

WHS SUMMER READING FICTION

Fiction 10-12

2023

Boorman, Kate E. **Into the Sublime**. Four teen girls embark on a thrill-seeking quest that goes horribly wrong. The story starts at the end, at the very point of rescue, when the survivors are exhausted, injured, and barely intelligible. One girl is missing, two are taken to the hospital, and Deputy Vargas stays behind with Amelie, the one who will tell their story from the beginning, the one who is covered in blood—but not her own. Amelie, Devon, H, and Gia got together to explore an underground cave system that local legend says contains the Sublime, a subterranean lake with mystical powers that can change something important for those who find it—and who are willing to face their greatest fears.

Brooks, Nick. **Promise Boys**. J.B., Ramon, and Trey, students of the Urban **Promise** Prep School, must follow the school's strict rules, but when their principal is murdered, the three boys must band together to track down the real killer before they are arrested.

Ceron, Ella. **Viva Lola Espinoza**. Lola Espinoza feels pressured by Mami and Papi to make their college dreams for her come true. But when she gets a C in Spanish despite trying her best, they send her to Mexico City to stay with her maternal grandmother and master Spanish. Lola is soon swept up by life with her enormous extended family, working as a hostess at her cousin's restaurant, and the interest of two cute coworkers—popular, charming Rao and stoic, levelheaded Javier. But every time Lola kisses a boy, she gets sick. Upon learning of a curse that makes following your heart extra challenging for women in the Gómez family, Lola is determined to do whatever she must to free herself from its power.

Clarke, Lane. **Love Times Infinity**. As high school junior Michie plans for her future and explores a new relationship, she tries to reconcile with some uncomfortable truths about her life which becomes more complicated when she is contacted by her estranged mother.

Cline-Ransome, Lesa. **For Lamb**. The novel follows a family striving to better their lives in the late 1930s Jackson, Mississippi. Lamb's mother is a hard-working, creative seamstress who cannot reveal she is a lesbian. Lamb's brother has a brilliant mind and has even earned a college scholarship for a black college up north—if only he could curb his impulsiveness and rebellious nature. Lamb herself is a quiet and studious girl. She is also naive. As she tentatively accepts the friendly overtures of a white girl who loans her a book she loves, she sets off a calamitous series of events that pulls in her mother, charming hustler uncle, estranged father, and brother, and ends in a lynching

Colbert, Brandy. **The Voting Booth**. An African American teen activist is drawn to a young man she meets accidentally. When Marva Sheridan witnesses Duke Crenshaw, being turned away on Election Day, she springs into action. The two spend the day together as Duke attempts to work out his registration issues and get to his drumming gig. As they get to know each other, bits of their stories are shared: Marva's tensions with Alec, her white boyfriend who has decided not to vote, and Duke's family, who is still trying to cope following the death of his older brother. Duke's white mother and black father have divorced, and both parents are extremely protective of him and his younger sister.

Crossan, Sarah. **Breathe**. In a barren land, a shimmering glass dome houses the survivors of the Switch, the period when oxygen levels plunged and the green world withered. A state lottery meant a lucky few won safety, while the rest suffocated in the thin air. And now Alina, Quinn, and Bea--an unlikely trio, each with their own agendas, their own longings and fears--walk straight into the heart of danger. With two days' worth of oxygen in their tanks, they leave the dome. What will happen on the third day

Dahlin, Allyson. **Cake Eater**. Marie Antoinette, 1,000 years in the future. It's 3070. Seventeen-year-old Maria Antonia leaves the Austro Lands, where her mother is empress, to marry Louis-Auguste, dauphin of the Franc Kingdom and "a total mystery with almost zero social media presence" who may have sent her some anonymous texts. Due to a catastrophic climate-changing Event that killed half the world's population, current humanity is mostly cut off from information about the past, but vestiges of former glory remain at Versailles, a crumbling ancient palace where the quickly married, newly Franc Marie Antoinette must navigate her shy new husband, an unfamiliar society, hidden turmoil, and social inequalities she was never taught to recognize, let alone address.

Dass, Sarah. **Where the Rhythm Takes You**. Seventeen-year-old Reyna has spent most of her life at the Plumeria, her family's gorgeous seaside resort in Tobago. But what once seemed like paradise is starting to feel more like purgatory. It's been two years since Reyna's mother passed away, two years since Aiden--her childhood best friend, first kiss, first love, first everything--left the island to pursue his music dreams. Reyna's friends are all planning their futures and heading abroad. And that's when Aiden comes roaring back into her life--as a VIP guest at the resort. Aiden is now one-third of DJ Bacchanal--the latest, hottest music group on the scene.

