

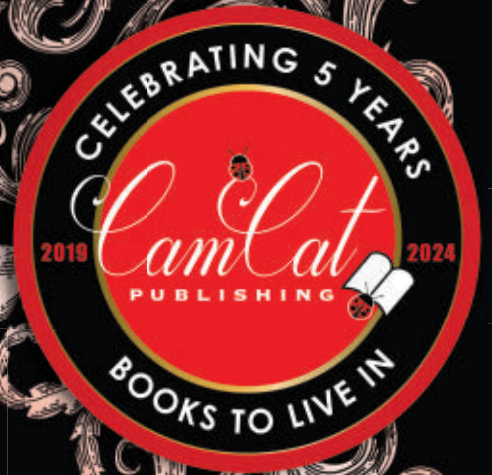
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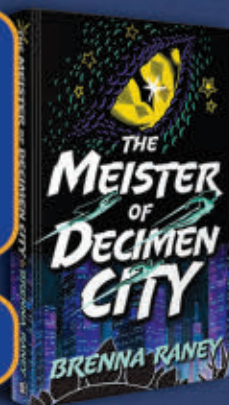
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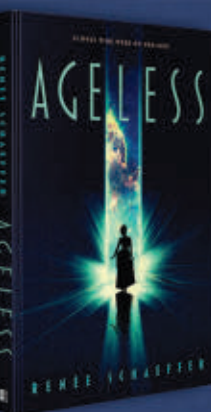
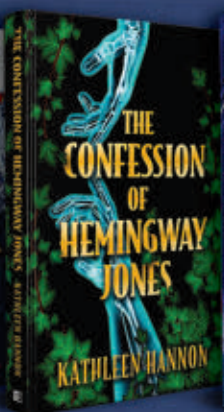
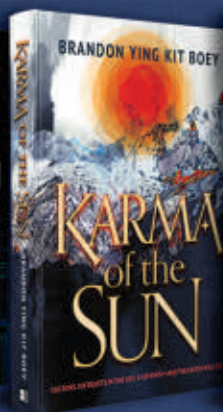


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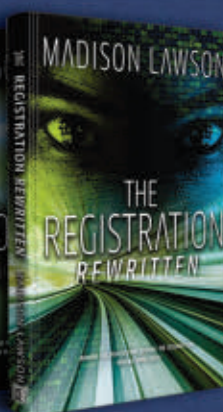
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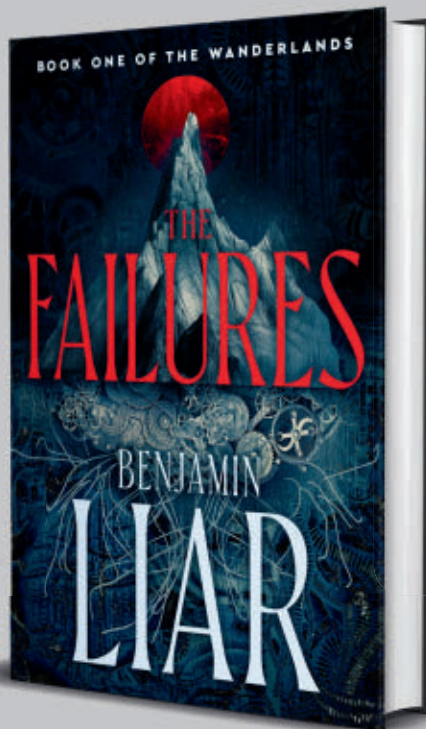
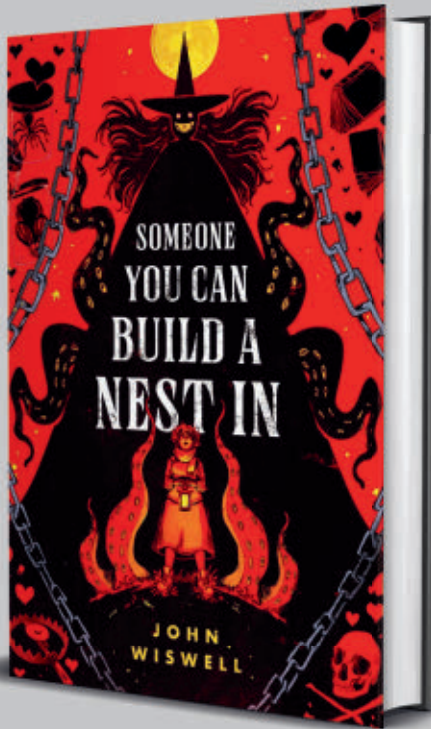


Ernesto Londoño

The *New York Times* reporter goes deep on medicinal psychedelics in *Trippy*, his perceptive and thought-provoking debut. See our review on p. 45.

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SHE WHO KNOWS: FIRESPITTER

NNEDI OKORAFOR
AUGUST 20, 2024

Part science fiction, part fantasy, and entirely infused with West African culture and spirituality, this novella offers an intimate glimpse into the life of a teenager whose coming of age will herald a new age for her world.



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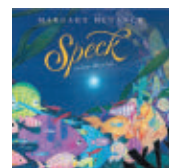
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The Week *in* Publishing

KIM TAPPED TO LEAD LITTLE, BROWN

In a major announcement, Sally Kim, currently senior v-p and publisher of Putnam, will join Hachette Book Group as president and publisher of Little, Brown and Company, effective March 4. Kim will succeed Bruce Nichols, who departs on March 1 after serving as senior v-p and publisher of Little, Brown since 2020.

The move marks David Shelley's first big appointment since taking over as Hachette Book Group CEO at the start of 2024, following the announcement of "a new English-language management structure" last year. Kim will also join HBG's executive board and will report directly to Shelley.

Kim joined Putnam, an imprint of Penguin Random House, in 2015, as editorial director. There, she acquired and edited such novels as Megan Abbott's *The Turnout*, Robert Jones Jr.'s *The Prophets*, and Kiley Reid's *Such a Fun Age* and *Come and Get It*. Prior to joining Putnam, she served as editorial director of Simon & Schuster's Touchstone imprint and held senior editorial roles at HarperCollins, the Crown Publishing Group, and St. Martin's Press. Over the course of her 30-year career, she has acquired and edited debuts by Jami Attenberg, Gillian Flynn, Ann Leary, Courtney Maum, and Lisa Unger, among others. In 2022, she received *Poets & Writers'* Editor's Award.

"Joining Little, Brown to help evolve its enviable legacy of finding and nurturing new voices at this, one of the most vibrant times in our industry and culture, is an incredible opportunity and truly an honor," Kim said in a statement. —SMS



Sally Kim

Delacorte Hearts Romance

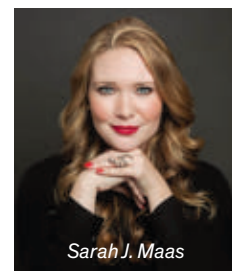
Delacorte Press has announced the launch of Delacorte Romance, a new imprint dedicated to highlighting love stories for teens. The imprint will be led by Wendy Loggia, v-p and senior executive editor of Delacorte Press.



The inaugural list publishes this summer and will feature five titles, with 12 more slated for release annually beginning in 2025. —IJ

Maas Boosts Bloomsbury

Just days after *House of Flame and Shadow* by Sarah J. Maas debuted in the #1 spot on *PW's* overall bestseller list, her publisher, Bloomsbury, raised its sales and earnings expectations for the fiscal year ending February 29. The U.K.-based publisher said it now expects revenue to be £291.4 million, and profits to reach £37.2 million, up sharply from sales of £264.1 million and profits of £31.1 million in 2023. In the U.S., two other Maas titles, *A Court of Thorns and Roses* and *A Court of Mist and Fury*, are also on *PW's* bestseller list. To date, Bloomsbury has published 15 Maas titles and has signed the author for six more. The company—which generated 48% of its revenue in the U.S. last year—is scheduled to release preliminary results for fiscal 2024 in May. —JM



Sarah J. Maas



Fans gathered at Barnes & Noble's New York City flagship store at Union Square for a midnight release of *House of Flame and Shadow*—and some were even moved to tears.



