**True Believer (Book 2) Virginia Euwer Wolff**

**ISBN – 13:9780689852886**

At 15, LaVaughn already knows that life is hard and that getting ahead takes a strong mind and an even stronger will. Surrounded by poverty and violence, she strives every day not to be just another inner-city statistic: "My hope is strong like an athlete. Every morning when we walk through the metal detectors to get into school ... it is an important day of dues-paying so I can go to college and be out of here." Last year when she babysat for Jolly, a young unwed mother, she saw firsthand how an unplanned pregnancy can diminish options. So she ignores the boys, studies hard, and hopes it will all be enough to get her into college. Then Jody moves back into the neighborhood. Once LaVaughn's childhood friend, Jody is now "suddenly beautiful... He could be in movies the way the parts of his face go together." If LaVaughn's choices were difficult before Jody, now they're almost impossible. What LaVaughn doesn't know is that Jody has difficult decisions of his own to make--decisions that could turn her carefully ordered world upside down.

The second novel in a proposed trilogy, *True Believer* picks up where the acclaimed [*Make Lemonade*](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/059048141X/$%7b0%7d) left off. Virginia Euwer Wolff's verse-prose is as sumptuous as ever, and her descriptions of LaVaughn's day-to-day life and feelings are sympathetic and achingly real. Readers will be eager to see where LaVaughn's choices take her in Wolff's next installment.

**Snitch- Allison Van Diepen**

**ISBN – 13:9781416950301**

*Julia Divino is a good girl, not squeaky clean but good. she's an A student with plans for college, and she vowed a years ago never to join a gang. Julia has friends in the life and that's as close as she wants to get. Eric Valiente, Julia's dream guy. They meet he likes her, they're together and it's amazing. Julia's falling fast and hard. but when Eric gets jumped in everything goes wrong. Julia is faced with choices and decisions that she never imagined having to make, and what happens when Eric turns out not to be who he says he is?*

***In a school run by gangs, staying out was harder than joining. We knew who our friends were, and were careful what we said. If people thought we were haters, it would only be a matter of time....*** *Lines are clearly marked at South Bay High School. It's mixed territory for the Crips and the Bloods, which means the drama never stops. Julia DiVino wants none of it. No colors, no C-Walks -- it's just not her thing. But when Eric Valienté jumps into her life, everything changes. Lines are redrawn. And then they're crossed.*

**Something Girl- Beth Goobie**

**ISBN – 13:9781551433479**

Grade 7 Up–Sophie, 15, comes from an abusive family. Her mother is a depressive alcoholic. Her father appears to be an upstanding member of the community, but in reality he is a savagely violent man. Without any provocation, he has beaten Sophie many times. She has no real friends, her boyfriend has just dumped her, and she is on probation for petty theft. Her only ally is 12-year-old JuJube, her former babysitting charge. After a particularly brutal attack, Sophie is hospitalized and it is JuJube who forces her to tell the truth. The ending is happy yet bittersweet. The novel deals with mature themes in a quick and easy-to-read manner. However, it has all the hallmarks of a message book and is not the most subtle piece of literature. Still, it could help teens with severe issues.

**Twisted-Laurie Halse Anderson**

**ISBN – 13:9780670061013**

Grade 9 Up–Socially inept Tyler Miller thinks his senior year of high school is going to be a year like no other. After being sentenced to a summer of character building physical labor following a graffiti prank, his reputation at school receives a boost, as do his muscles. Enter super-popular Bethany Milbury, sister of his tormentor, Chip, and daughter of his father's boss. Tyler's newfound physique has attracted her interest and infuriated Chip, leading to ongoing conflicts at school. Likewise, Tyler's inability to meet his volatile father's demands to be an asset, not a liability adds increasing tension. All too quickly, Tyler's life spirals out of control. In the wake of an incident at a wild party that Bethany has invited him to attend, he is left feeling completely isolated at school and alienated at home, a victim of twisted perception. Tyler must tackle the complex issues of integrity, personal responsibility, and identity on his own as he struggles to understand what it means to be a man. His once humorous voice now only conveys naked vulnerability. With gripping scenes and a rousing ending, Anderson authentically portrays Tyler's emotional instability as he contemplates darker and darker solutions to his situation. Readers will rejoice in Tyler's proclamation, I'm not the problem here…I'm tired of feeling like I am. Teenage concerns with sex, alcohol, grades, and family are all tackled with honesty and candor. Once again, Anderson's taut, confident writing will cause this story to linger long after the book is set down.