

# RECOMMENDED READS

## NOVELS IN VERSE

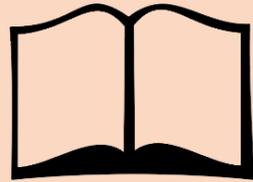
A **verse novel** is a type of narrative poetry in which a novel-length narrative is told through the medium of poetry rather than prose.

Reasons to read a verse novel:

- They offer a unique and sometimes faster reading experience;
- They pack a big punch! Fewer words can mean powerful emotions;
- They can help reluctant readers progress in reading;
- The content might take you outside your usual comfort zone.

There are some fantastic titles available on the following pages and in the Thomas Hardy School LRC. Just give one a try.





# RECOMMENDED READ

**Apple and Rain**  
by Sarah Crossan

When Apple's mother returns after eleven years of absence, Apple feels whole again. She will have an answer to her burning question – why did you go? And she will have someone who understands what it means to be a teenager – unlike Nana.

But just like the stormy Christmas Eve when she left, her mother's homecoming is bitter sweet, and Apple wonders who is really looking after whom. It's only when Apple meets someone more lost than she is, that she begins to see things as they really are.

'A poignant, realistic tale about  
learning to love' SUNDAY TIMES

# APPLE

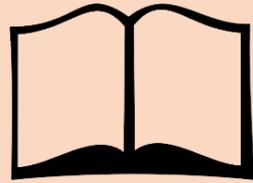


SHORTLISTED  
CILIP  
Carnegie  
Medal  
2015

# AND RAIN

SARAH CROSSAN

BLOOMSBURY



# RECOMMENDED READ

## **The Black Flamingo** by Dean Atta

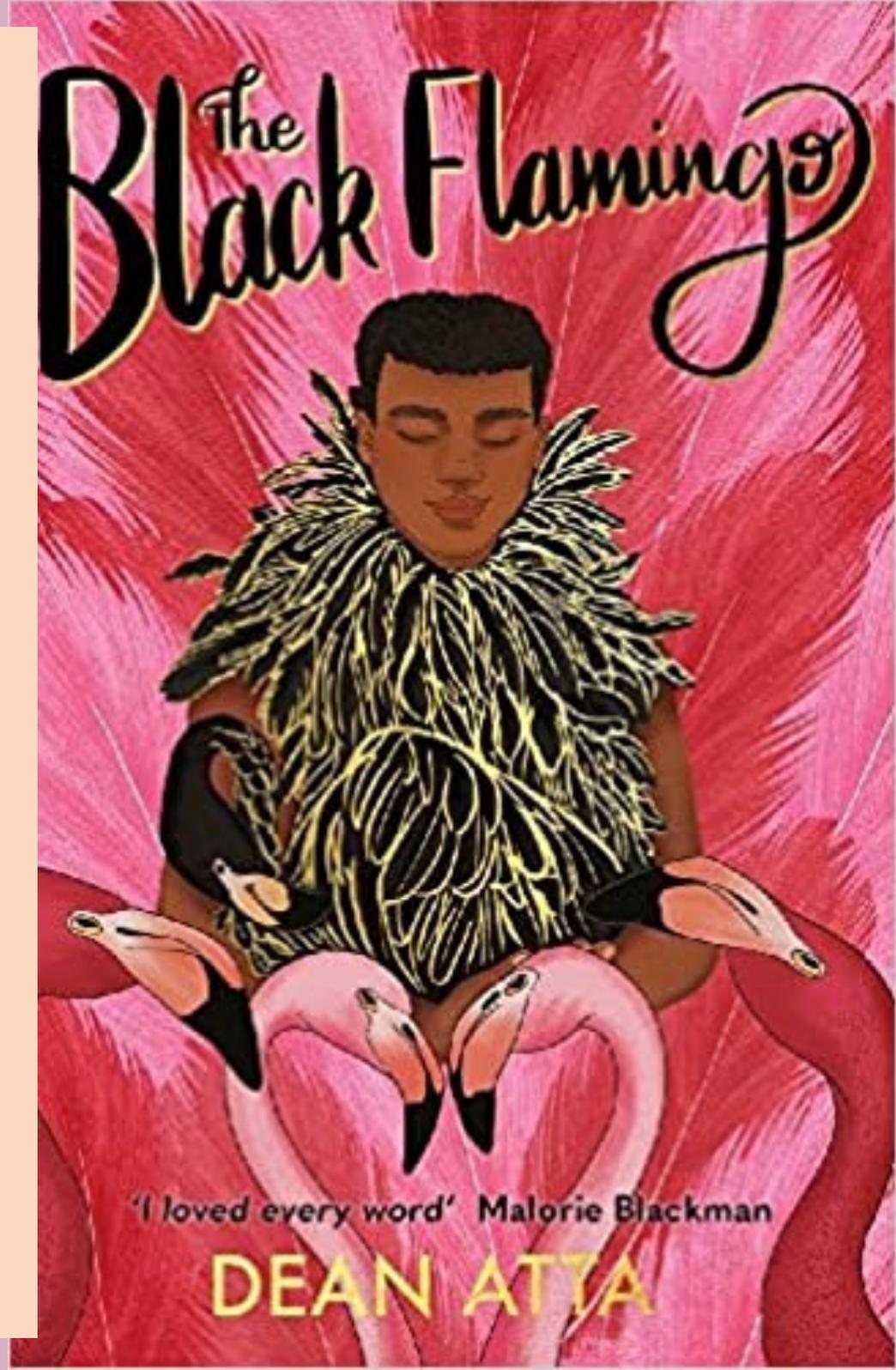
This is not about being ready, it's not even about being fierce, or fearless, IT'S ABOUT BEING FREE.

