

TAE KELLER

Winner of the Newbery Medal for When You Trap a Tiger

WHEN TOMORROW BURNS

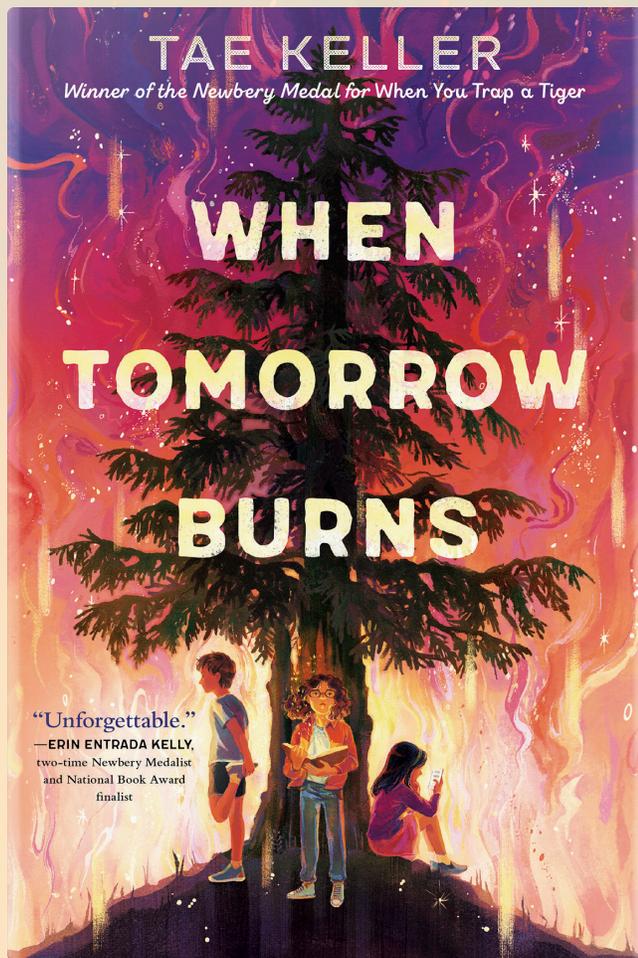


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EDUCATORS' GUIDE

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About the Book

When best friends Nomi, Vi, and Arthur were younger, they discovered a book of prophecies. It was so very comforting to know what was coming. But as the kids grew older, they forgot about the book.

Until the final prophecy started coming true.

Now, as seventh grade tests their friendship and wildfires threaten Seattle, the final prophecy promises fire and destruction. Nomi tries everything to prevent calamity. She needs help . . . but Vi's acting strange and Arthur stopped talking to her.

Vi can't tell Nomi, but she's been texting the coolest boy in school, and it's going well—until that boy makes an unexpected request, and she must decide who she wants to be.

Meanwhile, Arthur joined the cross-country team, but he can't outrun the real reason he ended his friendship with Nomi. The best he can do is try to hide it.

As the prophecy eventuates, past and present intersect, fate and friendship collide, and secrets spread like wildfire. Together, Nomi, Vi, and Arthur must face the future . . . even (and especially) when it's so uncertain.



Jenny Jimenez

About the Author

Tae Keller is the Newbery Award–winning and *New York Times* bestselling author of *When You Trap a Tiger* and *The Science of Breakable Things*. She was born and raised in Honolulu, where she grew up on purple rice, Spam musubi, and her halmoni's stories. After high school, she moved in search of snow. Find her online at taekeller.com or on or on Instagram at [@tae_keller](https://www.instagram.com/tae_keller).

Pre-Reading Questions

1. Examine the book cover and title. What might the story be about? Based on what the characters are doing, their facial expressions, and their body language, what do you think they're like? What do they want?
2. Have you ever stopped talking to a friend? What happened—what role did you play, and what role did they play? How did you resolve it? And how do you feel about your friendship now?
3. People, and especially young people, change as they grow. They might find new hobbies or interests or meet new friends. Have you had a friend who changed over time? How have you changed over time? How did you and your friendships evolve as each of you changed?
4. What are some climate issues in the area where you live? What caused them? What are you and your community doing to resolve these issues?
5. Do some research to learn about the Indigenous nations that live in your area (native-land.ca). What are some important moments in the nations' histories? How are those nations doing today? What are some local or federal policies that shape those communities?
6. What are your family's values and rules regarding technology and social media use? Do grown-ups and kids in your family have different rules? Does everyone follow the rules?
7. Do some research on social media use and addiction, especially but not only in young people. How does what you learned impact your own social media use?
8. Do grown-ups or friends take photos or videos of you to post on their social media? Do they ask for your consent first? Do some research on responsible and respectful social media behavior. What are the pros and cons of posting photos and videos to social media? What guidelines would you share with young people about healthy social media use?
9. Have you ever done something you regretted? Were you able to fix it, or was it out of your control? If you could go back and make different decisions, what would you do differently?



