profanity; and explicit violence.

## CONTENT WARNING

You are about to access material that may contain content of an ADULT nature. These files may include pictures and materials that some viewers may find offensive. If you are under the age of 18, or if such material offends you or if it is illegal for you to view these materials, please exit now.

**3** / 5

**Minor Restricted**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
35	EThen she guided him down another and another, until he was sitting up to his shoulders. Eye-level with her full, peaked breasts.
61	<p>"The lack of feeling and movement begins at my hips."</p> <p>Yrene's eyes shot right to them, dancing over him. "Are you capable of using your manhood?"</p> <p>He tried not to flinch. Even Nesryn blinked at the frank question.</p> <p>"Yes," he said tightly, fighting the heat rising in his cheeks.</p> <p>She looked between them, assessing. "Have you used it to completion?"</p>
63	Her hands pushed and pressed on his thighs, and he watched with no small amount of growing horror as she slid them higher and higher. He was about to demand if she planned to ascertain for herself about the life in his manhood, but Yrene lifted her head and met his stare.
148	<p>Kadara was beautiful.</p> <p>Each of the ruk's golden feathers shone like burnished metal, the white of her breast bright as fresh snow. And her gold eyes had sized Nesryn up immediately. Before Sartaq even turned from where he'd been buckling on the saddle across her broad back.</p>
185	"For patients completely immobilized, this may not be an option, but Lord Westfall retains the ability to move above his waist and can steer the horse with the reins. Balance and safety, of course, remain concerns, but another is that he retains use and sensation of his manhood—which also presents a few hiccups regarding the comfort of the brace itself."
192	She hadn't even kissed a man until last autumn. Certainly had never giggled over one.
218	Too thin, she'd told Yrene by way of greeting. She needed a fatter ass for her lover to grip at night.
225	<p>He kissed her when she'd walked by to dress for dinner.</p> <p>He'd grabbed her by the wrist and tugged her down, and kissed her once. Brief—but thorough.</p>
255	<p>A young woman and man had positioned themselves on either side of Arghun, one nibbling at his neck while the other traced circles along the prince's thighs. All the while, the prince continued conversation with a vizier seated in a chair to his left, unfazed.</p> <p>"I thought he had a wife," Chaol said.</p> <p>Yrene followed his gaze. "He does. She stays at his country estate. And servants are not considered affairs. The needs they see to ... It might as well be giving a bath." Her eyes danced as she said, "I'm sure you discovered that your first day."</p>
259	<p>Yrene's eyes dropped to his mouth, and every instinct, every bit of focus, narrowed on that movement. Every part of him came to aching attention. And the sensation of it, as he casually adjusted his jacket over his lap, was better than an ice bath.</p> <p>The smoke—the opiates. It was some sort of aphrodisiac, some lulling of common sense.</p> <p>Yrene was still watching his mouth as if it were a piece of fruit, her uneven breath lifting those lush, high breasts within the confines of her gown.</p>

Page	Content
450	<p>"I had her in my bed, so I think that says enough about my feelings."</p> <p>He hated the words, even as the temper, the sharpness ... it was a relief, too. Yrene sucked in a breath, but didn't back down. "Yes, you had her in your bed, but I think she was likely a distraction, and was sick of it. Perhaps sick of being a consolation prize."</p>
455	<p>And it was only when Yrene settled her hand on his chest, not to push him away but to feel the raging, thunderous heartbeat beneath, that Chaol lowered his head and kissed her.</p> <p>He was standing. He was walking.</p> <p>And he was kissing her.</p> <p>Yrene could barely breathe, barely keep inside her skin, as Chaol's mouth settled over hers.</p> <p>It was like waking up or being born or falling out of the sky. It was an answer and a song, and she could not think or feel fast enough.</p> <p>Her hands curled into his shirt, fingers wrapping around fistfuls of fabric, tugging him closer.</p> <p>His lips caressed hers in patient, unhurried movements, as if tracing the feel of her. And when his teeth grazed her lower lip ... She opened her mouth to him. He swept in, pressing her farther into the wall. She barely felt the molding digging into her spine, the sleekness of the wallpaper against her back as his tongue slid into her mouth. Yrene moaned, not caring who heard, who might be listening. They could all go to hell for all she cared. She was burning, glowing—</p> <p>Chaol laid a hand against her jaw, angling her face to better claim her mouth. She arched, silently begging him to take—</p> <p>She knew he hadn't meant what he said, knew it had been himself he'd been raging at. She'd goaded him into that fight, and even if it had hurt ... She'd known the moment he stood, when her heart had stopped dead, that he hadn't meant it. That he would have crawled.</p> <p>This man, this noble and selfless and remarkable man ...</p> <p>Yrene dragged her hands around his shoulders, fingers slipping into his silken brown hair. More, more, more—</p> <p>But his kiss was thorough. As if he wanted to learn every taste, every angle of her. She brushed her tongue against his, and his growl had her toes curling in her slippers—</p> <p>She felt the tremor go through him before she registered what it was.</p> <p>The strain.</p> <p>Still he kissed her, seemed intent to do so, even if it brought him crashing to the floor.</p> <p>Small steps. Small measures.</p> <p>Yrene broke away, putting a hand on his chest when he made to claim her mouth again.</p>
457	<p>Yrene caught him, steadied him.</p> <p>"I thought you never stepped in to help me," he said drily, raising a brow.</p> <p>"In the chair, yes. You have much farther to fall now."</p> <p>Chaol huffed a laugh, then leaned in to whisper in her ear, "Will it be the bed or the couch now, Yrene?"</p>



Page	Content
	<p>She swallowed, daring a sidelong look up at him. His eyes were still dark, his face flushed and lips swollen. From her.</p> <p>Yrene's blood heated, her core near-molten. How the hell would she have him nearly naked before her now?</p> <p>"You are still my patient," she managed to say primly, and guided him into his chair. Nearly shoved him onto it—and nearly leaped atop him, too.</p> <p>...Chaol's answering smile was anything but. So was the way he growled, "Come here."</p> <p>Yrene's heartbeat pounded through every inch of her as she closed the foot of space between them. As she held his burning gaze and settled into his lap.</p> <p>His hand slid beneath her hair to cup the back of her neck, drawing her face to his as he brushed a kiss over the corner of her mouth. Then the other. She gripped his shoulder, fingers digging into the hard muscle beneath, her breathing turning jagged as he nipped at her bottom lip, as his other hand began to explore up her torso—</p>
461	<p>The color on her face, he realized with no small amount of male satisfaction, was from far more than the heat. And when they'd eventually left, walking slowly into the cool shadows of the halls, Yrene had tugged him into a curtained-off alcove and kissed him.</p> <p>Leaning against a supply shelf for support, his hands had roved all over her, the generous curves and small waist, tangling into her long, heavy hair. She'd kissed and kissed him, breathless and panting, and then licked—actually licked the sweat from his neck.</p> <p>Chaol had groaned so loudly that it was no surprise a servant appeared a heartbeat later, ripping the curtain away, as if to chide two workers for shirking their duties.</p>
482	<p>While Chaol was in his usual teal jacket and brown pants, Yrene had forgone a dress.</p> <p>They'd swathed her in white and gold against the sun, her long tunic flowing to her knees to reveal loose, gauzy pants tucked into high brown boots. A belt cinched her slim waist, and a glinting bandolier of gold and silver beading sliced between her breasts. Her hair, she'd left in her usual half-up fashion, but someone had woven bits of gold thread through it.</p> <p>Beautiful. As lovely as a sunrise.</p>
491	<p>But it was the relief in his face as he asked, "Your tent or mine?" that made her worry—just a tad.</p> <p>"Mine," she said, aware of the servants and nobility who likely had no idea she was even the cause of this excursion, but who would happily report her comings and goings. He nodded, and she monitored each rise and placement of his legs, the shifting of his torso, the way he leaned on that cane.</p> <p>As Chaol edged past her and into the tent, he murmured in her ear, "I won, by the way."</p> <p>Yrene glanced toward the sun now making its descent and felt her core tighten in answer.</p>
500	<p>Yrene blushed as his gaze slid along her neckline, to the swaths of skin the flowing folds of the dress revealed along her waist. Her thighs. Silver and clear beads had</p>