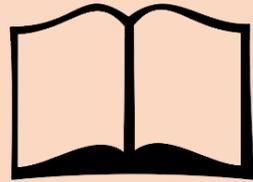
Michael waits in the stage wings, wearing a pink wig, pink fluffy coat and black heels.

One more step will see him illuminated by spotlight.

He has been on a journey of bravery to get here, and he is almost ready to show himself to the world in bold colours ...

*Can he emerge as The Black Flamingo?*





# RECOMMENDED READ

**Booked**  
by Kwame Alexander

*Like lightning/you strike/fast and free/legs zoom/down field/eyes  
fixed/on the checkered ball/on the goal/ten yards to go/can't nobody  
stop you/can't nobody cop you...*

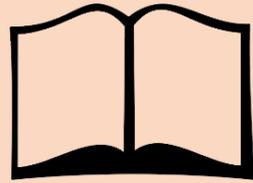
Twelve-year-old Nick is a football-mad boy who absolutely hates books. In this follow-up to the Newbery-winning novel *The Crossover*, football, family, love, and friendship take centre stage as Nick tries to figure out how to navigate his parents' break-up, stand up to bullies, and impress the girl of his dreams. These challenges – which seem even harder than scoring a tie-breaking, game-winning goal – change his life, as well as his best friend's.

NOMINATED FOR THE CARNEGIE MEDAL

KWAME ALEXANDER

NEWBERY MEDAL-WINNING AUTHOR OF *THE CROSSOVER*





# RECOMMENDED READ

## **Clap When You Land** by Elizabeth Acevedo

Camino Rios lives for the summers when her father visits her in the Dominican Republic. But this time, on the day when his plane is supposed to land, Camino arrives at the airport to see crowds of crying people...

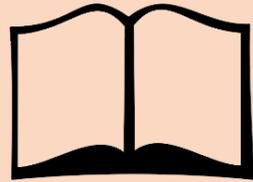
In New York City, Yahaira Rios is called to the principal's office, where her mother is waiting to tell her that her father, her hero, has died in a plane crash.

Separated by distance - and Papi's secrets - the two girls are forced to face a new reality in which their father is dead and their lives are forever altered.

And then, when it seems like they've lost everything of their father, they learn of each other.

- This is a dual narrative novel in verse that covers the themes of grief, love, the devastation of loss, the difficulty of forgiveness, and the bittersweet bonds that shape our lives.





# RECOMMENDED READ

**Gloves Off**  
by **Louisa Reid**

An immersive YA novel in verse, telling the story of Lily who is mercilessly bullied at school and who turns to boxing in an attempt to fight back; a story of hope and resilience breaking through even the most difficult situations.

Lily turns sixteen with two very different sides to her life: school, where she is badly bullied, and home with her mum and dad, warm and comforting but with its own difficulties.

After a particularly terrible bullying incident, Lily's dad determines to give his daughter the tools to fight back.

