**Bittersweet Sixteen** by Carrie Karasyov and Jill Kargman
Friendship/Money

_Bittersweet Sixteen_ is a look into the lives of a group of teenage girls living in New York City and attending an out-of-your-reach expensive all-girls school. The story is told from the perspective of Laura, who is attending the school only because of scholarships. While her friends are wearing designer clothes and renting private jets to fly to Europe, Laura gets caught up in the whirlwind of being a teenage girl trying to “keep up with the Joneses.” The language and descriptions used in this book remind me of a mix of Fox’s “The O.C.” and MTV’s “My Super Sweet 16.” _Bittersweet Sixteen_ would be enjoyed by any teenage girl who wonders what it would be like to have a glamorous life in New York City, but who knows that the reality of life is having great friends and family who allow you to be yourself.

Bonny Martens
Manhattan, KS

**Call Me the Canyon: A Love Story**
Historical Fiction/Romance/Southwest
by Ann Howard Creel
Brown Barn Books, 2006, 224 pp., $8.95
ISBN: 0-9768126-4-9; 978-09768126-4-7

In the late 1880s, Lester Demming and his daughter Madolen scratch out a harsh life in the canyons of Southeastern Utah. Madolen’s mother was Navajo, and after her death, Demming retreats into silence. So when Mormon missionaries offer to take Madolen in, she quickly accepts. Creel sympathetically depicts Mormonism, but she excels at describing the typography of Utah—the rugged beauty of the rocks and plateaus where the spirits of the “Ancient Ones” still dwell. A strength of the novel is Creel’s ability to weave in archeological information about the ancient Indian civilizations of the region, while she also explains the spread of mining, ranching, and Mormonism in the area. Her female characters are well-drawn, but she is less successful in showing Madolen’s spiritual and emotional journey from embracing the Mormon faith, to her love affair with a wealthy Harvard law student, to her eventual marriage to a Navajo trader. Creel never fully develops what it means to Madolen to be part Navajo, and her depiction of Navajo culture is lacking in nuance.

Johanna Denzin Bradley
Fayette, MO

**Call Me Henri**
Realistic Fiction/Hispanic Families
by Lorraine M. Lopez
Curbstone Press, 2006, 233 pp., $17.95

In his required journaling, Enrique writes that sometimes there are more important things to worry about than listening to his teacher and peers during ESL class. This couldn’t be truer for Enrique. He is responsible for taking care of triplet infant brothers; his stepfather is abusive; his beloved dog, Boy, is missing; a new classmate commits suicide; and he watches his best friend be shot by local gang members. No wonder he is struggling in math class. Throughout, Enrique stays hopeful that his teenage life will have some sense of normalcy: finding a girlfriend and learning his favorite language, French. When all hope seems lost, the teachers at his school team up to provide Enrique with his best hope for escaping the troubles of his youth. Lopez authentically captures the struggles of a second language learner dealing with the trials and tribulations of being a teenager.

Faith H. Wallace
Kennesaw, GA

**The Cassandra Virus**
The Future/Computers
by K.V. Johansen
Orca Book Publishers, 2006, 151 pp., $7.95
ISBN: 1-55143-497-0

This novel is disturbing, not only because it is at times illogical, but because the basis for its plot has been largely mined before in the 1983 Ally Sheedy/Matthew Broderick film, _War Games_. The main character, Jordan O’Blenis, bears a striking resemblance to the Broderick character in the film.

In the novel, Jordan and his female sidekick begin to communicate with a computer Jordan builds one summer, to which the writer devotes an entire page. Once Cassandra, named after his sister, is up and running, it can hack into any computer in the world, can read email, can remove software and hard drives. The government wants to shut Cassandra down, just as the computer in _War Games_ is determined to have hacked into NORAD, the early warning system established by the U.S. military to warn of incoming missiles from Russia.

There are differences, largely made from the writer’s choice to set this book in the near future, but only the most computerwise and reluctant of readers will follow this novel through its anticlimactic ending.