Page	Content
	<p>been sewn onto the entire thing, making the gown shimmer like the stars now flickering to life in the night sky above them.</p>
513	<p>She slid the locket's fine silver chain over her head, the links catching in the stray, luscious curls. He watched her lift the mass of her hair over the chain, setting it dangling down to the edge of her breasts. Against the honey-brown of her skin, the locket was like quicksilver. She traced her slim fingers over the engraved surface.</p> <p>...His heart thundered through every inch of him.</p> <p>Yrene rose onto her toes and pressed a kiss, light as a caress, to his mouth. Never breaking his stare.</p> <p>He read the unspoken words there. He wondered if she read the ones not voiced by him, either.</p> <p>"I will cherish it always," Yrene said, and he knew she wasn't talking about the locket. Not as she lowered a hand from his face to his chest. Atop his raging heart. "No matter what may befall the world." Another featherlight kiss. "No matter the oceans, or mountains, or forests in the way."</p> <p>Any leash on himself snapped. Letting his cane thump to the floor, Chaol drifted a hand around her waist, his thumb stroking along the sliver of bare skin the dress revealed. The other he plunged into that luxurious, heavy hair, cupping the back of her head as he tilted her face upward. As he studied those brown-gold eyes, the emotion simmering in them.</p> <p>"I am glad that I do not love them, either, Yrene Towers," he whispered onto her lips.</p> <p>Then his mouth was on hers, and she opened for him, the heat and silk of her driving a groan from deep in his throat.</p> <p>Her hands speared into his hair, onto his shoulders, across his chest and up his neck. As if she could not touch enough of him.</p> <p>Chaol reveled in the fingers she dug into his clothes, as if they were claws seeking purchase. He slid his tongue against hers, and her moan as she pushed herself against him—</p> <p>Chaol backed them toward the bed, its white sheets near-glowing in the lantern light, not caring that his steps were uneven, staggering. Not with that dress little more than cobwebs and mist, not when he never took his mouth from hers, remained unable to take his mouth from hers.</p> <p>Yrene's knees hit the mattress behind them, and she drew her lips away enough to protest, "Your back—"</p> <p>"I'll manage." He slanted his mouth over hers again, her kiss searing him to his very soul.</p> <p>His. She was his, and he had never had anything he could call such. Wanted to call such.</p> <p>Chaol couldn't bring himself to rip his mouth away from Yrene's long enough to ask if she considered him hers. To explain that he already knew his own answer. Had perhaps known from the moment she'd walked into that sitting room and did not look at him with an ounce of pity or sadness.</p> <p>He nudged her with a press of his hips, and she let him lay her upon the bed gently—reverently.</p> <p>Her reach for him, hauling him atop her, was anything but.</p>

Page	Content
	<p>Chaol huffed a laugh against her warm neck, the skin softer than silk, as she scrabbled with his buttons, his buckles. She writhed against him, and as he settled his weight over her, every hard part of him lining up with so many soft parts of her ...</p> <p>He was going to fly out of his skin.</p> <p>Yrene's breath was sharp and ragged against his ear, her hands tugging desperately at his shirt, trying to slide to his back beneath.</p> <p>"I'd think you were sick of touching my back."</p> <p>She shut him up with a plundering kiss that made him forget language for a while. Forget about his name and his title and everything but her.</p> <p>Yrene.</p> <p>Yrene.</p> <p>Yrene.</p> <p>She moaned when he slid a hand up her thigh, baring her skin beneath the folds of that gown. When he did it to the other leg. When he nipped at her mouth and traced idle circles with his fingers over those beautiful thighs, starting along their outer edge and arcing over—</p> <p>Yrene did not appreciate being toyed with. Not as she wrapped a hand around him, and his entire body bowed into the touch, the sensation of it. Not just a hand stroking over him, but Yrene doing it—</p> <p>He couldn't think, couldn't do anything but taste and touch and yield.</p> <p>And yet—</p> <p>He found words. Found language again. Long enough to ask, "Have you ever—" "Yes." The word was a rough pant. "Once."</p> <p>Chaol shoved against the ripple of darkness, the line on that throat. He only kissed it instead. Licked it. Then asked against her skin, his mouth skirting up her jaw, "Do you want to—"</p> <p>"Keep going."</p> <p>But he made himself pause. Made himself rise to look at her face, his hands on her sleek thighs and her hand still gripping him, stroking him. "Yes, then?"</p> <p>Yrene's eyes were gold flame. "Yes," she breathed. She leaned up, kissed him gently. Not lightly, but sweetly. Openly. "Yes."</p> <p>A shudder wracked through him at the words, and he gripped her thigh right where it met her hip. Yrene released him to lift her hips, dragging herself over him. Feeling him, with only the thin gossamer panel of her gown between them. Nothing beneath.</p> <p>Chaol slid it to the side, bunching the material at her waist. He dipped his head, eager to look his fill, then to touch and taste and learn what made Yrene Towers lose control entirely—</p> <p>"Later," Yrene begged hoarsely. "Later."</p> <p>He couldn't bring himself to deny her anything. This woman who held everything he was, all he had left, in her beautiful hands.</p> <p>So Chaol removed his shirt, his pants following with a few, trickier maneuvers. Then he removed that dress of hers, leaving it in scraps on the floor beside the bed.</p> <p>Until Yrene only wore that locket. Until Chaol surveyed every inch of her and found himself unable to breathe.</p>

Page	Content
	<p>"I will cherish it always," Chaol whispered as he slid into her, slow and deep. Pleasure rippled down his spine. "No matter what may befall the world." Yrene kissed his neck, his shoulder, his jaw. "No matter the oceans, or mountains, or forests in the way."</p> <p>Chaol held Yrene's stare as he stilled, letting her adjust. Letting himself adjust to the sensation that the entire axis of the world had shifted. Looking into those eyes of hers, swimming with brightness, he wondered if she felt it, too.</p> <p>But Yrene kissed him again, in answer and silent demand. And as Chaol began to move in her, he realized that here, amongst the dunes and stars...</p>
518	<p>Her quick, unimpressive, and only brush with sex had been just last autumn, and had left her in no hurry to seek it out again. But this ...</p> <p>He'd made sure she found her pleasure. Repeatedly. Before he ever found his own.</p> <p>And beyond that, the things he made her feel—</p> <p>Not just as a result of his body, but who he was ...</p> <p>Yrene pressed an idle kiss to the sculpted muscle of his chest, savoring the fingers he still trained down her spine, over and over.</p>
519	<p>Between bouts of lovemaking, when she'd gone to move his cane within easy reach of the bed, she'd slid the small note inside. The fit had been perfect.</p>
576	<p>He went still at the smokiness in her eyes. Slowly, Yrene undid the laces down the front of that pale purple gown. Let it ripple to the floor, along with her undergarments.</p> <p>His mouth turned dry as she kept her eyes upon him, hips swishing with every step she took to the pool. To the stairs.</p> <p>Yrene stepped into the water, and his blood roared in his ears.</p> <p>Chaol was upon her before she'd hit the last step.</p> <p>They missed dinner. And dessert.</p> <p>And midnight kahve.</p> <p>Kadja snuck in during the bath to change the sheets. Yrene couldn't bring herself to be mortified at what the servant had likely heard. They certainly hadn't been quiet in the water.</p> <p>And certainly weren't quiet during the hours following.</p> <p>Yrene was limp with exhaustion when they peeled apart, sweaty enough that another trip to the bath was imminent. Chaol's chest rose and fell in mighty gulps. In the desert, he'd been unbelievable. But now, healed—beyond the spine, the legs; healed in that dark, rotting place within his soul ...</p> <p>He pressed a kiss to her sweat-sticky brow, his lips catching in the stray curls that had appeared thanks to the bath. His other hand drew circles on her lower back.</p>
578	<p>She kissed his chest, right over his heart. "How could I resist these muscles?"</p> <p>His laugh rumbled into her mouth, her bones. "The consummate professional."</p> <p>...She let out a dainty hum and traced a circle around his nipple. "What sort of place?"</p> <p>...A corner of Chaol's mouth kicked up, and he hauled her over him. "I think I know of just the position."</p>
647	<p>Then you and I will fly back here. Together." He kissed her again—a bare caress of his mouth. "And so we shall remain for the rest of our days."</p>

