

3-2015

# Vanished

Maggie Mason Smith

*Clemson University*, [mason5@clemson.edu](mailto:mason5@clemson.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: [https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/lib\\_pubs](https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/lib_pubs)

 Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Please use publisher's recommended citation. <http://www.slj.com/category/teens-ya/>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the University Libraries at TigerPrints. It has been accepted for inclusion in Publications by an authorized administrator of TigerPrints. For more information, please contact [kokeefe@clemson.edu](mailto:kokeefe@clemson.edu).

ments he endured involving Evans one month before. To further his surprise, it is not Evans who flies in on the helicopter to retrieve him but Don Mundie, CIA, who instantly arouses King's suspicions by calling him William. Upon their arrival at the hotel, Blake is clueless as to Mundie's identity, so King knows what he has to do. Together the three boys overpower Mundie, make a run for it, and run straight into Evans at the door. Mundie attempts to convince the boys that Evans is conning them but the boys place their faith in Evans and exit with him. King and his friends must make a choice, and the choice leaves them nowhere to hide. This fast-paced thriller full of unexpected twists, addressing deception, identity struggle, and inner peace, deserves its place on the shelf. **VERDICT** For fans of plot-driven conspiracy-theory fiction.—*Susan Harris, Ridgeway High School, TN*

**BROUWER, Sigmund.** *Rock the Boat.* ISBN 9781459804555.

**POLAK, Monique.** *Learning the Ropes.* ISBN 9781459804524.

ea vol: 168p. (Orca Limelights). ebook available. Orca. May 2015. pap. \$9.95.

**Gr 7-10**—In *Rock the Boat*, 17-year-old Webb is a Canadian songwriter trying to land a record deal in Nashville. He runs into financial trouble when he places his trust in an unscrupulous record producer. When Webb buys lunch for a musician who turns out to be more than meets the eye, the young man's fortune begins to change. In *Learning the Ropes*, despite her father's misgivings, Mandy attends a camp that trains young people to be professional circus performers. She needs to stay focused on her rope climbing to beat the competition, but an accident resulting in the death of a local aerialist threatens Mandy's drive. Does she have the guts to pursue this dangerous profession, or should she follow her dad's advice and set her dream aside? Both of these novels will hook readers from the first chapter. Even though the ambitions of the main characters are specialized, Webb and Mandy are relatable to any young teen in pursuit of a dream. The specifics of the characters' interests—music and circus performance—are described in a way that is true to life and easy to grasp. **VERDICT** Suspenseful plots, fascinating details, and likable protagonists make these titles wonderful additions to hilo collections.—*Alison O'Reilly Poage, Seminary of the Southwest Lib.*

**CAMERON, Sharon.** *Rook.* 464p. Scholastic. May 2015. Tr \$17.99. ISBN 9780545675994; ebk. \$17.99. ISBN 9780545676007.

**Gr 9 Up**—"It was a fine night for an execution..." but the Red Rook has other plans. Eighteen-year-old Sophia Bellamy, with

the help of her older brother Tom and their trusted friend Spear, has freed the prisoners before the Razor could sever their heads. This retelling of *The Scarlet Pimpernel* (a story unlikely to be familiar to most teens) is set in a far-future England and France, when magnetic pole shifts have rendered technology a distant memory. Candlelight, penned letters, and escapes on horseback are the order of the day, and shards of plastic can fetch a pretty price. A political atmosphere similar to the French Revolution has taken hold, and the Rook is determined that innocent lives will not be lost. When not wielding her sword (and a red-tipped feather as a calling card), Sophia is juggling her betrothal of convenience to handsome Frenchman René Hasard, meant to save the Bellamy estate from forfeiture. René is more intriguing (and smarter) than she expected, and though uncomfortable sparks initially fly between them, they soon find they are on the same side, despite René kinship to the Ministre of Security—the very man who has vowed to see the Red Rook brought down. Sophia and René are well matched, and Cameron's atmospheric writing keeps the novel moving. A good choice where Robin LaFevers's *Grave Mercy* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012) or Jennifer Donnelly's *Revolution* (Delacorte, 2010) are popular. **VERDICT** This dashing story line combines a technology-free dystopia with swashbuckling romance.—*Maggie Knapp, Trinity Valley School, Fort Worth, TX*