Introducing her to boxing, he encourages Lily to find her own worth. It is both difficult and challenging but in confronting her own fears she finds a way through that illuminates her life and friendships.

Meeting Rose, and seeing that there is another world out there, enables her to live her own life fully and gives her the knowledge that she is both beautiful and worth it.

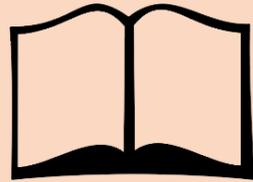
'Beautiful, brave and inspiring' *Lisa Williamson*



*EVERYONE DESERVES  
A FIGHTING CHANGE*

**GLOVES OFF**

**LOUISA REID**



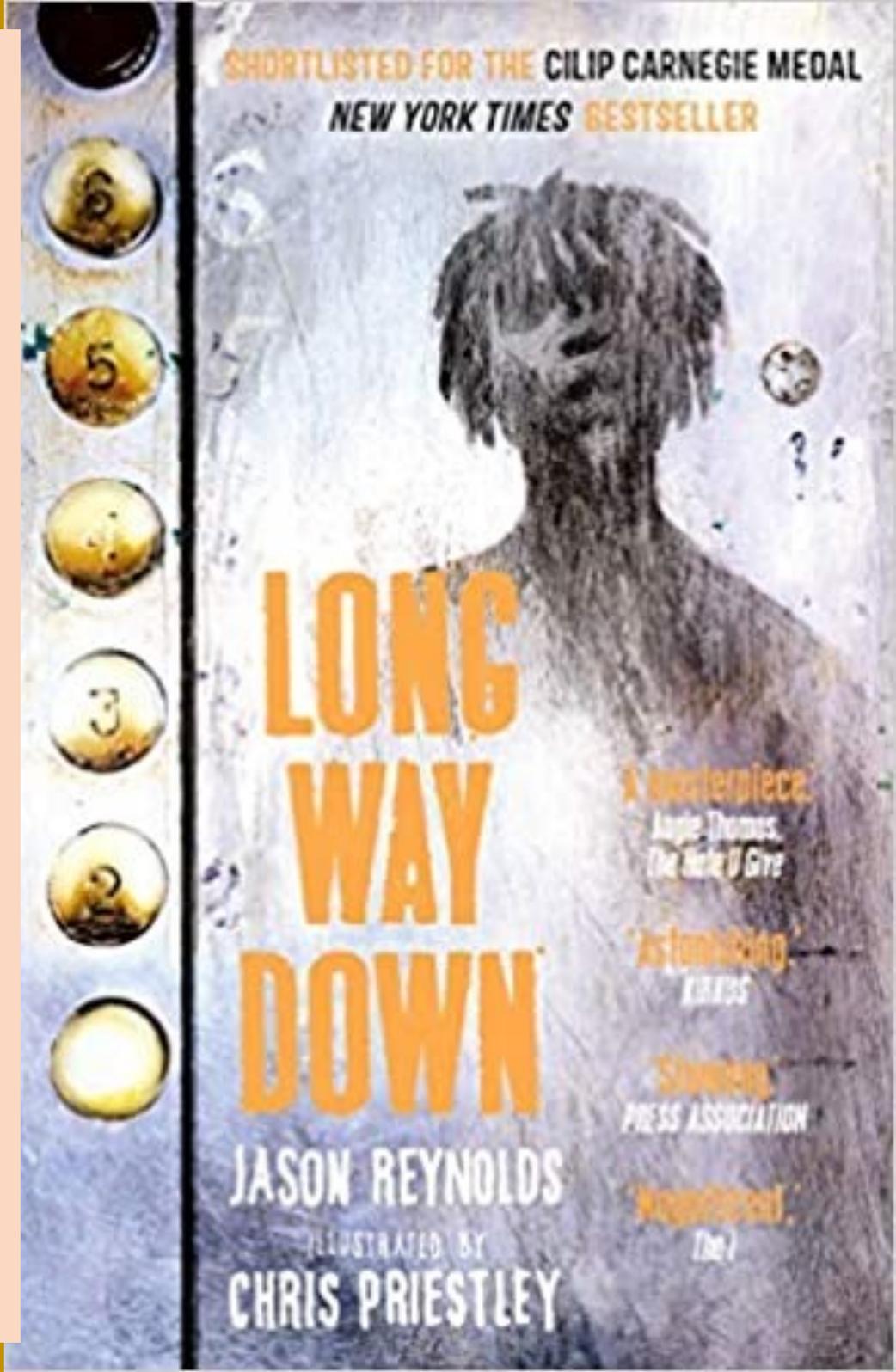
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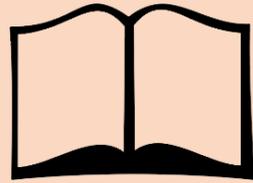
**Long Way Down**  
by Jason Reynolds

*AND THEN THERE WERE SHOTS*  
Everybody  
ran,  
ducked,  
hid, tucked  
themselves tight.