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The Week in Publishing

Court Trims Author AI Lawsuits

A federal judge in California has dismissed four of six claims made by authors in a now consolidated lawsuit alleging that OpenAI infringes their copyrights. But the court also gave the authors until March 13 to amend their complaint, and the suit's core claim of direct infringement—which OpenAI did not seek to dismiss—remains active. The suits, which were filed last summer by authors including Michael Chabon, Sarah Silverman, and Paul Tremblay, accuse OpenAI of using unauthorized copies of their books to train the company's AI models. —AA



Michael Chabon

BIG MOVE FOR BALZER + BRAY



Alessandra Balzer



Donna Bray

Renowned children's publishers Alessandra Balzer and Donna Bray will bring their Balzer + Bray imprint to the Macmillan Children's Publishing Group. Launched in 2009 at HarperCollins, Balzer + Bray has produced numerous critical and commercial successes. Books published by the two at HarperCollins will remain there and be reassigned to other imprints in the HarperCollins Children's Books division.

Bray is the editor of *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas and Balzer's editing credits include *Dumplin'* by Julie Murphy, both bestsellers. The move to Macmillan is effective April 15. As senior v-ps and copublishers, they will oversee a list of picture books, middle grade, YA fiction, and graphic novels. The imprint's move to Macmillan is one of a number of changes at HCCB in recent months. —EK

KKR: S&S Is a "Gem"

When a private equity firm acquires a company, it's only a matter of time before it looks to sell. But in an interview on Bloomberg Television, Pete Stavros, co-head of global equity for KKR, said that the firm is in "no hurry" to sell Simon & Schuster, which it bought in October 2023. Stavros gave a ballpark estimate of five to seven years before it looks for a new home for the publisher, and didn't rule out taking it public. Under Paramount Global, S&S was an "unloved gem," Stavros said—and KKR intends to invest in S&S for growth, unlike its predecessor. —JM



S&S CEO Jonathan Karp (l.) and KKR's Pete Stavros on Bloomberg TV

New Eligibility Rules for NBAs



The National Book Foundation has expanded eligibility for the National Book Awards for Fiction, Nonfiction, Poetry, and Young People's Literature to include authors who do not hold U.S. citizenship. Under the new rules, authors who maintain their "primary, long-term home" in the "U.S., U.S. territories, or Tribal lands" are now eligible. Submissions for the 75th National Book Awards will open on March 13. —SMS

AUTHOR SPOTLIGHT ON

DR. BARBARA M. PANTHER-GIBBY

UNCLE TED

A GI's Journal of World War II



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E-book: 979-8-88963-128-6 | \$2.99

With an entire professional career dedicated to her vocation to serve, Dr. Barbara M. Panther-Gibby graduated as a nurse and worked for eleven years before getting seriously injured. She then studied to be a counselor and worked for the Worker's Compensation of Oregon for a decade. She got a doctor's degree in psychology and has had a private practice since 1995. Dr. Panther-Gibby has received five Marquis awards and has worked with several non-profit organizations. She has written extensively about her work in Uganda. She has helped bring clean water to eight Ugandan schools. Her work there is detailed in *Ending Wars on Uganda's Children*.

A dedicated writer, Dr. Panther-Gibby also wrote *Uncle Ted: A GI's Journal of World War II*, which documents the life of her Uncle Ted from the beginning of his tour of duty in 1941 until the end of World War II.

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News

A Frenetic Winter Institute 2024

Booksellers built their brands and honed their narratives at the conference, while many attendees urged ABA to take a stand on important issues

Booksellers don't just sell books: they're storytellers, too. And at the American Booksellers Association Winter Institute 2024, which ran February 11–14 in Cincinnati, Ohio, stories percolated throughout the conference's keynotes, debriefings, and panel sessions. In all, some 300 publisher reps and upward of 100 authors and speakers engaged with a record 951 bookseller attendees, more than half of them first-timers.

Among the stories shared, entrepreneur James Rhee (*Red Helicopter*) connected his family history to his journey as an investor, negotiation expert William Ury (*Possible*) recalled de-escalating tensions among world leaders, and journalist Michele Norris (*Our Hidden Conversations*) explained the concept behind The Race Card Project, which prompts participants to tell personal stories about race in six words. WI2024's closing keynote speaker,



Talia White, of Rozzie Bound Co-op in Roslindale, Mass., lines up with other booksellers for the Tuesday evening reception at WI2024, featuring 78 authors signing books.

presidential historian Doris Kearns Goodwin, spoke with booksellers about her deeply personal new book, *An Unfinished Love Story: A Personal History of the 1960s*, due from Simon & Schuster in April.

The importance of narrative was also reflected among this year's esteemed guests. Fanfare accompanied Paul Yamazaki, the

PHOTO © CLAIRE KIRCH

HOLDING HIS HAND IS A HEARTWARMING MEMOIR ON BLENDED FAMILIES, AUTISM, AND LOVE AFTER LOSS

In an achingly beautiful memoir, authors Jeff and Nancy Cole relate the joy, heartbreak, and hope of a Hallmark-esque true love story. In *Holding His Hand*, Nancy's life begins to change when her daughter asks one simple question:

"Mommy, when do I get my stepdad?"

Still recovering from the end of her first marriage, Nancy is unprepared for what is to come. But then she meets Jeff, a widower cautiously exploring dating for the first time since his wife's passing. Sparks fly.



Holding His Hand



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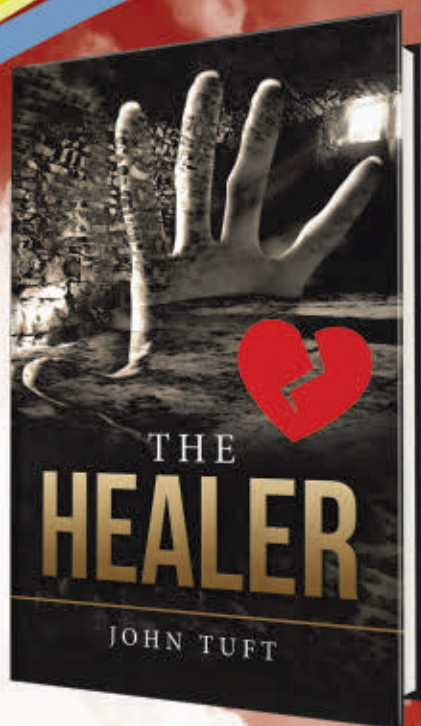
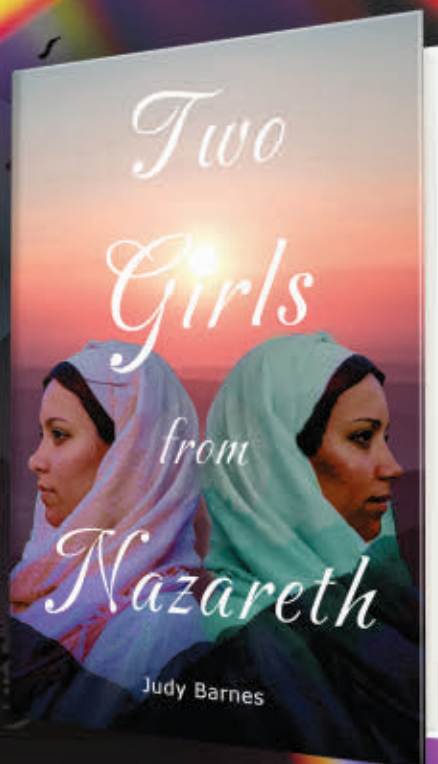
Judy Barnes



Discovering later in life that she possesses great imagination and talent for writing, Judy Barnes began to write. The first book in her trilogy, *Two Girls from Nazareth* focuses on women named Mary who were hoping to be the mother of the Chosen One, but only one was selected. Mostly fictional, Judy Barnes gives personality to Mary—the Messiah's mother.

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John Tuft



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The setting of Gideon's story in *The Healer* features the towns, rivers, and landscapes of Western Pennsylvania, where John Tuft—the author—grew up.