**CARTHAGE, Lynn.** *Haunted.* 288p. (The Arnaud Legacy Series: Bk. 1). Kensington/KTeen. Mar. 2015. pap. \$9.95. ISBN 9781617736261; ebk. ISBN 9781617736292.

**Gr 8 Up**—Near the end of Phoebe's sophomore year, her family abruptly moves from San Francisco to her stepfather's sprawling ancestral home in England. Phoebe is convinced the move is a result of something awful she did back in California, but her tense family won't talk about it—or much else, for that matter. The house itself seems to send out a dark and hungry vibe, putting the teen even more on edge. Feeling emotionally abandoned by her family, she enlists the help of Miles, a cute local boy who is surrounded by the same cloud of bewildered loneliness, to investigate the terrifying history of the estate. The reasons why Phoebe and Miles have such difficulty maintaining a firm grasp on the world around them is revealed about two thirds of the way through the story, allowing the characters to acknowledge what savvy readers will have already picked up on. The titular haunting is multilayered and centers on a grotesque villain who delivers camp and true horror. The writing sometimes wanders into flowery territory, and the tone is a little hard to pin down. The final showdown, how-

ever, involves a complex chain of heroics, redemption, and forgiveness that strikes the right cord of sincere emotion. The ending leaves things open, hinting at a love triangle that may be a bit of a stretch. **VERDICT** A slightly gruesome haunted house story that will appeal to paranormal romance readers who also crave light horror.—*Beth McIntyre, Madison Public Library, WI*

**COLASANTI, Susane.** *City Love.* 336p. HarperCollins/Katherine Tegen Bks. Apr. 2015. Tr \$17.99. ISBN 9780062307682; ebk. ISBN 9780062307729.

**Gr 9 Up**—Sadie, Darcy, and Rosanna are roommates in New York City the summer before their college freshman year. Sadie, a native New Yorker, is interning at the Department of City Planning and hopes to pursue a career in urban design. Darcy, from Southern California, has unlimited financial support from her parents, which she uses to pursue her carefree social activities and adventures. Rosanna leaves Chicago with the hopes of starting over in a new city but is plagued with constant worry over her living expenses. Despite their differences, the girls enjoy one another's company and support one another through their budding romances. They each have secrets that are alluded to but will likely be revealed in the planned sequel. Each chapter is told in the alternating, indistinguishable voices of the three girls. Though slow at times, the plot moves along at an even pace. The strength of this work lies in its reverence for New York City culture and its ability to capture the excitement of embarking on a new adventure. Readers with a love of made-for-TV romances will enjoy this series opener. **VERDICT** Recommended for those who have exhausted most of Sarah Dessen's titles.—*Lynn Rashid, Marriotts Ridge High School, Marriottsville, MD*

**COOPER, E.E.** *Vanished.* 320p. HarperCollins/Katherine Tegen Bks. May 2015. Tr \$17.99. ISBN 9780062293909; ebk. ISBN 9780062293893.