John Jacob
Oak Park, IL
The Crow-Girl

by Bodil Bredsdorff

Compassion/Orphans/Relationships

Sunburst, 2006, 160 pp., $5.95

Crow-Girl is a Danish folktale comparable to a Hans Christian Anderson story. Crow-Girl lives by the sea in a small house where she spends her time caring for her dying grandmother and gathering driftwood and oysters. Before her grandmother dies, she promises Crow-Girl she will continue to watch over her in order to guide and comfort Crow-Girl on her life’s path.

Now an orphan, Crow-Girl decides to travel until she can find a new family. Led by a crow (that’s the reason she is called Crow-Girl), she journeys to various towns where she discovers that not all people make good family members, and that it is best to find happiness when you help others. She assists a number of people on her journey—a small abandoned boy, an abused mother and daughter, and a lonely old farmer. By selflessly helping others, Crow-Girl gains a family from those she has helped.

Diana Harter
Provo, UT

Crunch Time

by Mariah Fredericks

Realistic Fiction

Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2006, 317 pp., $15.95

Following four high school juniors through the endless struggle of growing up, Crunch Time by Mariah Fredericks is a novel many students will relate to. Delving deep into the issues of friendship, relationships, failure, parents, and fear, this novel depicts the world of high-stakes testing and pressure to succeed in a refreshing, entertaining way.

Crunch Time stands as a snippet of high school life, including the dramas and scandals typical in most schools today. Fredericks creates this high-stress world by giving first-person accounts of the four very different main characters who met by skipping a SAT prep course together. The characters tell their side of the story in third-person perspective, allowing for more suspense, insight, and connection as readers sympathize and relate to each specific character's personality and situation.

Jennifer Hanni
Manhattan, KS

The Dream Where the Losers Go

by Beth Goobie

Realistic Fiction

Orca Book Publishers, 2006, 204 pp., $8.95

Beth Goobie’s The Dream Where the Losers Go immerses readers into a world of silent darkness and screaming light where the main character, high school junior Skey, wants to wake up from the nightmare that is her life. To find relief from the pain and scars on her wrists, Skey must battle the Dragons, her boyfriend, her mother, and most importantly, her own mind that will not allow her to remember how she got to the dark. Happiness seems as hopeless as sleep, until a boy enters the darkness with her and helps her find the light.

The Dream Where the Losers Go is the emotional saga of a girl searching for her lost soul. The novel delves into themes of divorce, abuse, suicide, anger, and love through entwined images of dark and light. By empathizing with the character’s choices and experiences, readers are given the chance to see the pain of others as they share Skey's pain and illusions from beginning to end, showing Goobie’s great skill at creating imperfect characters readers can relate to.

Jennifer Hanni
Manhattan, KS

Escape: The Story of the Great Houdini

by Sid Fleischman

Biography

Greenwillow, 2006, 206 pp., $18.99
ISBN: 978-0-06-085094-4

Harry Houdini is, perhaps, America's most enigmatic hero, and Sid Fleischman brings his considerable storytelling skills to bear in this attempt to capture his illusive subject. In Escape, Fleischman traces the journey of Ehrich Weiss, from the Jewish ghetto of Budapest to the streets of New York, where he becomes the Great Harry Houdini.

Houdini was as much a social phenomenon as a performer. The details of his life say as much about the American culture in the first two decades of the 20th century as they do about the American culture in the first two decades of the 21st century. As Fleischman documents again and again, the details of Houdini's life are shrouded in mystery and outright deception. That Houdini remains a source of fascination says a great deal about our need to witness the impossible, all the while knowing it isn't real.

Escape provides today's adolescents a glimpse at the life of the man hanging suspended in the water-filled torture cell. The book is an essential addition to secondary school libraries, and it would be an excellent text for interdisciplinary or social studies units.