Page	Content
	...So she wrapped her arms around his neck and kissed him. It was tentative, and soft, and full of wonder, that kiss. He tasted like the wind, like a mountain spring. He tasted like home.
652	But Chaol pushed that from his mind as he slid his arms around Yrene's waist and pressed a kiss to the crook of her neck. She didn't so much as freeze at the touch from behind. As if she'd learned the cadence of his steps. As if she took none of them for granted, either. Yrene leaned back into him, her body loosening with a sigh as she laid her hands atop where his rested over her stomach.
654	"You're suited to it," he said, kissing her neck again. ...Where they had remained, to the annoyance of the fish, kissing until a servant had pointedly coughed on their way past.
657	Yrene was watching him warily. He kissed her once—twice.
658	"Will I ever hear an explanation for this dramatic reaction," Yrene said at last, clicking her tongue, "or are you just going to kiss me for the rest of the day?" ...Yrene rose onto her toes to kiss him before he led them toward their spacious stateroom.

Profanity	Count
Ass	8
Bitch	3
Piss	8
Shit	16



## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings

Central High School


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FIC MAA VOL 6

Tower of dawn

Maas, Sarah J.

[book] (2017.)

★★★★★ (0)

Fantasy fiction

Sarah J. Maas.

Bloomsbury,

664 p. :map ;25 cm.

9781681195773


"Chaol Westfall has always defined himself by his unwavering loyalty, his strength, and his position as the Captain of the Guard. But all of that has changed since the glass castle shattered, since his men were slaughtered, since the King of Adarlan spared him from a killing blow, but left his body broken. His only shot at recovery lies with the legendary healers of the Torre Cesme in Antica--the stronghold of the southern continent's mighty empire. And with war looming over Dorian and Aelin back home, their survival might lie with Chaol and Nesryn convincing its rulers to ally with them. But what they discover in Antica will change them both--and be more vital to...

Kings and rulers

Courts and courtiers

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The World Trade Center remembered

Bullaty, Sonja.

★★★★★ (0)

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*Throne of Glass* #6

# Tower of Dawn

Sarah J. Maas

4.27

464,374 ratings 39,594 reviews

**Goodreads Choice Award**

**Nominee for Best Young Adult Fantasy & Science Fiction (2017)**

*An alternative cover edition for this ISBN can be found [here](#).*

Chaol Westfall and Nesryn Faliq have arrived in the shining city of Antica to forge an alliance with the Khagan of the Southern Continent, whose vast armies are Erilea's last hope. But they have also come to Antica for another purpose: to seek healing at the famed Torre Cesme for the wounds Chaol received in Rifthold.

After enduring unspeakable horrors as a child, Yrene Towers has no desire to help the young lord from Adarlan, let alone heal him. Yet she has sworn an oath to assist those in need—and will honor it. But Lord Westfall carries shadows from his own past, and Yrene soon comes to realize they could engulf them both.

In this sweeping parallel novel to the *New York Times* bestselling *Empire of Storms*, Chaol, Nesryn, and Yrene will have to draw on every scrap of their resilience if they wish to save their friends. But while they become entangled in the political webs of the khaganate, deep in the shadows of mighty mountains where warriors soar on legendary ruks, long-awaited answers slumber. Answers that might offer their world a chance at survival—or doom them all . . .

Genres **Fantasy Young Adult Romance New Adult Fiction Magic Fae**  
...more

663 pages, Hardcover

First published September 5, 2017

# **Tower of Dawn (Throne of Glass, 6) Paperback – October 23, 2018**

by Sarah J Maas (Author)

4.7 4.7 out of 5 stars\_ 48,371 ratings

4.3 on Goodreads

**In the next installment of the *New York Times* bestselling Throne of Glass series, follow Chaol on his sweeping journey to a distant empire.**

Chaol Westfall has always defined himself by his unwavering loyalty, his strength, and his position as the Captain of the Guard. But all of that has changed since the glass castle shattered, since his men were slaughtered, since the King of Adarlan spared him from a killing blow, but left his body broken.

His only shot at recovery lies with the legendary healers of the Torre Cesme in Antica--the stronghold of the southern continent's mighty empire. And with war looming over Dorian and Aelin back home, their survival might lie with Chaol and Nesryn convincing its rulers to ally with them.

But what they discover in Antica will change them both--and be more vital to saving Erilea than they could have imagined

## **TOWER OF DAWN**

**From the Throne of Glass series , Vol. 6**

BY SARAH J. MAAS • RELEASE DATE: SEPT. 5, 2017

*A compelling story of hard-fought growth and redemption, with yet more to come in at least one more future volume.*



Maas chronicles Chaol and Nesryn's activities during *Empire of Storms* (2016).

Chaol (a rare white character in this book) and Nesryn venture to the Southern Continent on a mission with two objectives. One is to make an alliance with the powerful khagan, the other to see if the famed healers of Antica's Torre Cesme can use their magic to repair his spine. The progressive khaganate, a multicultural empire modeled after Mongolia, is lavishly and lovingly explored during the first half of the book. Nesryn enjoys it as well, taking pleasure in not being a racial other, as she is Adarlan; her father was from the Southern Continent, and her family names are analogous to Arabic). Nesryn, from whose third-person perspective much of the story is told, comes into her own here, apart from Chaol. A complicated political situation involving five potential heirs to the khaganate means Chaol must tread carefully to secure support. Meanwhile, Chaol's assigned healer, brown-skinned Yrene (also a point-of-view character), is from the Northern Continent and has a major grudge against Adarlan. Chaol and Yrene must work on emotional wounds as well as physical—readers who stick around till the end of this long tome will find a subversion of the typical fantasy disability narrative. Meanwhile, romances bloom, and the Valg threat looms closer, leading to major revelations.

A compelling story of hard-fought growth and redemption, with yet more to come in at least one more future volume. (*Fantasy. 14-adult*)

**Pub Date:** Sept. 5, 2017

**ISBN:** 978-1-68119-577-3

**Page Count:** 672

**Publisher:** Bloomsbury

**Review Posted Online:** Sept. 20, 2017

**Categories:**

TEENS & YOUNG ADULT SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY | TEENS & YOUNG ADULT  
ROMANCE | TEENS & YOUNG ADULT FICTION

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

# Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days after its formation. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School Central High Date 3-1-24

Title Tower of Dawn

Author Sarah Maas

## Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material

### Silent Voting Results:

3 Do Not Remove

2 Remove/Discontinue

Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
<p>If committee is recommending limiting access-</p> <p>_____ Grade Level</p> <p>_____ For Advance Course</p> <p>_____ Parent Permission</p>	<p>Basis for removal, check all that apply:</p> <p>_____ The material is pornographic</p> <p>_____ The material is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS</p> <p>_____ The material is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.</p> <p>_____ The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.</p>

# Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

Print Name

Position

Signature

Debbie Warren

District

*[Signature]*

DAVID McARTHUR

Parent

*[Signature]*

Rachel Kingdom

Lay Person  
Teacher

*[Signature]*

Kelly Slusser

Principal

*[Signature]*

PAM Everett

Community

*[Signature]*

Administrator's Signature *[Signature]*

Date 3/1/24



TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: March 4, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenge CHS 0103-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, "Tower of Dawn" at Central High School. The review committee at Central High School has evaluated the book, "Tower of Dawn", written by Sarah Maas based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is that the book is not removed from Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on May 14, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before May 14, 2024.