*Pressed our lips to the  
pavement and prayed  
the boom, followed by  
the buzz of a bullet,  
didn't meet us.*

After Will's brother is shot in a gang crime, he knows the next steps. Don't cry. Don't snitch. Get revenge. So he gets in the lift with Shawn's gun, determined to follow The Rules. Only when the lift door opens, Buck walks in, Will's friend who died years ago. And Dani, who was shot years before that. As more people from his past arrive, Will has to ask himself if he really knows what he's doing.





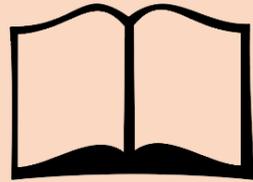
# RECOMMENDED READ

**Love That Dog**  
by Sharan Creech

Slowly Jack learns the pleasures of writing poetry as Miss Stretchberry encourages him to tell his own story through verse. What emerges is a moving and memorable story about a boy and his dog and his growing passion for poetry.

LOVE THAT DOG  
sharon creech





# RECOMMENDED READ

**Moonrise**  
by Sarah Crossan

*They think I hurt someone.  
But I didn't. You hear?  
Cos people are gonna be telling you  
all kinds of lies.  
I need you to know the truth.*

Joe hasn't seen his brother for ten years, and it's for the most brutal of reasons. Ed is on death row.

But now Ed's execution date has been set, and Joe is determined to spend those last weeks with him, no matter what other people think ...

This poignant, stirring, huge-hearted novel asks big questions.

- What value do you place on life?
- What can you forgive?
- And just how do you say goodbye?

*'Any reader with a heart will weep buckets'*  
Sunday Times

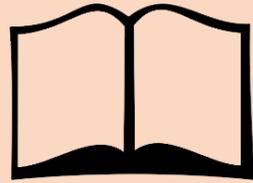
# MOONRISE



*Carnegie Medal Winner*

# SARAH CROSSAN

BLOOMSBURY



# RECOMMENDED READ

**One**  
by Sarah Crossan

Grace and Tippi don't like being stared and sneered at, but they're used to it. They're conjoined twins - united in blood and bone.