F. Todd Goodson
Manhattan, KS
Exit Point by Laura Langston
Paranormal Activity/Child Molestation
Orca Book Publishers, 2006, 110 pp., $7.95

Ostensibly a novel about the afterlife of narrator Logan, a 16-year-old victim of a car crash, the book may interest reluctant readers with its brevity and characterization of Logan and his grandmother, whom he meets in the afterlife, younger, smoking, and gambling. She is the most well-characterized person in the book. But close readers will notice that Logan is hardly sympathetic (he died racing cars after getting drunk one night, his preferred form of recreation), and that, while the afterlife is interesting, it can conform itself to almost anything the author wants to say.

The author seems torn between developing her afterlife and making Logan’s presence somewhat valid, by making his younger sister the victim of sexual molestation from their uncle.

The novel becomes a race to stop another evening of molestation, and when Logan has accomplished his “mission,” he is allowed to continue in his movement from the stations in the afterlife to a final resting point beyond.

Exit Point by Laura Langston
Paranormal Activity/Child Molestation
Orca Book Publishers, 2006, 110 pp., $7.95

Ostensibly a novel about the afterlife of narrator Logan, a 16-year-old victim of a car crash, the book may interest reluctant readers with its brevity and characterization of Logan and his grandmother, whom he meets in the afterlife, younger, smoking, and gambling. She is the most well-characterized person in the book. But close readers will notice that Logan is hardly sympathetic (he died racing cars after getting drunk one night, his preferred form of recreation), and that, while the afterlife is interesting, it can conform itself to almost anything the author wants to say.

The author seems torn between developing her afterlife and making Logan’s presence somewhat valid, by making his younger sister the victim of sexual molestation from their uncle.

The novel becomes a race to stop another evening of molestation, and when Logan has accomplished his “mission,” he is allowed to continue in his movement from the stations in the afterlife to a final resting point beyond.

Exit Point by Laura Langston
Paranormal Activity/Child Molestation
Orca Book Publishers, 2006, 110 pp., $7.95

Ostensibly a novel about the afterlife of narrator Logan, a 16-year-old victim of a car crash, the book may interest reluctant readers with its brevity and characterization of Logan and his grandmother, whom he meets in the afterlife, younger, smoking, and gambling. She is the most well-characterized person in the book. But close readers will notice that Logan is hardly sympathetic (he died racing cars after getting drunk one night, his preferred form of recreation), and that, while the afterlife is interesting, it can conform itself to almost anything the author wants to say.

The author seems torn between developing her afterlife and making Logan’s presence somewhat valid, by making his younger sister the victim of sexual molestation from their uncle.

The novel becomes a race to stop another evening of molestation, and when Logan has accomplished his “mission,” he is allowed to continue in his movement from the stations in the afterlife to a final resting point beyond.

Exit Point by Laura Langston
Paranormal Activity/Child Molestation
Orca Book Publishers, 2006, 110 pp., $7.95

Ostensibly a novel about the afterlife of narrator Logan, a 16-year-old victim of a car crash, the book may interest reluctant readers with its brevity and characterization of Logan and his grandmother, whom he meets in the afterlife, younger, smoking, and gambling. She is the most well-characterized person in the book. But close readers will notice that Logan is hardly sympathetic (he died racing cars after getting drunk one night, his preferred form of recreation), and that, while the afterlife is interesting, it can conform itself to almost anything the author wants to say.

The author seems torn between developing her afterlife and making Logan’s presence somewhat valid, by making his younger sister the victim of sexual molestation from their uncle.

The novel becomes a race to stop another evening of molestation, and when Logan has accomplished his “mission,” he is allowed to continue in his movement from the stations in the afterlife to a final resting point beyond.
**Hard Hit**
by Ann Turner


Mark Warren has a great life. He has a cool best friend. He’s the star pitcher on his high school team, thanks in part to the advice of his English teacher. His younger sister turned 13 and is a pain, but not bad as sisters go. But one lousy phone call, and Mark’s world is forever changed. His dad’s pancreatic cancer is back.

Ann Turner tells the story with a strong plot and realistic dialog. Readers will identify with the main character and his desire to help his dad. The secondary characters are also well-developed and add to the believability of the story. The book is a well-paced, nicely plotted novel that examines multiple adolescent themes. The tight ending leaves the reader wanting more. Highly recommended for all teen collections.

