



2018

# Calling My Name

Bailey Ondricek

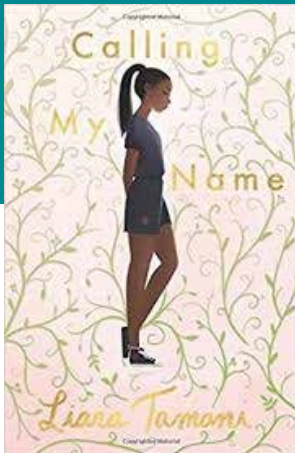
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## Book Review

### Calling My Name

#### Author

Liara Tamani

#### Illustrator

#### Reviewer

Bailey Ondricek

#### Rating

Outstanding

#### Level

Young Adult

#### Pages

310

#### Year

2017

#### Publisher

Greenwillow Books

#### ISBN

9780062656865

Taja is a young girl growing into herself. This story chronicles the thoughts and feelings of the middle schooler as she contemplates themes of love, religion, education, and friendship up until her high school years and acceptance to university. The author's final acknowledgement at the end of the book effectively summarizes the heartfelt theme, "And to every young person who's ever struggled with departing from your family's or community's teachings: it's OKAY to follow the voice inside." Indeed, Taja's raw exploration of God and sin model a form of questioning and discovery that validate the very natural questions common to humanity. They call her name.

This standard-sized chapter book has a beautiful jacket with a picture of Taja surrounded by winding vines. The vines are mimicked on the first page of each of the short chapters, only a few pages a piece, and roses with a meaningful quote mark a new section of the book and a new phase of Taja's life. The thoughtful construction is well-matched to the content of the story. The ebb and flow of Liara's words have this beautiful hypnotic rhythm that persuade to read on. It's difficult at times to see where the story ends and the reader begins with such submersive details that the reader can almost smell the battling scents of mama, bacon, and lip gloss during weekend breakfast. An extremely well-written book, *Calling My Name* is impossible to put down. The pages flip quickly as Taja's stream of consciousness nearly matches the reader's own. Taja's character is relatable and inspirational, and her dreams of becoming a writer and attending the top schools make her a wonderful, imperfect heroine.

\*Contains moderate language and severe sexual content.