Dhillon, Navdeep Singh. **Sunny G's Series of Rash Decisions**. Sunny G's brother left him one thing when he died: His notebook, which Sunny is determined to fill up with a series of rash decisions. Decision number one was a big one: He stopped wearing his turban, cut off his hair, and shaved his beard. He doesn't look like a Sikh anymore. He doesn't look like himself anymore. Enter Mindii Vang, a girl with a penchant for making rash decisions of her own, starting with stealing Sunny's notebook. When Sunny chases after her, it turns into an all-night adventure--a night full of rash, wonderful, romantic, stupid, life-changing decisions.

Di Lorenzo, Melinda. **Counting Scars**. When sixteen-year-old Adele Reimer is forced to spend two weeks at a youth reform camp, she has no idea it will lead to a complicated and dangerous love triangle. With her mother in rehab and her estranged father unable to take immediate custody, Adele's only goal at the camp is to avoid any trouble. But then Adele meets mysterious Fergus and charming Andy and soon finds herself pulled into a dangerous situation that might end up costing her life. Can Adele both listen to her heart and trust her instincts?

Emrich, Elisha. **Nerd Crush**. Ramona Lambert has a hard time being herself. The Black high school junior's social life mostly takes place in the cosplay universes where she can thrive as Rel, the character she's created and has been dressing up as for several years. Ramona decides to email Caleb Woolf, the White boy from school she's crushing on—but as Rel. The pair begin exchanging long missives, and Ramona becomes unsure of what to do, especially when she develops a relationship with Caleb in real life, too. As Ramona struggles socially, she also feels misunderstood at home, where her parents question her dream of attending Savannah College of Art and Design's illustration program.

Fadugba, Femi. **The Upper World**. Today. During arguably the worst week of Esso's life, an accident knocks him into an incredible world—a place beyond space or time, where he can see glimpses of the past and future. But if what he sees there is true, he might not have much longer to live, unless he can use his new gift to change the course of history. Tomorrow. Rhia's past is filled with questions, none of which she expects a new physics tutor to answer. But Dr. Esso's not here to help Rhia. He's here because he needs her help—to unravel a tragedy that happened fifteen years ago. One that holds the key not only to Rhia's past, but to a future worth fighting for.

Fantauzzo, Laurel Flores, **My Heart Underwater**. After the dual shock of her father's coma following a work accident and her mother catching her kissing Ms. Holden, her history teacher, Corazon finds herself in Manila, capital of the Philippines. Ostensibly, she's there to visit her older half brother, Jun, but Corazon knows her mother's true intention—to give Corazon time to "think about her life decisions." What it does in reality is uncover the dysfunctional family dynamics her parents have shielded her from and how her mother's choices have echoed through the years and the challenges Corazon grapples with today.

Fitzsimons, Isaac. **The Passing Playbook**. Fifteen-year-old Spencer Harris is a proud nerd, an awesome big brother, and a David Beckham in training. He's also transgender. After transitioning at his old school leads to a year of isolation and bullying, Spencer gets a fresh start at Oakley, the most liberal private school in Ohio. At Oakley, Spencer seems to have it all: more accepting classmates, a decent shot at a starting position on the boys' soccer team, great new friends, and maybe even something more than friendship with one of his teammates. The problem is, no one at Oakley knows Spencer is trans—he's passing.

Giles, Lamar. **The Getaway**. The U.S. is rapidly changing thanks to unchecked climate change; food is scarce, and humankind is running out of options. The lucky ones find employment with Karloff Country, a corporation famous for its animated feature films and world-class resorts. Jay and his family are a few of those lucky ones. With a hearty supply of food and stable work, Jay can't imagine ever leaving—that is, until the world ends. Thanks to the novel's alternating perspectives from Jay and his friends, readers can get a sense of the different residents of Karloff Country and their bravery in the face of oppression.