**Vicki Sherbert Wachefield, KS**

**Harlem Hustle**
by Janet McDonald

African Americans/Music Francis Foster Books, 2006, 192 pp., $16.00
ISBN: 0-374-37184-9

Harlem is full of energy, life, and diversity. Hustle embodies this spirit of Harlem as a young African American teen with the dream of making it big as a rapper. Hustle is smart and street-smart, knows his way around Harlem, where to shoplift and who to get to know to make it in the biz. Hustle is discovered at a party and for a short time believes this is the break he needs to enter the world of hip hop. But he soon discovers the world of rappers in gold chains with music labels is as crooked as the streets of Harlem.

Janet McDonald’s story is full of the vibrant life that is Harlem, complete with contemporary language of the hip hop culture that appeals to teens of all races and backgrounds. Hustle’s story is not predictable in that he examines his old ideas of what makes good lyrical writing and studies poetry in order to improve his own word play. This contemporary novel provides the interest needed for teen boys to get hooked immediately.

**Deana Cowan Maple Hill, KS**

**Heat**
by Mike Lupica

Baseball/Family Philomel, 2006, 220 pp., $16.99
ISBN: 0-399-24301-1

Mike Lupica’s book is a well-paced, steadily building novel that examines baseball, cultural identity, first love, and adulthood. When their father dies, Michael and his older brother are forced to fend for themselves. But should anyone find out their secret, they will be split up or worse…sent back to Cuba, spoiling Mike’s chances of playing in the Little League World Series. This coming of age tale uses the America’s past time as backdrop for exploring multiple adolescent themes. The story is told from the point of view of the underdog- team, the heat, and the individual team that would have qualified for the tournament. The quick pace of the story keeps the reader interested and entertained. The main character, Mike, is a smart and street-smart youth who makes the best of his testing circumstances.

This was a suspensful, well-drawn story with happy and somber moments. The book is a terrific read for those looking for a dose of childhood baseball nostalgia.

**Curtis Chandler
Wamego, KS**

**Hell Phone**
by William Sleator

ISBN: 0-8109-5479-6

William Sleator’s book was a suspenseful thriller mystery intertwined with fantasy and romance. The compelling story was an easy read. Although the beginning of the story lacked vivid descriptors, it improved. The quick pace of the story keeps the reader interested and involved. The story begins with a young boy who seems to be able to talk to ghosts. He is visited by a ghost who tells him that he is the target of an evil sorcerer who wants him for his mystical powers. The story is full of ghoulish creatures and is a fast-paced read that will appeal to young readers who enjoy thrillers with the mention of ghosts and magic.

The author was superb with his depiction of the innocent youth being the unsuspecting target of unscrupulous characters. Young readers with the same socio-economic background could easily relate to the problems of Nick, the protagonist, a good boy, easy duped teenager with a trusting character. The author’s depiction of the innocent youth being duped is frightening. Highly recommended for those looking for a dose of fantasy and a well-written mystery.

**Paulette Clark Junction City, KS**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Incantation</strong> by Alice Hoffmann</th>
<th><strong>Coming of Age/Historical Fiction</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

This coming-of-age story about Estrella deMadrigal, set in medieval Spain, looks at contrasts and appearances. At first Estrella sees herself as the look-alike and sister to her best friend, Catalina. She also sees herself as a Christian. But when Estrella witnesses a book burning in the town’s plaza, her world begins to change. Soon public denouncements and executions follow as the town fathers accuse all Jews of witch craft and sorcery. Estrella finally sees what has always been around her. There is a secret her family is protecting—secret knowledge of the Jews or kabbalah, which is taught in her family’s house. Family rituals are really Jewish rituals and family members have secret names. Along her journey to selfhood, Estrella falls in love, loses her best friend, and survives horrific persecution.

The historical setting and Biblical allusions add richness to this coming-of-age story. Alice Hoffman’s characters are well developed and speak with unique voices. This story will foster discussions about diversity, religious freedom, friendships, and betrayal. But, most of all, it is a poignant and often painful tale of growing up.

