

<p><i>The Adventures of Sir Balin the Ill-Fated</i> by Gerald Morris Houghton Mifflin Books for Children, 2012, 94 pp., \$14.99 ISBN: 978-0-547-68085-9 Fantasy</p> <p>On the day of Balin's christening, he was pronounced ill-fated. He would be the noblest knight in England who would also bring misfortune and calamity to all. He would also bring down two kingdoms and destroy the knight he loves the most. Young Balin lived by the prophecy, avoiding contact with King Arthur or his brother Sir Balan, only to find fate helping him in defeating the evil and saving the good. In the end, he decided that he would make his way.</p> <p>This story of a knight is filled with dark and absurdist humor. It features brotherly love between Sir Balin and Sir Balan. It has a warm, happy ending with a surprising twist. Linda Sun Hong Kong</p>	<p><i>The Ballad of Jesse Pearl</i> by Shannon Hitchcock Nameelos, 2012, 140 pp., \$9.95 Historical American Fiction ISBN: 978-1-608-98142-7</p> <p>Using a rural dialect of North Carolina, Hitchcock exposes readers to family life and traditions in the early 1920s. Fourteen-year-old Jesse Pearl plans to become a teacher during a time when women are expected to marry. She still hears her deceased mother's voice encouraging her to continue her education. Unfortunately, Jesse must put her dreams aside to care for an older sister who suddenly comes down with tuberculosis. With that comes the sudden responsibility of caring for all of the males in the family—her father, her sister's husband, and her sister's newborn son—and "traditional women's work" is not Jesse's forte. To complicate matters, Jesse has real feelings for a local boy who is also interested in her, but who has a nemesis who gets her nose in Jesse's business in more ways than one. This debut novel is packed with much to think and talk about and is a nice addition to the growing collection of charming Southern YA literature; the author will present at the ALAN Workshop in Boston. Joan Kaywell Tampa, FL</p>
<p><i>The Bell Bandid</i> by Jacqueline Davis Houghton Mifflin Books for Children, 2012, 174 pp., \$15.99 ISBN: 978-0-547-56737-2 Realistic Fiction</p> <p>Evan and Jessie always spend their Christmas at their grandma's and ring the New Year bell with the rest of the town. This year, there has been a fire at grandma's house and the bell has gone missing. Moreover, grandma is suffering from memory loss and sporadically forgets who Evan and Jessie are. Evan and Jessie struggle to understand her condition, but they realize this holiday season is going to be rough.</p> <p>The traumatic fire turns out to be a transformational event for this family. When one family member is in trouble, others jump in and help. Evan takes up the job of reconstructing grandma's house while Jessie solves the mystery of the missing bell. They work together, take care of each other, and restore peace at their grandma's house. Linda Sun Hong Kong</p>	<p><i>Brianna on the Brink</i> by Nicole McInnes Holiday House, 2013, 170 pp., \$16.95 Realistic Fiction/Identity ISBN: 978-0-8234-2741-3</p> <p>Brianna has never felt like part of a family. Her mother kicked her out on her sixteenth birthday, and now she lives with her sister, who pays more attention to her loser boyfriend than Brianna. At least at school, Brianna feels like she fits in. She has worked hard to be a popular, bad-girl cheerleader who everyone respects. All of this changes when Brianna has a disastrous one-night stand with a man she didn't know was married to her English teacher.</p> <p>Left deserted by her family and friends in the wake of her mistake, Brianna learns to accept help from the teacher she hurt so badly. Through this experience, she learns to let down her guard and become a part of a real, loving family. Brianna may teeter on the brink of bad decision making and its consequences, but she learns how to catch herself before she falls. Laura Cockman Fishers, IN</p>

