



Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award 2013 Nominees



The Strange Case of Origami Yoda by Tom Angleberger

AUDIO CD J F ANG

Tommy and his fellow sixth-grade friends keep a log of stories dealing with their odd classmate Dwight and the paper origami Yoda finger puppet he wears. Dwight himself is one strange character, so it's pretty incredible that his origami Yoda seems able to give somewhat useful advice and predict the future, including an upcoming pop quiz – whoa! While some students seem to believe in the paper Yoda's incredible talents, Tommy's friend Harvey doesn't buy into the future-predicting Yoda stuff, referring to Dwight's finger puppet as no more than a "paper wad." There's more going on here, too, including some budding feelings for classmates of the female persuasion. If you like Jeff Kinney's *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series, you'll like this book and its follow-up novel *Darth Paper Strikes Back*.

Anything But Typical by Nora Raleigh Baskin

J BAS / JP BAS / PLAYAWAY J F BAS

Despite being gifted with special creative writing abilities, twelve-year-old Jason struggles with socialization, school, and "neurotypicals" – the term he uses to refer to those who, unlike him, don't have autism. He has trouble reading people and interacting with them by not always knowing what they want, being unsure of how to understand their body language, and sometimes failing to get his own needs across to others. He never really feels like he fits in until he puts those writing abilities to use, posting his stories to an online writing group called Storyboard, where he eventually befriends PhoenixBird, a girl named Rebecca. He's never before had a friend, so this new relationship with Rebecca is exciting for him. But when his parents take him to a Storyboard convention, Jason is terrified to come face-to-face with his new online friend. Jason is forced to face his fears – will he fit in? And will Rebecca only see him as an autistic boy, or will she recognize and appreciate him for who he is inside?

****Out of My Mind*** by Sharon Draper

JP DRA / TEEN DRA*

Told from the point of view of 11-year-old Melody Brooks, this novel describes first-hand what life is like for this young girl who has cerebral palsy, a disorder which has rendered her unable to walk or talk her entire life. Even though she needs someone to feed her, dress her, and take her to the bathroom, Melody is super smart – and super frustrated by her doctors and teachers. They think that just because she can't talk or use her muscles properly, she's not capable of learning, and her teachers treat her and her classmates like preschoolers. Thankfully, Melody's parents and their neighbor Mrs. Valencia are there to treat her with the respect and dignity she so rightly deserves. When she finally gets a computer that allows her the gift of speech, Melody's life begins to change, as she finds both disappointment and immense joy in new opportunities.

****Dark Life*** by Kat Falls

AUDIO CD J F FAL / TEEN FAL*

In a future time, when the oceans swallow low-lying areas and huge earthquakes devastate the lands, people are forced into new lives in one of two ways: in topside cities stacked on the remaining hillsides, or deep under the sea in sprawling colonies. Fifteen-year-old Ty is one of the deep-sea, dark life dwellers, and he's got some seriously cool talents. When he meets Gemma, a topside girl who ran away from her life on land, they befriend each other and work together to find her missing brother. But Gemma's brother may be involved with pirates, and Ty and the other pioneers of his subterranean colony have been made responsible by the topside Commonwealth government for stopping these pirates and their attacks on the above-sea cities. To go against their orders would be to risk losing precious supplies needed to sustain life on the ocean floor.

Born to Fly by Michael Ferrari

J FER / JP FER

Eleven-year-old Bird McGill is one lucky Rhode Island girl – her father is an airplane mechanic who lets her fly planes with him after he fixes them, and she wants more than anything to become a pilot one day. But the year is 1941, and things are soon about to change. When Japan bombs the Pearl Harbor Military Base, Bird suddenly finds her father being shipped off to serve in the Army, and she's missing him terribly. Then a new Asian American boy named Kenji Fujita moves to town, and Bird's fellow students are certain he's either a spy for Japan or on Japan's side in the war. But Bird isn't so sure. Kenji, like Bird, is without friends and becomes easy prey for bullies, but soon the two classmates become

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friends, and together, they discover a real spy in town – but will anyone believe what they've seen? Or are they in for whole new a world of trouble?

Bounce by Natasha Friend

JP FRI

After the death of her mother when Evyn was still a baby, she and her older brother Mackey live with their father in Maine, and Evyn, age thirteen, is mostly happy there, despite missing her mother and wishing she could be with them. But when her dad announces he is getting remarried to a woman with six children, and they are moving to Massachusetts, Evyn suddenly feels alone. Though she is obviously not there, Evyn often talks to her mother – she claims she's just talking to herself – and she struggles to follow the advice she comes up with: to let the bad things “bounce” off her, because many times that's easier said than done. Upon her family's move to Boston, Evyn misses her best friend back home, who has moved on without her, and she also has trouble making new friends and adjusting to attending classes at a private school. Throw in a crush on her oldest stepbrother, and a surprise announcement from her father and stepmother, and Evyn's got all kinds of issues to deal with. Will Evyn learn to heed the “bounce” advice in order to adjust to her new life and family?

