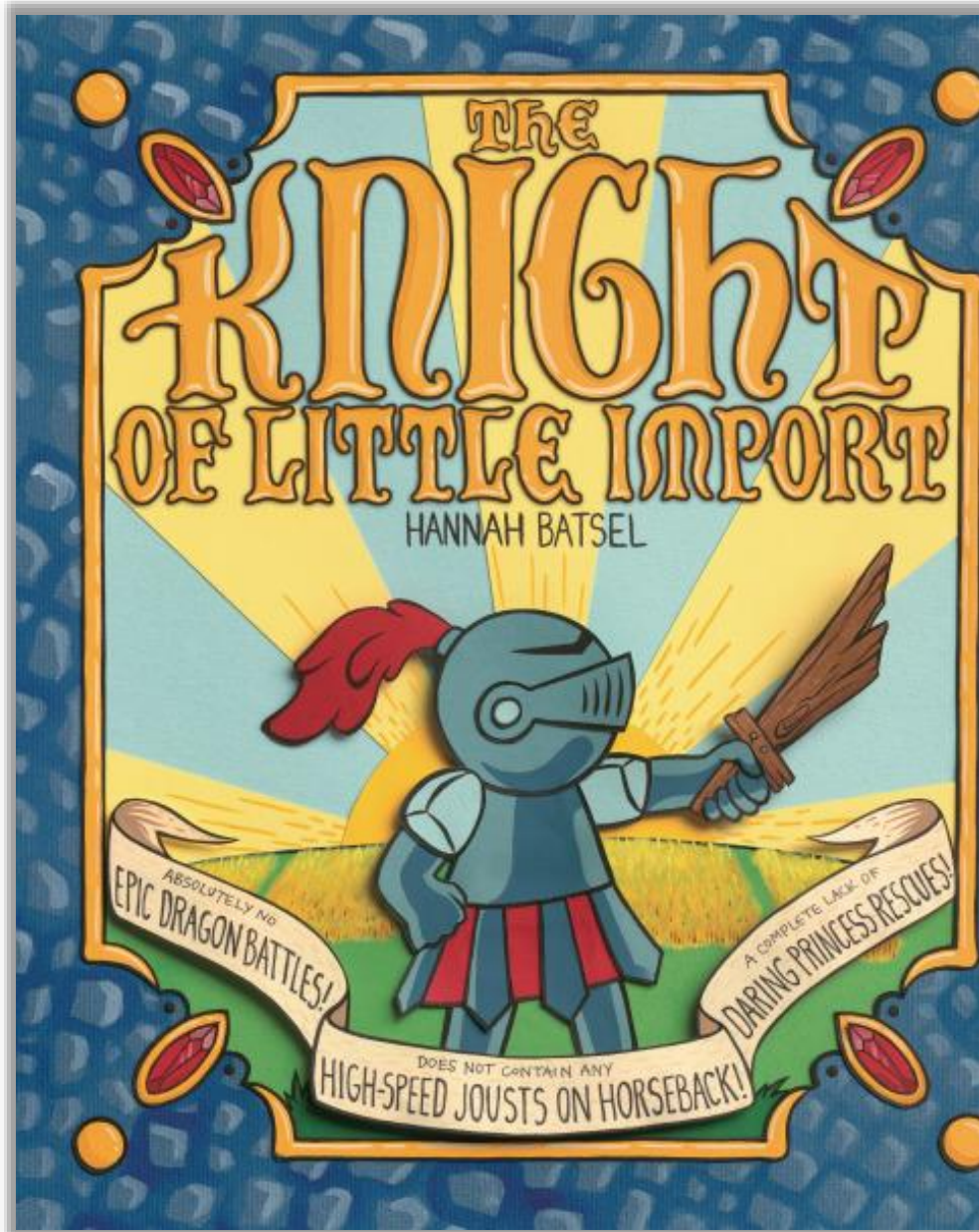




Fall 2023 Lead Titles

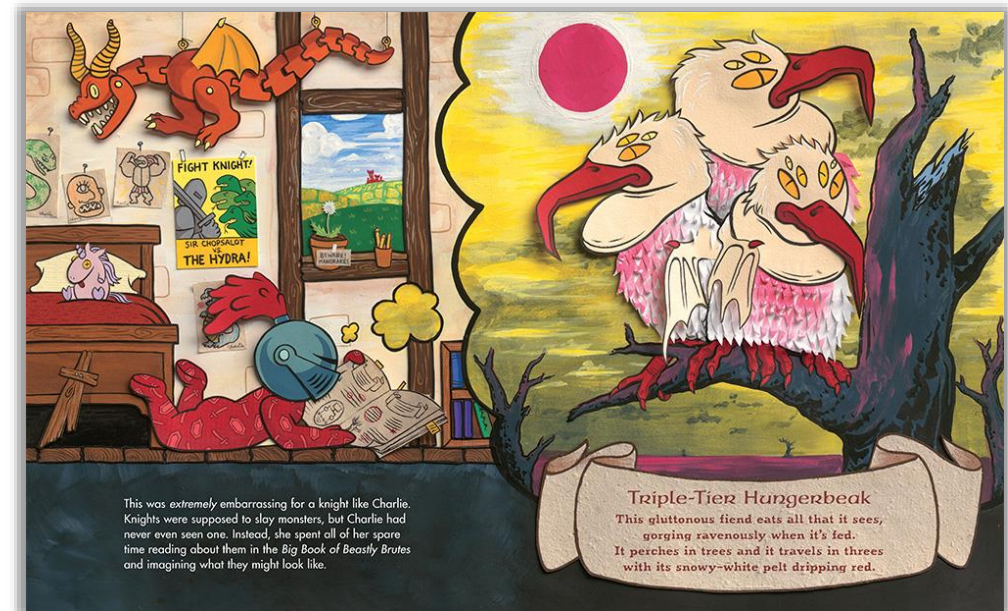