<p><i>Bruised</i> by Sarah Skilton Amulet Books, 2013, 288 pp., \$16.95</p> <p>Identity/Romance ISBN: 978-1-4197-0387-4</p> <p>Sixteen-year-old Imogen hides under a table at a local diner when an armed robber appears; a young man huddles nearby. The police subsequently kill the thief. Although a black belt in taekwon do, Imogen blames herself for the death, since she believes she covered in fear and forgot her skills. She finally meets Ricky, her ally at the café; they embark on a journey of recovery together. Imogen is filled with anger and guilt; she yearns for a physical fight to prove she is no longer a victim. Ricky wants her to teach him martial arts while Imogen's motive is to defeat him. Their romance somehow develops, but Imogen's bitterness threatens to destroy it.</p> <p>Imogen's dark sense of humor encourages the reader to root for her as Skilton's traumatic tale unfolds through flashbacks and in the present world of nightmares, vengeful rages, and psychosomatic illness.</p> <p>Judith A. Hayn Little Rock, AR</p>	<p><i>Call Me Oklahomal!</i> by Miriam Glassman Holiday House, 2013, 123 pp., \$16.95</p> <p>Realistic Fiction/Humor ISBN: 978-0-8234-2742-0</p> <p>On the first day of fourth grade, Paige decides that she doesn't want to feel like a little mouse anymore. She is going to be gutsy and spunky and she is changing her name to Oklahomal! Her teacher says that there are many possible selves in everyone, and Paige sets out to find her Oklahoma self. Her obstacles, though, are the mean girl Viveca, her hyperactive cousin Cordelia, dark and terrible stage fright, and many other things. Paige realizes that becoming a brave person doesn't happen overnight. It's all the little changes that count—she stands up to Viveca, tries cauliflower, and plays the piano for the entire school. As her new name Oklahoma catches on, she decides that she is happy being Paige; there is nothing she can't do as Paige.</p> <p>Linda Sun Hong Kong</p>
<p><i>Eleanor and Park</i> by Rainbow Rowell St. Martin's Griffin, 2013, 288 pp., \$17.99</p> <p>Romance/Identity ISBN: 978-1-250-01257-9</p> <p>Eleanor is the new girl in 1986 Omaha; Park reluctantly allows her to sit by him on the school bus to save her from harassment by his cruel classmates. Park is small and Asian, which might make him the butt of jokes; however, his taekwondo training gives him credibility. His mom is Korean, and his dad married her when he was in the Army; handsome and athletic older brother Josh seems to be the favorite at home. Eleanor, who is gawky and red-headed, has just been allowed back home by her alcoholic and abusive stepdad Richie. He has beaten Eleanor's mom into submission while the four young siblings cower in silence.</p> <p>A poignant romance, originally based on comic books and punk rock, slowly develops for the truly star-crossed misfit couple. The two play out a familiar, yet suspenseful, drama told from their alternating viewpoints—a spellbinding young adult romance.</p> <p>Judith A. Hayn Little Rock, AR</p>	<p><i>Enrique's Journey</i> by Sonia Nazario Delacorte, 2013, 240 pp., \$17.99</p> <p>Nonfiction ISBN: 978-0-385-74327-3</p> <p>An adaptation for young readers of Nazario's original 2006 adult work, the book is subtitled "The True Story of a Boy Determined to Reunite with His Mother." Based on a series of Pulitzer Prize-winning articles, it is a disturbing, yet uplifting, story.</p> <p>During Nazario's lengthy research, she met 17-year-old Enrique in a Mexican migrant shelter. She retraced his 1600 mile journey that included traveling atop freight trains. Movingly, she reveals the desperation and determination that marks Enrique's desire to find the woman who deserted him. When he was five growing up in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, his mother Lourdes fled to the US for work so she could send money back; she encourages him to be patient and that they will reunite soon. After 11 years, the disillusioned boy joins thousands of other immigrant children who followed similar paths to find the love they are missing. The reconciliation is bittersweet as the plight of illegal aliens threatens to destroy a dream.</p> <p>Judith A. Hayn Little Rock, AR</p>

<p><i>The 5th Wave</i> by Rick Yancey Putnam, 2013, pp. 480, \$18.99</p> <p>Yancey delivers a dystopian, post-apocalyptic thriller featuring a kick-butt heroine. Aliens have come to destroy Earth's inhabitants through a series of ever-worsening Waves. Once an ordinary high school girl with a crush on a guy who doesn't know she is alive, Cassie Sullivan is now struggling for her own survival while seeking her younger brother, who vanished when children were transported out of a refugee camp. Packing a Luger and M-16, she dodges her relentless pursuers, including unyielding drones and ruthless snipers. Evan Walker rescues her from freezing to death after she is shot, and the two experience moments of closeness. Five-year-old Sammy is imprisoned at Camp Haven, a massive concentration facility designed to winnow out the weak, convert the inmates, and train killing machines. Who can she rely on when the Others are us and we are them? Will her obsession with a boy from the past doom or save her? Judith A. Hayn Little Rock, AR</p>	<p><i>Frostbite</i> by Richelle Mead, adapted by Leigh Dragoon Graphic Novel / Supernatural Penguin Group, 2012, 152 pp., \$12.99</p> <p>Like other teens, Rose Hathaway goes to school, has a crush, and deals with her embarrassing mom. But unlike most other teens, Rose is a dhampir—a half-human, half-vampire training to become a guardian in the battle between good and evil. Rose's main goal is to protect her best friend Lissa, a vampire princess with the special power to control the spirit element.