



# BOOK RESUME: CLOSER TO NOWHERE

## BOOK SYNOPSIS

#1 *New York Times* bestselling author Ellen Hopkins's poignant middle grade novel in verse about coming to terms with indelible truths of family and belonging.

For the most part, Hannah's life is just how she wants it. She has two supportive parents, she's popular at school, and she's been killing it at gymnastics. But when her cousin Cal moves in with her family, everything changes. Cal tells half-truths and tall tales, pranks Hannah constantly, and seems to be the reason her parents are fighting more and more. Nothing is how it used to be. She knows that Cal went through a lot after his mom died and she is trying to be patient, but most days Hannah just wishes Cal never moved in.

For his part, Cal is trying his hardest to fit in, but not everyone is as appreciative of his unique sense of humor and storytelling gifts as he is. Humor and stories might be his defense mechanism, but if Cal doesn't let his walls down soon, he might push away the very people who are trying their best to love him.

Told in verse from the alternating perspectives of Hannah and Cal, this is a story of two cousins who are more alike than they realize and the family they both want to save.

## REVIEWS AND PRAISE

★ "Readers will root for these realistic characters, and will cheer for the growth they experience. Highly recommended." —*School Library Journal*, starred review

"Hopkins' use of free verse provides a canvas for sure-handed, brush-stroke development of the backstory and plot and emotional investment and identification with the characters. . . Compassionate and compelling." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"Hopkins uses her familiar verse to take readers on an emotional rollercoaster. . . The author's note about her own family experiences with addiction and behavioral challenges is almost as poignant as the text, and the quick pace makes it easy to devour, enticing fans to check out the rest of Hopkins' oeuvre." —*The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*

"Hopkins creates realistic portrayals of two kids trying to do their best even when it's not easy." —*Publishers Weekly*

**Title:** Closer to Nowhere

**Author:** Ellen Hopkins

**Imprint:** Nancy Paulsen Books

**Publisher:** Penguin Young Readers

**On sale date:** October 6, 2020

**ISBN:** 9780593108611 and 9780593108635

**Format:** Hardcover and Paperback

**Age Range\*:** 10 Up

**Grade Range:** Gr 5-8

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\*Publisher suggested age range covers the wide range of readers publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate range for their diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.

“The queen of gritty YA novels-in-verse enters the realm of middle-grade literature with this story of a family fracturing under myriad pressures yet refusing to be broken . . . Hopkins paints a realistic picture of a family undergoing upheaval and learning to better care for one another.” —*Booklist*

#### **AWARDS AND ACCOLADES**

- A Bank Street Best Children’s Book of the Year
- A NCTE Notable Novel in Verse
- An Amazon Best Book of the Month
- A Truman Readers Book Award (MO)
- A South Carolina Junior Book Award (SC)

#### **MEDIA AND RESOURCES**

- [TeachingBooks.net resources](#)
- [Penguin Classroom Discussion Guide](#)
- [Library of Congress Panel Discussion with Author](#)
- [Reading With Your Kids Interview with Author](#)
- [School Library Journal Interview on Censorship with Author](#)
- [Simon & Schuster Interview with Author](#)
- [Girls in the Stacks Interview with Author](#)
- [Nineteen Questions with Author](#)

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