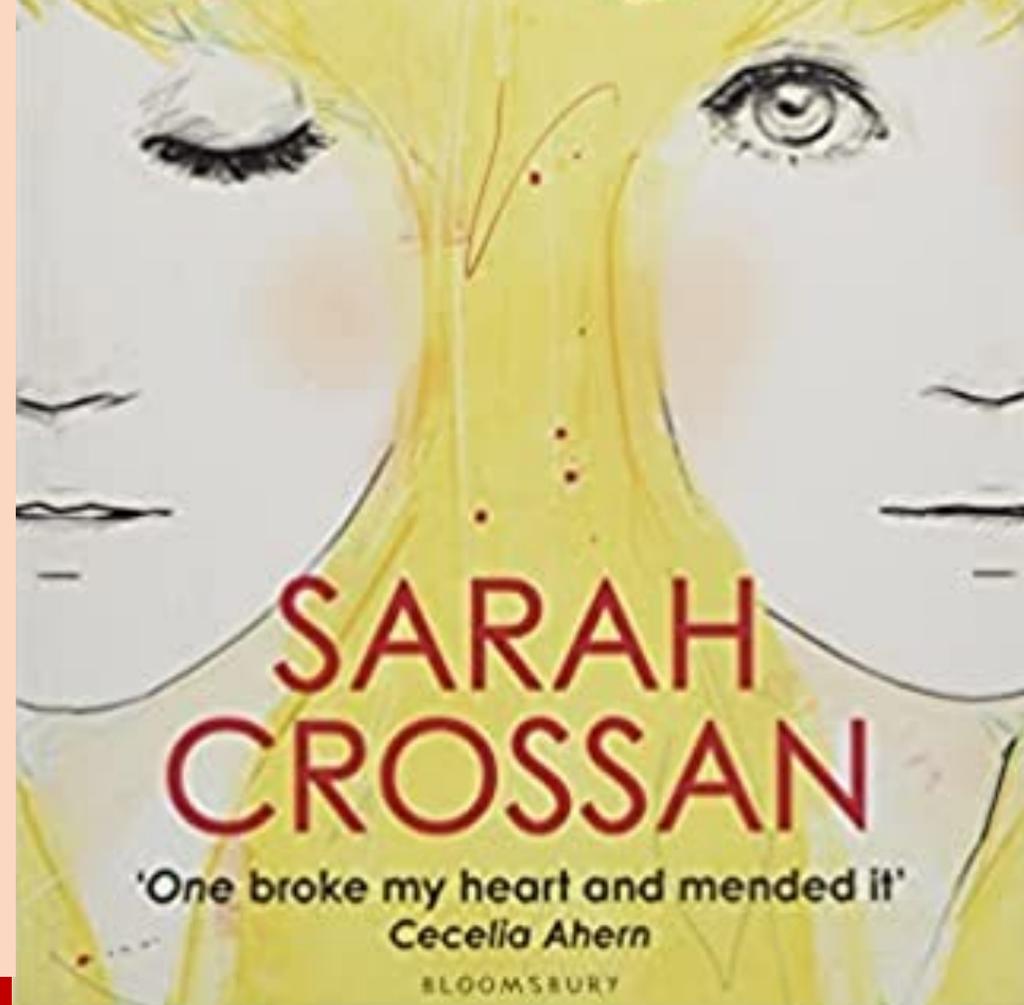
What they want is to be looked at in turn, like they truly are two people. They want real friends. And what about love?

But a heart-wrenching decision lies ahead for Tippi and Grace. One that could change their lives more than they ever asked for...

*This moving and beautifully crafted novel about identity, sisterhood and love ultimately asks one question: what does it mean to want and have a soulmate?*

WINNER OF THE CARNEGIE MEDAL

# One

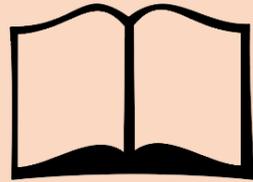


SARAH  
CROSSAN

'One broke my heart and mended it'

Cecelia Ahern

BLOOMSBURY



# RECOMMENDED READ

**The Poet X**  
by **Elizabeth Acevedo**

Xiomara has always kept her words to herself. When it comes to standing her ground in her Harlem neighbourhood, she lets her fists and her fierceness do the talking.