**A. Item Currently Budgeted -**

Account Name		<u>No Financial Impact</u>										
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

**B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -\*\***

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

**C. History**

Check one:

Prior Year Budget: ☐New for Current Year: ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$

**\*\* WHEN ITEM NOT CURRENTLY BUDGETED IS APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD, THIS WILL SERVE AS THE BUDGET AMENDMENT\*\***





# Hernando School District

## Special School Board Meeting

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**Agenda Item # 24. 24-2248**

5/7/2024

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### **Title and Board Action Requested**

Public Hearing and Final Approval of the Committee's Recommendation to keep the book, "Tower of Dawn" written by Sarah Maas, in circulation, but limit access to students in grade 8 at the middle school level for Hernando County Schools.

### **Executive Summary**

The Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs, on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby requests the Board to give approval to keep the book, "Tower of Dawn" written by Sarah Maas, in circulation, but limit access to students in grade 8 at the middle school level for Hernando County Schools. This book is being challenged at Challenger K-8.

Challenger K-8's Review Committee met on April 8, 2024 and April 11, 2024 to discuss a citizen's request for school reconsideration of the book. The committee voted 6-0 to recommend to the Superintendent that the book stay in circulation at the middle school level with limited access for 8<sup>th</sup> grade in Hernando County Schools.

Per Hernando County School District 2522 Policy requirements, the Superintendent will advise the Board of the committee's recommendation to keep the book, but limit access to grade 8 at the middle school level.

### **My Contact**

Kelly Downey

Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention and Elementary Academic Programs

352-797-7000 ext. 280

downey\_k@hcsb.k12.fl.us

### **2023-28 Strategic Focus Area**

Other

### **Financial Impact**

See attached budget sheet.

If expenditure is not currently budgeted, this will serve as the budget amendment when Board approved. If the agenda item includes the purchase of goods or services, the funds requested are an anticipated amount and may fluctuate depending on such factors as current market conditions, product availability, additional funding sources, and the needs of the District. Should the actual cost exceed the anticipated amount, the Board approves the additional cost, after review by the superintendent, but not in excess of the funds available in the site's approved annual budget.



## MOMS FOR LIBERTY – HERNANDO COUNTY CHAPTER CURRICULUM & MATERIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julia Thomas  
PO Box 1568 – Brooksville, Florida, 34605

M4LHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Hernando County School District  
919 North Broad Street.  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE: CK8 "Tower of Dawn" (M4LHC –  
0102/2023)

October 31, 2023

Hernando County School District,

You will find an attached official challenge request from (M4LHC 0102-23) for "Tower of Dawn" which is currently located at Challenger K8 School's media center. This book was discovered back on July 22, 2023.

"Tower of Dawn" has a warning label marked for ages 18 to adult clearly stating the contents are not for underage children 6 to 13 years of age. This book contains sexual activities; sexual nudity; mild profanity; and explicit violence.

The actions of the media specialist or administrative staff in selecting this book currently violates H.B 467 s. 847.012 (b) that media specialists are responsible for selecting books free of pornographic and sexually explicit materials. Furthermore, the Hernando County School District is also in violation of H.B 1557 for teaching and/ or introducing sexual orientation and gender identity to children, as well as multiple provisions of H.B. 1069.

As the newly elected Committee Chair for the Curriculum and Materials Review Committee of the Hernando County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, I remind you that besides the District of Hernando County Schools being in violation, it is not the responsibility of the District or any staff employed by the District to make a decision concerning these mature topics. District Staff should not be encouraging minors to read a book for adults only.

In closing, I'm calling on the Hernando County School Board to remove this book, from Challenger K8 School effective immediately, and in accordance with District Policy (*Media Specialist Handbook*), and H.B. 1069 which both clearly state that books can't be "disappeared" (*i.e., hidden*) but instead properly disposed of not only through steps outlined in the Media Specialist Handbook regarding the disposal of books, but also accurately noted as disposed of in Alexandria as outlined in H.B. 1069.

In Liberty,

*Julia Thomas*

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

Request for Reconsideration of Media Materials/Instructional Materials

Instructions: Complete and return this form with all materials to be reviewed.

Please type or print..

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION:

Have you read or viewed the entire material? Yes

Request Initiated by (first and last name) JT

Address : PO Box 1568 City Brooksville State FL Zip Code 34605

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email (optional)

M4IHernando.CMRCCChair@gmail.com

Date of Request: October 31, 2023 Author: Sarah Maas

Title: Tower of Dawn

Publisher, Date of Publication/Production, Type of Media: Bloomsbury 2017,

School(s) in which item is used: Challenger K8 School

What first prompted your concern? Please See Attached

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, frames, etc. Attach additional pages if necessary) Please See Attached

Are you aware of the judgement of this educational material by literary and/or authoritative critics?

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

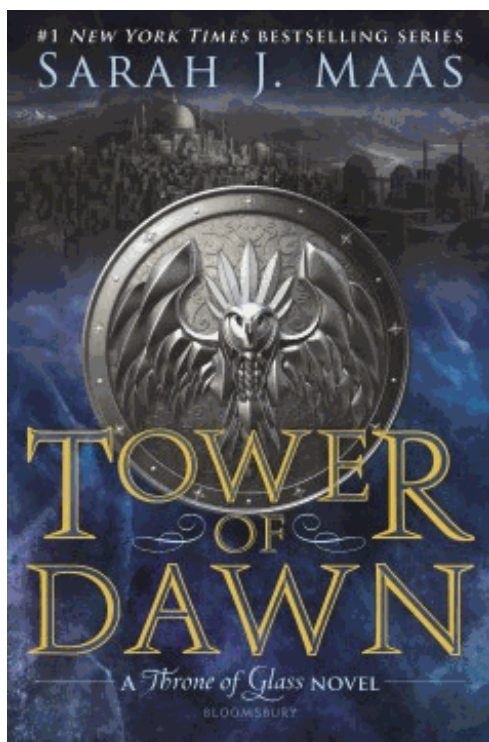
If yes, where? Name and date of publication: GoodReads 2020

Complainant's Signature

Julia Thomas

Date October 31, 2023

# TOWER OF DAWN



*Young Adult*

**By Sarah J. Maas**

ISBN: 978-1-68119-580-3

## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains sexual activities; sexual nudity; mild profanity; and explicit violence.

## CONTENT WARNING

You are about to access material that may contain content of an ADULT nature. These files may include pictures and materials that some viewers may find offensive. If you are under the age of 18, or if such material offends you or if it is illegal for you to view these materials, please exit now.

**3** / 5

**Minor Restricted**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
35	EThen she guided him down another and another, until he was sitting up to his shoulders. Eye-level with her full, peaked breasts.
61	<p>"The lack of feeling and movement begins at my hips."</p> <p>Yrene's eyes shot right to them, dancing over him. "Are you capable of using your manhood?"</p> <p>He tried not to flinch. Even Nesryn blinked at the frank question.</p> <p>"Yes," he said tightly, fighting the heat rising in his cheeks.</p> <p>She looked between them, assessing. "Have you used it to completion?"</p>
63	Her hands pushed and pressed on his thighs, and he watched with no small amount of growing horror as she slid them higher and higher. He was about to demand if she planned to ascertain for herself about the life in his manhood, but Yrene lifted her head and met his stare.
148	<p>Kadara was beautiful.</p> <p>Each of the ruk's golden feathers shone like burnished metal, the white of her breast bright as fresh snow. And her gold eyes had sized Nesryn up immediately. Before Sartaq even turned from where he'd been buckling on the saddle across her broad back.</p>
185	"For patients completely immobilized, this may not be an option, but Lord Westfall retains the ability to move above his waist and can steer the horse with the reins. Balance and safety, of course, remain concerns, but another is that he retains use and sensation of his manhood—which also presents a few hiccups regarding the comfort of the brace itself."
192	She hadn't even kissed a man until last autumn. Certainly had never giggled over one.
218	Too thin, she'd told Yrene by way of greeting. She needed a fatter ass for her lover to grip at night.
225	<p>He kissed her when she'd walked by to dress for dinner.</p> <p>He'd grabbed her by the wrist and tugged her down, and kissed her once. Brief—but thorough.</p>
255	<p>A young woman and man had positioned themselves on either side of Arghun, one nibbling at his neck while the other traced circles along the prince's thighs. All the while, the prince continued conversation with a vizier seated in a chair to his left, unfazed.</p> <p>"I thought he had a wife," Chaol said.</p> <p>Yrene followed his gaze. "He does. She stays at his country estate. And servants are not considered affairs. The needs they see to ... It might as well be giving a bath." Her eyes danced as she said, "I'm sure you discovered that your first day."</p>
259	<p>Yrene's eyes dropped to his mouth, and every instinct, every bit of focus, narrowed on that movement. Every part of him came to aching attention. And the sensation of it, as he casually adjusted his jacket over his lap, was better than an ice bath.</p> <p>The smoke—the opiates. It was some sort of aphrodisiac, some lulling of common sense.</p> <p>Yrene was still watching his mouth as if it were a piece of fruit, her uneven breath lifting those lush, high breasts within the confines of her gown.</p>



