
Core announces the 2021 Excellence in Children's and Young Adult Science Fiction Notable Lists



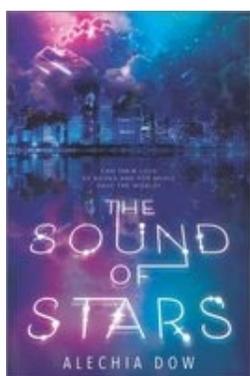
Hard Wired by Len Vlahos

Quinn thinks he's a normal fifteen year-old. He plays video games, spends time with his friends, and crushes on a girl named Shea. But a shocking secret brings his entire world crashing down: he's not a boy. He's artificial intelligence.

After Quinn "wakes up," he sees his world was nothing more than a virtual construct. He's the QUantum INTelligence Project, the first fully-aware A.I. in the world--part of a grand multi-billion-dollar experiment led by the very man he believed to be his dead father.

But as Quinn encounters the *real* world for the first time, his life becomes a nightmare. While the scientists continue to experiment on him, Quinn must come to grips with the truth: his mom and brother don't exist. His friends are all adults who were paid to hang out with him. Even other super computers aren't like him. Quinn finds himself completely alone--until he bonds with Shea, the real girl behind the virtual one. As Quinn explores what it means to truly live, he questions who he can trust. What will it take to win his freedom . . . and where does he belong?

Award-winning author Len Vlahos offers a perfect blend of science fiction and contemporary in this unputdownable, high stakes tale that explores big questions about what it means to be human.



The Sound of Stars by Alechia Dow

Can a girl who risks her life for books and an alien who loves pop music work together to save humanity? A beautiful and thrilling debut novel for fans of Marie Lu and Veronica Roth.

Two years ago, a misunderstanding between the leaders of Earth and the invading Ilori resulted in the deaths of one-third of the world's population.

Today, seventeen-year-old Ellie Baker survives in an Ilori-controlled center in New York City. With humans deemed dangerously volatile because of their initial reaction to the invasion, emotional expression can be grounds for execution. Music, art and books are

illegal, but Ellie still keeps a secret library.

When young Ilori commander M0Rr1S finds Ellie's library, he's duty-bound to deliver her for execution. The trouble is, he finds himself drawn to human music and in desperate need of more.

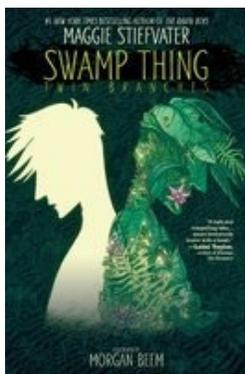
Humanity's fate rests in the hands of an alien Ellie should fear, but M0Rr1S has a potential solution--thousands of miles away. The two embark on a wild and dangerous journey with a bag of books and their favorite albums, all the while creating a story and a song of their own that just might save them both.



Catfishing on Catnet by Naomi Kritzer

Because her mom is always on the move, Steph hasn't lived anywhere longer than six months. Her only constant is an online community called CatNet--a social media site where users upload cat pictures--a place she knows she is welcome. What Steph doesn't know is that the admin of the site, CheshireCat, is a sentient A.I. When a threat from Steph's past catches up to her and CheshireCat's existence is discovered by outsiders, it's up to Steph and her friends, both online and IRL, to save her. A surprising, heartfelt near-future YA thriller about the topical issues of online privacy and out-of-control technology, and the importance of making connections in an increasingly fragmented society by award-winning author

Naomi Kritzer, whose short story "Cat Pictures Please" won the Hugo Award and Locus Award and was a finalist for the Nebula Award.

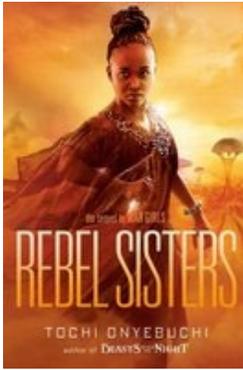


Swamp Thing: Twin Branches by Maggie Stiefvater & Morgan Beem

Twins Alec and Walker Holland have a reputation around town. One is quiet and the other is the life of any party, but the two are inseparable. For their last summer before college, Alec and Walker leave the city to live with their rural cousins, where they find that the swamp holds far darker depths than they could have imagined.

While Walker carves their names into the new social scene, Alec recedes into a summer-school laboratory, slowly losing himself to a deep, dark experiment. This season, both brothers must confront truths, ancient and familial, and as their lives diverge, tensions increase and dormant memories claw to the surface.

Swamp Thing- Twin Branches is a story of shadows, both literal and imagined--and those that take form and haunt us.