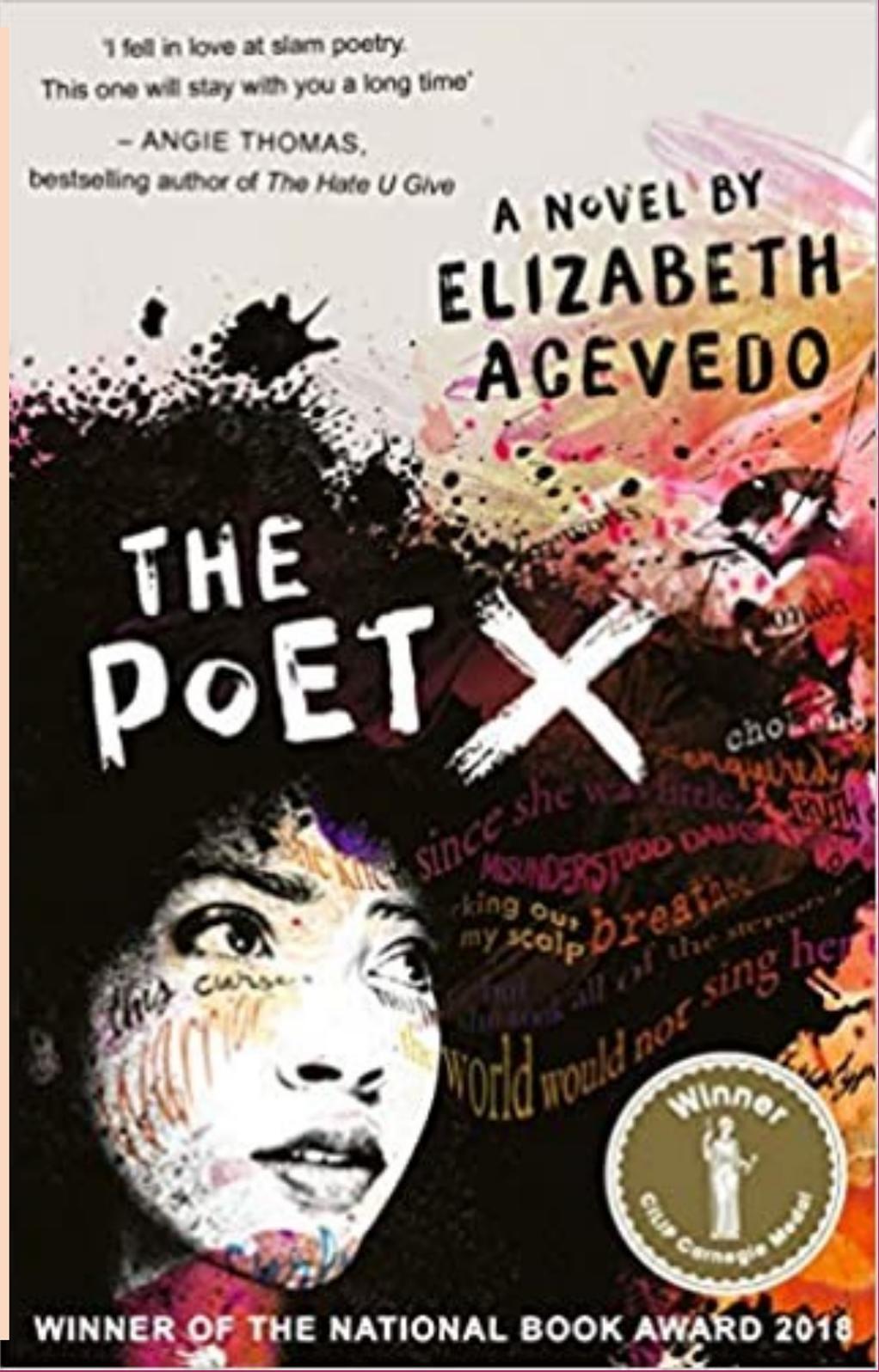
But X has secrets – her feelings for a boy in her bio class, and the notebook full of poems that she keeps under her bed. And a slam poetry club that will pull those secrets into the spotlight.

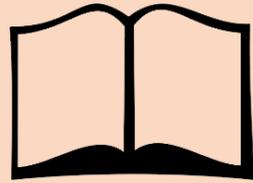
Because in spite of a world that might not want to hear her, Xiomara refuses to stay silent.

*A novel about finding your voice and standing up for what you believe in, no matter how hard it is to say.*

*Brave, bold and beautifully written.*

*Dealing with issues of race, feminism and faith.*





# RECOMMENDED READ

## **Punching the Air**

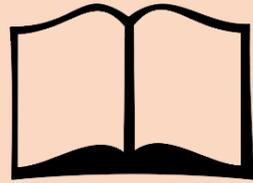
**by Ibi Zoboi & Yusef Salaam**

One fateful night, an altercation in a gentrifying neighbourhood escalates into tragedy. 'Boys just being boys' turns out to be true only when those boys are white.

Suddenly, at just sixteen years old, Amal Shahid's bright future is upended: he is convicted of a crime he didn't commit and sent to prison. Despair and rage almost sink him until he turns to the refuge of his words, his art. This never should have been his story. But can he change it?

With spellbinding lyricism, award-winning author Ibi Zoboi and prison reform activist Yusef Salaam tell a moving and deeply profound story about how one boy is able to maintain his humanity and fight for the truth, in a system designed to strip him of both.