**Gr 9 Up**—Kalah is lucky to have best friends like Brit and Beth. Seniors and cocaptains of the field hockey team, Brit and Beth took Kalah in when she transferred to Northside, introducing her to their world of high school popularity and drama. But Kalah is falling for Beth, and before she can talk to her about her feelings, Beth vanishes. According to rumors, her disappearance is tied to a secret relationship with Brit's boyfriend, and soon after the gossip begins, Brit commits suicide, leaving Kalah without either of her two friends. Following Brit's death, Beth finally contacts Kalah, but when she does, Kalah realizes that something is very wrong. This novel tackles themes of friendship, deception, obsession, and love. However, Kalah encounters the same set of

problems and reacts the same way over and over again, coming across as a bit static and at times tiresome. The pace picks up about two-thirds of the way through, which brings about a welcome change in Kalah, although the secondary characters remain underdeveloped. **VERDICT** With early hints of John Green's *Paper Towns* (Dutton, 2008) that slowly morph into Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl* (Crown, 2012), this work is recommended for dedicated readers of realistic fiction.—*Maggie Mason Smith, Clemson University R. M. Cooper Library, South Carolina*

**CROSS, Julie & Mark Perini.** *Halfway Perfect*. 384p. Sourcebooks Fire. May 2015. pap. \$9.99. ISBN 9781402297199.

**Gr 10 Up**—Eve Nowakowski knows all about the ups and downs of the modeling lifestyle. Just a few years ago, she was internationally known cover girl Eve Castle—but the life became too much to bear, and she slipped into anonymity. Now a freshman at Columbia University, she discovers that photography is her passion, and through a twist of fate she becomes an assistant to a famous fashion photographer, which puts her right back in the world she tried so desperately to escape. At her first fashion shoot, Eve meets rising modeling star Alex, and sparks immediately fly. However, Alex's agent has cooked up a plan for Alex and another ingénue, underage French model Elana, to become fashion's new hot couple. Eve and Alex have real chemistry, though, and they know that Alex and Elana's contrived relationship is not only dishonest: it is illegal. Eve and Alex are then faced with a series of tough decisions that will put their new relationship to the test. Presented in dual perspectives, switching between narrators Alex and Eve, this title is well written but suffers from a weak plot. The instant love connection between the protagonists is unrealistic and the central conflict between Eve and Wes, Alex's evil talent agent, is not enough to carry the story. Mature subject matter, including alcohol use, eating disorders, and domestic violence, makes this a title suited to an older teen audience. **VERDICT** An additional purchase for libraries that can't keep any "Gossip Girl" or "Pretty Little Liars" (both Little, Brown) installments on the shelf.—*Morgan Brickey, Marion County Public Library System, FL*

**CROSS, Kady.** *Sisters of Blood and Spirit*. 288p. (Sisters of Blood and Spirit: Bk. 1). ebook available. Harlequin Teen. Apr. 2015. Tr \$17.99. ISBN 9780373211487.

**Gr 8 Up**—Lark and Wren Noble are twins; one living and the other a ghost existing through her sister after she died at birth. Entering high school in small town New Devon hasn't been easy for Lark with her dead sister tagging along and sometimes taking over her body. Conversations always appear to be one-sided

to others, making her look a little unbalanced. With her sister occasionally inhabiting her body, Lark never knows what she will wake up to and often wonders if it would be easier to join her sister in the Shadow Lands, where she lurks with other ghostly characters. When a teenager and his friends are challenged by the restless spirit of a serial killer, they seek the help of Lark and Wren to fight the disturbance. Settings that alternate between the murky Shadow Lands and the drama-filled world of high school keep the pace moving. As the perspective shifts between Wren and Lark, readers will find it easy to follow and enjoy the creepiness of the Shadow Lands. Librarians won't keep this one on the shelves for long. **VERDICT** Readers will impatiently wait for the second book in this series, as the first will intrigue fans of romance mixed with paranormal phenomenon.—*Karen Alexander, Lake Fenton High School, Linden, MI*

**DOMINY, Amy Fellner.** *A Matter of Heart*. 320p. Delacorte. May 2015. Tr \$17.99. ISBN 9780385744430; lib. ed. \$20.99. ISBN 9780375991660; ebk. ISBN 9780385389938.