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News

longtime head buyer at San Francisco's City Lights Bookstore and author of *Reading the Room*. Other bookselling legends shared recollections at the "Bookstore Resilience" session, featuring Shirikiana Gerima (Sankofa Video and Books, Washington, D.C.), Janet Jones (Source Booksellers, Detroit), Kris Kleindienst (Left Bank Books, St. Louis), Brein Lopez (Children's Book World, Los Angeles), and Rick Simonson (Elliott Bay Book Co., Seattle). Matt Banker of Banker Creative (St. Paul, Minn.) led a StoryBrand workshop, and the nascent Bookseller Oral History Project set up recording devices to collect people's career highlights.

Of course, any memorable story involves conflict. In a session on banned books and censorship, and at the "Beyond the Binary" panel (where Palestinian American author Maysoon Zayid shouted, "Stop the genocide, ceasefire now!"), several booksellers raised concerns that the ABA did not devote any discussion time to Palestine or the impact of Israel's ongoing war with Hamas.

On February 14, about 70 attendees held an ad hoc meeting to talk about the violence in Gaza and the responsibility of literary organizations and booksellers to speak out. "Who are we, if we're not political booksellers?" one participant asked. Another said, "I'm disappointed that it's taken people on the margins to speak up for a ceasefire—ABA should be more vocal."

At the Community Forum that followed, speakers lined up at the mic to be heard. "A ceasefire resolution by a national organization like this will carry weight," one argued, citing "the advocacy infrastructure ABA has built up." Some connected inaction on Israel and Palestine to what they feel is a lack of recognition of historically marginalized booksellers' concerns, despite stated good intentions. They read poems by Noor Hindi and the late Refaat Alareer, and exhorted the audience to stand if they were "against genocide" in Palestine, Sudan, and Congo. One member spoke up as "a Jewish person for Palestine," noting, "Please understand there are a lot of us, and [the war] is not in our name."

ABA CEO Allison Hill, seated with the board, acknowledged the seriousness of the moment, noting, "That was a lot for this community to just hear." Board member Danny Caine, co-owner of The Raven Book Store in Lawrence, Kans., emphasized, "We have realized how urgent this is to people in this room. I'm sorry it didn't happen sooner, but we are here, and we are learning."

On the subject of DEI representation, one person of color stated, "I've seen tiny incremental change, but it isn't enough." A Black bookseller added that though ABA has diverse members in the ranks, the focus remains on "white people, white bookstores, the 'traditional'—heavy quotes on *traditional*—bookstore model."

From the stage, the board offered measured responses, mindful of governance amid the frank conversation. Board member Jenny Cohen of Waucoma Bookstore in Hood River, Ore., acknowledged, "There's just so much work to do." But the intense interaction might have, as an audience member said, "pushed the needle."

"I'm taking all this in," Hill told booksellers as the meeting concluded. "I appreciate so much that you spoke up. Thank you."

Winter Institute 2025 will convene in Denver, February 23–26. —Claire Kirch and Nathalie op de Beek

Call for Information

Feature: LGBTQ Publishing in Focus

Issue: Apr. 15

Deadline: Feb. 23

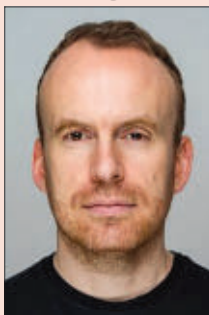
We'd like to hear about forthcoming adult and children's books with strong LGBTQ themes. Please be sure your pitch indicates why the book and author are appropriate for this feature. Pub dates: mid-April through mid-October. The submission deadline is February 23. Visit publishersweekly.com/lgbtqspring24 to submit your titles.

DEALS

By Andrew Albanese

DEAL OF THE WEEK

■ Viking and Haig Do the ‘Impossible’



Haig

Matt Haig, author of the 2020 blockbuster bestseller *The Midnight Library*, has sold U.S. rights to *The Life Impossible* to Patrick Nolan at Viking. Haig was represented by Clare Conville of C+W Agency. Viking said the novel, “a story of hope and the life-changing power of a new beginning,” follows a retired math teacher who inherits a long-lost friend’s

rundown house on a Mediterranean island and comes to terms with her own life as she “searches for answers” about her friend’s death. The book will be published in September.

■ Smarsh Signs Two with Scribner



Smarsh

Scribner editorial director Kathryn Belden has acquired North American rights to two books from acclaimed journalist and National Book Award finalist Sarah Smarsh. Scribner said the first book in the deal, *Bone of the Bone: Essays on America by a Daughter of the Working Class*, set for fall, is a collection of mostly previously published essays with a new essay and an introduction. The second

book in the deal is an as-yet untitled work of narrative nonfiction that will, according to the publisher, “uncover the industrial and cultural forces decimating North America’s tallgrass prairie and the little-known movement to save it.” That book is set to be published in 2026. Smarsh was represented by Julie Barer of the Book Group.

■ Subramaniam Goes to HarperVia



Subramaniam

HarperVia’s Gabriella Page-Fort has acquired world rights (excluding the Indian subcontinent) to Arundhati Subramaniam’s *Women Who Wear Only Themselves*. The deal was negotiated by Priya Doraswamy of Lotus Lane Literary, who described the book as “sensitive, insightful, and spare,” and written “to address the gender imbalance in spiritual teachings.” In it, Subramaniam

interviews four “female spiritual travelers” about their journeys. The book will be published in March 2025.

■ Pinborough Takes Gothic Thriller to Flatiron



Pinborough

In an exclusive submission, Sarah Pinborough (*Behind Her Eyes*) has sold North American rights to *We Live Here Now* to Christine Koppasch at Flatiron Books. The deal was brokered by Gráinne Fox at UTA on behalf of Veronique Baxter at DHA. Fox described the novel as a “gothic thriller” that follows Emily and her husband Freddie’s move from London to a “beautiful, remote country estate,” where Emily soon learns that “the house has secrets, and so does her husband.” *We Live Here Now* will be published in summer 2025.

■ Donlea Sells Four to Kensington



Donlea

Kensington editor-in-chief John Scognamiglio has signed a four-book, world rights deal with *Those Empty Eyes* author Charlie Donlea. Marlene Stringer at the Stringer Literary Agency brokered the agreement. The first novel will be *The Anonymous Client*, which follows a psychologist who is thrust into a murder investigation “and a dangerous game of cat-and-mouse” when an anonymous client confesses to the crime. *The Anonymous Client* will be published in August 2025. No details were announced for the other books in the deal.

■ Acho, Tishby Take ‘Conversation’ to Simon



Acho (l.) and Tishby

Doris Cooper at Simon Element has acquired U.S., Canadian, and open market rights to *Uncomfortable Conversations with a Jew* by bestselling authors Emmanuel Acho (*Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man*) and Noa Tishby (*Israel: A Simple Guide to the Most Misunderstood Country on Earth*). Meredith Miller at UTA brokered the deal on behalf of Acho, and Becky Sweren at Aevitas represented Tishby. The publisher described the book as a “timely, disarmingly honest, and thought-provoking investigation into antisemitism.” Publication is slated for April.

BY CAROLYN JURIS

MASTER CLASS

Freida McFadden tops our trade paperback list with *The Teacher*, a twisty tale of inappropriate student-educator relations. It's the third-best-selling book in the country, received a starred *PW* review, and joins two other frontlist McFadden novels: *The Housemaid's Secret* and *Never Lie* are respectively #7 and #8 on our trade paper list. Poisoned Pen began releasing new McFadden works, such as *The Teacher*, and previously self-published titles, including *Never Lie*, in 2023. The author's popular Housemaid series, currently with *Grand Central* and *Mobius*, moves to Poisoned Pen with the June release of *The Housemaid is Watching*.



RECENT FIRST-WEEK PRINT UNIT SALES FOR FREIDA MCFADDEN

Bridal Path

After a string of STEM rom-coms beginning with 2021's *The Love Hypothesis*, followed by an advance into YA with *Check & Mate*, Ali Hazelwood makes another shift with *Bride*, a "funny and thoughtful urban fantasy romance," per our review. "It's a new subgenre for Hazelwood, and she navigates it well, slowly teasing out the sweet and spicy supernatural romance." It's #3 on our hardcover fiction list (#5 in the country) and #5 on our trade paper list. Together, the two formats sold nearly 51K print copies, marking Hazelwood's best debut week to date.