Gong, Chloe. **Foul Lady Fortune**. In 1931 Shanghai, two Nationalist spies pose as a married couple to investigate a series of brutal murders causing unrest in the city. Four years ago, Rosalind Lang was brought back from the brink of death, but the strange experiment that saved her also stopped her from sleeping and aging--and allows her to heal from any wound. In short, Rosalind cannot die. Now, desperate for redemption for her traitorous past, she uses her abilities as an assassin for her country. Code name: Fortune. But when the Japanese Imperial Army begins its invasion march, Rosalind's mission pivots. A series of murders is causing unrest in Shanghai, and the Japanese are under suspicion. Rosalind's new orders are to infiltrate foreign society and identify the culprits behind the terror plot before more of her people are killed.

Harrison, Margot. **We Made It All Up**. Celeste moved to Kray's Defile, Montana, just as her junior year began, in order to escape an abusive relationship with her drama teacher back in Montreal. Now it is mid-November, and she wakes up on a park bench at 3 a.m. with no memory past kissing Joss Thorsen, the town's golden boy, following an alcohol-fueled game of spin the bottle. When Joss is found murdered outside the cave where they kissed—the cave where the in crowd of hockey players and powder-puffs girls regularly held some kind of sick initiation rite for a secret club—Celeste worries that she might have killed him.

Hassan, Rochelle. **The Buried and the Bound**. Hassan's thrilling dark fantasy is told from three perspectives: that of Tristan, with a closet full of skeletons, new powers to handle, and a witch who has control over his every waking moment; Aziza, the only hedgewitch in Blackthorn, Massachusetts, tasked with protecting the humans from the fae in the woods; and Leo, a cursed teen who's forgotten everything about his true love. The unlikely, reluctant trio converge when Aziza discovers that a creature in the woods is too dangerous for a talented hedgewitch to go at alone, especially one whose usual adventures consist of dealing with meddlesome fae. Though they're not sure they can trust anyone else—including each other—the three band together to quell the danger in the woods.

Henry, April. **Girl Forgotten**. Piper Gray is a true-crime enthusiast with a hunger for investigating unresolved mysteries. After learning of the unsolved case of Layla Trello from more than 17 years earlier, she starts a podcast and digs into the story. The podcast is the distraction she needs, especially after her mother's recent death, which led her to move to the same place where Layla's murder occurred. Piper's new project leads to a sudden rise in her popularity at school, which makes her suspicious of trusting anyone, and the suspense ratchets up when she starts receiving eerie death threats meant to stop her work.

Huerta, Lizz. **The Lost Dreamer**. Indir is a dreamer, descended from a long line of seers; able to see beyond reality, she carries the rare gift of dreaming the truth. But when beloved King Anz dies, his son and heir has no respect for this time-honored tradition and wants to bring it to an end. As violent change shakes Indir's world to its core, she is forced to make an impossible choice: fight for her home or fight to survive.

Huey, Emily Inouye. **Beneath the Wide Silk Sky**. With the recent death of her mother and the possibility of her family losing their farm, Samantha Sakamoto does not have space in her life for dreams, but when faced with prejudice and violence in her Washington State community after Pearl Harbor, she is determined to use her photography to document the bigotry around her.

Hur, June. **The Red Palace**. It's 1758, and four palace nurses have been massacred in the Korean kingdom Joseon. Hyeon, a hardworking 18-year-old palace nurse, begins a dangerous solo investigation. She is determined to clear her wrongfully accused mentor, Nurse Jeongsu, and to earn her estranged father's acceptance. Along the way, she teams up with the newest police inspector, Eojin, a prodigy who is also 18. As Hyeon and Eojin get deeper into their investigation, they must also figure out what is really happening with the crown prince: Is he a suspect or another victim? Amid their fast-paced mission, a gentle romance subtly blooms between Hyeon and Eojin.

Jackson, Tiffany D. **Weight of Blood**. When Springville residents--at least the ones still alive--are questioned about what happened on prom night, they all have the same explanation...Maddy did it. Madison Washington has always been a teasing target for bullies. And she's dealt with it until the morning a surprise rainstorm reveals her most closely kept secret: Maddy is biracial. She has been passing for white her entire life at the behest of her fanatical white father, Thomas Washington. After a viral bullying video pulls back the curtain on Springville High's racist roots, student leaders come up with a plan to change their image: host the school's first integrated prom as a show of unity. The popular white class president convinces her Black superstar quarterback boyfriend to ask Maddy to be his date, leaving Maddy wondering if it's possible to have a normal life. But some of her classmates aren't done with her just yet. And what they don't know is that Maddy still has another secret...one that will cost them all their lives.

