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# Hiding

Maggie Mason Smith

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realized portrayal of a person living with Asperger's. As her romantic foil, Stanley's character is initially a little too perfect, but as the story progresses it is made clear that he struggles with his own issues. This is a love story that could also appeal to adult readers. Their love is hard-fought and deservedly earned. **VERDICT** Recommended for all YA collections.—*Kefra Phillippe, Nichols Middle School, Evanston, IL*

**TURNER, Henry. *Hiding*.** 272p. HMH. Apr. 2018. Tr \$17.99. ISBN 9780544284777.

**Gr 8 Up**—When a lovesick teen goes for a walk one night, he “accidentally” finds himself in the basement of his ex-girlfriend’s house. Unable to leave because of the home alarm system, he resigns himself to an overnight stay. When the maid arrives in the morning, the teen sees his chance to leave, but curiosity gets the better of him and he begins to explore; as he moves around the house he describes his relationships with his parents and few friends, but mostly he recounts the relationship he shared with his ex-girlfriend. The teen prides himself on his ability to hide and uses this skill while stuck in the house but despite this titular theme, the work’s true focus is on the connections people share. Twists in the story line will keep readers engaged, but the main plot, which is peppered with curses and some sexual references, frequently becomes lost in the many tangential plotlines. Abrupt returns to the present may leave some teens confused. **VERDICT** An additional purchase.—*Maggie Mason Smith, Clemson University, SC*

★ **WYK, C.V. *Blood and Sand*.** 320p. Tor Teen. Jan. 2018. Tr \$17.99. ISBN 9780765380098. **POP**

**Gr 8 Up**—Weaving two stories together—that of Attia, a 17-year-old Thracian warrior princess, and of Xanthus, a gladiator—Wyk crafts a cast of relatable characters whose lives have been thrown together as a result of massacre. Within a matter of days, Attia goes from being the princess of Thrace to being a slave girl in a gladiator household. She is purchased at an auction by the House of Timeus to be given as a gift to Xanthus, the Champion of Rome. A skilled fighter, Attia immediately escapes by breaking the bones of her captors, climbing buildings, and running as fast as possible. She is ultimately caught and branded and learns that she needs to follow instructions and lie low until she is able to kill Timeus and seek revenge on Crassus Flavius, the man responsible for the murder of her Thracian comrades. Meanwhile, Attia gets to know Xanthus, only to find out that he is also a slave to Timeus, bought as a child and forced to learn how to fight as a gladiator. Xanthus is training for the fight of his life: a chance to battle the man who murdered his people, Decimus.

The eruption of Mount Vesuvius changes everyone’s plans and each character must fight to survive. A surprise ending will leave readers wanting more. Only slightly similar in theme to Marie Rutkoski’s *The Winner’s Curse*, this debut is a unique addition to Ancient Roman historical fiction. This stunning series starter reads like a movie, with lengthy action scenes and strong imagery that allow readers to enjoy the narrative on a different level. **VERDICT** Recommended for all young adult collections.—*Kristin Unruh, Siersma Elementary School, Warren, MI*

## YA Graphic Novels

★ **ANDERSON, Laurie Halse. *Speak: The Graphic Novel*.** illus. by Emily Carroll. 384p. Farrar. Feb. 2018. Tr \$19.99. ISBN 9780374300289.

**Gr 7 Up**—Melinda is already a pariah on her first day as a freshman at Merryweather High. She involved the police in an end-of-summer party, and now everyone shuns her. Unable to tell anyone what actually happened at the party, Melinda withdraws more and more into herself. Rarely speaking, ditching classes, and ignoring school assignments, she spirals downward into apathy and depression. One of the few people to reach her is her art teacher, who helps her express with art what she has so deeply and painfully buried. This potent retelling of the modern classic *Speak* blends words and images to create magic: a new representation of a teen whose voice is ripped from her, the battles she must wage to find it again, and the triumph of finally being able to speak out. Carroll’s grayscale artwork perfectly depicts the starkness of Melinda’s depression through strong ink lines and striking panels that rely on pencil and charcoal textural effects for the backgrounds. The characters are distinct and the action flows naturally; it is amazing how closely this version evokes the style and feeling of the original. The dialogue is pulled directly from the novel and enhances the progression of the story and of Melinda’s emotions. **VERDICT** This gripping, powerful work will introduce *Speak* to a brand-new audience and enthrall longtime fans. Admirers of Carroll’s *Through the Woods* will also appreciate this timeless tale.—*Kelley Gile, Cheshire Public Library, CT*

**MARINAOMI. *Losing the Girl*.** illus. by Mari-Naomi. 280p. (Life on Earth: Bk. 1). Graphic Universe. Jan. 2018. Tr \$29.32. ISBN 9781512449105.

**Gr 10 Up**—This first installment in the “Life on Earth” series follows four teenagers at Blithedale High along their adolescent journeys with all the joys, agonies, and oddities that usually accompany them—with a few twists. Nigel tries a little too hard, and the

girls are laughing at him, not with him. Emily finally catches the attention of her crush, but what will happen when things go too far too fast? Paula would give anything to get out of Emily’s shadow. Brett wants the one girl he knows he can’t have, and the girl he doesn’t love is the only one right in front of him. Meanwhile, the teens discuss the disappearance of a classmate, Claudia Jones. Was she abducted by aliens? Each character comes in contact with something mysterious and inexplicable. Part 1 of the trilogy leaves most of the characters in cliff-hanger situations that beg for a sequel. The artwork is simplistic, like idle doodling, and while it propels the plot at a lightning pace, it disconnects readers from the characters at times. When the narrative does slow, some of the more intense scenes are carefully drawn out for emotional impact. Mari-Naomi skillfully weaves webs of intrigue, and fans of suspenseful graphic novels will be interested in how events play out. **VERDICT** Enjoyable but not earth-shattering—for libraries that need to build up their graphic novel collections.—*Michael Marie Jacobs, Darlington School, GA*

**SMITH, Juliana “Jewels.” (H)afrocentric: Vols. 1–4.** illus. by Ronald Nelson & Mike Hampton. 120p. PM Pr. Nov. 2017. pap. \$20. ISBN 9781629634487.

**Gr 10 Up**—Naima is a student at Ronald Reagan University, where she strives to live up to her dreams of being a revolutionary, black, feminist activist. Determined and confident, Naima brings together the people in her life, such as her best friend Renee, who is queer; her apathetic brother Miles; and their Chicano friend El, to help her change the world. Packed with references to significant counterculture and African American movements, this graphic novel (begun as a webcomic) moves incredibly quickly among genres and topics. Intersectionality and the divide between privileged “enlightenment” and radical race relations are the backbone of the whip-smart, wildly original comic. Satire (an internship opportunity for black interpreters for white people, a protest sign—wielding fairy godmother) simultaneously diffuses and highlights the heavy reality of the issues discussed. The art is approachable but not predictable, with close-ups of angry faces and fluid backgrounds that add to the raw feeling of the work. The result of so many great things packed into a small package is that the book sometimes falters under its own weight, making some pages hard to follow. **VERDICT** While cultural references may leave younger teens and those unfamiliar with social justice frustrated, those discovering a desire for activism will be eager to learn from Naima. Highly recommended for collections serving older teens.—*Amy Diegelman, formerly at Vineyard Haven Public Library, MA*

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