## KENTUCKY BLUEGRASS AWARD WINNERS

**Novels specifically written for young adult readers**

**Above: A Novel** by Isla Morley

Blythe Hallowell is sixteen when she is abducted by a survivorist and locked away in an abandoned missile silo in Eudora, Kansas. She focuses frantically on finding a way out until the harrowing truth of her new existence settles in.

**Complicit** by Stephanie Kuehn

Two years ago, fifteen-year-old Jamie Henry breathed a sigh of relief when a judge sentenced his older sister to juvenile detention for burning down their neighbor's fancy horse barn. The whole town did. But today Cate got out. And now she's coming back.

**Faking Normal** by Courtney Stevens

Alexi Littrell hasn't told anyone what happened to her over the summer by her backyard pool. Instead, she hides in her closet compulsively scratching the back of her neck, trying to make the outside hurt more than the inside does.

**The Geography of You and Me** by Jennifer Smith

Sparks fly when Lucy and Owen meet on an elevator rendered useless by a New York City blackout. Soon after, the two teens leave the city, but as they travel farther away from each other geographically, they stay connected emotionally.

**I’ll Meet You There** by Heather Demetrios

If Skylar were a typical Creek View girl, her future would involve a double-wide trailer, a baby on her hip, and working at Taco Bell. When Josh has his leg blown off in Afghanistan, he returns home, a shell of the cocky boy he used to be. What brings them together is working at The Paradise—a quirky Californian motel.

**Inhuman** by Kat Falls

Following a biological disaster, half of the U.S. has been abandoned and renamed the Feral Zone, a reference to the virus that turned most into bloodthirsty savages, the entire area is off-limits. When Lane learns that someone close to her has crossed into the Feral Zone, she has little choice but to follow.

**The Scar Boys** by Len Vlahos

In attempting to describe himself in his college application essay, Harbinger Jones goes way beyond the limit and gives a full account of his life. The 1st defining moment: the day the neighborhood goons tied him to a tree during a lightning storm. The 2nd defining moment: the day in 8th grade when Johnny rescued him from the bullies and suggested that they form a band.

**The Walk On** by John Feinstein

After moving to a new town his freshman year, Alex Myers is happy to win a spot on the varsity football team as a quarterback but must deal with the idea of not playing for two years since the first-string quarterback is the son of the corrupt head coach.

**The Winner’s Curse** by Marie Rutkoski

As a general's daughter, seventeen-year-old Kestrel enjoys an extravagant and privileged life. Arin has nothing but the clothes on his back. Then Kestrel makes an impulsive decision that binds Arin to her. Though they try to fight it, they can't help but fall in love. In order to be together, they must betray their people . . . but to be loyal to their country, they must betray each other.

## ALEX AWARD WINNERS

**More challenging novels written for an adult audience, but have wide appeal for teen readers**

**The Lock Artist** by Steve Hamilton

Mike Smith can open any safe, padlock, or locked door without a combination or a key—a talent that lands him in prison at the age of eighteen. He spends his time writing down the story of his life because writing is the only way he can share it: he hasn’t spoken in ten years since the tragic day he became the "Miracle Boy."

**The Vanishing of Katharina Linden** by Helen Grant

When 10-year-old Pia Kolvenbach’s grandmother accidentally sets herself on fire and burns to death, a rumor erupts that makes Pia an instant outcast. Her only friend is “StinkStefan,” the most unpopular boy in her class. The two of them begin visiting an elderly man who entertains them with ghost stories from local folklore that they hope might help them solve a decades-old mystery.

## NONFICTION

**Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can’t Stop Talking** by Susan Cain

At least a third of the people we know are introverts: the ones who prefer listening to speaking; who innovate and create but dislike self-promotion; who favor working on their own over working in teams. Cain argues that we dramatically undervalue them and shows how much we lose in doing so.

**Hole in My Life** by Jack Gantos

Jack Gantos was an aspiring writer looking for adventure when he recklessly agreed to help sail a yacht loaded with drugs from the Caribbean to New York City. Once caught, Gantos was sentenced to serve up to six years in prison. Just beneath the action is the story of how Gantos moved from wanting to be a writer to writing, and how dedicating himself more fully to the thing he most wanted to do helped him endure and ultimately overcome the worst experience of his life.

## LITERARY CLASSICS

**The Bluest Eye** by Toni Morrison

Set in Ohio, in 1941, 11-year-old Pecola Breedlove, whose entire family is ugly, is subjected to things far worse than ugliness, and she yearns to be the very opposite of what she is—to be a white child with the blondest hair and the bluest eye.

**For Whom the Bell Tolls** by Ernest Hemingway

The story of Robert Jordan, a young American in the International Brigades attached to an antifascist guerilla unit in the mountains of Spain, it tells of loyalty and courage, love and defeat, and the tragic death of an ideal.