Jean, Emiko. **Tokyo Ever After**. After learning that her father is the Crown Prince of Japan, Izumi travels to Tokyo, where she discovers that Japanese imperial life--complete with designer clothes, court intrigue, paparazzi scandals, and a forbidden romance with her handsome but stoic bodyguard--is a tough fit for the outspoken and irreverent eighteen-year-old from northern California.

Johnson, Maureen. **Nine Liars**. Senior year at Ellingham Academy for Stevie Bell isn't going well. Her boyfriend, David, is studying in London. Her friends are obsessed with college applications. There is nothing to distract her from the questions pinging around her brain--questions about college, love, and life in general. Relief comes when David invites Stevie and her friends to join him for study abroad, and his new friend Izzy introduces her to a double-murder cold case. In 1995, nine friends from Cambridge University went to a country house and played a drunken game of hide-and-seek. Two were found in the woodshed the next day, murdered with an ax. The case was assumed to be a burglary gone wrong, but one of the remaining seven saw something she can't explain. This was no break-in. Someone's lying about what happened in the woodshed. Seven suspects. Two murders. One killer still playing a deadly game

Kester, Eric. **Gut Check**. Wyatt has wanted nothing more than to play football on Grayport's championship-winning team. But not for the fame, glory, or girls. It's his last chance to build a relationship with his older brother Brett, the star quarterback, before he leaves for college. Now that their team has gained national attention, a big win could be just what the small town needs in order to rebound from a fishing season that has been devastated by Red Tide. But when Brett suffers a terrible concussion, Wyatt must decide if keeping his brother's secret is worth risking his scholarship future.

Kilcoyne, Elizabeth. **Wake the Bones**. In the small farming town of Dry Valley, Kentucky, Laurel faces her family legacy. Her mother had strange gifts before her mysterious death in their old well, leaving Laurel to grow up orphaned (and with a less useful gift: As a taxidermist, Laurel can read death stories from bones). When she and her best friends discover a grisly scene by the reopened well, it's only the beginning of the seemingly impossible—and increasingly dangerous—happenings.

Liang, Ann. **If You Could See the Sun**. Alice Sun has always felt invisible at her elite Beijing international boarding school, where she's the only scholarship student among China's most rich and influential teens. But then she starts uncontrollably turning invisible--actually invisible. When her parents drop the news that they can no longer afford her tuition, even with the scholarship, Alice hatches a plan to monetize her strange new power--she'll discover the scandalous secrets her classmates want to know, for a price. But as the tasks escalate from petty scandals to actual crimes, Alice must decide if it's worth losing her conscience--or even her life

Lloyd-Jones, Emily. **The Drowned Woods**. A group of misfits comes together to perpetrate the ultimate heist. It is a risky plan, one with high stakes, dark magic, and a treacherous journey, but in the end, whoever survives gets a share in a mythical treasure. And if their heist also happens to help remove corrupt Prince Garanhir from power, so much the better. This is how former spymaster Renfrew manages to convince Mererid, the last water diviner, to go along with her old handler's scheme, especially since it could mean gaining her freedom in the end. Their crew includes Fane, a cursed ironfetch; Trefor, his corgi; and Ifanna, a thief and Mer's old flame who once betrayed her.

Maldonado, Crystal. **No Filter and Other Lies**. Seventeen-year-old Kat Sanchez uses photos of a friend to create a fake Instagram account, but when one of her posts goes viral and exposes Kat's duplicity, her entire world--both real and pretend--comes crashing down around her.

Marshall, Kate Alice. **These Fleeting Shadows**. Helen Vaughan has been haunted by dreams of her mother's ancestral home, Harrowstone Hall, ever since they fled 10 years ago, but Helen has no idea why her mother left or why the house is calling to her. Then her grandfather dies, leaving Harrow (the house) to her, provided she lives there for a year and is accepted by the house, which is so much more than it seems.

Masood, Syed M. **Sway With Me**. Arsalan Nizami has learned all he knows from his 100-year-old great-grandfather, but when Beenish Siraj asks him to be her partner in a dance she's been forbidden to perform at her sister's wedding, Arsalan's world opens up in more ways than he could have imagined.