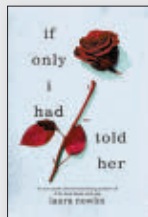
NEW & NOTABLE

THE WOMEN



Kristin Hannah
#1 Hardcover Fiction,
#1 overall
"Hannah's emotionally charged page-turner centers on a young nurse whose life is changed by the Vietnam War," according to our review. "Fans of women's historicals will enjoy this magnetic wartime story."

IF ONLY I HAD TOLD HER



Laura Nowlin
#1 Children's Fiction,
#2 overall
This is a companion novel to Nowlin's 2013 debut, the YA romance *If He Had Been with Me*, which went from modest backlist seller to BookTok phenomenon a decade after its release. The 2019 trade paper edition has sold more than 883K print copies.

Charmed, I'm Sure

Kazu Kibuishi launched his middle grade graphic novel series, *Amulet*, in 2008, and it's since sold more than two million print copies. The series, which follows the adventures of a girl tasked with saving a magical world, concludes with the ninth volume, *Waverider*. The trade paper edition is the #6 book in the country; the hardcover is #24 on our children's fiction list.



TOP 10 OVERALL

RANK	TITLE	AUTHOR	IMPRINT	UNITS
1	<i>The Women</i>	Kristin Hannah	St. Martin's	121,030
2	<i>If Only I Had Told Her</i>	Laura Nowlin	Sourcebooks Fire	86,492
3	<i>The Teacher</i>	Freida McFadden	Poisoned Pen	44,368
4	<i>House of Flame and Shadow</i>	Sarah J. Maas	Bloomsbury	35,547
5	<i>Bride</i>	Ali Hazelwood	Berkley	34,101
6	<i>Waverider</i> (Amulet #9)	Kazu Kibuishi	Graphix	33,235
7	<i>A Court of Thorns and Roses</i>	Sarah J. Maas	Bloomsbury	33,198
8	<i>Little Blue Truck's Valentine</i>	Schertle/McElmurry	Clarion	32,944
9	<i>Taylor Swift</i>	Loggia/Chavarrri	Golden	31,268
10	<i>Chainsaw Man, Vol. 14</i>	Tatsuki Fujimoto	Viz	27,493



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ALL PRINT UNIT SALES PER CIRCANA BOOKSCAN EXCEPT WHERE NOTED

Children's Frontlist Fiction

RANK	TITLE	AUTHOR	IMPRINT	ISBN	UNITS
1	If Only I Had Told Her	Laura Nowlin	Sourcebooks Fire	9781728276229	86,492
2	Waverider (Amulet #9) (paper)	Kazu Kibuishi	Graphix	9780545828659	33,235
3	Winter Turning (Wings of Fire Graphic Novel #7)	Sutherland/Holmes	Graphix	9781338730920	12,812
4	No Brainer (Diary of a Wimpy Kid #18)	Jeff Kinney	Amulet	9781419766947	12,707
5	Influencers (Cat Kid Comic Club #5)	Dav Pilkey	Graphix	9781338896398	10,807
6	Claudia and the Bad Joke (The Baby-Sitters Club Graphic Novel #15)	Martin/Nopra	Graphix	9781338835502	10,150
7	Divine Rivals	Rebecca Ross	Wednesday	9781250857439	8,784
8	Heroes: A Novel of Pearl Harbor	Alan Gratz	Scholastic Press	9781338736076	8,604
9	Ruthless Vows	Rebecca Ross	Wednesday	9781250857453	8,130
10	Powerless	Lauren Roberts	Simon & Schuster	9781665954884	7,595
11	The Chalice of the Gods (Percy Jackson and the Olympians #6)	Rick Riordan	Disney Hyperion	9781368098175	7,516
12	All This Twisted Glory (This Woven Kingdom #3)	Tahereh Mafi	HarperCollins	9780062972507	7,299
13	Five Nights at Freddy's (Fazbear Frights Graphic Novel Collection #4)	Scott Cawthon	Graphix	9781339005300	6,014
14	Mission Manhattan (City Spies #5)	James Ponti	Aladdin	9781665932479	6,014
15	Heartstopper #5	Alice Oseman	Graphix	9781338807486	5,750
16	The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes	Suzanne Collins	Scholastic Press	9781339016573	5,723
17	Bloodmarked (Legendborn #2)	Tracy Deonn	Simon & Schuster	9781534441644	5,230
18	Twenty Thousand Fleas Under the Sea (Dog Man #11)	Dav Pilkey	Graphix	9781338801910	5,007
19	A Thousand Boy Kisses	Tillie Cole	Bloom	9781728297088	4,911
20	Murtagh: The World of Eragon	Christopher Paolini	Knopf	9780593650868	3,904
21	Check & Mate	Ali Hazelwood	Putnam	9780593619919	3,640
22	The Do-Over	Lynn Painter	Simon & Schuster	9781534478879	3,594
23	Stacey's Mistake (The Baby-Sitters Club Graphic Novel #14)	Martin/Crenshaw	Graphix	9781338616132	3,584
24	Waverider (Amulet #9)	Kazu Kibuishi	Graphix	9780545850032	3,483
25	Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone	Rowling/MinaLima	Scholastic	9781338878929	3,214

Children's Picture Books

RANK	TITLE	AUTHOR	IMPRINT	ISBN	UNITS
1	Little Blue Truck's Valentine	Schertle/McElmurry	Clarion	9780358272441	32,944
2	Taylor Swift	Loggia/Chavarri	Golden	9780593566718	31,268
3	You're My Little Cuddle Bug	Edwards/Marshall	Silver Dolphin	9781684122585	22,682
4	I Love You Like No Otter	Rossner/Hanson	Sourcebooks Wonderland	9781728213743	21,993
5	Llama Llama I Love You	Anna Dewdney	Viking	9780451469816	19,228
6	Love from the Very Hungry Caterpillar	Eric Carle	World of Eric Carle	9780448489322	16,424
7	Love from Bluey	Suzy Brumm	Penguin Young Readers	9780593658444	12,459
8	I Love You to the Moon and Back	Hepworth/Warnes	Tiger Tales	9781589255517	12,143
9	Love from the Crayons	Daywalt/Jeffers	Penguin Workshop	9781524792688	11,702
10	Pop-Up Peekaboo! I Love You	-	DK	9781465465269	11,422
11	Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?	Martin/Carle	Holt	9780805047905	11,140
12	Happy Valentine's Day, Mouse!	Numeroff/Bond	HarperFestival	9780061804328	11,137
13	Dr. Seuss's Lovey Things	Dr. Seuss	Random House	9781984851888	11,094
14	The Invisible String	Karst/Lew-Vriethoff	Little, Brown	9780316486231	10,780
15	Green Eggs and Ham	Dr. Seuss	Random House	9780394800165	10,574
16	The Very Hungry Caterpillar	Eric Carle	Philomel	9780399226908	10,264
17	Bananas for You!	-	Abrams Appleseed	9781419751073	9,518
18	There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Rose!	Colandro/Lee	Scholastic	9780545352239	9,264
19	One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish	Dr. Seuss	Random House	9780394800134	9,208
20	In My Heart	Witek/Roussey	Abrams Appleseed	9781419713101	9,108
21	You're My Little Baby	Eric Carle	Little Simon	9781534474932	8,877
22	I Love You, Little Pookie	Sandra Boynton	Boynton Bookworks	9781534437234	8,849
23	Chicka Chicka Boom Boom	Martin/Archambault/Ehlert	Little Simon	9781442450707	8,489
24	Cupig: The Valentine's Day Pig	Tattersfield/Sayegh	Flamingo	9780593623107	8,414
25	Construction Site: You're Just Right	Rinker/Ford	Chronicle	9781797204307	8,306

Where to Put the Sticker

After the Caldecott Medal is bestowed, the creative team behind the winner often scrambles to find the perfect cover spot for the shining golden seal

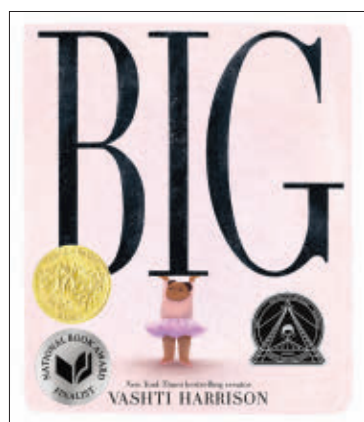
By Nathalie op de Beeck

On January 22, the 2024 Youth Media Awards were announced, anointing the top titles of the previous year. Prize-winning publishers and author-illustrators weren't resting on their laurels that day. Behind the scenes, creative teams were managing a dreamed-of design challenge: where to put the award stickers on book covers.