Larisa Schumann
Laie, HI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Little Secrets—Playing with Fire</strong> by Emily Blake</th>
<th><strong>Friendship</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Alison Rose struggles with the embarrassment of her rich, strong mother being incarcerated and losing her boyfriend to her best friend, her cousin Kelly. At the beginning the reader wonders if Alison’s mother is framed and will the mystery be revealed. Members of the family claim the maternal grandmother is responsible for her daughter’s incarceration. Many skeletons are exposed in Alison’s family and the families of her friends. As the story unfolds, the characters demonstrate the importance of belonging, acceptance, and friendship. During her mother’s incarceration, Alison experiences more freedom to grow and solve her problems. She is reunited with an old friend she betrayed during 5th grade. Now, as they both struggle to find acceptance and fit in, they work through their problems and become allies. A naïve’ Alison grows during the story to become a strong opponent.

Paulette Clark
Junction City, KS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Long Gone Daddy</strong> by Helen Hemphill</th>
<th><strong>Fathers-Son Relationships/Religions</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

This was a delightful story that let the reader feel the emotions and battles of a teenage boy trying to understand his thoughts and life—separate from the thinking of his father, the preacher. His struggles bring out the bitter anger within himself when he tries to express his feelings and opinions. Harlan Q, the protagonist, begins his relationship with his paternal grandfather on the cold, mortuary-embalming table. While he and his father transport the grandfather’s body to its final resting place in Las Vegas, they encounter a young philosopher, Warrior, who gently opens the minds of Harlan Q and his father. The journey unravels the mystery of the grandfather and the world to Harlan Q. He experiences a world outside his hometown and realizes his own vulnerability.

Paulette Clark
Junction City, KS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Monkey Town</strong> by Ronald Kidd</th>
<th><strong>Historical Fiction/Evolution</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Given the recent debate regarding “intelligent design,” Kidd’s *Monkey Town* is especially timely. Inspired by a chance meeting with the daughter of one of the key players in the Scopes Monkey Trial, Kidd carefully researched the events of the summer of 1925 in Dayton, Tennessee, and young people with an interest in the evolution controversy should find this a compelling read.

Kidd’s novel retells the Scopes story as one of a small town struggling to survive in the face of economic hardship. Town leaders see in the ACLU’s offer to defend any teacher charged under the state’s new anti-evolution law an opportunity to bring attention, publicity, and prosperity to Dayton. With the consent of John Scopes, the trial moves forward, ultimately to become part of American mythology.

*Monkey Town* provides an accessible glimpse into an important incident in American history and culture. The book is especially well-suited for interdisciplinary studies, and the topic should be of interest to many contemporary students.

F. Todd Goodson
Manhattan, KS

---

**Clip & File YA Book Reviews**
**Pretty Little Devils**

by Nancy Holder

Suspense/Murder/Mystery


Hazel Stone longs to be part of the popular high school crowd, but her good looks and classy style haven’t been enough to move her up the social ladder. Imagine Hazel’s excitement when Sylvia Orly, the most popular girl, recruits her to be a member of The Pretty Little Devils, undoubtedly the most elite group. Hazel will pay any price to prove her worthy, enduring an induction of social lessons, devilish tactics, and sinister pranks.

Alarm sets in when no one from within the group claims credit for mysterious threatening messages, casting suspicion on... when the murders begin. Cleverly written using personal blog style dialogue, it is a must-read for suspense thriller fans.

Susan Gapp

**The Rise of Lubchenko**

by Michael Simmons

Bioterrorism Espionage/Adventure


Evan Macalister, teenaged protagonist of The Rise of Lubchenko, is an even more unlikely hero than Clark Kent. Author Michael Simmons combines a rebellious yet insecure, sleep-through-class smart guy with a save-the-world adventure seeker to create one sarcastic, vulnerable, funny, likable, somehow believable character.