Page	Content
450	<p>"I had her in my bed, so I think that says enough about my feelings."</p> <p>He hated the words, even as the temper, the sharpness ... it was a relief, too. Yrene sucked in a breath, but didn't back down. "Yes, you had her in your bed, but I think she was likely a distraction, and was sick of it. Perhaps sick of being a consolation prize."</p>
455	<p>And it was only when Yrene settled her hand on his chest, not to push him away but to feel the raging, thunderous heartbeat beneath, that Chaol lowered his head and kissed her.</p> <p>He was standing. He was walking.</p> <p>And he was kissing her.</p> <p>Yrene could barely breathe, barely keep inside her skin, as Chaol's mouth settled over hers.</p> <p>It was like waking up or being born or falling out of the sky. It was an answer and a song, and she could not think or feel fast enough.</p> <p>Her hands curled into his shirt, fingers wrapping around fistfuls of fabric, tugging him closer.</p> <p>His lips caressed hers in patient, unhurried movements, as if tracing the feel of her. And when his teeth grazed her lower lip ... She opened her mouth to him. He swept in, pressing her farther into the wall. She barely felt the molding digging into her spine, the sleekness of the wallpaper against her back as his tongue slid into her mouth. Yrene moaned, not caring who heard, who might be listening. They could all go to hell for all she cared. She was burning, glowing—</p> <p>Chaol laid a hand against her jaw, angling her face to better claim her mouth. She arched, silently begging him to take—</p> <p>She knew he hadn't meant what he said, knew it had been himself he'd been raging at. She'd goaded him into that fight, and even if it had hurt ... She'd known the moment he stood, when her heart had stopped dead, that he hadn't meant it. That he would have crawled.</p> <p>This man, this noble and selfless and remarkable man ...</p> <p>Yrene dragged her hands around his shoulders, fingers slipping into his silken brown hair. More, more, more—</p> <p>But his kiss was thorough. As if he wanted to learn every taste, every angle of her. She brushed her tongue against his, and his growl had her toes curling in her slippers—</p> <p>She felt the tremor go through him before she registered what it was.</p> <p>The strain.</p> <p>Still he kissed her, seemed intent to do so, even if it brought him crashing to the floor.</p> <p>Small steps. Small measures.</p> <p>Yrene broke away, putting a hand on his chest when he made to claim her mouth again.</p>
457	<p>Yrene caught him, steadied him.</p> <p>"I thought you never stepped in to help me," he said drily, raising a brow.</p> <p>"In the chair, yes. You have much farther to fall now."</p> <p>Chaol huffed a laugh, then leaned in to whisper in her ear, "Will it be the bed or the couch now, Yrene?"</p>

Page	Content
	<p>She swallowed, daring a sidelong look up at him. His eyes were still dark, his face flushed and lips swollen. From her.</p> <p>Yrene's blood heated, her core near-molten. How the hell would she have him nearly naked before her now?</p> <p>"You are still my patient," she managed to say primly, and guided him into his chair. Nearly shoved him onto it—and nearly leaped atop him, too.</p> <p>...Chaol's answering smile was anything but. So was the way he growled, "Come here."</p> <p>Yrene's heartbeat pounded through every inch of her as she closed the foot of space between them. As she held his burning gaze and settled into his lap.</p> <p>His hand slid beneath her hair to cup the back of her neck, drawing her face to his as he brushed a kiss over the corner of her mouth. Then the other. She gripped his shoulder, fingers digging into the hard muscle beneath, her breathing turning jagged as he nipped at her bottom lip, as his other hand began to explore up her torso—</p>
461	<p>The color on her face, he realized with no small amount of male satisfaction, was from far more than the heat. And when they'd eventually left, walking slowly into the cool shadows of the halls, Yrene had tugged him into a curtained-off alcove and kissed him.</p> <p>Leaning against a supply shelf for support, his hands had roved all over her, the generous curves and small waist, tangling into her long, heavy hair. She'd kissed and kissed him, breathless and panting, and then licked—actually licked the sweat from his neck.</p> <p>Chaol had groaned so loudly that it was no surprise a servant appeared a heartbeat later, ripping the curtain away, as if to chide two workers for shirking their duties.</p>
482	<p>While Chaol was in his usual teal jacket and brown pants, Yrene had forgone a dress.</p> <p>They'd swathed her in white and gold against the sun, her long tunic flowing to her knees to reveal loose, gauzy pants tucked into high brown boots. A belt cinched her slim waist, and a glinting bandolier of gold and silver beading sliced between her breasts. Her hair, she'd left in her usual half-up fashion, but someone had woven bits of gold thread through it.</p> <p>Beautiful. As lovely as a sunrise.</p>
491	<p>But it was the relief in his face as he asked, "Your tent or mine?" that made her worry—just a tad.</p> <p>"Mine," she said, aware of the servants and nobility who likely had no idea she was even the cause of this excursion, but who would happily report her comings and goings. He nodded, and she monitored each rise and placement of his legs, the shifting of his torso, the way he leaned on that cane.</p> <p>As Chaol edged past her and into the tent, he murmured in her ear, "I won, by the way."</p> <p>Yrene glanced toward the sun now making its descent and felt her core tighten in answer.</p>
500	<p>Yrene blushed as his gaze slid along her neckline, to the swaths of skin the flowing folds of the dress revealed along her waist. Her thighs. Silver and clear beads had</p>

Page	Content
	<p>been sewn onto the entire thing, making the gown shimmer like the stars now flickering to life in the night sky above them.</p>
513	<p>She slid the locket's fine silver chain over her head, the links catching in the stray, luscious curls. He watched her lift the mass of her hair over the chain, setting it dangling down to the edge of her breasts. Against the honey-brown of her skin, the locket was like quicksilver. She traced her slim fingers over the engraved surface.</p> <p>...His heart thundered through every inch of him.</p> <p>Yrene rose onto her toes and pressed a kiss, light as a caress, to his mouth. Never breaking his stare.</p> <p>He read the unspoken words there. He wondered if she read the ones not voiced by him, either.</p> <p>"I will cherish it always," Yrene said, and he knew she wasn't talking about the locket. Not as she lowered a hand from his face to his chest. Atop his raging heart. "No matter what may befall the world." Another featherlight kiss. "No matter the oceans, or mountains, or forests in the way."</p> <p>Any leash on himself snapped. Letting his cane thump to the floor, Chaol drifted a hand around her waist, his thumb stroking along the sliver of bare skin the dress revealed. The other he plunged into that luxurious, heavy hair, cupping the back of her head as he tilted her face upward. As he studied those brown-gold eyes, the emotion simmering in them.</p> <p>"I am glad that I do not love them, either, Yrene Towers," he whispered onto her lips.</p> <p>Then his mouth was on hers, and she opened for him, the heat and silk of her driving a groan from deep in his throat.</p> <p>Her hands speared into his hair, onto his shoulders, across his chest and up his neck. As if she could not touch enough of him.</p> <p>Chaol reveled in the fingers she dug into his clothes, as if they were claws seeking purchase. He slid his tongue against hers, and her moan as she pushed herself against him—</p> <p>Chaol backed them toward the bed, its white sheets near-glowing in the lantern light, not caring that his steps were uneven, staggering. Not with that dress little more than cobwebs and mist, not when he never took his mouth from hers, remained unable to take his mouth from hers.</p> <p>Yrene's knees hit the mattress behind them, and she drew her lips away enough to protest, "Your back—"</p> <p>"I'll manage." He slanted his mouth over hers again, her kiss searing him to his very soul.</p> <p>His. She was his, and he had never had anything he could call such. Wanted to call such.</p> <p>Chaol couldn't bring himself to rip his mouth away from Yrene's long enough to ask if she considered him hers. To explain that he already knew his own answer. Had perhaps known from the moment she'd walked into that sitting room and did not look at him with an ounce of pity or sadness.</p> <p>He nudged her with a press of his hips, and she let him lay her upon the bed gently—reverently.</p> <p>Her reach for him, hauling him atop her, was anything but.</p>