</p> <p>Protecting Lissa is not always easy for Rose as she navigates relationships with boys, family, and friends. However, when some students leave their safe haven to attack the Strigoi, a group of evil vampires, Rose learns how far she will go to protect her loved ones and how she can use her intellect and powers to fight for good. This graphic adaptation of Richelle Mead's original series tells Rose's action-packed story in both words and stunningly bright pictures for a comprehensive story experience. Laura Cockman Fishers, IN</p>
<p><i>Hereville: How Mirka Met a Meteorite</i> by Barry Deutsch Amulet Books, 2012, 128 pp., \$16.95</p> <p>Mirka Herschberg, the eleven-year-old Orthodox Jewish heroine, is back and she's still marching to the beat of her own drum. After being un-grounded for sneaking out at night, fighting a troll, and talking to a witch, Mirka finds herself in trouble again. When a troll summons a destructive meteorite toward the Earth, a witch uses a few strands of Mirka's hair to transform the meteorite into Metty, Mirka's doppelganger. Metty is not only clever, intelligent, and better at basketball, but also determined to replace Mirka. As Mirka plans to get rid of Metty, she starts to understand that being yourself—even if you are silly, goofy, or clumsy—is better than having a perfect copy of yourself.</p> <p>Deutsch's story is colorful and captivating in the way that it incorporates Jewish culture and faith. <i>Hereville</i> places great emphasis on the importance of understanding that everyone is special in their own way. David Chang Chicago, IL</p>	<p><i>Hunter Moran Saves the Universe</i> by Patricia Reilly Giff Holiday House, 2012, 125 pp., \$16.95</p> <p>Hunter and Zach Moran might have been the twins who originated the phrase "Double Trouble." Armed with only their wits and good intentions, Hunter and Zach must find a way to intervene before a sinister dentist, Dr. Digilo, sets off a bomb in their town—blowing the whole place to smithereens. The boys juggle nosy parents, tag-along siblings, and the preparations for their town's "Lester Tinwitty Day," all while attempting the save the universe. Everything comes down to last seconds—either before the town's celebration, or before the town will meet its end.</p> <p>Two-time Newbery Honor medalist Reilly Giff writes characters that charm readers who are thrilled to be along on their adventures. Her latest novel lands right in the middle of mountains of mischief and will not leave her audience disappointed. Rachel Marie Morris Brooklyn, New York</p>

<p><i>Hurricane Heat</i> by Steven Barwin Orca, 2013, 162 pp., \$9.95</p> <p>Realistic/Athletics ISBN: 978-1-4598-0213-1</p> <p>It's been five years since Travis's parents died in a car crash and he was separated from his sister Amanda. After Amanda sends a mysterious postcard, Travis ventures to California in hopes of finding his lost sibling. While seeking information, Travis meets Ethan, who discovers Travis's baseball skills and convinces him to join a summer league. Travis instantly becomes a top player and is even gaining attention from scouts. However, when baseball and the search for his sister start to conflict, Travis must decide what is most important for his life and future.</p> <p>As Travis's summer comes to an end, he reaches the peak of his search and baseball season. Although the climactic moment is perhaps underplayed after the built suspense, Travis's struggle of balancing adolescent concerns, baseball, and family becomes a very relatable experience. <i>Hurricane Heat</i> does a sufficient job in establishing the value of responsibility and familial importance.