Male readers will vicariously enjoy Evan’s James Bondian adventures to prevent a smallpox epidemic planned by his father’s business partner without revealing his own illegal theft and sales of his father’s office equipment. They will identify with his more ordinary problems (a distant dad, failing grades), all of which Simmons handles lightly yet sincerely. They will also appreciate Simmons’ fast-paced, no-nonsense, humorous style.

The Rise of Lubchenko offers something not always easy to find—a good casual read for middle-school and high-school guys.

Judy Beemer

**Sand Dollar Summer**

by Kimberly K. Jones

Family/Friendship

Simon & Schuster, 2006, 206 pp., $15.95


Lise, a twelve-year-old girl, thinks her life is over when her mother moves the family to a beach in Maine for the summer. Unknown to Lise and her five-year-old brother, this is where their mother grew up many years ago. As the family deals with living in a ramshackle beach house, Lise is battling with her fear of the sea, and is constantly questioning why her mother brought them here.

Friendship, family, and love are continuing themes in the first novel of Kimberly K. Jones, who lives on the East Coast and brings knowledge of the sea into her writing.

Bonny Martens
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Book</strong></th>
<th><strong>Author</strong></th>
<th><strong>Publisher</strong></th>
<th><strong>Publication Date</strong></th>
<th><strong>Pages</strong></th>
<th><strong>Price</strong></th>
<th><strong>ISBN</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stuffed</td>
<td>Eric Walters</td>
<td>Orca Soundings</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>108 pp.</td>
<td>$7.95</td>
<td>1-55143-500-4 (pbk.) 1-55143-519-5 (bound)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Catch a Prince</td>
<td>Gillian McKnight</td>
<td>Simon Pulse</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>254 pp.</td>
<td>$5.99</td>
<td>976-0-689-87734-6 0-689-87734-X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrrell</td>
<td>Coe Booth</td>
<td>Push (Scholastic)</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>310 pp.</td>
<td>$16.99</td>
<td>0-439-83879-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vampire Beach: Bloodlust</td>
<td>Alex Duval</td>
<td>Simon Pulse</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>196 pp.</td>
<td>$5.99</td>
<td>978-1-4169-1166-1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Stuffed**

When fifteen-year-old Ian views *Stuffed*, an exposé of the Frankie’s fast food chain and similar to the real *Super Size Me*, his class project emerges. He likes Frankie’s food, but dislikes their unhealthy ingredients, toys and gimmicks used to entice customers, and negative corporate policies. He posts his suggestion of a one-day Frankie’s boycott on the Internet. Ian reaches millions with hundreds responding, including Frankie’s attorneys, who offer his school a free Frankie’s lunch in lieu of boycotting. Ian and Frankie’s attorney present their positions to Ian’s entire school, with students unanimously selecting to boycott. Tidily, Ian is offered a future position by opposing council, the girl he secretly likes calls, and Frankie’s menu becomes healthier.

Ian is an intelligent, witty narrator, and this fast-paced, large-print novel explores the seamy sides of the fast-food industry and legal profession while revealing the business tactics of each as being remarkably similar.

Lisa A. Hazlett
Vermillion, SD

**To Catch a Prince**

Two beautiful 16-year-old rich girls, Helene and Alexis, best friends and step-sisters, fly off to London for a summer of adventure and fun. On the way, they make a bet as to who can ensnare the heart of Prince William first. In the past, these two have made a point of choosing different activities to avoid competition. This ill-advised bet throws their relationship awry. Meanwhile, in their pursuit of a stodgy, self-centered, and unromantic prince, they don’t see the two far superior boys pining for them in front of their noses until it is almost too late. In spite of the book’s standard disclaimer that all the characters are fictional, the author does seem to delight in taking a few unnecessary potshots at the heir to the British crown. Nevertheless, the book is a light fantasy escape into the lives of the likes of more virginal Paris Hiltons.

Myrna Marler
Laie, HI

**Tyrrell**

Tyrell’s world is not easy to hear about. A homeless African-American teen in the Bronx, Tyrell’s goal is to hold his family together and move his spaced-out mother and seven-year-old brother “home” to the projects. Available money-making ventures, though, also involve brushes with the law, and Tyrell doesn’t want to end up in jail like his father: “I don’t wanna be the kinda man my pops turned out to be. . . . Nah. I’ma hafta do better than him.”

