



Buzzing by Samuel Sattin, Rye Hickman

Plot Summary (courtesy of Kirkus Reviews) A middle schooler with obsessive-compulsive disorder navigates family, friendship, and role-playing games. Isaac, who has light brown skin and dark curly hair, was recently diagnosed with OCD. He constantly hears the metaphorical buzzing of his intrusive thoughts, depicted as cute but cruel cartoon bees. The artwork makes good use of color to bring readers into Isaac's world. His bees are always brightly colored, as are the panels depicting positive experiences such as his art, the friends he is beginning to make, and the fantasy world of their Dungeons & Dragons-like role-playing game. In contrast, school and home are shown in drab, largely gray and beige tones. Isaac's mom does her best to support and protect him, but her efforts slide into being overprotective and controlling. Over the course of the narrative, however, she learns to trust Isaac and support him as he figures out his own path. With their mom's attention on Isaac, his sister, Miriam, feels ignored, and she takes this out on him. This is a sensitive depiction of an unfortunate reality: When one sibling has a difficult diagnosis, others often feel pushed aside. In this case, both siblings are ultimately able to support each other while expressing their needs to their mother. This book provides a positive, sympathetic introduction to living with OCD, with appeal for readers who have the same diagnosis as well as those who do not. An original exploration of living with mental illness. (supplemental art)

(Graphic novel/fiction. 9-13), [Kirkus Review](#)



The Lost Year by Katherine Marsh

A 13-year-old boy trapped indoors by Covid-19 uncovers a dark family secret leading back to the Holodomor, the early 1930s Ukrainian famine caused by Stalin's policies. When the pandemic shuts down the world in 2020, Matthew is more isolated than most kids. His journalist father is stuck in Paris, and since his mom has moved GG, his frail, 100-year-old, Ukrainian immigrant great-grandmother, in with them, protecting her means Matthew can't see his friends. Matthew starts helping GG sort her boxes of keepsakes, gradually piecing together a story that's also told from the points of view of Mila, the privileged

daughter of a Communist Party member, and Helen, the daughter of Ukrainian immigrants living in Brooklyn. When Helen's cousins write to say they are starving, she secretly mails them her father's cherished gold cross. Meanwhile, in Kyiv, Mila encounters a starving girl who claims to be her cousin Nadiva. Mila is a strong supporter of Papa Stalin, but her efforts to help Nadiva ultimately open her eyes to the truth about his regime—as well as endangering her own life. Marsh's intertwining narratives ground the story of the Holodomor—which affected her own family—within a historical framework while leading up to a completely believable and emotionally powerful conclusion. A strong subplot discusses journalistic integrity and how one powerful man managed to keep the truth of the Holodomor hidden for years. (Historical fiction. Ages 9-14) [Kirkus Review](#)



Race to the Sun by Rebecca Roanhorse

Adiné teen teams up with her younger brother and her best friend to battle monsters threatening their world. After seventh grader Nizhoni Begay senses a monster lurking in the stands during her basketball game, she tells her younger brother, Mac. When the monster kidnaps her father as part of a multilayered plot to lure her brother—the only one who knows her monster-spotting abilities—into servitude, kill her, and destroy the world, Nizhoni seeks help from her biracial best friend, Davery, whose mother is African American, his father, Diné. Aided by Mr.

Yazzie, a stuffed horned-toad toy that can talk, and a cast of characters from Diné culture, the three kids embark on an adventurous trek to free Dad and stop the monsters. But even with powers inherited from monster-slaying ancestors, assistance from Holy People, and weapons fashioned from the Sun, Nizhoni will need to believe in herself while sacrificing what's most important if she hopes to succeed. (includes glossary of Navajo terms, author's note) (Authentic author/Fantasy. Ages 8-12)

[Kirkus Review](#)



Coming Up Short by Laurie Morrison

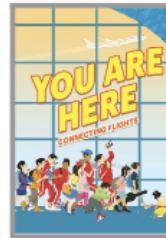
Seventh grader Bea stars on her suburban New Jersey softball team until news spreads of her lawyer father's one-year suspension for professional misconduct and the emotional stress takes a toll. Suddenly, she can't play. Not only was Bea unaware of her dad's misuse of funds, she soon finds out other family news that's been kept from her, something that is especially hurtful when she thought her parents shared everything. To get away from her friends and their gossip about her personal situation, she arranges to stay with a maternal aunt she barely knows and attend a softball camp on the Massachusetts island where her mother grew up.

Bea has never understood why her mother hated the island and seems to dislike her own sister. During the two-week summer camp, she regains her confidence, makes new friends, and gets to know her Aunt Mary, who has always wanted them to have a closer relationship. She also learns about the impact that mental health struggles have had on her family, knowledge that is tied to long-held secrets. (Sports/Realistic Fiction. 10-13) [Kirkus Review](#)



Amelia Lost by Candace Fleming

The most intriguing part of Amelia Earhart's life is often thought to be the way it ended. A mysterious disappearance and an unsolved rescue mission is a powerful story on its own. But Fleming digs deeper and shows readers why everyone—from young girls who looked up to her to the First Lady of the United States—cared so much for this daring woman pilot. Chapters alternate between the days surrounding Earhart's fateful crash and her growth from child to trailblazer. The narrative shifts could have been maddening, for suspense



You Are Here: Connecting Flights edited by Ellen Oh

Interwoven stories explore themes of identity and belonging from the perspectives of 12 young Southeast and East Asian Americans. Noted crowd pleasers, including Erin Entrada Kelly, Grace Lin, Linda Sue Park, Randy Ribay, and Christina Soontornvat, contribute to this volume. As a storm rages outside a chaotic Chicago airport, an interruption at a TSA checkpoint involving Thai American Paul and his family sparks racist rumors and confusion. The event has a ripple effect on each of the protagonists' lives, prompting them to find their voices and fight for what's right in their own ways as uncomfortable feelings bubble to the surface. Each story is seamlessly interconnected with the whole, allowing moments to be revisited from multiple points of view and creating a sense of intrigue as readers piece together the larger picture. Although each character's journey leads them to different destinations—a guitar jam session, a basketball tournament, a first trip to Vietnam—there are glowing moments of solidarity ranging from the subtle to the profound as they cross paths. The stories are imbued with a strong sense of authentic lived experiences as well as moments that will resonate with readers of other backgrounds, prompting examination of their own interactions or unconscious biases; it welcomes non-Asian readers to learn and connect. This remarkable anthology offers a warm and heartfelt reassurance to all those who recognize themselves reflected in its pages: You are seen, and you do belong. (editor's note, meet the authors) (Short stories/Fiction. 8-12) [Kirkus](#)



When The Stars Are Scattered by Victoria Jamieson and Omar Mohamed

Omar and his younger brother, Hassan, have spent most of their lives in Dadaab, a refugee camp in Kenya. Life is hard there: never enough food, achingly dull, and without access to the medical care Omar knows his nonverbal brother needs. So when Omar has the opportunity to go to school, he knows it might be a chance to change their future . . . but it would also mean leaving his brother, the only family member he has left, every day. Heartbreak, hope, and gentle humor exist together in this graphic novel about a childhood spent waiting, and a young man who is able to create a sense of family and home in the most difficult of settings. It's an intimate, important, unforgettable look at the day-to-day life of a refugee, as told to *New York Times* Bestselling author/artist Victoria Jamieson by Omar Mohamed, the Somali man who lived the story. [Kirkus Review](#)