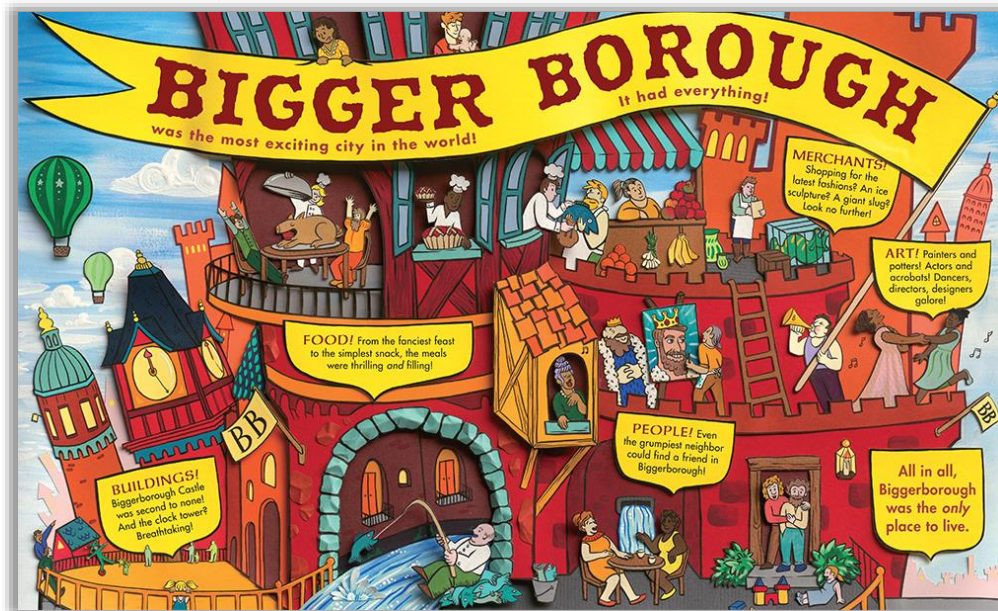
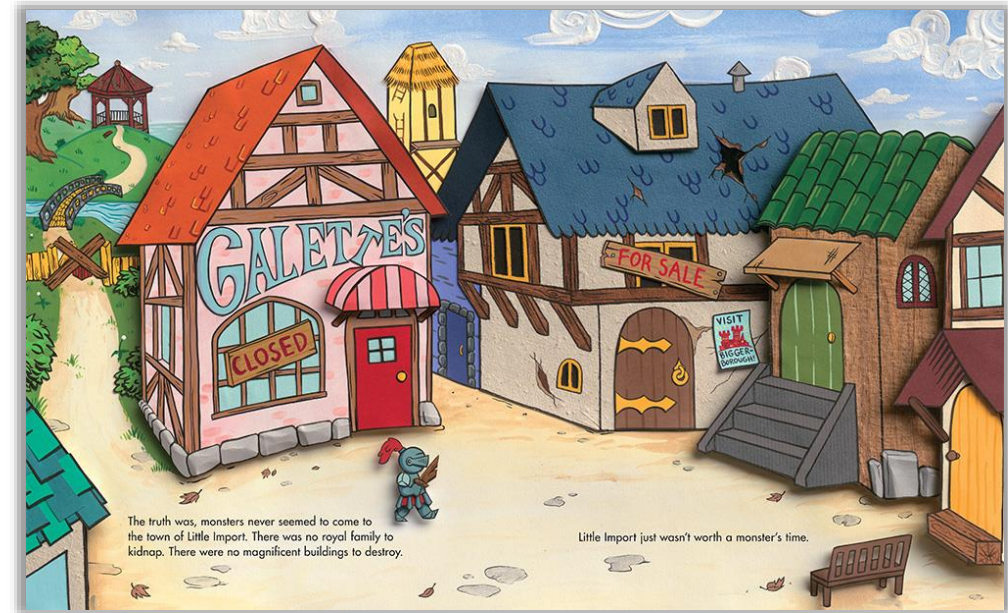
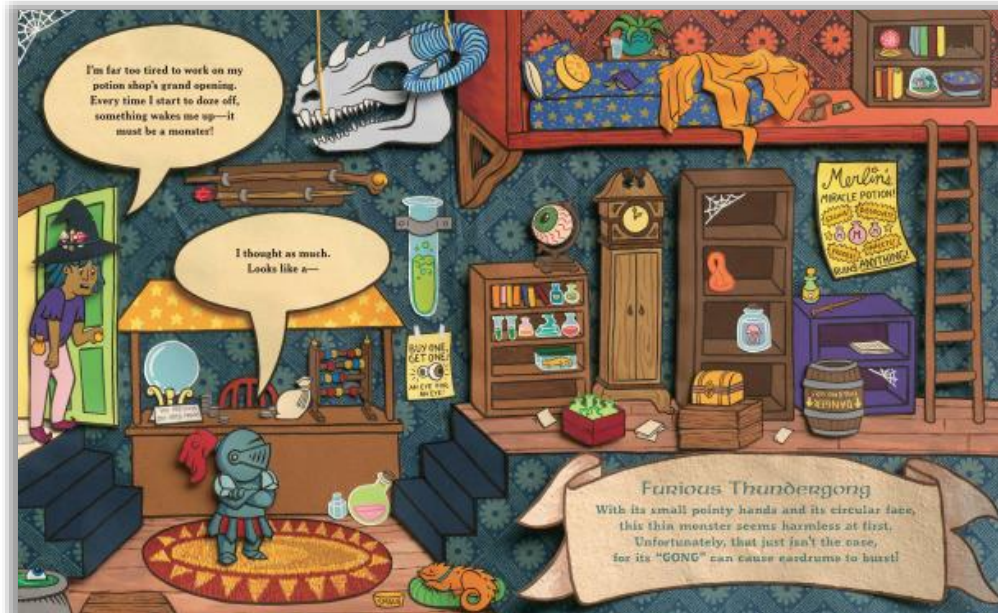
Lerner 

