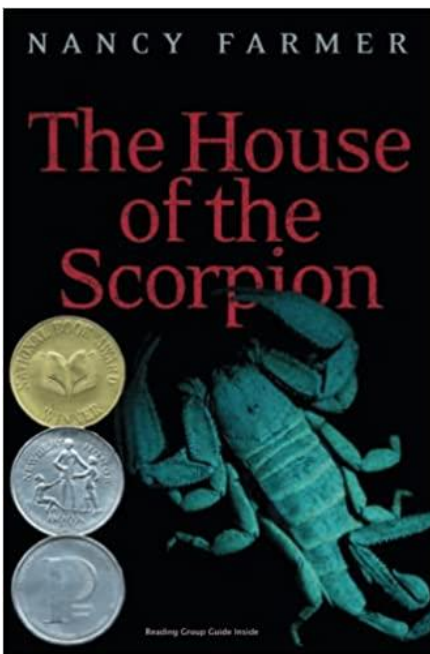# Lassiter High School

College Prep 9th Grade Literature and Composition

Optional Summer Reading 2024

Matteo Alacrán was not born; he was harvested.

His DNA came from El Patrón, lord of a country called Opium--a strip of poppy fields lying between the United States and what was once called Mexico. Matt's first cell split and divided inside a petri dish. Then he was placed in the womb of a cow, where he continued the miraculous journey from embryo to fetus to baby. He is a boy now, but most consider him a monster--except for El Patrón. El Patrón loves Matt as he loves himself, because Matt is himself.

As Matt struggles to understand his existence, he is threatened by a sinister cast of characters, including El Patrón's power-hungry family, and he is surrounded by a dangerous army of bodyguards. Escape is the only chance Matt has to survive. But escape from the Alacrán Estate is no guarantee of freedom, because Matt is marked by his difference in ways he doesn't even suspect.

https://www.amazon.com/House-Scorpion-Nancy-Farmer/dp/0689852231

**Summer reading plays a pivotal role in maintaining and enhancing literary skills, particularly for students during lengthy breaks from formal education. It acts as a bridge between academic years, preventing the so-called "summer slide," where critical reading skills might otherwise decline without regular practice. Beyond the academic benefits, summer reading also opens doors to new worlds, ideas, and cultures, fostering a lifelong love of curiosity and learning. It encourages personal growth and development by allowing readers to explore subjects and stories of interest at their own pace, in a relaxed environment. This period of exploration and discovery not only strengthens reading habits but also enhances critical thinking and empathy, as readers immerse themselves in diverse perspectives and experiences.

Our recommendation for summer reading is "The House of the Scorpion" by Nancy Farmer. We look forward to discussing this book and more during the upcoming school year.**