Page	Content
	<p>Chaol huffed a laugh against her warm neck, the skin softer than silk, as she scrabbled with his buttons, his buckles. She writhed against him, and as he settled his weight over her, every hard part of him lining up with so many soft parts of her ...</p> <p>He was going to fly out of his skin.</p> <p>Yrene's breath was sharp and ragged against his ear, her hands tugging desperately at his shirt, trying to slide to his back beneath.</p> <p>"I'd think you were sick of touching my back."</p> <p>She shut him up with a plundering kiss that made him forget language for a while. Forget about his name and his title and everything but her.</p> <p>Yrene.</p> <p>Yrene.</p> <p>Yrene.</p> <p>She moaned when he slid a hand up her thigh, baring her skin beneath the folds of that gown. When he did it to the other leg. When he nipped at her mouth and traced idle circles with his fingers over those beautiful thighs, starting along their outer edge and arcing over—</p> <p>Yrene did not appreciate being toyed with. Not as she wrapped a hand around him, and his entire body bowed into the touch, the sensation of it. Not just a hand stroking over him, but Yrene doing it—</p> <p>He couldn't think, couldn't do anything but taste and touch and yield.</p> <p>And yet—</p> <p>He found words. Found language again. Long enough to ask, "Have you ever—" "Yes." The word was a rough pant. "Once."</p> <p>Chaol shoved against the ripple of darkness, the line on that throat. He only kissed it instead. Licked it. Then asked against her skin, his mouth skirting up her jaw, "Do you want to—"</p> <p>"Keep going."</p> <p>But he made himself pause. Made himself rise to look at her face, his hands on her sleek thighs and her hand still gripping him, stroking him. "Yes, then?"</p> <p>Yrene's eyes were gold flame. "Yes," she breathed. She leaned up, kissed him gently. Not lightly, but sweetly. Openly. "Yes."</p> <p>A shudder wracked through him at the words, and he gripped her thigh right where it met her hip. Yrene released him to lift her hips, dragging herself over him. Feeling him, with only the thin gossamer panel of her gown between them. Nothing beneath.</p> <p>Chaol slid it to the side, bunching the material at her waist. He dipped his head, eager to look his fill, then to touch and taste and learn what made Yrene Towers lose control entirely—</p> <p>"Later," Yrene begged hoarsely. "Later."</p> <p>He couldn't bring himself to deny her anything. This woman who held everything he was, all he had left, in her beautiful hands.</p> <p>So Chaol removed his shirt, his pants following with a few, trickier maneuvers. Then he removed that dress of hers, leaving it in scraps on the floor beside the bed.</p> <p>Until Yrene only wore that locket. Until Chaol surveyed every inch of her and found himself unable to breathe.</p>

Page	Content
	<p>"I will cherish it always," Chaol whispered as he slid into her, slow and deep. Pleasure rippled down his spine. "No matter what may befall the world." Yrene kissed his neck, his shoulder, his jaw. "No matter the oceans, or mountains, or forests in the way."</p> <p>Chaol held Yrene's stare as he stilled, letting her adjust. Letting himself adjust to the sensation that the entire axis of the world had shifted. Looking into those eyes of hers, swimming with brightness, he wondered if she felt it, too.</p> <p>But Yrene kissed him again, in answer and silent demand. And as Chaol began to move in her, he realized that here, amongst the dunes and stars...</p>
518	<p>Her quick, unimpressive, and only brush with sex had been just last autumn, and had left her in no hurry to seek it out again. But this ...</p> <p>He'd made sure she found her pleasure. Repeatedly. Before he ever found his own.</p> <p>And beyond that, the things he made her feel—</p> <p>Not just as a result of his body, but who he was ...</p> <p>Yrene pressed an idle kiss to the sculpted muscle of his chest, savoring the fingers he still trained down her spine, over and over.</p>
519	<p>Between bouts of lovemaking, when she'd gone to move his cane within easy reach of the bed, she'd slid the small note inside. The fit had been perfect.</p>
576	<p>He went still at the smokiness in her eyes. Slowly, Yrene undid the laces down the front of that pale purple gown. Let it ripple to the floor, along with her undergarments.</p> <p>His mouth turned dry as she kept her eyes upon him, hips swishing with every step she took to the pool. To the stairs.</p> <p>Yrene stepped into the water, and his blood roared in his ears.</p> <p>Chaol was upon her before she'd hit the last step.</p> <p>They missed dinner. And dessert.</p> <p>And midnight kahve.</p> <p>Kadja snuck in during the bath to change the sheets. Yrene couldn't bring herself to be mortified at what the servant had likely heard. They certainly hadn't been quiet in the water.</p> <p>And certainly weren't quiet during the hours following.</p> <p>Yrene was limp with exhaustion when they peeled apart, sweaty enough that another trip to the bath was imminent. Chaol's chest rose and fell in mighty gulps. In the desert, he'd been unbelievable. But now, healed—beyond the spine, the legs; healed in that dark, rotting place within his soul ...</p> <p>He pressed a kiss to her sweat-sticky brow, his lips catching in the stray curls that had appeared thanks to the bath. His other hand drew circles on her lower back.</p>
578	<p>She kissed his chest, right over his heart. "How could I resist these muscles?"</p> <p>His laugh rumbled into her mouth, her bones. "The consummate professional."</p> <p>...She let out a dainty hum and traced a circle around his nipple. "What sort of place?"</p> <p>...A corner of Chaol's mouth kicked up, and he hauled her over him. "I think I know of just the position."</p>
647	<p>Then you and I will fly back here. Together." He kissed her again—a bare caress of his mouth. "And so we shall remain for the rest of our days."</p>