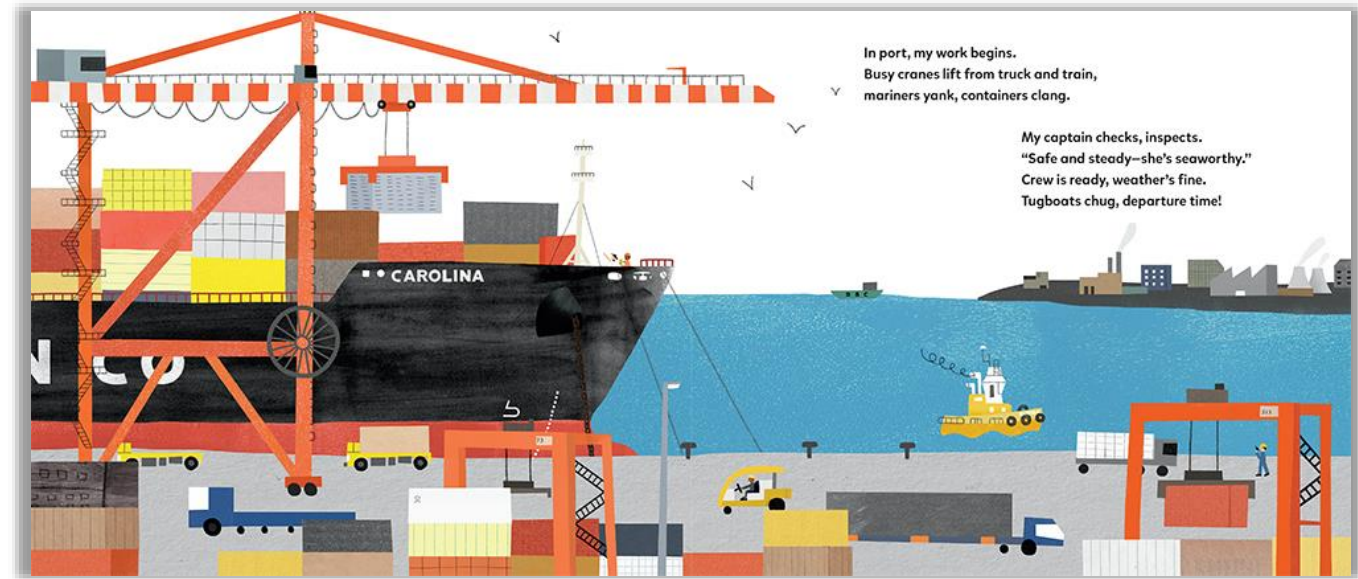
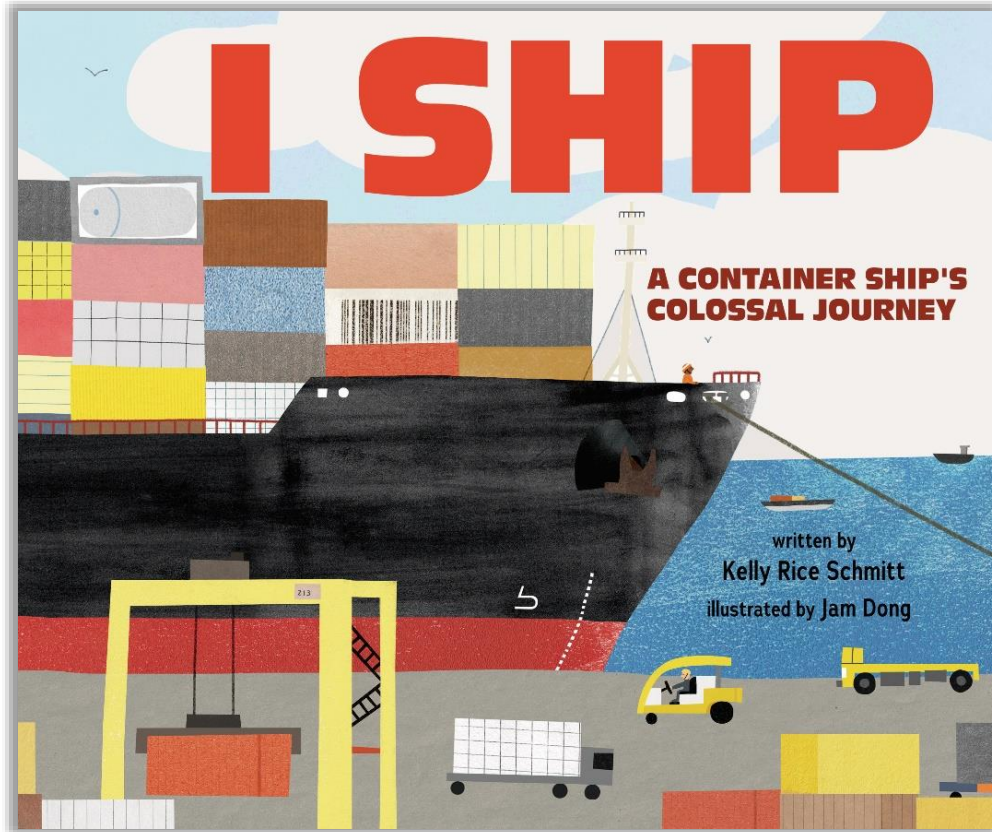


The Knight of Little Import

Written & illustrated by Hannah Batsel

- Hardcover Picture Book
- \$19.99
- 40 Pages
- 9.25 x 11 in
- On Sale September 2023
- Author lives in Chicago

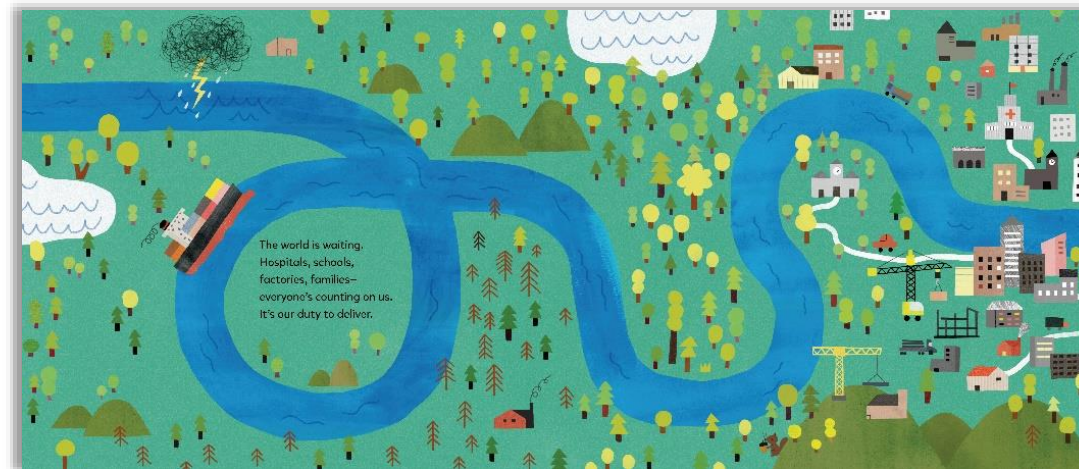
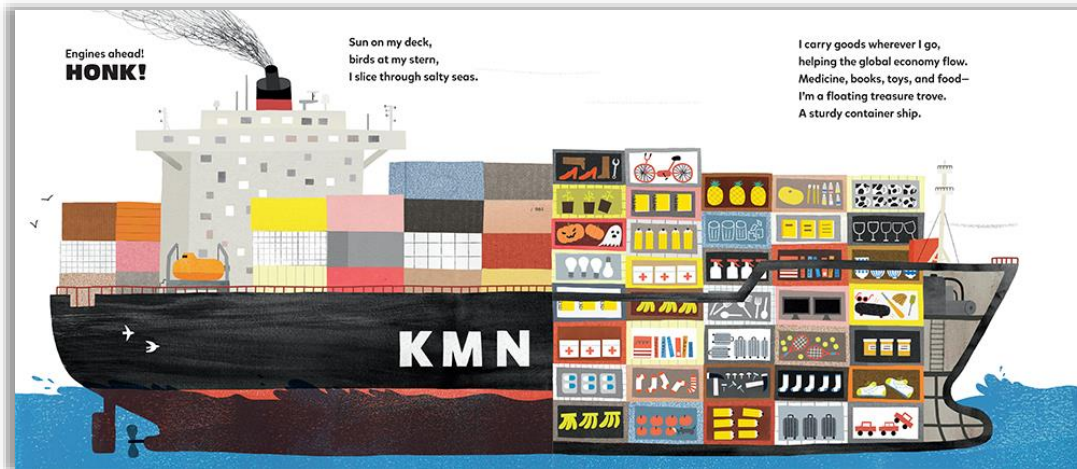