**Gr 9 Up**—Abby knows what she wants, and she is seconds away from achieving it: making the Olympic Trials in her premier event—the 100-meter freestyle. Weeks away from reaching her dream, she gets dizzy after a swim meet. Concerned, her coach wants her to get cleared by her doctor before he will let her swim again. Abby and her parents are shocked to learn that she has Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy, a medical condition that has been responsible for the loss of top high school athletes across the country. Abby and her parents each react differently after the doctor's diagnosis. Her mother incorrectly believes that her daughter's condition is fatal, her father is in denial, and Abby, knowing that she actually has a mild form that likely isn't terminal, decides not to give up on her goals. The teen continues to struggle with her decision to risk her life in order to achieve her dream. Even non-athletes will relate to Abby and her fight to attain a seemingly impossible aspiration. More than a sports novel, this book delves deep into issues of identity—how we identify ourselves separately from what we do well—and the importance of support systems while making life-altering decisions. **VERDICT** Give this to fans of Catherine Gilbert Murdock's "Dairy Queen" series (Houghton Harcourt, 2006).—*Stephanie Charlefour, Wixom Public Library, MI*

**DUNBAR, Helene.** *What Remains*. 336p. ebook available. Flux. May 2015. pap. \$9.99. ISBN 9780738744308.

**Gr 9 Up**—As long as Cal can remember, he has been part of a trio: Cal, Spencer, and Lizzie. Cal and Spencer have known each other since preschool, and Lizzie came into

their lives in first grade. It was obvious even then that Lizzie needed protecting and the boys took the job seriously, often helping Lizzie escape her drunken mother and her string of abusive boyfriends. Now in high school, they are still close, but the dynamic is different; they love one another, but Lizzie is in love with Spencer, even though she knows Spencer is gay. Lizzie's late night admission that she and Spencer slept together once makes Cal feel like an outsider for the first time, although he tries to hide it. Everything changes one afternoon when Cal's car is hit at a high speed by a distracted driver. Spencer only receives superficial bumps and bruises, Lizzie is thrown from the car and killed, and Cal is injured severely enough to require a heart transplant. He is given Lizzie's heart and starts hearing her voice in his head. He also has dreams that he is sure are of Lizzie's life, and he finds himself with some of her artistic talent. It is his inability to overcome his fear of driving that convinces him to start seeing a psychiatrist, and he slowly starts healing and learning to forgive himself. **VERDICT** This novel will appeal to readers who enjoy Lurlene McDaniel's and Gayle Forman's books.—*Suanne B. Roush, formerly at Osceola High School, Seminole, FL*

**EMERSON, Kevin.** *Encore to an Empty Room*. 320p. (Exile: Bk. 2). ebook available. HarperCollins/Katherine Tegen Bks. Apr. 2015. Tr \$17.99. ISBN 9780062133984.

**Gr 9 Up**—At the end of *Exile* (HarperCollins, 2014), Dangerheart became the hot new band once it was revealed that lead singer Caleb is the son of famous artist Eli White—and that Eli has left clues to find his lost songs. In this sequel, the band follows the clues to find Eli's songs, all while Caleb is trying to emerge from his father's shadow. Dangerheart's manager, Catherine Summer Carlson, continues to narrate in this entry. Readers feel connected to the issues that the protagonist faces, and the story line flows easily through her wit and intellect. The narratives presents both sides of the teen's life: as Summer, she navigates rock concerts, friends, dating Caleb, and the big mystery surrounding Caleb and Eli, while as Catherine, she copes with family, homework, and possibly law school. Which path will she choose? Teens will identify with the feeling of being caught between two worlds and will recognize the difficulty of following one's passions. **VERDICT** For fans of mysteries and rock and roll, this installment of Emerson's music-themed series hits all the right notes.—*Caitlin Wilson, Brooklyn Public Library*

**EVE, Helen.** *Boarding School Girls*. 384p. ebook available. St. Martin's Griffin. Mar. 2015. Tr \$19.99. ISBN 9781250054593.

Copyright of School Library Journal is the property of Media Source, Inc. and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.