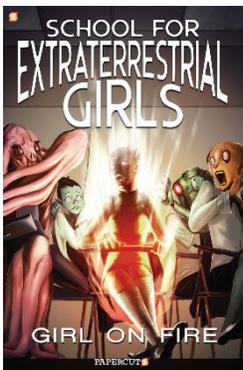


Rebel Sisters by Tochi Onyebuchi

Sequel to War Girls, it's been five years since the Biafran War ended. Ify is now nineteen and living where she's always dreamed--the Space Colonies. She is a respected, high-ranking medical officer and has dedicated her life to helping refugees like herself rebuild in the Colonies.

Back in the still devastated Nigeria, Uzo, a young synth, is helping an aid worker, Xifeng, recover images and details of the war held in the technology of destroyed androids. Uzo, Xifeng, and the rest of their team are working to preserve memories of the many lives lost, despite the government's best efforts to eradicate any signs that the war ever happened.

Though they are working toward common goals of helping those who suffered, Ify and Uzo are worlds apart. But when a mysterious virus breaks out among the children in the Space Colonies, their paths collide. Ify makes it her mission to figure out what's causing the deadly disease. And doing so means going back to the corrupt homeland she thought she'd left behind forever.



School for Extraterrestrial Girls Volume 1: Girl on Fire by Raquel Vasquez Gilliland (On Hoopla)

Tara Smith's parents are super strict with all their rules and routines, and Tara is a dutiful daughter. Rule #1: No friends her own age. Rule #2: keep her bracelet on, or else. But when she breaks her routine--and then loses her bracelet--she's in trouble. Now outed as an extraterrestrial after wielding fire and losing her humanoid form, Tara is captured by the government. She's given two options: get shipped far away where she won't be a danger to anyone or stay on Earth and join a school for other extraterrestrial girls like her. Things at the school aren't easy--especially for the girl whose only friends were textbooks. But Tara's goal to learn how to control her powers is soon sidelined by the discovery that the people she's called Mom and Dad all these years aren't her parents.



Aurora Rising by Amie Kaufman

The year is 2380, and the graduating cadets of Aurora Academy are being assigned their first missions. Star pupil Tyler Jones is ready to recruit the squad of his dreams, but his own boneheaded heroism sees him stuck with the dregs nobody else in the academy would touch . . .

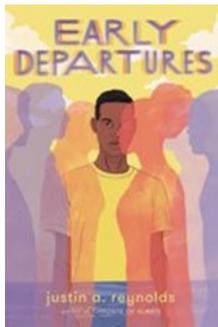
A cocky diplomat with a black belt in sarcasm
A sociopath scientist with a fondness for shooting her bunkmates
A smart-ass tech whiz with the galaxy's biggest chip on his shoulder

An alien warrior with anger-management issues

A tomboy pilot who's *totally* not into him, in case you were wondering

And Ty's squad isn't even his biggest problem--that'd be Aurora Jie-Lin O'Malley, the girl he's just rescued from interdimensional space. Trapped in cryo-sleep for two centuries, Auri is a girl out of time and out of her depth. But she could be the catalyst that starts a war millions of years in the making, and Tyler's squad of losers, discipline cases, and misfits might just be the last hope for the entire galaxy.

NOBODY PANIC.



Early Departures by Justin Reynolds

Justin A. Reynolds, author of *Opposite of Always*, returns with another charming and powerful YA contemporary novel with a speculative twist, perfect for fans of Nicola Yoon, Becky Albertalli, and Adam Silvera.

What if you could bring your best friend back to life--but only for a short time?

Jamal's best friend, Q, doesn't know that he died, and that he's about to die . . . again. He doesn't know that Jamal tried to save him. And that the reason they haven't been friends for two years is because Jamal blames Q for the accident that killed his parents.

But what if Jamal could have a second chance? A new technology allows Q to be reanimated for a few weeks before he dies . . . permanently. And Q's mom is not about to let anyone ruin this miracle by telling Q about his impending death. So how can Jamal fix everything if he can't tell Q the truth?

Early Departures weaves together loss, grief, friendship, and love to form a wholly unique homage to the bonds that bring people together for life--and beyond.



I Hope You Get This Message by Farah Naz Rishi

In this high concept YA novel debut that's *We All Looked Up* meets *The Sun Is Also a Star*, three teens must face down the mistakes of their past after they learn that life on Earth might end in less than a week.

News stations across the country are reporting mysterious messages that Earth has been receiving from a planet--Alma--claiming to be its creator. If they're being interpreted correctly, in seven days Alma will 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.

Jesse, who has been dealt one bad blow after another, wonders if it even matters what happens to the world. Cate, on the other hand, is desperate to use this time to find the father she never met. And Adeem, who hasn't spoken to his estranged sister in years, must find out if he has it in him to forgive her for leaving.

With only a week to face their truths and right their wrongs, Jesse, Cate, and Adeem's paths collide as their worlds are pulled apart.