I Ship: A Container Ship's Colossal Journey

Written by Kelly Rice Schmitt, illustrated by Jam Dong

- Hardcover picture book
- \$19.99
- 40 Pages
- 10.625 x 8.875 in
- On Sale October 2023
- Author lives in North Carolina, illustrator lives in Boston





Chapter 1

"Promise me," Kennedy says as she snaps the cap back onto her purple gel pen, "that you won't read this until you get home." She blows on the signature and swishes her pale hand back and forth over the text in an attempt to dry my final *have a nice summer* before we actually go out and do so. She gently closes the flimsy paperback yearbook and hands it to me.

"Okay," I shrug.

"You gushing your heart out to him or something?" Jonah teases Kennedy. His curly hair swishes as he shoots her a questioning glance.

I laugh, because everyone knows that Kennedy and Jonah belong together. Or at least, everyone *would* know that if they actually cared about my friends and me, but drama kid drama is not high on

the list of things our seventh-grade classmates care about. Unless, of course, you fall off the stage. Then it's all anybody can talk about for the past seventy-three days.

It wasn't so bad at first—everyone in the audience rising to their feet and shouting "Call 9-1-1!" because suddenly, I was the star. *And Miss H. didn't think I could play a lead.* A pair of hands yanked my shoulder, and I opened my eyes with a gasp. The room erupted into applause. My first standing ovation.

The ambulance came next.

I texted Kennedy as Mom and Dad whispered buzzwords with the doctors: Nothing broken. Ice packs. Therapy.

Don't sweat it, Kennedy's message said. *People make careers of falling off the stage all the time. Ever hear of The Play that Goes Wrong?*

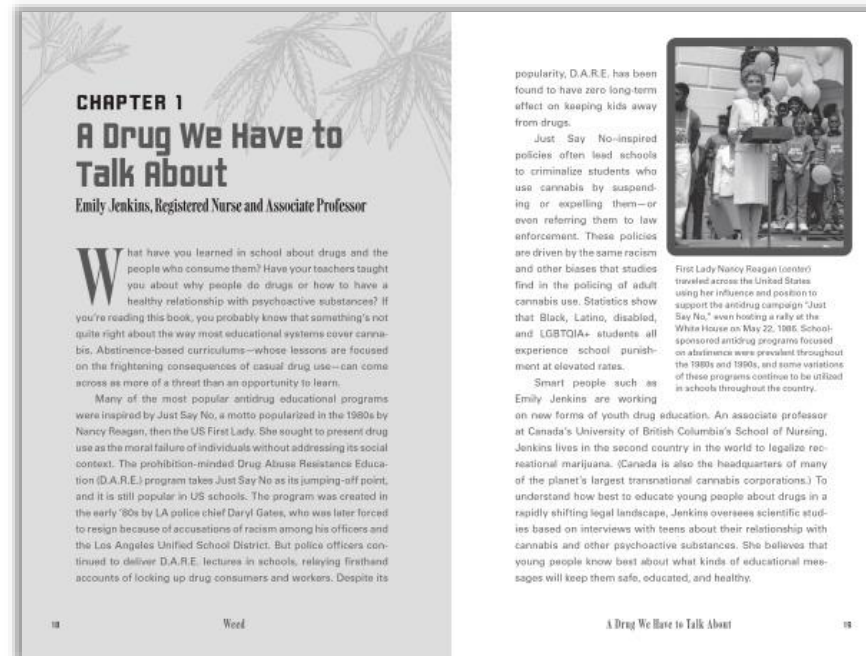
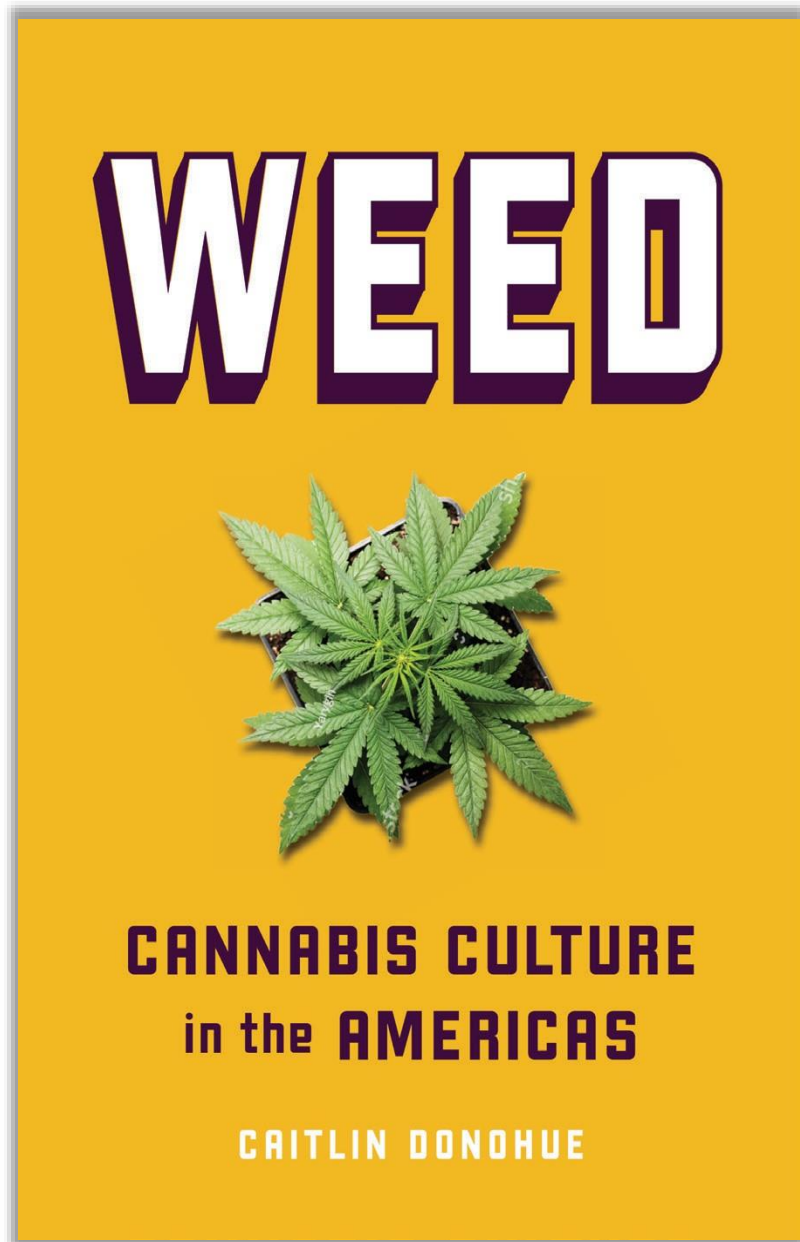
Uh. I just starred in it, I replied.