****The Graveyard Book*** by Neil Gaiman

J GAI / JP GAI / AUDIO CD J F GAI / E-BOOK / TEEN GAI*

Following the murder of his entire family by a man named Jack, a toddler finds his way out of his house and down to a graveyard. It is there that he takes refuge and is befriended by the graveyard's ghosts, including the elderly Mr. and Mrs. Owens, who never had children of their own. He is given the name Nobody Owens, Bod for short, and the Owenses, along with Silas – one of the graveyard's inhabitants who floats between the spirit and human worlds – raise and educate Bod within the safe confines of the cemetery – but even as Bod grows up, Jack continues to pursue him.

How to Survive Middle School by Donna Gephart

J GEP / JP GEP / E-BOOK

Eleven-year-old David longs to be like his TV star idol, Jon Stewart, so along with his best friend Elliott, David creates funny TalkTime videos, featuring his pet hamster and his own Top 6 lists, which they post to YouTube. But things aren't always easy – not only does David miss his mom, who walked out on his family two years earlier, he's also nervous about starting his first year of middle school. And suddenly things aren't looking so great when Elliott ditches David to hang out with the school bully. But then a new kid enters the scene, and David's life begins to pick up. Sure, the new kid is a girl named Sophie, but when she views his TalkTime videos and thinks they're the funniest things ever, she sends them to friends of hers, and the videos go viral. Before long, David becomes quite the sensation, even with those people he never dreamed would notice his work.

The Year Money Grew on Trees by Aaron Hawkins

JP HAW

Enticed by the opportunity to earn some nice money, fourteen-year-old Jackson Jones is about to become a teenage entrepreneur as he agrees to take on the work of his neighbor's apple orchard in exchange for the land and the orchard itself. Unfortunately, Jackson knows nothing about caring for an orchard, and neither do his sisters nor the cousins he's enlisted to help him in this endeavor. But he's signed a legal contract with Mrs. Nelson to work the land and harvest the fruit, and if he can raise \$8000 to pay for his first year of work, the orchard is his. Will Jackson and his family succeed at this enormous undertaking? Or has he gotten in too far over his head?

Turtle in Paradise by Jennifer Holm

J HOL / JP HOL / AUDIO CD J F HOL / E-BOOK

The year is 1935, times are tough, and upon her mom taking a housekeeping job for a lady who doesn't like kids, eleven-year-old Turtle has moved to Key West, Florida, to live with relatives she's never met. Turtle's a smart girl who's seen enough to know that life doesn't always go as one might hope, so she's ok with leaving her mom to live someplace new. She meets her cousins for the first time and experiences all sorts of things in Key West that she never thought imaginable. And Turtle comes to realize that what she's been protecting herself from, and what she's believed about hopes and dreams for all these years, just might not be so bad after all.

Love, Aubrey by Suzanne LaFleur

J LAF / JP LAF / AUDIO CD J F LAF

Eleven-year-old Aubrey is finding the strength to live alone after a tragic accident has changed her world. She's got a pet fish for company, some canned food for meals, and plenty of paper on which to write letters to someone who will never read them. Aubrey has lost her father and sister in a car accident, and her mother, unable to both deal with her own grief and care for Aubrey at the same time, has left home, and no one can find her. After a short time of being on her own, her grandmother realizes that she's alone and takes her in, uprooting Aubrey to move in with her in Vermont. While living with

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her grandmother, will Aubrey finally find the happiness that she's been missing for so long, and will she learn to open up to others again?

Inside Out & Back Again by Thanhha Lai

J LAI / AUDIO CD J F LAI

Ten-year-old Há's father has been missing in action during the Vietnam War for almost her entire life, but the family still hopes for his miraculous and safe return. Há herself has only known life in Saigon alongside her older brothers, her mother, and her beloved fruit-bearing papaya tree, but in 1975, the Vietnam War is closing in, and the safety of Saigon is being threatened. Her mother makes the difficult decision of uprooting the family and leaving for the safety of America. When they settle in Alabama, Há has difficulty adjusting to a brand new culture – she doesn't like the food, she has no friends, she isn't sure how to maneuver the customs of dress or speech, and she feels very sad and alone among her classmates. Will Há find the strength to weather the change and adjust to a new way of life with her family?

Black Radishes by Susan Lynn Meyer

J MEY / JP MEY

When German Nazis begin invading cities and countries all around them in 1940, things become increasingly unsafe for Jewish Gustave and his family. His parents fear that the French army will soon fall to the Germans, and so they take Gustave and flee from Paris to the countryside, seeking refuge in a small town called Saint-Georges. Gustave is unhappy with the fact that his friend Marcel and his cousin Jean-Paul have been left behind, but with the help of a Catholic girl named Rebecca who he meets in Saint-Georges, and her father, who works for the French Resistance, Gustave hopes to bring the two boys to safety – but it means putting himself in grave danger to do it.