</p> <p>Aly Martin Nashville, TN</p>	<p><i>In Too Deep</i> by Norah McClintock Lerner, 2013, 218 pp., \$17.99</p> <p>Mystery/Juvenile Delinquency ISBN: 978-0-7613-8318-5</p> <p>Robyn moves to a sleepy town up north with her friend Morgan. The town seems pretty safe when they first arrive, but Robyn notices the townspeople's anxiety about a home for at-risk youth. It's a spot for teenage boys who come from troubled families and is run by controversial Jerry Wilson, who teaches the boys auto repair and self-discipline. Robyn believes that Jerry's boys are polite and helpful after they help her to fix her car, but her boyfriend, Nick, believes that someone at Jerry's place killed his friend's brother. Robyn decides to help, writing an article for the newspaper as a cover for her investigation. She finds out too much and is in danger. Finally, murder looms, with Robyn, Nick and Morgan targeted as the victims. McClintock keeps her narrative and sentence structure simple, making her story accessible to less skilled readers.</p> <p>Wenjing Luo China</p>
<p><i>Island of Thieves</i> by Josh Lacey Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011, 228 pp., \$15.99</p> <p>Action/Adventure ISBN: 978-0-547-76327-9</p> <p>Two things come easily to Tom Trelawney: getting bored and getting in trouble. When his parents need somebody to take care of him while they go on vacation alone, only his mysterious Uncle Harvey is willing to take in such a troublemaker. But Uncle Harvey is a troublemaker, too. As soon as Tom arrives at his house, Uncle Harvey whisks him off to Peru to seek out a long-lost treasure.</p> <p>As he searches for secret treasure, Tom learns secrets about his own family. He is also able to help Uncle Harvey find the treasure through his knowledge of history. <i>Island of Thieves</i> links historical theory with action-packed adventure in a way that leads readers to speculate about how what they have learned about the past may impact their present and how they can discover secrets about their own histories.</p> <p>Laura Cockman Fishers, IN</p>	<p><i>Lauren Yanofsky Hates the Holocaust</i> by Leanne Lieberman Orca, 2013, 227 pp., \$12.95</p> <p>Teen/Romance ISBN: 978-1-4598-0109-7</p> <p>Lauren Yanofsky, as the name suggests, loathes the Holocaust, despite her Jewish background. With a father who studies the Holocaust and a family history affected by the Holocaust, the Holocaust has a way of constantly popping up in Lauren's life. However, when Lauren's would-be boyfriend parakes in a game that involves wearing swastikas and pretending to be Nazis, Lauren immediately runs into a personal conflict. Lauren is forced to consider if she can really date a guy who is insensitive to her past and if she should tell someone about the game.</p> <p>With her relationship on the line, Lauren must decide whether to do the right thing or suppress her heritage. Throughout her personal dilemmas, Lauren learns more about her past, and more importantly, more about herself. She struggles with tough decisions even as she struggles with the challenges of growing up. With the conflict of love versus beliefs, Lauren has to make mature decisions about how she is going to live her life.</p> <p>Spencer Hoddson Nashville, TN</p>

<p><i>The Lives We Lost</i> by Megan Crewe Hyperion, 2013, 288 pp., \$13.28</p> <p>Crewé's suspenseful second novel in The Fallen World series opens with heroine Kaelyn discovering a potentially lifesaving vaccine developed by her deceased father, a renowned scientist in their island community. As a deadly pandemic sweeps across North America, she rallies her friends on a journey to the mainland in search of researchers who can reproduce the healing medicine and rid their world of devastation once and for all. Their harrowing adventure brings them face to face with violence, desperation, and their worst fears, and reveals the tension between morality and survival in apocalyptic times. Kaelyn displays courage and incredible selflessness in the midst of overwhelming danger, all the while struggling with what to think about the crumbling world around her. <i>The Lives We Lost</i> blends many elements of a great story—secret romance, anticipation, and characters with depth.</p> <p>Rebekah Capps Nashville, TN</p>	<p><i>Maybe I Will</i> by Laurie Gray Luminis Books, 2013, 206 pp., \$14.95</p> <p>Is an act of sexual violence more traumatizing for a female victim than a male? <i>Maybe I Will</i> shares the story of a teenager who is the object of a nonconsensual sexual act. Sandy's two closest friends turn away when they are needed the most. Other adults do not seem to care or do not believe. Lost, confused, and violated, Sandy turns to alcohol as a numbing agent and best friend. All the childhood dreams and ambitions are diluted.</p> <p>Not only does this story tell one victim's response to sexual assault, it questions the meaning, or lack thereof, of gender roles as Sandy's gender is never revealed. Readers can directly relate to Sandy as they are able to make him/her relevant to their personal experiences. Sandy deals with the assault the same way—the same trauma, the same betrayal, and the same substance abuse—regardless of her/his gender.</p> <p>Anna Lee Minneastrista, MN</p>