After I was sent home with nothing but a bruised elbow and damaged pride, the whispered conversations began. Once everyone sees you aren't actually hurt, the "poor kid's" turn into "loser" and "Forsooth!" and—

BRRRRRRINGGGGGINGINGING. The school bell rings, and with that, the worst year of

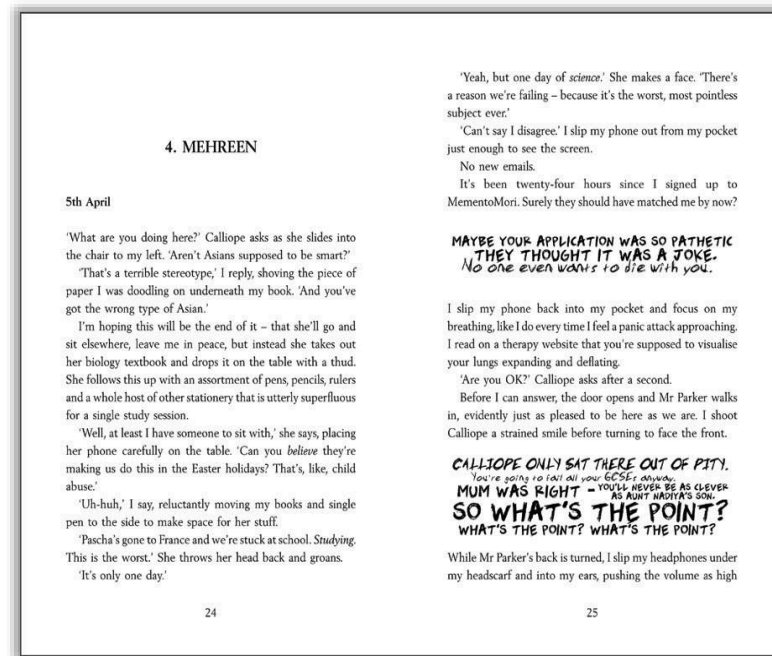
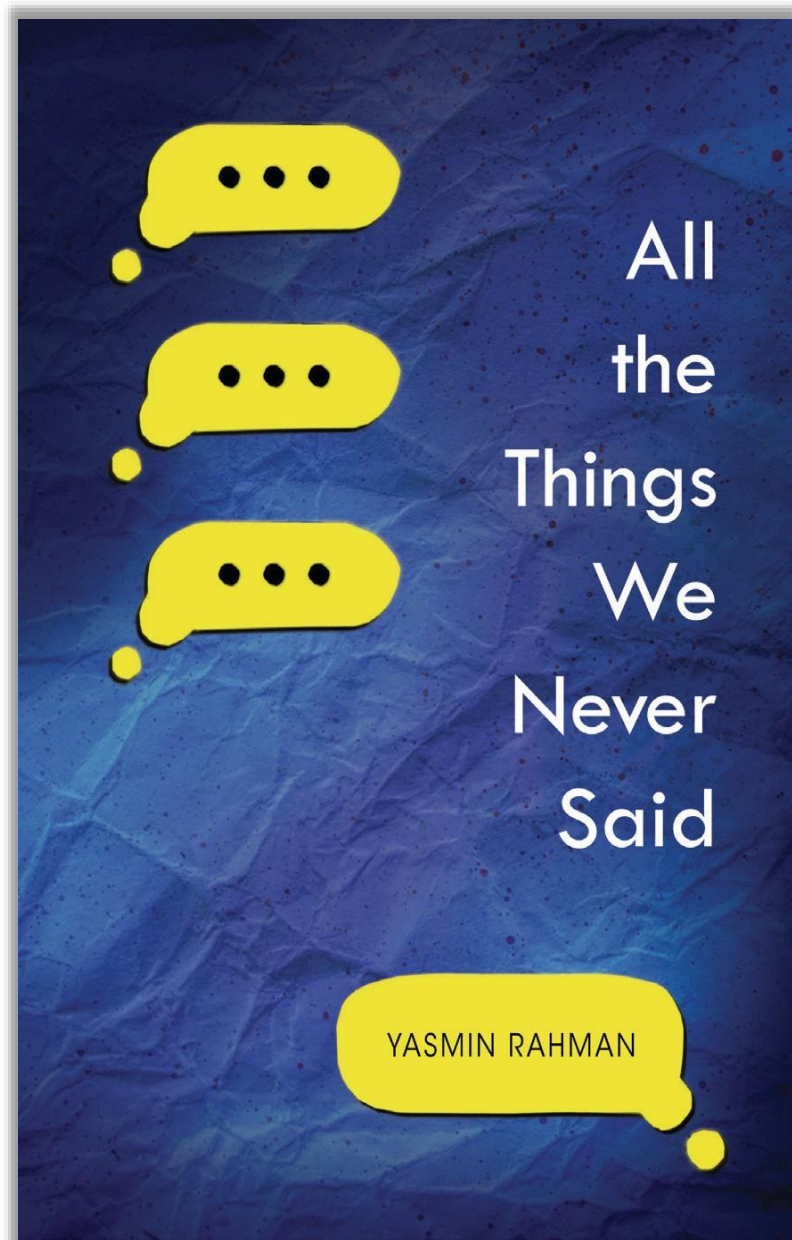
Forsooth Written by Jimmy Matejek-Morris

- Hardcover Middle Grade Fiction
- \$19.99
- 360 Pages
- 5.25 x 7.5
- On Sale November 2023
- Author lives in Massachusetts



