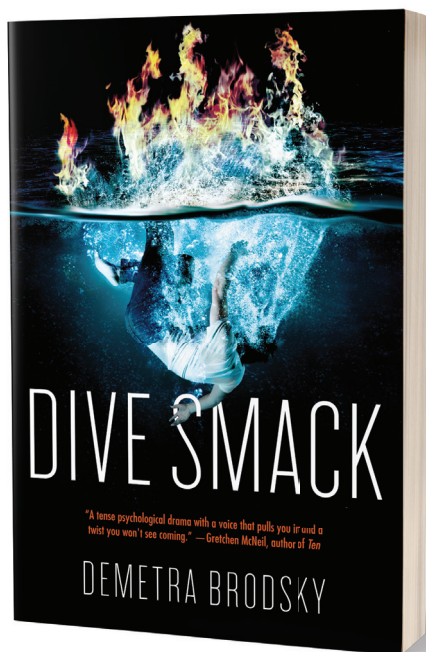


A 2018 Junior Library Guild Selection



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## DEMETRA BRODSKY

loves to write twisty stories about dark family secrets. She is an award-winning graphic designer & art director turned writer with a B.F.A from the Massachusetts College of Art and Design. Demetra is a first generation Greek-American, currently living in Southern California with her family of four and two lovable rescue dogs. *Dive Smack*, her debut novel, was a 2018 Junior Library Guild Selection, a January 2018 ALAN Pick, and a spring/summer 2018 Publishers Marketplace Buzz Books notable mention. *Dive Smack* is dedicated to Pumpkin, the monarch butterfly she once saved from the brink of death. Once you've read the book, you'll understand why.

Photo Credit: Jen Acosta

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### Praise for *Dive Smack*

**“A taut thriller with a twist ending that will blow your mind.”**

—KIM LIGGETT,  
author of *The Grace Year* and Bram Stoker Award–Winning Author of *The Last Harvest*

**“Heartbreaking, human and heroic, Demetra Brodsky’s *Dive Smack* is a Perfect 10!”**

—KAREN LAFACE,  
1992 USA Olympic Springboard Diver

**“Brodsky’s debut combines an engaging school story, filled with best friend shenanigans, first love, and a fascinating look at competitive diving, with a tense psychological mystery.”**

—BOOKLIST

**“In an impressive debut, Brodsky injects her teen drama with ambiguity, and a subtle hint of paranormal phenomena, leaving readers to guess at what’s really going on. Strong characters and a compelling mystery make this a real page-turner.”**

—PUBLISHERS WEEKLY

### About *Dive Smack*

Theo Mackey only remembers one thing for certain about the fire that destroyed his home: he lit the match.

Sure, it was an accident. But the blaze killed his mom and set his dad on a path to self-destruction. Everything else about that fateful night is full of gaping holes in Theo’s mind, for good reason. Maybe it’s better that way. As captain of the Ellis Hollow Diving Team, with straight A’s and solid friends, he’s only one semester away from securing a scholarship and leaving his past behind.

But when a family history project gets assigned at school, new memories come rushing to the surface, memories that make Theo question what he really knows about his family, the night of the fire, and if he can trust anyone—including himself.

### Discussion Guide

1. Theo holds himself to a very high standard on and off the diving board. Did that help or hinder him from uncovering the mystery surrounding his mother’s death?
2. Springboard Diving plays a huge role in *Dive Smack*. In what ways do you think the plot of this book is similar to a complicated dive?
3. Iris Fiorello is the girl of Theo’s dreams. How was Iris’s life similar to Theo’s?
4. Theo and Chip have an amazing friendship full of support in humor. What about Chip’s role in Theo’s life helped him learn the truth about his family?
5. Theo’s grandfather withheld information from Theo about his parents and uncle. How would you feel about a family member keeping secrets from you?
6. Theo can be unkind to Les Carter early on in the novel. What role did his suppositions about Les play in holding Theo back from his own goals.
7. There are some scary diving moments in *Dive Smack*. Did you fear for Theo’s life at any point in the novel?
8. The author dropped several hints and breadcrumbs about what was coming throughout the first two-thirds of the novel. Did you guess what happened to Theo’s mother or did it come as a surprise?
9. Uncle Phil is not who he pretends to be. What clues do you think Theo missed about his uncle and why?
10. Iris Fiorello is clear that people find themselves put into social boxes based on other people’s false ideas and views. How did Theo change those boundaries in *Dive Smack*?