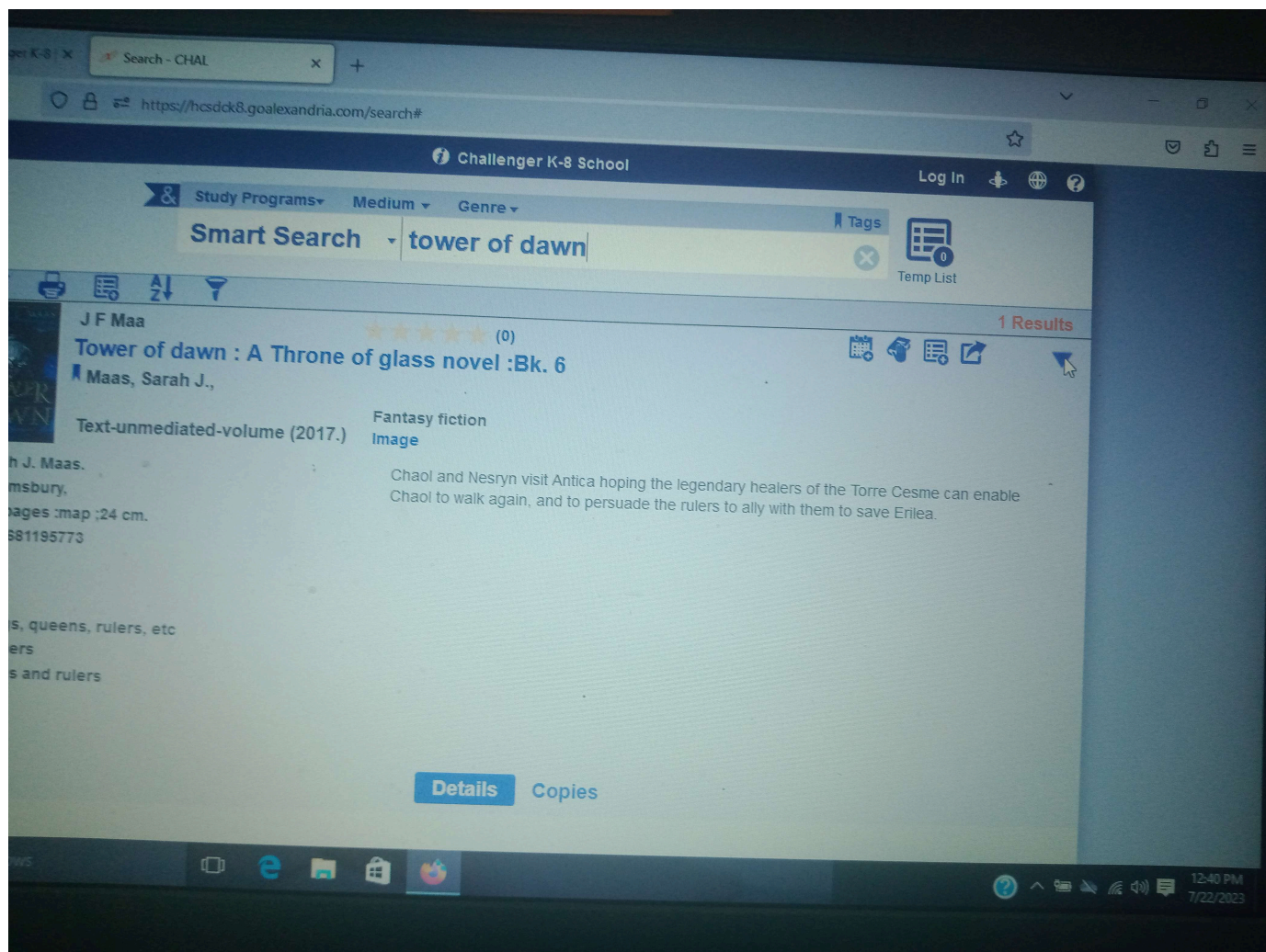


Page	Content
	...So she wrapped her arms around his neck and kissed him. It was tentative, and soft, and full of wonder, that kiss. He tasted like the wind, like a mountain spring. He tasted like home.
652	But Chaol pushed that from his mind as he slid his arms around Yrene's waist and pressed a kiss to the crook of her neck. She didn't so much as freeze at the touch from behind. As if she'd learned the cadence of his steps. As if she took none of them for granted, either. Yrene leaned back into him, her body loosening with a sigh as she laid her hands atop where his rested over her stomach.
654	"You're suited to it," he said, kissing her neck again. ...Where they had remained, to the annoyance of the fish, kissing until a servant had pointedly coughed on their way past.
657	Yrene was watching him warily. He kissed her once—twice.
658	"Will I ever hear an explanation for this dramatic reaction," Yrene said at last, clicking her tongue, "or are you just going to kiss me for the rest of the day?" ...Yrene rose onto her toes to kiss him before he led them toward their spacious stateroom.

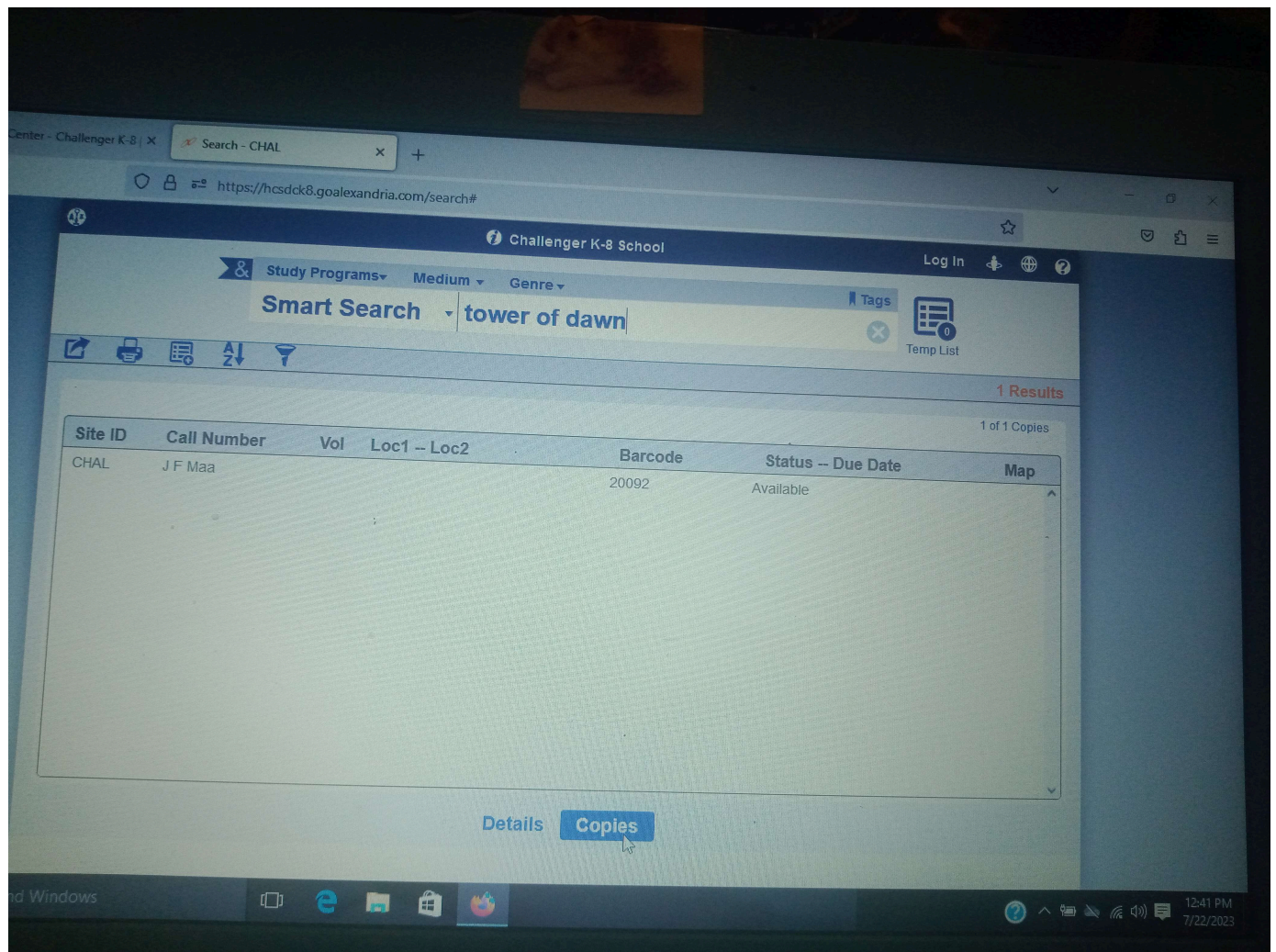
Profanity	Count
Ass	8
Bitch	3
Piss	8
Shit	16

## Universal Book Content (UBC) Rating

0	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• No Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• No Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Non-Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• No Profanity</li> <li>• No References to Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Mentioning of Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Violence</li> <li>• Non-Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Moderate Profanity</li> <li>• Inexplicit Sexual Activities</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Violence</li> <li>• Sexual Nudity</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent Use of Profanity</li> <li>• Sexual Activities No penetration, cunnilingus, fellatio, or ejaculation</li> <li>• Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aberrant Violence</li> <li>• Explicit Sexual Activities Ejaculation and Sexual Penetration (oral, anal, vaginal, fingering)</li> <li>• Explicit or Frequent use of Profanity</li> <li>• Aberrant Drug or Alcohol Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit References to Aberrant Sexual Activities</li> </ul>
Appropriate for all audiences	Might have minor issues for young readers	Suggested minimum younger teen	Suggested minimum older teen	Definitely adult only content	Might be arrested for reading at school board meetings







*Throne of Glass #6*

# Tower of Dawn

Sarah J. Maas

4.27

464,374 ratings 39,594 reviews

**Goodreads Choice Award**

**Nominee for Best Young Adult Fantasy & Science Fiction (2017)**

*An alternative cover edition for this ISBN can be found [here](#).*

Chaol Westfall and Nesryn Faliq have arrived in the shining city of Antica to forge an alliance with the Khagan of the Southern Continent, whose vast armies are Erilea's last hope. But they have also come to Antica for another purpose: to seek healing at the famed Torre Cesme for the wounds Chaol received in Rifthold.

