



# Alyssa's Beach Reads

LGBTQIA+ Books of Every Genre

Branum, Guy. *My Life as a Goddess: A Memoir through (Un)Popular Culture*, (July 2018). **Memoir**. A collection of side-splitting and illuminating essays by the popular stand-up comedian, written with Guy's characteristic wit. *My Life as a Goddess* is an unforgettable and deeply moving book by one of today's most endearing voices in comedy.

Chen Chen. *When I Grow Up I Want to Be a List of Further Possibilities*, (2017). **Poetry**. In this ferocious and tender debut, Chen Chen investigates different forms of love and family—including the strained relationship between a mother and son—all from Asian American, immigrant, and queer perspectives.

Colbert, Brandy. *Little & Lion*, (2017). **Young Adult**. Suzette comes home to Los Angeles after attending a private school in New England, with a strong and unique voice as a black, Jewish girl beginning to explore her bisexuality. The book subtly and authentically addresses a myriad of issues, including mental health, race and disability. An important read for all ages.

Dawn, Amber. *Sodom Road Exit*, (2018). **Paranormal Thriller**. In the summer of 1990, Starla returns home to her overbearing mother after dropping out of college. Her hometown, once home to an amusement park, has become an abandoned ghost town filled with literal ghosts. When others might run, Starla invites these otherworldly characters toward her.

Drayden, Nicky. *The Prey of Gods*, **Sci-Fi**. A new, hallucinogenic drug is sweeping through South Africa, artificial intelligence may be on the verge of an uprising, and to top it all off, an ancient demigoddess begins preying on human beings. The future of the world hangs in the balance and it's up to a young Zulu girl, a queer, mind-reading teen, a pop singer, and a politician with mommy issues to save it all.

Emezi, Akwaeke. *Freshwater*, (2017). **Literary Fiction**. This debut centers around a young Nigerian woman, Ada, who develops separate selves within her as a result of being born "with one foot on the other side." Unsettling, heart-wrenching, dark, and powerful, *Freshwater* describes a rare way of experiencing the world, one that illuminates how we all construct our identities.

James, Dean. *Posted to Death*, (2002). **Cozy Mystery**. In this delightful cozy mystery set in a quaint English village, a new resident moves to town. Simon Kirby-Jones is a sophisticated, attractive transplant from America – oh, and he's also a gay vampire. Filled with English humor and an amusing cast of characters, this one will have you guessing – and laughing – from page one.

Knecht, Rosalie. *Who Is Vera Kelly?*, (2018). **Historical Thriller**. New York City, 1962. Vera Kelly is struggling to make rent and blend into the underground gay scene in Greenwich Village. She's working night shifts at a radio station when her quick wits and technical skills get her noticed by a recruiter for the CIA. An exhilarating page-turner and perceptive coming-of-age story that introduces an original, wry and whip-smart female spy for the twenty-first century.

Makkai, Rebecca. *The Great Believers*, (2018). **Literary Fiction**. A dazzling novel of friendship and redemption in the face of tragedy set in 1980s Chicago and contemporary Paris. Using two



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timelines, one in the midst of the AIDS epidemic and another 30 years later, this novel explores the devastation of AIDS on multiple generations while finding goodness in the heart of a disaster.

Maroh, Julie. *Body Music*, (2017). **Graphic Novel**. Through 20 short vignettes, *Body Music* explores a myriad of romantic relationships, from first date to decades of marriage. All types of individuals are portrayed - polyamorous, First Nation, terminally ill, trans and more - explored with humor and honesty, paired with breathtaking artwork that is both stunning and understated.

Marzano-Lesnevich, Alexandria. *The Fact of a Body*, (2017). **True Crime/Memoir**. An intellectual and emotional thriller that's a different kind of murder mystery. A specific crime serves to highlight how we grapple with our own personal histories, tackling questions about forgiveness and truth. This heart-stopping work shows how the law is more personal than we would like to believe—and the truth more complicated than we could ever imagine.

Maupin, Armistead. *Logical Family*, (2017). **Memoir**. Chronicles Maupin's odyssey from the old South to freewheeling San Francisco, and his evolution from curious youth to ground-breaking writer and gay rights pioneer. With humor and unflinching honesty, he brings to life characters that are endearing and unforgettable.

Perri, Camille. *When Katie Met Cassidy*, (2018). **Romance**. A romantic comedy that explores how, as a culture, a woman's sexual pleasure still remains taboo. Katie Daniels is a 28-year-old lawyer living the New York dream. When she's dumped by her fiancé, she agrees to have a drink with Cassidy, a self-assured, sexually liberated woman she meets at work. Their new friendship makes Katie question everything she thought she knew about sex—and love.

Sindu, S.J. *Marriage of a Thousand Lies*, (2017). **Literary Fiction**. Lucky and husband, Krishna, are both from conservative, Sri Lankan families. And they are both gay. Beautifully descriptive and increasingly intense, this book expertly weaves themes of being "brown" in America and the choice between living a lie or losing your family.

Slater, Dashka. *The 57 Bus*, (2017). **Young Adult Non-Fiction**. Details the true story of Sasha, a white, middle-class and agender student, who is accidentally set on fire by Richard, a black teen from a rough neighborhood. This book explores themes of gender identity, race, class and discrimination. Equally informative, compelling and empathetic.

Thom, Kai Cheng. *A Place Called No Homeland*, (2017). **Poetry**. Both a primal scream and rallying cry, these narrative poems draw from memory, mythology, oral storytelling, and queer punk. Thom is a transgender writer and performer whose poetry truly comes alive and moves you.

Whitehead, Joshua. *Jonny Appleseed*, (2018). **Literary Fiction**. An important glimpse into queer, indigenous (Indigiqueer) life. Jonny is two-spirit, a term used by some indigenous North Americans to describe people in their communities who fulfill a traditional third-gender, ceremonial role in their cultures. This book explores family, tradition, trauma and survival through an authentic, poetic and lovable voice.