<p><i>The Morning Star</i> by Robin Bridges Delacorte, 2013, 288 pp., \$17.99</p> <p>Katerina Alexandrovna, the young Duchess of Oldenburg, dreams of becoming a doctor, not a necromancer. Tsar Alexander will not allow her to attend medical school, so she continues her studies with Tibetan medic Dr. Badmaev. Her love for the Tsar's son, the ailing George Alexandrovich, is threatened by her desire to learn how to cure him. Vampires, werewolves, shape shifters, and wizards populate the Kremlin of Romanov Russia as Katerina's former fiancé Crown Prince Danilo returns. The illicit tsar Konstantin has inhabited Danilo's soul and now seeks the Morning Star, an ancient sword that will enable a necromancer to command a magical army. He also intends to marry Katerina and gain the throne. Kidnapped by Danilo, Katerina seeks the sword in Egypt. Will she wield the Morning Star to save Russia, and will her love for George win out over evil in the final volume of the Katerina trilogy?</p> <p>Judith A. Hayn Little Rock, AR</p>	<p><i>My Summer of Pink & Green</i> by Lisa Greenwald Amulet Books, 2013, 259 pp., \$16.95</p> <p>In this sequel to <i>My Life in Pink & Green</i>, 13-year-old Lucy Desberg is ready to spend the summer helping out with the eco-spa her family is building. But her summer doesn't turn out as she had planned. The adults don't need her around to help with the spa, and her sister and best friend always seem busy with their boyfriends. The only person left to spend time with Lucy is Bevin, the spa investor's immature daughter.</p> <p>When even Bevin gets mad at Lucy for trying to give her a life makeover, Lucy realizes that maybe instead of always trying to makeover other people, she should makeover her own attitude. Lucy learns the importance of appreciating other people for who they are. As she strives to be a better friend, sister, and daughter, she offers tips to readers so that they can become the best versions of themselves, too.</p> <p>Laura Cockman Fishers, IN</p>

<p><i>Nantucket Blue</i> by Leila Howland Hyperion, 2013, 304 pp., \$16.99</p> <p>Young Adult Fiction/Summer Romance ISBN: 978-1-4231-7919-1</p> <p>When Cricket Thompson's best friend, Jules Clayton, invites her to Nantucket for the summer, she's expecting a life-changing experience. But then, tragedy suddenly strikes the Clayton household and Cricket's dream vacation disappears. Instead of working on her tan, she finds herself working odd jobs at a bed and breakfast. Just when she thinks that her summer might be a bust, she connects with someone completely unexpected. With this new spark, though, comes a risk, and for the first time in her life, Cricket must decide what she is willing to sacrifice for her own happiness. Leila Howland has woven together a stunning story about the fragility of friendship, the excitement of first love, and the importance of standing up for oneself.</p> <p>Diana Liu Nashville, TN</p>	<p><i>Sean Griswold's Head</i> by Lindsey Leavitt Bloomsbury USA Children's, 2012, 304 pp., \$9.99</p> <p>Young Adult Fiction/Identity ISBN: 978-1-59990-911-0</p> <p>When Payton Gritas's guidance counselor tells her to express her suppressed emotions in a focus journal, she thinks that Miss Marietta might need some counseling herself. But what begins as an annoying assignment quickly evolves into a series of unexpected adventures. And as Payton gets to know her focus subject better (a cute boy named Sean Griswold), she also finds herself learning more about her family and her best friend, Jac. Ultimately, though, Payton will have to learn to face the very incident that sent her into Miss Marietta's office for counseling in the first place. Lindsey Leavitt tells the heartbreaking yet hilarious story of a teen girl navigating the aftermath of a devastating discovery.</p> <p>Diana Liu Nashville, TN</p>