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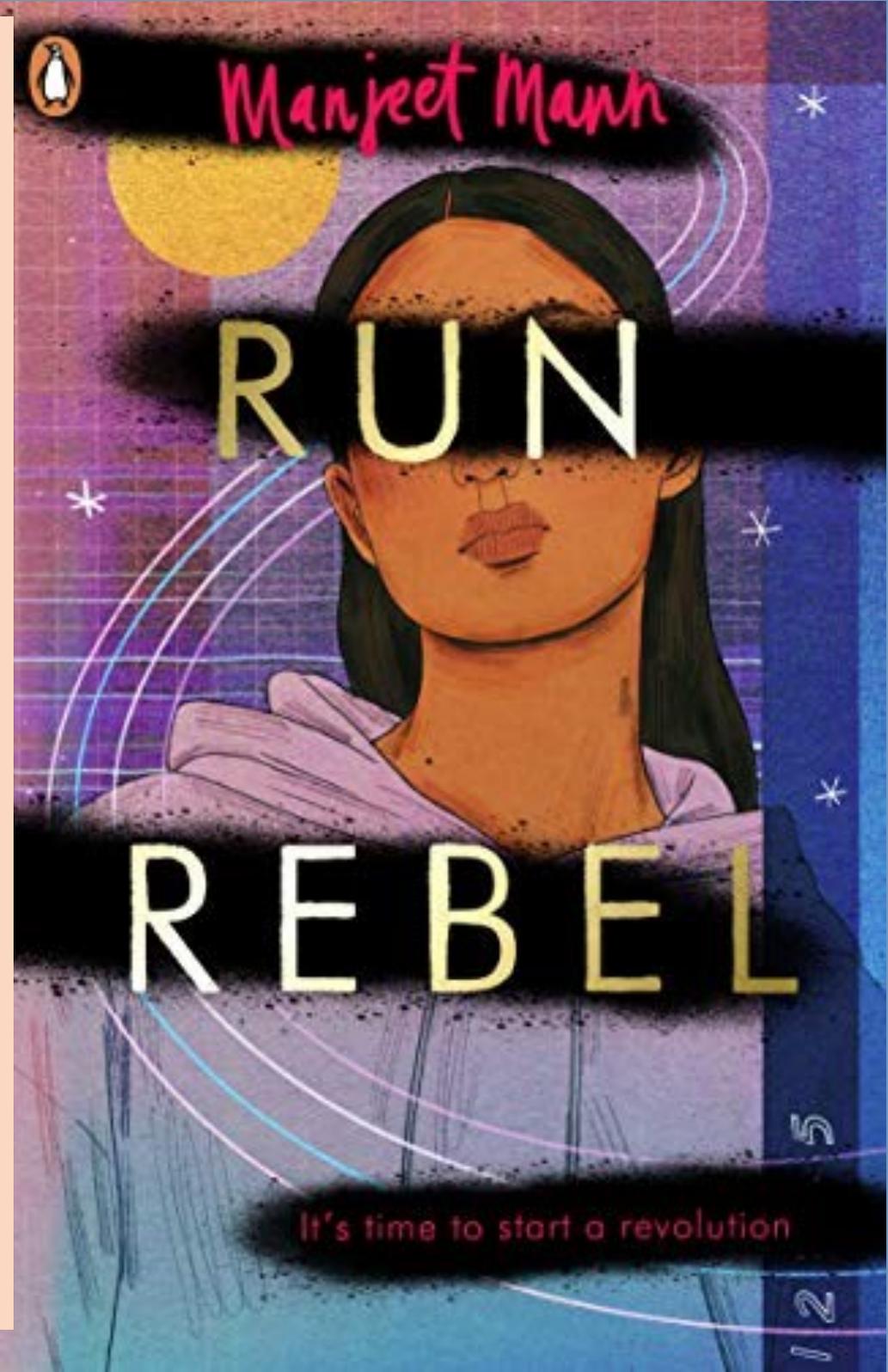
**Run Rebel**  
by **Manjeet Mann**

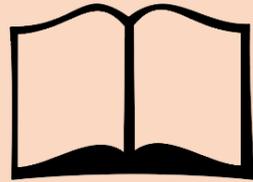
*I am restless, my feet need to fly.*

Amber is trapped - by her father's rules, by his expectations, by her own fears.

Now she's ready to fight - for her mother, for her sister, for herself.

Freedom always comes at a price.





# RECOMMENDED READ

**Toffee**  
by **Sarah Crossan**

When Allison runs away from home she doesn't expect to be taken in by Marla, an elderly woman with dementia, who mistakes her for an old friend called Toffee. Allison is used to hiding who she really is, and trying to be what other people want her to be. And so, Toffee is who she becomes. But as her bond with Marla grows, Allison begins to ask herself

- Where is home?
- What is a family?
- And most importantly, who am I, really?