Two inches in diameter in all its golden glory, the Caldecott Medal seal signifies "the artist of the most distinguished American picture book for children," according to the ALA. Yet the fancy embossed, metallic label—a sticker applied by hand, not inked on—takes up real estate on a picture book cover and often obscures

part of the artist's work. We asked creative teams to share how they negotiate the precise location of the seal.

"I mean, who's complaining?" asks Rotem Moscovich, editorial director of Knopf Books for Young Readers, who edited author-illustrator Doug Salati's 2023 Caldecott Medal-winning *Hot Dog*. The seal



affects the original composition, Moscovich says, "but we're so happy to have this beacon" on the jacket, attracting library patrons and bookstore browsers.

She notes that publishers purchase stickers from the ALA, then affix them one by one. "A person does that—the labor cost is practically the same as the actual sticker cost." Every book jacket is adorned with glory by someone at a printer or distributor.

Knopf BYR art director Rachael Cole adds that "the jackets are put on by hand as well," noting that people just don't think about the individual handler behind each copy.

"Having the physical stickers on the cover is always eye-catching and helps find more readers," says Aram Kim, art director at Macmillan Children's Book Group. "Many people will be surprised to hear that the publishers purchase the stickers from ALA for the books that won awards. But it's worth the cost."

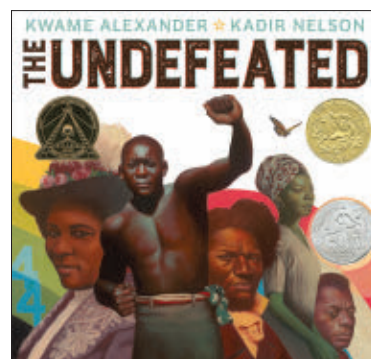
A good problem

In 2020, illustrator Kadir Nelson won the Caldecott Medal and Coretta Scott King Illustrator Award for *The Undeclared*, written by Kwame Alexander and published by Versify. *The Undeclared* also received a Newbery Honor, necessitating placement of not one, not two, but three stickers.

"When I composed the cover, I didn't have any thoughts about the book winning any awards," Nelson says. After the announcement, then-HMH art director Whitney Leader-Picone sent Nelson an image with suggested medal placements.

"She was very pleased that the Newbery Honor medal fit perfectly over one of the circular graphic elements in the existing artwork, which was inspired by the artwork of Harlem Renaissance artist Aaron Douglas," Nelson says. "The Caldecott and King medals also fell beautifully into place in a way that didn't crowd the artwork."

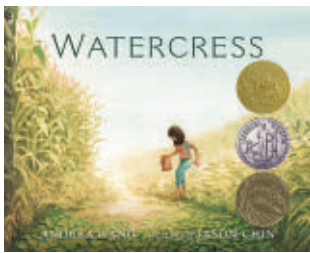
Margaret Raymo, now executive editor at Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, worked with Nelson and Alexander on *The*



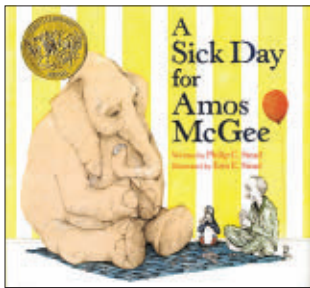
Undeclared when she was senior executive editor at HMH. "Those books that win more than one award are a bit more of a challenge, especially when you have gorgeous art by Kadir Nelson," Raymo says. She then pointed to the airy negative space on the cover of a newly consecrated

Little, Brown title by Vashti Harrison: "Luckily," she says, "*Big* has lots of room."

Little, Brown v-p and creative director Dave Caplan calls Harrison's *Big* cover award placements "a wonderful puzzle to solve." Not only did they need to affix the Caldecott but they had several competing stickers. "We tried every combination we could think of, even trying to place one of the medals inside the negative space of the G in the title. In the end we felt the best option was to group all the medals towards the bottom of the cover, even if it meant part of the title would need to be obscured. We presented three options to Vashti, and she chose the one she felt was the most visually balanced."



Dana Fritts, senior art director at HarperCollins Children's Books, concurs. "It's trickier if there are multiple medals to fit on a cover," she says. "But that is also a good problem to have!"



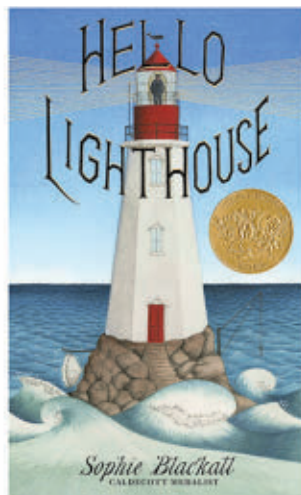
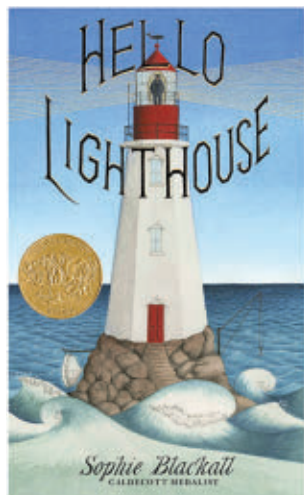
Watercress, written by Andrea Wang and illustrated by Jason Chin, faced a similar conundrum. In addition to Chin's 2022 Caldecott, *Watercress* received a Newbery Honor and the Asian/Pacific American Award. Neal Porter, publisher of Neal Porter Books at Holiday House and *Watercress*'s editor, found it "fortuitous that there's

a fair amount of space on either side of the figure in the middle of the *Watercress* jacket," he says.

The perfect spot

A Caldecott seal is kind of like a tattoo on a book cover: once its location is decided, it's permanent. That makes publishing perfectionists uneasy, Porter explains, because sometimes "there's no place to put a sticker that doesn't obscure a significant piece of art." While he was editorial director of his own imprint at Roaring Brook Press, Porter edited Erin and Philip Stead's 2011 Caldecott-winning title, *A Sick Day for Amos McGee*.

"I wouldn't say it's a busy cover, but there's a lot of imagery," Porter recalls. "When you look at the book now, it seems inevitable" that the seal is in the upper-left corner, just touching the elephant's head. "But I remember having a tough time figuring out where the seal could go."



The two versions of the stickered jacket. The version on the right was the clear winner.

Perfect solutions come along once in a while. In 2019, Little, Brown creative director Caplan saw two options for the seal's placement on Sophie Blackall's *Hello Lighthouse*. Blackall liked the one "above the horizon, like a sun," Little, Brown editor-at-large Susan Rich recalls, and that's where it went.

At Little, Brown, Javaka Steptoe's 2017 Caldecott- and King Illustrator award-winning *Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat* and Dan Santat's 2015 Caldecott-winning *The Adventures of Beekle: The Unimaginary Friend* provoked sticker-placement debate, as well. "Both covers feature full-bleed art without obvious spaces [for stickers]," Caplan says. "We knew art would need to be covered up." On *Radiant Child*'s jacket, designers wanted to "avoid overlapping with the portrait of Basquiat." On *Beekle*, the seal hides the legs of a seated person so that it doesn't clash with the posed woman and dog, "who are integral to adding that special bit of humor."