After enduring unspeakable horrors as a child, Yrene Towers has no desire to help the young lord from Adarlan, let alone heal him. Yet she has sworn an oath to assist those in need—and will honor it. But Lord Westfall carries shadows from his own past, and Yrene soon comes to realize they could engulf them both.

In this sweeping parallel novel to the *New York Times* bestselling *Empire of Storms*, Chaol, Nesryn, and Yrene will have to draw on every scrap of their resilience if they wish to save their friends. But while they become entangled in the political webs of the khaganate, deep in the shadows of mighty mountains where warriors soar on legendary ruks, long-awaited answers slumber. Answers that might offer their world a chance at survival—or doom them all . . .

Genres **Fantasy Young Adult Romance New Adult Fiction Magic Fae**  
...more

663 pages, Hardcover

First published September 5, 2017



# **Tower of Dawn (Throne of Glass, 6) Paperback – October 23, 2018**

by Sarah J Maas (Author)

4.7 4.7 out of 5 stars\_ 48,371 ratings

4.3 on Goodreads

**In the next installment of the *New York Times* bestselling Throne of Glass series, follow Chaol on his sweeping journey to a distant empire.**

Chaol Westfall has always defined himself by his unwavering loyalty, his strength, and his position as the Captain of the Guard. But all of that has changed since the glass castle shattered, since his men were slaughtered, since the King of Adarlan spared him from a killing blow, but left his body broken.

His only shot at recovery lies with the legendary healers of the Torre Cesme in Antica--the stronghold of the southern continent's mighty empire. And with war looming over Dorian and Aelin back home, their survival might lie with Chaol and Nesryn convincing its rulers to ally with them.

But what they discover in Antica will change them both--and be more vital to saving Erilea than they could have imagined

## **TOWER OF DAWN**

**From the Throne of Glass series , Vol. 6**

BY SARAH J. MAAS • RELEASE DATE: SEPT. 5, 2017

*A compelling story of hard-fought growth and redemption, with yet more to come in at least one more future volume.*

Maas chronicles Chaol and Nesryn's activities during *Empire of Storms* (2016).

Chaol (a rare white character in this book) and Nesryn venture to the Southern Continent on a mission with two objectives. One is to make an alliance with the powerful khagan, the other to see if the famed healers of Antica's Torre Cesme can use their magic to repair his spine. The progressive khaganate, a multicultural empire modeled after Mongolia, is lavishly and lovingly explored during the first half of the book. Nesryn enjoys it as well, taking pleasure in not being a racial other, as she is Adarlan; her father was from the Southern Continent, and her family names are analogous to Arabic). Nesryn, from whose third-person perspective much of the story is told, comes into her own here, apart from Chaol. A complicated political situation involving five potential heirs to the khaganate means Chaol must tread carefully to secure support. Meanwhile, Chaol's assigned healer, brown-skinned Yrene (also a point-of-view character), is from the Northern Continent and has a major grudge against Adarlan. Chaol and Yrene must work on emotional wounds as well as physical—readers who stick around till the end of this long tome will find a subversion of the typical fantasy disability narrative. Meanwhile, romances bloom, and the Valg threat looms closer, leading to major revelations.

A compelling story of hard-fought growth and redemption, with yet more to come in at least one more future volume. (*Fantasy. 14-adult*)

**Pub Date:** Sept. 5, 2017

**ISBN:** 978-1-68119-577-3

**Page Count:** 672

**Publisher:** Bloomsbury

**Review Posted Online:** Sept. 20, 2017

**Categories:**

TEENS & YOUNG ADULT SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY | TEENS & YOUNG ADULT  
ROMANCE | TEENS & YOUNG ADULT FICTION

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

# Recommendation of Media Review Committee for Reconsideration of Media Materials

Instructions: The Media Review Committee will complete this form within 15 business days following the formation of the committee. Once complete, the Supervisor of Literacy, Intervention, and Elementary Programs, who will bring it forth to the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, who in turn will bring it to the Superintendent.

School Challenger K8 Date 4-11-24

Title Tower of Dawn

Author Sarah Maas

## Committee's Recommendation Regarding Challenged Material

### Silent Voting Results:

6 Do Not Remove

0 Remove/Discontinue

Do Not Remove	Remove/Discontinue
<p>If committee is recommending to limit access-</p> <p><u>X</u> Grade Level <u>8th only</u></p> <p><u>      </u> For Advance Course</p> <p><u>      </u> Parent Permission</p>	<p>Basis for removal, check all that apply:</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is pornographic</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is prohibited under Section 847.012, FS</p> <p><u>      </u> The materials is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material.</p> <p><u>      </u> The material is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which it is used.</p>

# Signatures of Media Review Committee Members

Print Name	Position	Signature
Debbie Warrell	District	D. Warrell
Melinda Reiter	Teacher	M. Reiter
Victoria Spina	Community Member	Victoria Spina
Schandell Hill	Lay person	Schandell Hill
Beth Bernado	Parent	(by phone)
Rosemarie Maiorini	Principal	(by phone)

Administrator's Signature Rosemarie Maiorini (S.M.) Date 4-11-24



TO: Ms. Thomas

FROM: Mr. John Stratton, Superintendent

DATE: April 12, 2024

SUBJECT: Media Challenge CK8 0102-23

This response is in reference to your challenge for the book, "Tower of Dawn" at Challenger K-8. The review committee at Challenger K-8 has evaluated the book, "Tower of Dawn", written by Sarah Maas based on the criteria from Hernando County School Board Policy 2522. The committee, in evaluating the questioned material, was guided by the following criteria: the appropriateness of the material for the age and maturity level of the students with whom it is being used, the accuracy of the material, the objectivity of the material, the use being made of the material.

The committee's recommendation is to limit access to grade 8 at the middle school level in Hernando County Schools. The Board will review the case, including all evidence proffered, during a publicly noticed Board meeting on May 7, 2024. The Board will announce during the meeting whether the challenged material meets the requirements of Policy 2522. You may submit any additional evidence for the Board's consideration no later than fourteen (14) days before May 7, 2024.



**A. Item Currently Budgeted -**

Account Name		<u>No Financial Impact</u>										
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Original Approved Budget	+	Budget Amendments	-	Expenditures / Encumbrances To Date	=	Current Available Budget	-	Present Request	=	Remaining Balance Available		
\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		

**B. Item Currently Not Budgeted -\*\***

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

Funding Source												
Account Name												
Account Number												
		Fund		Function		Object		Cost Center		Project		Sub Project
Amount	\$											

**C. History**

Check one:

Prior Year Budget: ☐New for Current Year: ☐

Prior Year Approved Budget: \$

Prior Year Actual Spent: \$

**\*\* WHEN ITEM NOT CURRENTLY BUDGETED IS APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD, THIS WILL SERVE AS THE BUDGET AMENDMENT\*\***