<p><i>Tagged</i> by Eric Walters Orca, 2013, 136 pp., \$9.95</p> <p>School/Street Art ISBN: 978-1-4598-0167-7</p> <p>Ian Cheevers is enjoying spending his last year of high school with his two best friends, Oswald and Julia. One of his favorite pastimes is to look at the graffiti done by the mysterious "Wiz." However, Mayor Dumfrey begins to fight back against street art because it is illegal. Although Ian believes graffiti is true art, the city rails against illegal artwork that defaces public property.</p> <p>Ian and his friends deal with the illegal nature of guerilla art and whether graffiti is art or vandalism. He hears Mayor Dumfrey's stance on criminalizing graffiti, but also learns about the political powers of art in his Art Appreciation class. Will Ian find a way to make his opinions heard? Will the mysterious Wiz ever reveal his true identity?</p> <p>Candy Lee North Brunswick, NJ</p>	<p><i>Teenboat</i> by Dave Roman and John Green Clarion Books, 2012, 139 pp., \$14.99</p> <p>Graphic Novel/Humor ISBN: 978-0-547-63669-6</p> <p>Teenboat, a high school student with the superpower to turn into a small yacht, wants to be popular so that his crush, Niña Pinta Santa Maria, will notice him. His best friend Joey, a girl with secret superpowers of her own, does not like the crowd he wants to hang out with. They use his boat-transformation powers to take them to international waters to gamble, and they almost trade him away to pirates.</p> <p>Although pirates are always after Teenboat, they seem like the least of his problems as he navigates his first detention, first love, and first job. Dave Roman and John Green present <i>Teenboat</i> as a series of short, comic-book-style issues that build upon each other to show Teenboat's development as a teen and as a superhero. As Teenboat navigates choppy waters and the high school social scene, <i>Teenboat</i> takes readers on a brightly colored, pun-filled journey through adolescence.</p> <p>Laura Cockman Fishers, IN</p>

<p><i>A Soldier's Secret</i> by Marissa Moss Amulet Books, 2012, 387 pp., \$16.95</p> <p>Private Frank Thomson of the Second Michigan Volunteer Infantry has his work cut out for him in the Union Army during the War between the States: running from battlefield to hospital as a nurse, delivering letters to his fellow soldiers as mail carrier, and gaining critical information from behind enemy lines as a spy. Yet the anxiety Frank feels going into battle is no match for the anxiety he experiences every day: Frank's real name is Sarah Emma Edmonds. She is masquerading as a man.</p> <p>Marissa Moss's moment-by-moment account of the true story of Sarah Emma Edmonds provides an accessible avenue for adolescent readers to understand the Civil War, the rights of women, and the timeless struggle for equality. Blending historical facts, including photographs and character names, with a fresh voice for Sarah Edmonds, Moss breathes life into her story grounded in history.</p> <p>Laura Cramer Nashville, TN</p>	<p><i>Time between Us</i> by Tamara Ireland Stone Hyperion, 2012, 384 pp., \$17.99</p> <p>Fiction/Romance/Time Travel ISBN: 978-1-4321-6840-9</p> <p>Growing up in 1990s suburbia, Anna Greene is a pretty normal teenager. She goes to school, runs cross-country, and works in her family's bookstore. But one day, everything changes when Anna notices a shaggy-haired boy watching her on an early morning run. One moment, he's there; the next moment, he's disappeared into thin air. Anna is perplexed at first, but once she runs into the mysterious boy at school, she quickly realizes that her life will never be the same again, because Bennett Cooper has a secret—a secret that will not only bring them together, but can also tear them apart. In her debut novel, Tamara Ireland Stone weaves together a captivating story that addresses the classic question of whether or not love can truly stand the test of time.</p> <p>Diana Liu Nashville, TN</p>
<p><i>Towering</i> by Sarah Skilton HarperTeen, 2013, 304 pp., \$17.99</p> <p>Fantasy/Romance ISBN: 978-0-06-202417-6</p> <p>Flinn continues her series of revamped fairy tales in this contemporary version of Rapunzel. As in the original, Rachel with her long golden hair is imprisoned in a tower in the woods, this time rural Slakkill, NY. Seventeen-year-old Wyatt has come to the isolated community to recover from the death of his best friend and sister. He stays with his mom's acquaintance, elderly Mrs. Greenwood, whose daughter Danielle mysteriously disappeared years ago. Wyatt hears Rachel's heartrending songs and follows her voice; their meeting eventually fulfills a prophecy that will help solve the mystery of Dani's disappearance. The two lovers are destined to remove a curse grounded in modern society's drug culture that has threatened the area for years. Enough of the fantastic is coupled with the tenderness of young love amidst the threat of impending violence—a magical read for fans of the genre.