Hot Dog faced another dilemma at Knopf when author-illustrator Salati won both the Caldecott and Ezra Jack Keats Award. The Caldecott is announced in January; the Keats needs to stay under wraps until March. Moscovich and Cole huddled with Salati until they'd found a place for the Caldecott seal, high enough on the cover to include the red and silver Keats sticker. "If we hadn't known about the EJK, we might have made a different call," Moscovich says. "But all future reprints would have both, so we had this intermediary."

Avoiding predictions

Considering how sticky award placement can become, why not design book covers with potential award seals in mind?

"Never!" says Susan Rich, editor-at-large at Little, Brown Books for Young Readers. "If you think, even for one second, that a book might win an award, that would be the best way to ensure it does not."

Rich might as well have been speaking for everyone. "We publishers are very superstitious, and we don't talk about potential award winners," Porter at Holiday House says. "That is just a happy thought lurking in the background."

Knopf's Cole expresses horror at the idea of leaving a special spot aside. "I just can't go there in my head," she says. "Every once in a while when designing a cover, I'll be like, 'Oh, that would be a good place for something.' And then I'm spitting three times."

Little, Brown's Caplan referenced award-season magic too. "No one has a crystal ball," he says. "Only after a book has won an award, and by some miracle happens to have the perfect spot on the cover to hold a seal, we will of course take credit for having planned that well in advance!"

Everyone agrees that creative teams have to focus on creating the strongest cover designs possible, avoid making predictions, and scramble if award fortune smiles upon them. "It's a very happy thing when a book rockets to Caldecott fame, but it's an onslaught of extra work," Cole says. "It's kind of a wild ride when it happens." ■



WARRING FICTIONS

Forthcoming sci-fi, fantasy, and horror novels examine the consequences of armed conflict

BY VERA KEAN

Speculative fiction is rife with depictions of combat—inventive takes on historical wars, clashes on battlefields suffused with magic, and military strikes executed by futuristic AI. What makes science fiction, fantasy, and horror such fertile ground for contemplating war?

For one, genre fiction offers an opportunity to “literalize things that are otherwise invisible or impossible to reckon with,” says fantasy novelist Katherine Arden. She and other authors *PW* spoke with confront visceral realities through flights of imagination.

History lessons

When Arden, whose *Winternight* trilogy is set in a magical medieval Russia, was considering her next project, she came



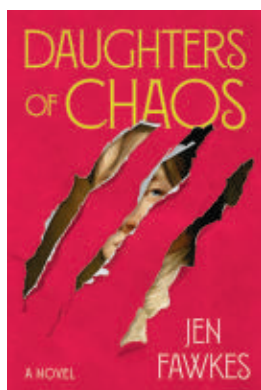
across a WWI-era photograph of “a German cavalry officer on horseback, holding a lance and wearing a gas mask.” It sparked the idea for *The Warm Hands of Ghosts* (Del Rey, Feb.), which *PW*’s starred review called “a breathtaking historical fantasy [that] blends a meticulously researched WWI epic, an eloquent family saga, and a touch of the supernatural.” The story follows honorably discharged Canadian field nurse Laura Iven,

who returns to Europe to search for her brother Freddie, missing in action in Belgium.

As Arden conducted research for the book, she says, it seemed to her that “the 20th century ushered in these earthly hellscape.” She wondered, “If humans make the hellscape, what does the devil do?”

Lucy Holland’s *Song of the Huntress* (Redhook, Mar.) draws on earlier European history—the eighth-century CE reign of warrior queen Æthelburg of Wessex—and the Northern European legend of the Wild Hunt. Holland, who lives near the part of England where the book is set, is fascinated by the time and place that inspired her story. “It was a war-torn landscape,” she says. “Obviously, the formation of Britain was very bloody.” (For *PW*’s q&a with Holland, see “For Queen and Country,” p. 24.)

Daughters of Chaos (Overlook, July) is set during the American Civil War, but author Jen Fawkes says its central conflict is “the struggle to be a woman in the world.” In the novel, Sylvie Smith comes to



Nashville to search for a missing sibling. She begins to spy for the Union Army and is also drawn into a sisterhood of women with secret, potent powers—the Cult of Chaos, whose members have been militating against men’s violence since ancient times.

Fawkes says she had an epiphany while rereading the ancient Greek comedy *Lysistrata*, in which women end the Peloponnesian War by withholding sex until the men agree to make peace. She realized there are so many untold stories of “women and the way warfare has impacted them,”

she says. “In the book, the women are their own army. They become a force standing in for all women who are struggling for personhood.”

Rules of engagement

Other books use historical events as a launchpad to second-world settings. Nebula Award winner Premee Mohamed says



she’d grown interested in WWII-era German pacifists and wanted to “remove some of the baggage of real-world history” while also writing about the wartime lives of civilians. In *The Siege of Burning Grass* (Solaris, Mar.), which *PW*’s review called a “haunting and insightful examination of the human capacity for violence and mercy,” the Varkal and Med’ariz empires are locked in perpetual battle. Varkal pacifist

leader Alefret, tortured by his own government, is offered a chance at freedom, one that could end the fighting but would also mean moral compromise.

For the fantasy *House of Open Wounds* (Head of Zeus, Mar.), Adrian Tchaikovsky looked to the European revolutions of 1848, which he calls “the greatest historical upheaval that never was” because the uprisings were “brutally put down” by imperial power. The book, second in

the Hugo



OPENING ART AND MAN WITH ROBOTIC HAND ©GRANDFAILURE/DEPOSITPHOTOS.COM



Award winner's Tyrant Philosophers series, focuses on a group of healers in an occupying army's field hospital. *PW*'s starred review, which likened the story to "*M*A*S*H* written by an uncharacteristically somber Terry Pratchett," said this depiction of "the corroding conflict between medicine and war" is "not to be missed."

Samantha Mills, who has won numerous awards for her short fiction, makes her full-length debut

with *The Wings upon Her Back* (Tachyon, Apr.), a "cathartic adventure," according to *PW*'s starred review. In the aftermath of a civil war, the city of Radezhda is split into five sects, each worshipping a different sleeping god. Winged Zemolai, banished from the mecha sect after an act of mercy toward a spy, is rescued by a rival faction and must choose between betraying her people or begging the forgiveness of her former leader.

In Radezhda, Mills says, to rebel is to demand the right to "be heretical, to question the gods and the government." Zemolai's struggle to distance herself from her increasingly authoritarian sect dramatizes a behavior pattern called the irrational escalation of commitment, she explains. "It's similar to the sunk cost fallacy, where a person or group gets increasingly negative consequences from their actions but instead of pulling back, they double down. It appears irrational, but it's consistent. It's the only way to justify prior things you've done."



Once and future conflict

The Korean War, which led to the separation of North and South Korea, is technically still ongoing, and the fear and dread of living in a war zone suffuse the atmosphere of Yeji Y. Ham's

debut, *The Invisible Hotel* (Zando, Mar.). Ham, who was born in South Korea and moved to Canada at age 11, says, "I have vivid memories of, for example, having to draw posters for my elementary school—*report the reds, report North Koreans*. Being so young, I didn't know what those meant, but looking back, the war had always lived with us and it still lives with us."

In *The Invisible Hotel*, that presence is literal: protagonist Yewon



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for the future of
humanity continues...

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Publishers Weekly on *The Rowan*

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[Q&A]

PW TALKS WITH SOFIA SAMATAR

DEI in Space

A boy born in the oppressive hold of a spaceship wins a rare scholarship in Samatar's *The Practice, the Horizon, and the Chain* (Tordotcom, Apr.; reviewed on this page).

What inspired this story?

A ship—in the book it's a spaceship, with a lower section called “the hold” where you have a group of people who are referred to as “the chained”—is a really powerful image in a U.S. context. It's going to evoke the transatlantic slave trade. So that history was certainly an important part of what went into the book. And along with the historical, there's a very contemporary inspiration: the book *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study* by Fred Moten and Stephano Harney, which is about the university. It was really the combination of those ideas and those images—of large spaces with lots of people in them, the organization of space, the organization of people, and parallels that repeat across time—that's what generated the story.