Readers listen to Tyrell for just one week, but that is enough to recognize the frustration of his world. “I really wanna put my fist through the wall. . . . I gotta do something. I wanna go somewhere, but I don’t got nowhere to go.”

Born in the Bronx, author Coe Booth continues to live there, and this first novel takes mature readers there, too.

Judy Beemer
Junction City, KS

**Vampire Beach: Bloodlust**

This is a well-written tale of school life in Malibu, and this book is only one in a series of books about Jason and his sister, Dani, and their “friends” in the high school where they have come to live.

The vampires stay hidden for fully half of the book, allowing the reader to become familiar with the teens who inhabit the country’s most elite high school. The parties, the obnoxious spending, and the cliques are largely glossed over as one of the vampires turns rogue and kills someone. In this haven for vampirism, the condition has existed for more than a century, and though some scenes come from films like *Fright Night* and *The Lost Boys*, Jason does seem to have something of a normal life. The vampire he lusts after—sexually—explains that vampires only take enough blood to stay relatively young. Only rogue vampires kill, and of course, Jason must confront both the rogue and his competition at school, in a tale that is meant to flow into other stories.

John Jacob
Oak Park, IL
Wait for Me
by An Na
Realistic Fiction
ISBN: 0-399-24275-9

Creating a dream-like state through language and point of view in Wait for Me, An Na tells the story of a Korean-American girl searching for her own dreams, while trying to live up to her mother's high expectations. Mina feels conflicted between the expectations of her mother and her own desires, and the fear, anger, desperation, passion, and struggle with parents that arises from this conflict. Readers will connect with the fear, anger, desperation, passion, and struggle with parents Mina feels, as well as fall in love with Ysrael, the boy who flips her tormented world upside down, forcing her to decide exactly what she, and not her mother, wants.

Wait for Me's chapters switch focus between the protagonist, older sister Mina, and her younger hearing-impaired sister Suna. Mina's chapters are written in first person, while Suna's are written in third person. This point of view floats readers outside reality into a world where truth, reality, and fantasy intertwine.

Jennifer Hanni
Manhattan, KS

Waking
by Alyxandra Harvey-Fitzhenry
Self Discovery/Death/Relationships
Orca, 2006, 119 pp., $8.95
ISBN: 1-55143-489-x

Beauty feels alienated around her classmates. But so would you if you had to shave your legs at school and cover your scratches because your father was paranoid about sharp objects. Ever since her mother died, Beauty has had to deal with strange changes like being haunted by a Shadow Lady in her dreams. It isn't until Beauty is assigned to work with the odd new girl, Luna, that Beauty begins to find peace in her life. Luna introduces Beauty to the carefree, hippie-like philosophy of the Pre-Raphaelites who created the great works of art and poetry that Beauty admires. By adopting this new outlook, Beauty is able to discover herself and to find a place among her peers. In addition, her newfound confidence aids her to overcome her nightmares and leave behind the horrors of her mother's death.

Diana Harter
Provo, UT

The Winter Road
by Terry Hokenson
Coming of Age/Adventure
Front Street, 2006, 175 pp., $16.95
ISBN: 1932425454

Willa Raedl is frustrated with her life. School is unfulfilling, and at home she feels ignored and unimportant. Ever since her brother Ray died, it seems her family has been disconnected and numb to her feelings. On one particularly challenging day, Willa sees an opportunity to prove to her family—and to herself—that she is more capable and responsible than they often believe her to be. When she discovers her uncle is not in any condition to fly out and transport her mother from one city to another, she decides to fly his plane over to pick up her mother herself. After trying to navigate through a blizzard, the plane crashes in a snowy wilderness, and she must figure out how to survive despite cold temperatures and few supplies.

Terry Hokenson's first, The Winter Road is a story of survival and self discovery and shows how one girl finds value in herself through determination and perseverance.