Questions and Activities

1. As you read from Nomi, Vi, and Arthur's perspectives, make some notes about the things they care about, what worries them, and what makes them happy. What brings them together as friends? What unique characteristics enrich their friendship? What are some things they each need to work on?
2. In what ways does each character's intersecting background (race, gender, kinship structure, class, etc.) inform their perspectives and experiences?
3. "Friendships, she'd decided, were almost as unreliable as the future." (p. 34) Why does Nomi think this? What do you think are some of the characteristics of a friendship? Are they sometimes unreliable?
4. Vi thinks, "There was something exciting about not knowing, about climbing into the future and discovering what it had in store for her." (p. 63) Do you prefer to know everything in advance, or do you like to be surprised?
5. The trees mention that as more people arrived, a little girl observing a changing world hoped "everyone would live together on this land." (p. 76) Unfortunately, that did not happen. Chinese immigrants were pushed out, and Duwamish longhouses were set on fire (p. 77). Do some research into this time period and these occurrences. What happened? Write a brief newspaper article explaining who, what, when, where, and the alleged why.
6. When Arthur visits Lucas's home, Lucas's dad says that "girls have all the power now" and "It's harder than ever to be a boy." (p. 83) Do you think these statements are true? What evidence would you use to support or refute them? Do some research on legislation related to gender (such as Title IX) or social movements (such as #MeToo) to learn about how people have fought for gender equality and against harassment in the United States.
7. Lucas's dad also says, "At least you'll get the benefits of being Asian, Lucas" and "people aren't as prejudiced against [Asians] as they are against white boys." (p. 83) What does he mean? What "benefits" does he think Asians get, and why is this a flawed and inaccurate comparison?
8. When Nomi, Vi, and Arthur take a tour of Seattle's Underground, their guide Zed points out a Tlingit totem pole (p. 103). You may have heard the phrase "the lowest man on the totem pole." Do some research on totem poles to understand their significance and why this phrase is both inaccurate and disrespectful. What can people say instead of this phrase?
9. Trees say, "Some will live their whole lives without knowing their roots exist." (p. 108) Some people, such as those who are adopted or displaced due to war, might not have access to their roots. What are some other reasons people may not have access to their roots? Do you think everyone has a right to know their roots, to know where they come from? What can be done to ensure everyone can access their roots?
10. Why is it important to learn about the backgrounds and origins of the adults in your life, and how might their experiences help you better understand the world today?
11. Why do you think Vi, Nomi, and Lucas each behaved the way they did regarding Vi's picture and Lucas's and the other boys' reactions? What do you think of the consequences for each of them?

Post-Reading Questions

1. Look again at the book cover and title. What, if anything, did you predict correctly? What surprised you about the story?
2. Think back to the question about climate issues in your area. Did you gain any new ideas or insights about caring for the environment after reading this story?
3. How is everyone in the story related to one another across time and space? Make a character map to explore the relationships between the characters.
4. What did you learn about trees by reading *When Tomorrow Burns*? Why is it important that we care for and pay attention to trees? What can we learn from them?
5. How does each character change over the course of the story? In what ways do they become more or less of themselves as the story progresses? How are these changes healthy and how are they not?
6. Reread Vi's thoughts about how not knowing is exciting (p. 63). Do you think Vi had any idea what Lucas was going to do? What do you think she might think of surprises considering what happened?
7. What does it mean to live on "stolen land" (p. 104)? Look up #LandBack. What can and should the US government and everyday people do to honor and support #LandBack movements?
8. The trees say, "If time is a circle, then what is the point of roots? What is the point of history?" (p. 110) How would you answer these questions?
9. When grown-ups say kids give them hope, they usually mean it in a nice way. But Arthur says it's "too much pressure." (p. 132) Write a text message conversation between Arthur and his dads in which he explains that he doesn't like it when they say that. How do you think they would respond?
10. Consider your responses to the earlier questions about social media use. Did Vi's story in *When Tomorrow Burns* make you think differently about using social media? How might you and your friends change how you use it?