**The historical parallels are fascinating.**

The relationship between this story and history is like the relationship between Star Wars and the Vietnam War. There are references and you can catch them, but it's also a space romp. And that was very deliberate on my part, because it's dealing with something very, very heavy, which is the persistence of harmful structures through time, despite all of people's efforts to overturn those structures. I really wanted to write a little book that somebody could carry in their backpack at university, and they're a tired professor, or a worn-out grad

student, or somebody who's in a precarious work position—a contingent faculty, adjunct professor, all of those people who are struggling in that space—who could just whip this out of their backpack and see wild things happening, unexpectedly, impossibly, out of this difficult situation.

The main characters—the boy, the woman, and the prophet—all go unnamed. What inspired this choice?

There's a naming pattern in the world of the ship. It's very hierarchical: there's a group that has an iron chain, there's a group that has an electronic anklet, and at the top, there are people who don't have any kind of anklet or chain. And only that top group is named. The middle and lower groups don't have names—and that's pretty much all the main characters.

How did your experience as a university professor influence your portrayal of academia?

Anybody who has done any kind of diversity work in higher education—DEI, DEJA, it has all different kinds of names—but people who have been in this work will recognize a lot of things in this book, and hopefully get a kick out of it. It's kind of an ironic take on it, but it's also real: it does express some of the constraints and contradictions of doing this kind of work—but, you know, in outer space.

—ELOISE LINDBLOM

and their young daughter have vanished. Unsettled by the strange quiet, he slowly realizes that he is the only person left in his city, and maybe the world. There's no internet, no TV broadcasts, and within a day or two, no pets or wild creatures either; just the narrator, alone, coming to understand how delicate the balance of his whole world is, and how close to the edge of destroying it forever he has come without even noticing. Smith's choice to tell this parable through tight first-person narration highlights the fundamental self-absorption of his protagonist, a man who is so inside his own head it almost doesn't matter that there is a whole world outside of it. From a deceptively simple personal growth arc, Smith unspools a haunting narrative that will have readers rushing to call their loved ones. *Agent: Jonny Geller, Curtis Brown UK.* (Apr.)

★ **The Practice, the Horizon, and the Chain**

Sofia Samatar. Tordotcom, \$18.99 trade paper (112p) ISBN 978-1-250-88180-9

From PEN Award winner Samatar (*The White Mosque*) comes a brutal, haunting, yet ultimately uplifting novella examining capitalism and labor exploitation through the lens of science fiction. “The boy,” 17 and one half of a duo of nameless protagonists, was born and raised in the hold of a mining ship, a place of chain gangs and forced labor. Through a scholarship program, he's rescued to the world above by “the woman,” who implemented the program, and whose father, too, was raised in the hold. What at first appears to be a relatively familiar academic setting—the woman is a professor, the boy a tentative new student under her tutelage—slowly unravels, revealing the deep horrors underlying the reality these characters inhabit. Samatar unfurls worldbuilding details with masterful subtlety, making each shocking reveal all the more potent. Through what amounts to a meditative far-future allegory, Samatar highlights the power of collective action in the face of oppression. This packs a punch. (Apr.)

★ **The Heart of Winter**

Shona Kinsella. Flame Tree, \$16.95 trade paper (240p) ISBN 978-1-78758-830-1

Despite a fiercely independent heroine

HEALTH, HOME, GARDENING

Half Moon Waking: Rising, Falling, and Walking Through Marriage, Motherhood, and Miscarriage

Liv Hunziker

180p, trade paper, \$15.99, ISBN 979-8-218-29618-6

"Motherhood," Hunziker writes, "Tougher than any marathon." In this lyrically penned collection of poetry, essays, and short fictions, Hunziker highlights the joys and challenges of motherhood and marriage, plus the grief of miscarriage, and "scratching the surface" of the truth about life, faith, and love. Featuring different forms of poetry such as haikus, tankas, haibuns, and villanelles, *Half Moon Waking* is a candid exploration into the battle of being "caught between thriving and crashing" when it comes to the exhaustive yet rewarding "calling" of being a parent.

Shining with insight and playful language, pieces such as "Calling Mommy" ("three-dimensional sound wrapping/ around a sweet spot/ the word naively singing a miniature siren sword") dig deep into life's richest experiences. Hunziker also offers vivid detail in pieces exploring the challenges of breastfeeding and considering the calming tranquility of nature ("Trees teach. Trees produce. Trees help build things. Yet



Wise and engaging chapbook on parenthood, faith, and love.

Great for fans of Rudy Francisco's *I'll Fly Away*, Morgan Harper Nichols's *All Along You Were Blooming*.

tivating a relationship with God, children, and ourselves.

Half Moon Waking explores life lessons with vulnerability and empathy as Hunziker, writing with approachable eloquence, ruminates on experiences both treasured and painful, including some, like the exhaustion of the first weeks of motherhood, that are too complex—"too ripe and absurd,/ too stark real"—to fully capture in language. The result is a surprising collection, straightforward and personal despite its host of formal approaches, digging deeply into what the author has learned as she has grown, often in the face of self-doubt, into maturity and the wisdom that "the most beautiful treasures in life are those that involve pain, time, and great effort."

Cover: **A** | Design & typography: **A** | Illustrations: – Editing: **A** | Marketing copy: **A**

HEALTH, HOME, GARDENING

Cooperative Co-Parenting for Secure Kids: The Attachment Theory Guide to Raising Kids in Two Homes

Aurisha Smolarski | New Harbinger Publications

198p, mass market, \$18.95, ISBN 978-1-648-48184-0

Making the case that "a good divorce is better than a bad marriage" and that, for children, growing up "with the support and care of both parents" matters more than living arrangements, this supportive parenting resource explores co-parenting, attachment styles, and family dynamics with clarity, empathy, and a wealth of fresh, practical advice. Author Smolarski also gets personal: after the emotional wake-up call of her young daughter expressing her concern and emotions when adjusting to her parents' recent separation, Smolarski knew she had to put her own feelings of loss, grief, and hurt to the side and focus on providing a secure and stable parenting relationship with her ex for their daughter's sake. *Cooperative Co-Parenting for Secure Kids* lays out a path for "collaboratively communicating and coordinating routines and scheduling and other concerns, in the interest of "providing a secure environment for your child."

In clear, inviting prose, Smolarski breaks down how different attach-



Heartening, original guide for co-parents creating stability for children.

Great for fans of Mashonda Tifre's *Blend*, Christina McGhee's *Parenting Apart*.

ment styles—ambivalent, avoidant, and secure—affect the way individuals parent, love, and handle their emotions, and how understanding these can shape a healthy co-parenting partnership committed to a child or children's needs. "Co-parents create certainty in the midst of change by committing to show up and be present for your child," Smolarski writes. Personal anecdotes, hard-won experience, and illuminating research demonstrate this, while the author provides tips, advice, and original tools like the six Cs of cooperative co-parenting (commitment, collaboration, clarity, and more) to help readers strengthen relationships and provide stability, safety, and clarity.

Smolarski also answers potential questions that may arise on the co-parenting journey at the end of each chapter. Touching smartly on the evolution of family foundations, Smolarski's book is a valuable resource that faces all the sadness, fear, shame, and anger that "can manifest" when household and family dynamics change and offers support and ways to move forward, such as making a clean romantic break and cooperating to become the "supporting base" for children.

Cover: **A** | Design & typography: **A** | Illustrations: – Editing: **A** | Marketing copy: **A**

SELF-HELP, RELATIONSHIPS, PSYCHOLOGY

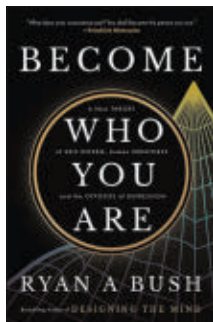
Become Who You Are: A New Theory of Self-Esteem, Human Greatness, and the Opposite of Depression

Ryan A. Bush | Designing the Mind

270p, hardcover, \$22, ISBN 978-1-737-84624-6

What actually makes us happy? According to Bush (author of *Designing the Mind*), the answers form a relatively short list. Be honest with yourself and others, work hard, and help your neighbor. Start now as even relatively small steps can pay large dividends, and the road to fulfillment is paved with good deeds and other virtues. Offering nothing less than a "grand, unified theory of human well-being," *Become Who You Are* presents a synthesis of the thinking of Nietzsche (the source of the title), the Stoics, spiritual wisdom, psychotherapy, virtue ethics, and more, as Bush lays out a route to achieving "eudaimonia," an ancient Greek term for "the good life."