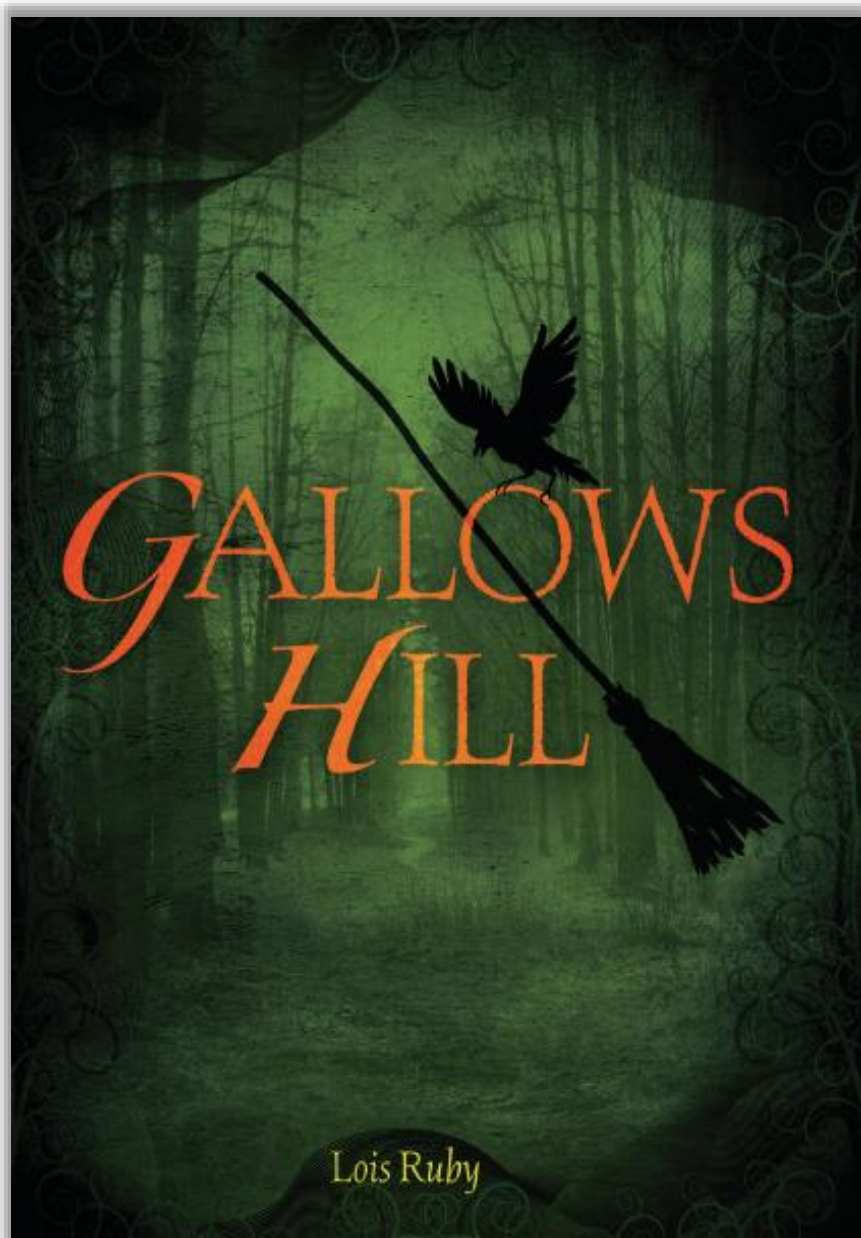
Weed: Cannabis Culture in the Americas Written by Caitlin Donohue

- Paperback Young Adult Nonfiction
- \$18.99
- 184 Pages
- 5.5 x 8.25
- On Sale September 2023
- Author lives in Mexico City and visits PNW regularly



All the Things We Never Said Written by Yasmin Rahman

- Hardcover Young Adult Fiction
- \$20.99
- 440 Pages
- 5.0625 x 7.8125
- On Sale October 2023
- Author lives in the UK



Chapter 2 February

Thomas

The rich people from the upper decks saunter down the gang-plank in fancy dress they've saved for this very moment. We of the lower decks stumble off the ship, filthy and exhausted, half-blinded by the unexpected sunlight as a blast of frosty air assaults us. Some of us are barely alive, but we are here, in New England.

Passengers scatter to waiting family. Three ladies on our deck have come to be matched with husbands they've never met. Everyone has someplace to go except Grace and me. We're alone.

The wharf is crowded with residents hurrying here and there, most wearing humble linen and wool. We're scruffy after our weeks on the ship, but the Salem folk take no notice of us amid the hogs and chickens and goats and sows sauntering through the town. The smell is horrid and at the same time intoxicating: rotting vegetables, unwashed bodies, horse manure, salt-water fish, and smoke rising from nearby chimneys promising warmth and roasted meat. We haven't tasted meat in months. I've no idea where we'll come by a morsel to fill our stomachs, which are inside-out with hunger.

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I pull Grace along toward a craggy man perched on a rock. "Pardon me, sir, but can you tell me where I might find Eberly the shipwright?"

The man claps me on the shoulder. "I'm no *sir*, boy. *Sirs* are the landed gentry, or at least the rich, like that fine fellow yonder with the fancy boot buckles. Sawtucket, at yer service." He doffs his hat and bows broadly like a man I once saw in a street performance, acting the part of a court jester. Though we Friends hold that all theater is deceitful and therefore sinful, Father let me tarry a few moments to watch the spectacle.

Father. Gone from us. A wave of grief washes through me again.

"Pleased to meet you, Goodman Sawtucket"—for that's how to address the next caste of New Englanders properly.

"No *goodman*, neither. Just Sawtucket."

"Sawtucket, can you kindly direct us to Eberly?"

"Hm." He thrusts his palm toward me and flexes his fingers in a come-forth way.

Am I to pay him in exchange for information about the shipbuilder? I pluck a coin out of my pocket. There are so few.

"Dead in the water," Sawtucket says, snapping his strubby fingers around the coin. "That's life on ye. Shipbuilder, dead in the water. Yes, me boy, he went down with one of his faulty boats. Look for him at the bottom of the bay."

Grace stares at Sawtucket. "But he's our last hope, Eberly is. There's no one else, and we're orphans."