</p> <p>Judith A. Hayn Little Rock, AR</p>	<p><i>Whatever Doesn't Kill You</i> by Elizabeth Wennick Orca, 2013, 202 pp., \$12.95</p> <p>Drama/Mystery ISBN: 978-1-4598-0083-0</p> <p>Jenna Cooper was born into tragedy. A few days after her birth, her father was murdered and her family began a tailspin that ended with her mother locked away in a nursing home, her sister addicted to alcohol, and her brother desperately trying to keep what was left of the family intact.</p> <p>When Jenna finds a photo of her father's murderer, Travis Bingham, staring back at her in a newspaper article announcing his release from prison, she becomes determined to find him and give him a piece of her mind. Despite friends and family urging her to move on, Jenna remains unwavering in her pursuit of Travis and begins to discover that the story behind her father's death contains a bevy of buried secrets that could compromise her relationships with her loved ones.</p> <p>Rachel Wilkinson Nashville, TN</p>

<p><i>When You Wish upon a Rat</i> by Maureen McCarthy Amulet Books, 2012, 288 pp., \$16.95</p> <p>Fiction/Middle School ISBN: 978-1-4197-0161-0</p> <p>What would you do if you were given the chance to perfect your life with three wishes? For Ruth Craze, an overworked and misunderstood eleven-year-old, changing her life sounds like a fabulous idea. What she really wants in life are more responsible parents, less obnoxious brothers, and true friends. So when Rodney the Rat, a stuffed animal from her favorite aunt, offers her the chance to create the perfect life with three wishes, Ruth jumps at the chance. But as Ruth quickly discovers, wishes don't always work out the way you think they will, and soon she finds herself amidst a whole new set of misadventures. Maureen McCarthy weaves a charming tale that will leave readers asking themselves what they might wish for if they ever come across their own Rodney the Rat.</p> <p>Diana Liu Nashville, TN</p>	<p><i>The Wild Book</i> by Margarita Engle Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012, 121 pp., \$16.99</p> <p>Poetry/Historical Fiction ISBN: 978-0-547-58131-6</p> <p>In Fefa's small community in the Cuban countryside, reading and writing poetry is the main pastime. But Fefa is diagnosed with dyslexia, called "word-blindness" by her doctor. Fefa's mother believes Fefa can overcome her problems with words. She gives Fefa a "wild book" where she can practice writing. Fefa thinks of her book like a garden where she can plant words and grow her reading and writing skills.</p> <p>Reading becomes an especially important skill when kidnappers ravage the countryside, leaving ransom notes for children. When a threatening note appears in Fefa's house one day, she must figure out who sent it before the writer kidnaps her siblings. Based upon author Margarita Engle's grandmother's childhood in early twentieth century Cuba, this novel in verse explores what it is like to overcome fear from both the outside and the inside.</p> <p>Laura Cockman Fishers, IN</p>
<p><i>William and the Lost Spirit</i> by Gwen de Bonneval & Matthieu Bonhomme Graphic Universe, 2013, 160 pp., \$9.95</p> <p>Fantasy Fiction/Adventure ISBN: 978-1-4677-0807-4</p> <p>William de Sonac is unwilling to accept the death of his father. To make matters worse, his sister, Helise, disappears in the middle of the night to find their father's murderer. William makes the difficult decision to leave his mother and accepts the call to adventure, in hopes of saving his beloved sister.</p> <p>William befriends a rugged troubadour and an amiable goat as he desperately searches for the mysterious "far-off lands" where his father may be. He encounters fickle kings, barbarous bandits, and vicious monsters. Only when William is badly injured does he find a way between the different worlds. Eventually, he wakes beside his sister, and the two of them ultimately discover the truth behind their father's untimely death.</p> <p>This tale is not predictable and touches upon a variety of classical tropes. Furthermore, readers are able to delight in Bonhomme's vivid artistry that brings such a journey to life.</p> <p>David Chang Chicago, IL</p>	<p><i>Publishers who wish to submit a book for possible review should send a copy of the book to:</i> <i>Melanie Hundley</i> <i>1021 Delmas Ave.</i> <i>Nashville, TN 37216-3630</i> <i>To submit a review for possible publication or to become a reviewer, contact Melanie Hundley at melanie.hundley@Vanderbilt.edu.</i></p>

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