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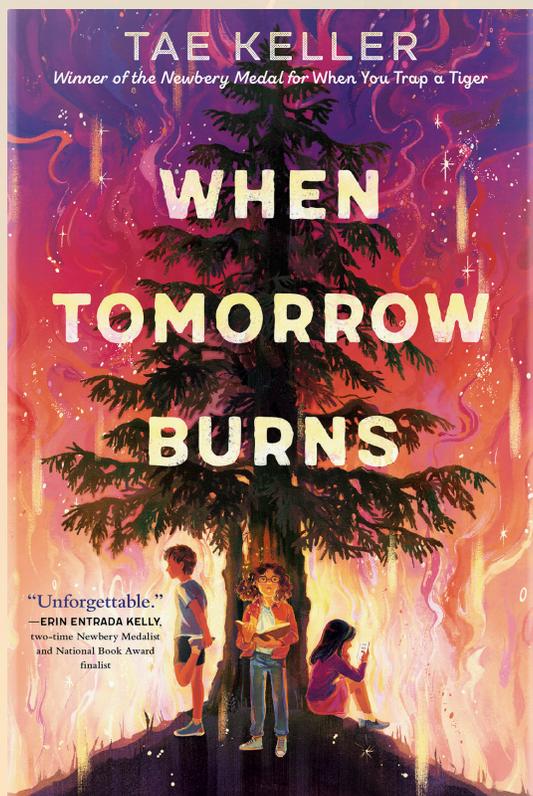


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Praise for
WHEN TOMORROW BURNS



★ “A complex, carefully woven exploration of fate, autonomy, power, privilege, identity, and friendship.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

“A moving, clear-eyed exhortation on the necessity of community.”

—*Publishers Weekly*

“Captivatingly thoughtful, utterly unforgettable, and singularly brilliant.”

—Jasmine Warga,
New York Times bestselling and
Newbery Honor–winning author

“In our uncertain world, Tae Keller’s **tender and powerful novel** explores the impact of stories, friendship, and ultimately, hope.”

—Lisa Yee,

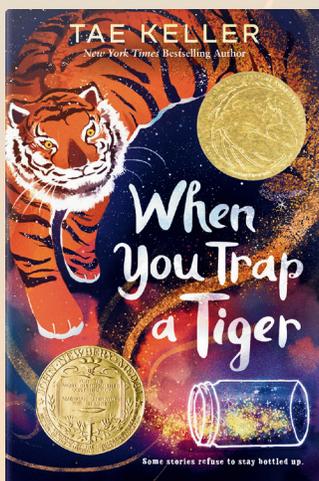
Newbery Honor winner and National Book Award finalist

“*When Tomorrow Burns* is **for anyone who’s ever sensed a whisper of magic in a tree, a book, a friendship**—or anyone who wants to.”

—Elana K. Arnold,

National Book Award finalist and Printz Honor–winning author

Praise for WHEN YOU TRAP A TIGER



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Winner of the Newbery Medal

Winner of the Asian/Pacific American
Award for Children's Literature

★ “Keller calls on the power of stories to bring families and communities together and the ability to heal by speaking to their pasts.”

—*School Library Journal*, starred review

★ “Explores both the end of life and coming-of-age, with a sensitive examination of immigration issues and the complexity of home.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

★ “A tale about letting go and the immortality that story can allow.”

—*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

★ “A complex, satisfying story, one that foregrounds family and healing alongside a love for Korean folklore.”

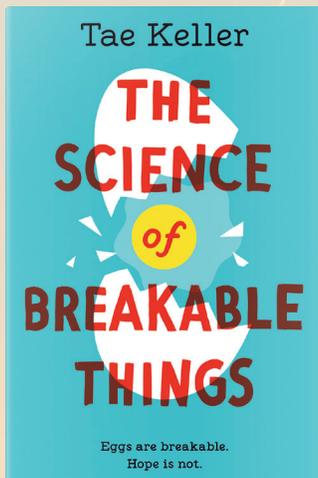
—*The Bulletin*, starred review

★ “Every chapter is filled with a richness and magic that demands every word be treasured.”

—*Booklist*, starred review

Praise for

THE SCIENCE OF BREAKABLE THINGS



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★ “A compassionate glimpse of mental illness.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

★ “A moving story about fragility and rebirth.”

—*Booklist*, starred review

“An emotional story that explores parental depression with realism and empathy.”

—*School Library Journal*

“Natalie’s Korean heritage is sensitively explored, as is the central issue of depression.”

—*Publishers Weekly*

Praise for

JENNIFER CHAN IS NOT ALONE



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★ “Highly recommended for all library shelves.”

—*School Library Journal*, starred review

★ “An emotionally absorbing story.”

—*Booklist*, starred review

★ “A mesmerizing look at bullying and its aftereffects.” —*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

★ “Introspective.” —*The Bulletin*, starred review

★ “A sincere look into individuals’ desire for acceptance.” —*Publishers Weekly*, starred review