Mehrotra, Rati. **Night of the Raven, Dawn of the Dove**. Katyani's life is dedicated to serving as a guardswoman for the Kingdom of Chandela's Prince Ayan. Following an attack on the royal family, Katyani and Ayan are whisked away to Acharya Mahavir's monastic school, where Ayan and his cousin Bhairav must complete mandatory royal training. While making sure Ayan is completing this task, Katyani meets Daksh, the Acharya's son, and begins to develop complicated feelings for him.

Miller-Lachman, Lyn. **Torch**. In late 1960s in Czechoslovakia, Pavol takes his own life by setting himself on fire. Among those he leaves behind are his friends, each with a secret involving Pavol. Tomas, awkward and insular, found a lifeline to the outside world in Pavol, who shared Tomas' love of contraband music. For Stepan, Pavol was the closest of friends, even as Stepan wished for a more intimate relationship. And Lida is left with the most impactful secret of all: Pavol's unborn child. All three must contend with the aftermath of their friend's death—and of the incendiary note authorities found on his corpse that could spell their doom.

Morris, Brittany. **The Jump**. An exhilarating adventure of four teens who must use their puzzle-solving skills to stop the construction of an oil refinery. Han, Yas, Spider, and Jax are each gifted with a skill set that makes them the unstoppable Team Jericho, their cryptogram-solving unit. When an underground group makes a splash with a puzzle of their own, Team Jericho races to crack the code and save their families from the oil refinery that's threatening to destroy their communities.

Naz Rishi, Farah. **I Hope You Get This Message**. When news hits that Earth has been receiving messages from a planet claiming to be its creator, no one knows what to think. If you ask the folks at NASA, this mysterious planet—Alma—is taking eight days to decide whether or not to hit the kill switch on their “colony,” Earth. True or not, for teenagers Jesse Hewitt, Cate Collins, and Adeem Khan, the prospect of this ticking time bomb will change their lives forever. There are pasts to reconcile, estranged family members to track down, and, ultimately, love and forgiveness to give and accept. With only seven days to face their truths and right their wrongs, Jesse, Cate, and Adeem’s paths collide as their worlds are pulled apart

Radley, B.L. **Strictly No Heroics**. Riley Jones becomes a henchman. When a Super harasses her friend Javira Neita at the vegan burger place where they work, Riley, who is a Normie, retaliates with a faceful of frozen veggie burgers. Fired for assaulting a customer and in need of money for therapy for her anxiety, Riley finds Hench, the only company willing to take her on. Working as a henchman becomes her way to lash out against a society that favors those with superpowers. At first, Riley is thrilled to join the squad, but her bubble bursts when she discovers their true purpose: Instead of striking down arrogant heroes, henchmen are trained to miss all their shots, acting incompetent to stall for time and disrupt their villainous clients' plans.

Reck, Jared. **Donuts and Other Proclamations of Love**. Oscar learns that life is a lot more complicated than frying donuts thanks to an unlikely romance, confronting the past, and dealing with heartache. Desperate to be done with school in Pennsylvania, Oscar is a determined senior with plans to one day operate the family's Swedish food truck business and maybe even open his own cafe. When presented with an unusual opportunity to use his culinary skills to help prevent cafeteria food waste, he forms an unlikely friendship with academic all-star Lou. Though he resists at first, she becomes an integral part of Oscar's life both in school and on the truck.

Rigaud, Debbie. **A Girl’s Guide to Love and Magic**. Fifteen-year-old Haitian American Cicely is excited to celebrate the West Indian Day Parade with her aunt, and voodoo dabbler, Mimose, but when Mimose's dabbling goes awry and she becomes possessed by a spirit, Cicely, Renee, and Kwame, her crush, must find a way to set things right.

Safi, Amina Mae. **Travelers Along the Way**. In this reimagination of the legend of Robin Hood, Rahma al-Hud and her older sister Zeena travel to Jerusalem for a final mission, and on their way they assemble a ragtag band of misfits and get swept up in Holy Land politics.

Shukairy, Ream. **The Next New Syrian Girl**. The unlikely friendship between Syrian American boxer Khadija and Syrian refugee Leene reveals the pressures and expectations of the perfect Syrian daughter and the repercussions of the Syrian Revolution both at home and abroad.