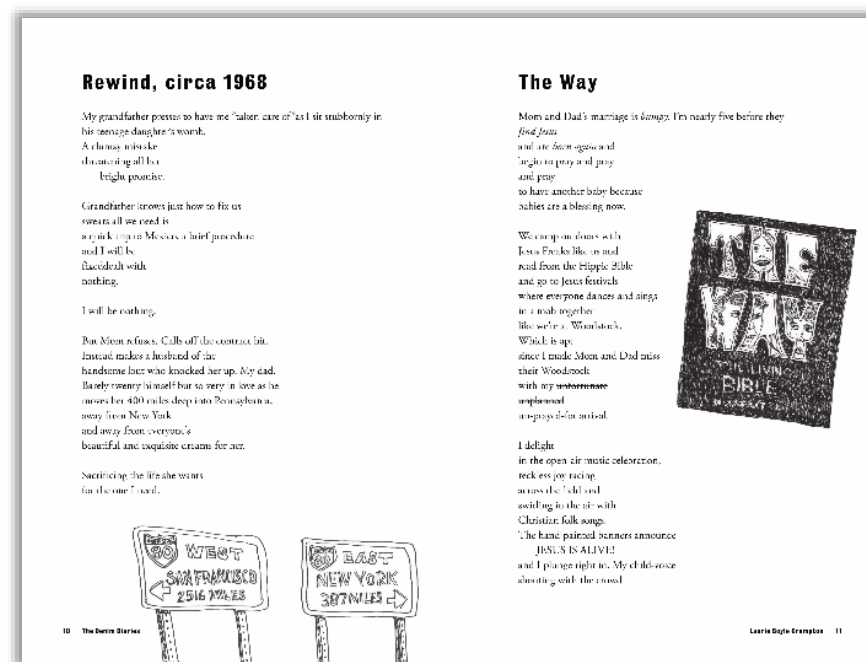
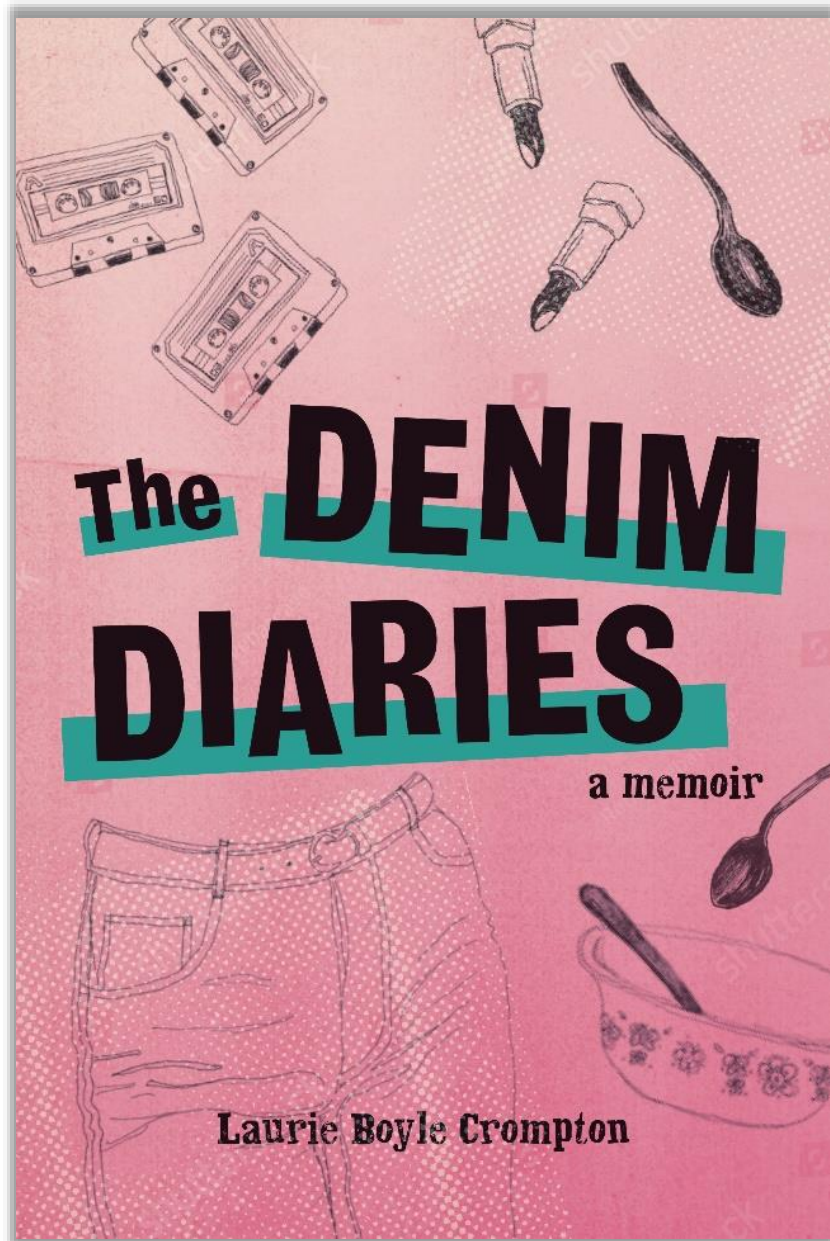
"Sawtucket," I say, "do you know of any other Friends—Quakers like ourselves—who might take us in?"

"Few enough Quakers heresabouts, fewer still could afford to feed two more mouths—and with suspicion already on their

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Gallows Hill Written by Lois Ruby

- Hardcover Young Adult Fiction
- \$19.99
- 216 Pages
- 5.25 x 8.25
- On Sale September 2023
- Author lives in Cincinnati



The Denim Diaries: A Memoir Written & illustrated by Laurie Boyle Crompton

- Paperback Young Adult Nonfiction/Poetry
- \$18.99
- TBD Pages
- 6 x 9
- On Sale November 2023
- Author lives in Long Island, NY

Runner Up

Mom should've been a model everyone says so.

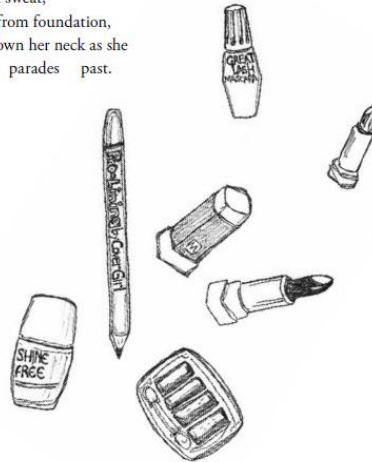
She enhances her wide eyes with green colored-contacts, Cheekbones tuned to max volume Heart-shaped face framed with long and flirty, summer-blond hair. "We were meant to be natural blondes," she tells me, as her mother told her, "but it was bred out of us due to our weakness for dark-haired men." So Mom fixes hers each month with a box from the drugstore.

She is thin-thin-thin and everything else that a woman should be. Enchanting my father so absolutely. He calls her "Lady Godiva" with nude desire that's uncomfortable to witness. Like they're alone with their lust.

My mother turns heads on the street at the mall even in church.



But now she must maintain that appeal, cannot let her guard down. Never leaves the house without her mask of makeup. The neighbors wait, as she gets ready to jog, pulling on shorts lacing up sneakers, clipping on walkman, then base / concealer / eyeliner / lipstick / powder / mascara / blush that is wasted on face, flushed from the effort, as she runs along the gravel on the side of the road, tears of sweat, milky from foundation, flow down her neck as she parades past.