****Trash*** by Andy Mulligan

TEEN MUL*

Raphael, Gardo, and Rat -- three penniless boys with no families, no education, and no place to call home – spend their days rummaging through garbage dumps in a third world country. When they stumble upon a bag that contains something both important and mysterious, they decide to keep it, despite the hefty reward being offered. But hanging onto the bag and its contents opens up scary consequences and threats of death that they hadn't ever dreamed of, and the three boys must band together – while keeping their wits and making decent judgments to the best of their abilities – to solve the mystery of the bag, outrun the police and other pursuers, and stay one step ahead of danger.

****As Easy As Falling Off the Face of the Earth*** by Lynne Rae Perkins

TEEN PER*

Stepping off the train to make a phone call to his grandfather on the way to camp, sixteen-year-old Ry soon finds himself left behind when the train begins to move again and he can't catch up. He's stranded in the middle of nowhere with very little to his name: \$83, a cell phone and a pocketknife. Not only is Ry alone and far from home, it also happens that Ry's grandfather is missing and his parents' sailing trip has become one problem after another. And since his phone isn't completely reliable, Ry must rely on dumb luck and the kindness of others to help him find his way back home. A comic strip, "Dogs," also accompanies the story.

Ninth Ward by Jewell Parker Rhodes

J RHO / JP RHO

Since her mother died during childbirth and her uptown relatives want nothing to do with her, Lanesha has never met a single member of her actual family, but that doesn't keep this twelve-year-old from New Orleans' Ninth Ward from being upbeat and optimistic about herself and her life. She has Mama Ya Ya as her caretaker, an eighty-two-year-old former midwife who actually delivered Lanesha, and the girl has learned lots about life and fortitude from this incredible woman. Despite being financially poor, Mama Ya Ya and Lanesha possess unlimited resources of love and strength during times of need. Mama Ya Ya has a special sense of premonition and believes in the significance of colors and numbers, and Lanesha also has this special gift, for she can see ghosts. When Hurricane Katrina approaches, Mama Ya Ya and Lanesha are forced to ride out the storm in their rickety old home despite mandatory evacuation procedures for the city. Throughout this ordeal, Lanesha discovers incredible strength and inner peace, forming relationships with two very special friends in the process.

Shooting Kabul by N. H. Senzai

J SEN / JP SEN

In 2001, the Taliban is closing in on Fadi's hometown in Afghanistan, and his parents have decided to flee with him and his younger sister Mariam in order to find refuge in the United States. But when the truck that's rescuing them accidentally leaves Mariam behind, the family is forced to go on without her. Fadi and his parents arrive in San Francisco, California, and Fadi learns to adjust to his new life there, all the while missing his younger sister and hoping to one day return and save her – but the events of September 11, 2001, lessen the chances of her safe retrieval. Fadi refuses to give up hope

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and enters a photography contest, of which the winning prize is a trip to India. He sees this as his one and only chance to bring Mariam home – but will Fadi succeed in his dream of securing safety for his sister and reuniting his family?

Smile by Raina Telgemeier

J GN TEL / TEEN GN TEL*

Following a Girl Scout meeting, sixth-grader Raina trips and falls, knocking out her two front teeth. Throughout junior high and high school, she endures many years of surgeries, braces, and embarrassing headgear to repair her teeth, and she's become very self-conscious about smiling and showing her teeth. Not only does she have to deal with the issues involved with these, she also has to navigate the world of school, classmates, friendships relationships, and the 1989 Oakland earthquake. As she grows older and reaches high school, she finds her place in the world, her true friends, and reason enough to break out of her shell and finally realize that it's okay to once again smile.

Countdown by Deborah Wiles

J WIL / AUDIO CD J F WIL

The year is 1962, and the threat of nuclear disaster looms large. There's also a feud broiling between twelve-year-old Franny Chapman and her best friend Margie; Franny's own sister is keeping secrets and disappearing; her WWI veteran uncle is fighting memories in his head; and her relationship with her younger brother is growing tense. With all of these events going on around her, and the whole country living in fear while waiting for a bomb to drop, Franny just wants a break. Using photographs, newspaper articles, lyrics, ads, and other media, this book resembles a scrapbook of the time period in which Franny lives – a time when “duck and cover” air-raid drills and “how to build a bomb shelter” pamphlets were common. Can Franny figure out how to manage the stress, continue to love those with whom she struggles, and successfully navigate her way through such difficult times?

One Crazy Summer by Rita Williams-Garcia

J WIL / JP WIL / AUDIO CD J F WIL

During the summer of 1968, eleven-year-old Delphine and her two younger sisters, Vonetta and Fern, are sent by their father from Brooklyn, New York, to Oakland, California, to visit the mother they barely know. While they may hope for fun and maybe even a trip to Disneyland, their mother Cecile has other plans in mind. Cecile views her children and their visit as little other than a burden, intruding on her personal life and space, and so she has little to do with Delphine and her sisters. She keeps them out of certain areas in her home, fails to explain to them the strange beret-wearing visitors that stop by, and then ships them off to a summer camp run by the controversial Black Panthers.



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