Smith, Lindsay. **The Shadow War**. World War II is raging, and five teens are looking to make a mark. Daniel and Rebeka seek revenge against the Nazis who slaughtered their family; Simone is determined to fight back against the oppressors who ruined her life and corrupted her girlfriend; Phillip aims to prove that he's better than his worst mistakes; and Liam is searching for a way to control the portal to the shadow world he's uncovered, and the monsters that live within it--before the Nazi regime can do the same. When the five meet, and begrudgingly team up, in the forests of Germany, none of them knows what their future might hold.

Stork, Francisco X. **On The Hook**. Hector has always minded his own business, working hard to make his way to a better life someday. He's the chess team champion, helps the family with his job at the grocery, and teaches his little sister to shoot hoops overhand. Until Joey singles him out. Joey, whose older brother, Chavo, is head of the Discípulos gang, tells Hector that he's going to kill him: maybe not today, or tomorrow, but someday. And Hector, frozen with fear, does nothing. From that day forward, Hector's death is hanging over his head every time he leaves the house. He tries to fade into the shadows--to drop off Joey's radar--to become no one. But when a fight between Chavo and Hector's brother Fili escalates, Hector is left with no choice but to take a stand.

Turner, Erika. **And Other Mistakes**. Seventeen-year-old Aaliyah is trying to survive her last years of high school, but things become much more complicated after she is outed by a church elder and Aaliyah must navigate new friends, old flames, and nosy school counselors during her senior year.

Valentine, Danielle. **How to Survive Your Murder**. Alice is an expert on murder—at least those that happen in the movies. But no movie could have prepared her for her sister Claire's very real murder at the hands of a chainsaw-wielding maniac. One year later, a sullen, distant Alice is set to testify against Claire's killer. But just before the trial begins, she is attacked by a strange girl who knocks her out. When Alice awakens, she is somehow back in the past with a chance to alter Claire's fate—and hers along with it. But can Alice stop the killer in time to change the future?

Van, Sandi. **Caught in the Haze**. Tae has moved twice in his life. First, from South Korea to the United States when he was adopted as a baby, and then to a new town before he starts high school. In Tae's new school, he's one of the youngest players, and the only person of color, trying out for the Varsity soccer team--a team known for its violent hazing practices. Tae wants more than anything to be part of the team, but worries about fitting in. Then, he sees a familiar face. Luke is a soccer star on his way to scoring a role as the team captain and a full ride to college, but no one knows his secret--that he was adopted too. Tae and Luke met in an adoption group years before, and Luke's first instinct is to help Tae fit in. But tradition is tradition, and Luke might not be able to save Tae from being hurt in the hazing rituals without risking his own reputation

Velez, Angela. **Lulu and Milagro's Search for Clarity**. Luz has straight As, perfect attendance, and a solid ten-year plan. First up: nail her interview for a dream internship at Stanford, the last stop on her school's cross-country college road trip. The only flaw in her plan is Clara, her oldest sister, who went off to college and sparked a massive fight with their overprotective Peruvian mom, who is now convinced that out-of-state-college will destroy their family. If Lulu can't fix whatever went wrong between them, the whole trip--and her future--will be a waste.

Weymouth, Laura E. **A Consuming Fire**. Born to be a sacrificial Weatherell girl like her mother, Anya Astraea instead sets out in search of vengeance against the mountain deity who claimed the life of her twin sister.

Woon, Yvonne. **My Flawless Life**. After a costly scandal involving her ex-senator father, Hana's once flawless life atop the social scene of uber-elite St. Francis High crashed down. Now she resides on the fringes, occasionally dipping back in to "fix" problems (making sure secrets stay buried, managing reputations, pulling strings) in exchange for money. When she's contacted by a mysterious client offering a paycheck she can't refuse, Hana is tasked with delving into the underbelly of her community to expose a conspiracy that could rip her school—and what remains of her life—apart. The result is a hugely refreshing read. Full of twists and double-crosses, the story never settles into predictability.

Zhao, Amelie Wen. **Song of Silver, Flame Like Night**. Two teens struggle to survive in their conquered homeland. In the city of Haak'gong, Lan gets by as a songgirl, performing and demeaning herself for the Elantians who colonized her homeland, the Last Kingdom. Lan seeks answers behind the curious scar on her wrist, a mark left by her mother, who died at the hands of an Elantian magician. After she is saved from a life-threatening attack by a boy named Zen, Lan discovers that qi practitioners and heroes of legend still exist and that hidden masters hold the truth behind the meaning of the mysterious mark she carries, a secret that could save—or destroy—the kingdom.