Health Food Bites

Mom unearths a book about the natural food movement and is an instant zealot. HEALTH FOOD is our new way of life. In place of chocolate? Caneb and cane is revolting. Also! raisins for dessert and raisins are not dessert! We wonder if Mom's taste buds have simultaneously dropped out of her mouth. She blissfully smiles as she feeds us corrugated cardboard for a snack.

Health potions are the manifestation of her love. The foul flavor "flavor" "flavor" of fully-casting capsules and oils repeating all "day" "long" "day" "long".

I teach myself to palm six of Dad's Chipo Ahoy's at a time as I stroll casually by.



Wild Horses

A girl in my class is effortlessly and unquestioningly worshipped and loves horses so much it touches everyone in her gravitational field.

We all love horses now. She brings her collection of painted horse models to school and bestows them one by one to the worthy. A growing herd of prancing beauties day by day, more and more enthusiastically corralled across smooth desktops. The lackest of us earn the coveted blonde equines preening and posing with manes flowing in invisible wind.

And my desk is an empty acre.

The burning shame colors my days.

Excluded from the game of being included.



she's acting crazy, I swallow the bile of my guilt, silently willing Mom to double herself believe him.

When she comes upstairs with cheeks flushed and eyes blazing she snaps at my staring. "Nothing is wrong. Go to your room."

Clinging to a shrinking raft of denial, I feel helpless all the time. Acquire a habit of smelling Dad for alcohol automatically, anytime he's near. Especially when he's happy. Human Breathalyzer, now there's a talent. Everything hinging on that sweet smothering scent that sinks my hope. Dad's been drinking again.

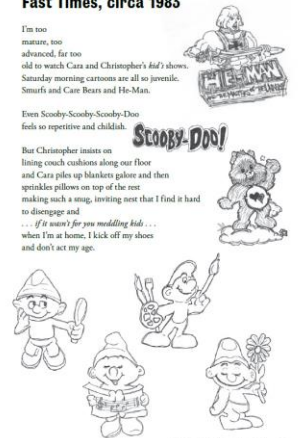


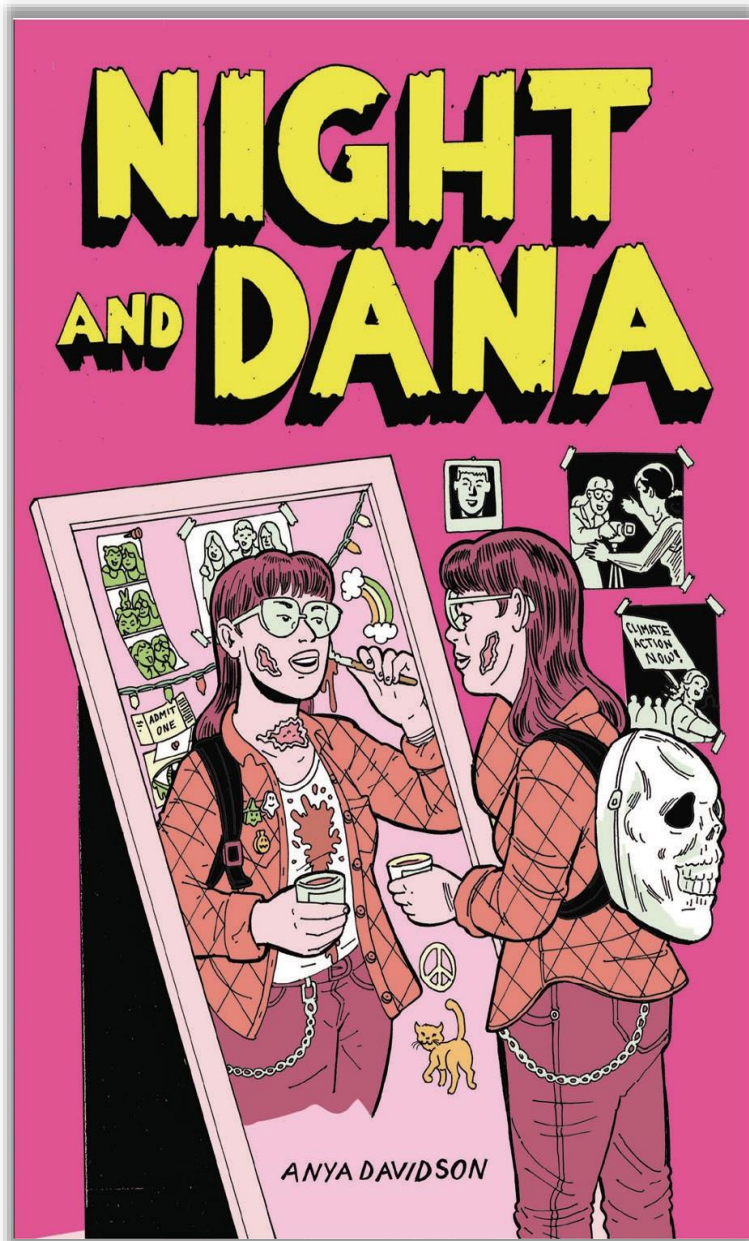
Fast Times, circa 1983

I'm too mature, too advanced, far too old to watch Cars and Christopher's Dad's shows. Saturday morning cartoons are all so juvenile. Smurfs and Care Bears and He-Man.

Even Scooby-Scooby-Scooby-Doo feels so repetitive and childish.

But Christopher insists on lining couch cushions along our floor and Cars piles up blankets galore and then sprinkles pillows on top of the nest making such a snog, inviting nest that I find it hard to disengage and ... if it wasn't for you meddling kids ... when I'm at home, I kick off my shoes and don't act my age.

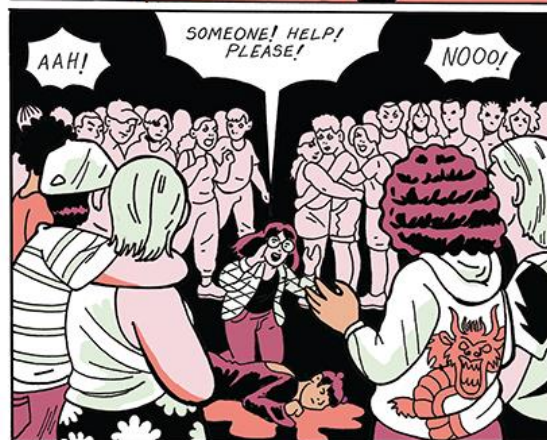




Night and Dana

Written & illustrated by Anya Davidson

- Paperback Young Adult Graphic Novel
- \$18.99
- 240 Pages
- 6 x 9
- On Sale September 2023
- Author lives in Chicago



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