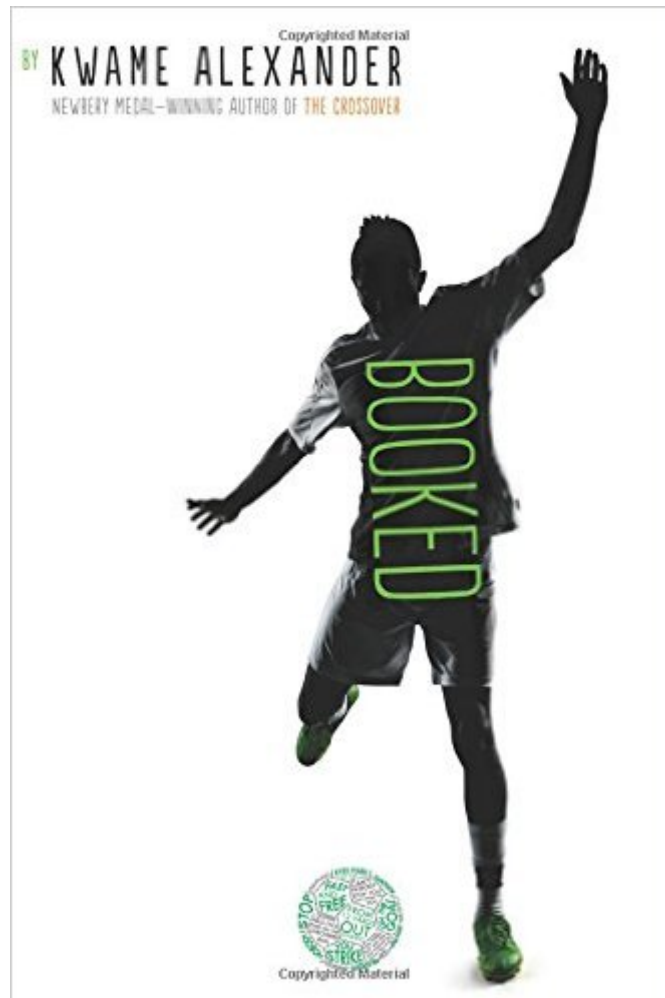


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## Synopsis

Like lightning/you strike/fast and free/legs zoom/down field/eyes fixed/on the checkered ball/on the goal/ten yards to go/can't nobody stop you/can't nobody cop you | In this follow-up to the Newbery-winning novel *THE CROSSOVER*, soccer, family, love, and friendship, take center stage as twelve-year-old Nick learns the power of words as he wrestles with problems at home, stands up to a bully, and tries to impress the girl of his dreams. Helping him along are his best friend and sometimes teammate Coby, and The Mac, a rapping librarian who gives Nick inspiring books to read. This electric and heartfelt novel-in-verse by poet Kwame Alexander bends and breaks as it captures all the thrills and setbacks, action and emotion of a World Cup match!

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 660 (What's this?)

Hardcover: 320 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers (April 5, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0544570987

ISBN-13: 978-0544570986

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 1.2 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars See all reviews (68 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #3,238 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #8 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > African-American #17 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Poetry > Stories In Verse #229 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life

Age Range: 10 - 12 years

Grade Level: 5 - 7

## Customer Reviews

**A Conversation with Kwame Alexander** We chat with the Newbery-winning author of *The Crossover* about his new novel. You've written about basketball, now soccer. Do you play sports yourself? I used to play a lot of basketball. I was average. Tennis was my sport. I was one of the top players in the state of Virginia when I was in high school. Now, I just do Zumba, which I know you're probably thinking, that's not a sport, which is exactly what I thought until I took my wife's Thursday night Zumba class and I felt like I'd

run ten miles and did 100 squats. But, it was fun too. Also, I play a mean game of ping pong. How did things change for you after you won the Newbery Medal for *The Crossover*? In the words of that great poet, Jay-Z, “I went from lukewarm to hot. Sleeping on futons and cots or better yet, as Eydie Gorme sang, “What a day this has been! What a rare mood I’m in! Why, it’s almost like being in love.” Seriously, the biggest change in my life is I get to travel to a lot more schools and libraries and conferences to share my love of poetry and reading with young people and teachers and librarians. That’s a pretty awesome responsibility and a lot of fun (and frequent flyer miles).

What is the most rewarding thing about being a poet? Being able to make someone feel. Something. Anything. That is powerfully rewarding. Nick’s mother has a somewhat unusual job “are you a fan of horse racing? I’ve ridden a horse exactly once. And, that was a pony. When I was ten. I know they say you’re supposed to write what you know, but I agree with Toni Morrison, who says sometimes you got to write what you don’t know. That’s kind of exciting and revealing and fresh to me. But, I’m a fan now. I may get a horse. How do you feel about the #WeNeedDiverseBooks movement happening in children’s publishing? It’s a big part of the civil rights movement of our day. How do we create equity and equality in the images and ideas that enable All of our children to imagine a world of possible, that empower All of our children to dream a better world, is the most important question we can ask ourselves as parents, teachers, and librarians.

The Mac, and his t-shirts, are great! Is he based on a real person? I love The Mac. And, his sneaks and shirts are so friggin’ cool. He is based on a whole lot of real librarians and awesome teachers that I know. I shall post all of their pictures on twitter and Instagram on April 5, 2016, the day *Booked* is launched. Please follow me @KwameAlexander and #GetBooked. You spend a lot of time in schools. What do you hope the students take away from your visit? That poetry is cool. That books are cool. That I am cool. That they want to read my books. That they want to read. Anything. Many of your books involve first love. Any advice to budding Casanovas? Write poetry.

Did you have a favorite book when you were in elementary or middle school? Any book about Muhammad Ali was my fave in middle school. I was a huge boxing fan, but also Ali was the coolest. He made words dance when he spoke. I wanted to do that. And, I did. On the tennis court. In my red high top Chuck Taylors and brown corduroy shorts I talked trash on the court. My opponents were

beat before the first volley. Who is your favorite poet? My favorite poet is Nikki Giovanni-Pablo Neruda-Langston Hughes-Naomi Shihab Nye-Mary Oliver-ee cummings- Haki Madhubuti What are you working on now? I am writing a few new picture books, a YA novel about my senior year in high school which was outta control, and a prequel to The Crossover, called Rebound, which is about Chuck & Da Man& Bell when he was twelve years old. It's a pretty busy year.

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