Bush's guidance and the book's soul-searching process is crafted not only to make readers ourselves better individuals, coming into "who they are," but also to become happier and more fulfilled along the way. Bush cuts a wide swath blending "philosophical arguments, scientific



The road to "the good life," through philosophy, virtue, and ethics.

Great for fans of Massimo Pigliucci et al.'s *How to Live a Good Life*, Gregory Lopez's *A Handbook for Stoics*.

data, and therapeutic advice" with thumbnail explications of philosophical history and movements, all while digging into questions like why we feel there's a reason to do the right thing even in the absence of consequences, and whether one person's gain is necessarily another's loss. Bush notes that, in a society that seemingly values material success above all else, it's tempting to think of one's self before others. But after the new car has lost its luster, and the trip around the world is over, what's next?

Bush urges readers toward greater self-esteem by arguing that regularly doing the "right thing," i.e., following a simple moral compass, is what can determine who we truly are. Although he occasionally falls short in his philosophical arguments, Bush deserves an "A" for effort. To his credit Bush neither talks "down" to the reader nor gets too grandiose in philosophical jargon. His direct, simple style, buttressed by examples from his own personal journey, which serve as life lessons, make the book highly readable and engaging.

Cover: **A** | Design & typography: **A** | Illustrations: – Editing: **A** | Marketing copy: **A**

SELF-HELP, RELATIONSHIPS, PSYCHOLOGY

I See You: A Guide for Women to Make More, Have More, and Be More—Without More Work

Amy Kemp | Page Two Books, Inc.
252p, trade paper, \$21.95, ISBN 978-1-774-58442-2

Kemp offers up actionable advice for women in the workforce to work less while increasing productivity in this motivating debut. Through personal and client anecdotes, drawing from over 20 years as a strategic coach and business owner, Kemp shares ways to welcome diverse perspectives, “see your own genius,” and learn that “you can’t outwork your thought habits.” She explores the habits that drive mindset, encouraging self-care along the way, and offers readers functional advice—including exercises and journaling prompts—to empower women to increase their income while decreasing their working hours.

The writing is inviting and personable, reminiscent of an exclusive session with a knowledgeable life coach, as Kemp challenges readers to create structured work routines while providing room for leisure time and rest. She delves into societal norms that many women face, such



Empowering guide for women to balance work and play.

Great for fans of Jen Sincero’s *You Are a Badass*, Suzanne Brown’s *The Mompowerment Guide to Work-Life Balance*.

as working outside of the home while simultaneously working unpaid hours in the home, exploring the guilt and exhaustion women can feel when attempting to balance work, home, and a safe space for themselves. “The change must start from within you,” Kemp declares, recommending readers set healthy boundaries, create a daily checklist, and, above all, “[take] care of yourself.”

Kemp’s fresh narrative will inspire readers to reevaluate how they spend their time, as she urges them to “work less and play more”—and that more should include more energy, more income, and more free time, according to Kemp. Self-assessments make the material applicable and clear, as do the hands-on tools scattered throughout (Kemp shares her own “Six Most Important Things List” to up productivity without sacrificing more time, and reflection questions get the ball rolling on restructuring boundaries and priorities). Readers—especially women—will be inspired to embrace their needs, confront the pressures of balancing work and home, and “liv[e] now, not only after all of their work is completed.”

Cover: **A** | Design & typography: **A** | Illustrations:— Editing: **A** | Marketing copy: **A**

MEMOIR

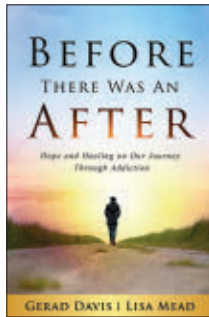
EDITOR'S PICK

Before There Was an After: Hope and Healing on Our Journey Through Addiction

Gerad Davis and Lisa Mead | Mead
220p, e-book, \$14.99, ISBN 979-8-9883988-1-3

In this moving memoir, son and mother Davis and Mead recount their transformative journey and the lessons they learned as Davis faced heroin addiction. After a life-altering motorcycle accident, Davis lost the feeling in his dominant arm along with his dream of attending art school and pursuing a career in photography. In the aftermath, he numbed the pain of discontentment and depression. Told in rotating point-of-views, Davis and Mead each share their perspective on the impact that addiction had on their lives and their loved ones. The duality of their story being told by both voices results in a moving, multi-faceted examination of a mother’s love and young man’s misery eventually giving way to a desire to overcome addiction.

Just as Mead reminded Davis that he was not alone, the authors show readers who may be facing similar troubles that it’s possible “to plant a seed that will sprout at some point and turn into a beautiful life.”



Moving memoir from a mother and son’s journey overcoming addiction.

Great for fans of James Brown’s *Apology to the Young Addict*, Erin Khar’s *Strung Out*.

Through multiple relapses, life-threatening infections, and arrests, Mead never loses faith that one day her son would win the battle. Reflecting on her support, which at times served to enable Davis’s addiction, Mead offers a transparent narrative from a loving mother never willing to give up on her son, even in times when she had to learn to let go. Davis offers urgent insight into the mind and struggles of an addict: “Experiencing addiction creates a series of cracks in your belief system,” he notes. “It blows up what you know to be true and breaks you in places you didn’t know you could be broken.”

These impassioned accounts demonstrate that “addiction is a ‘family disease’” that affects everyone in the life of an addict. Covering detoxes, surgeries, and rehab, both authors illuminate what it takes to find a path to recover—and invaluable lessons about what it takes to support an addict as the authors unflinchingly share a story offering real hope.

Cover: **A-** | Design & typography: **A** | Illustrations:— Editing: **A** | Marketing copy: **A**

PICTURE BOOKS

The Case of the Missing Turtle

Dave Cole | Common Deer Press
120p, trade paper, \$8.99, ISBN 978-1-988-76189-3

Cole (author of *The Math Kids* series) delivers a fun-filled adventure rich with educational elements in the first of his Emily and Sam series. Twins Emily and Sam Hilbert, out on a bike ride one day, discover a fascinating box turtle hidden in the grass—and decide, in classic curious kid fashion, to adopt the turtle as a member of their family. With that goal in mind, they set out to learn everything turtle-related via the local children’s zoo and their favorite zookeeper, Amira: what they eat, their favorite activities, and what kind of habitat they need to survive.

Soon, the twins have a cozy set up for their new turtle, who they’ve aptly named Chomper (after his penchant for wholeheartedly attacking lettuce), and adult readers will appreciate the engineering that goes into their turtle pen: using knowledge from a science fair project, Sam suggests they construct a table chart to determine the best shape for the enclosure, and the pair settle on a square to give Chomper the most space to conduct his turtle hijinks. And hijinks do



Twins and a missing turtle face an entertaining, informative adventure.

Great for fans of Carl Hiaasen’s *Hoot*, Victoria J. Coe’s *Fenway and Hattie* series.

ensue, as the next morning Chomper’s gone missing and the twins suspect their friend, Mateo, who’s “always wanted” a box turtle, of stealing him, setting in motion a botched nighttime rescue mission that ends in disaster.

Chomper eventually makes a reappearance, of course, but the wealth of this tale is in the educational tidbits Cole scatters throughout. Zookeeper Amira briefs the kids on turtle protection facts, readers will learn why garter snakes are important (and that they can climb trees), and Cole rounds out the book with a review of the Common Core math lessons peppered throughout. Mitchell’s black and white illustrations elevate the fun factor, splashing Chomper’s hilarious facial expressions and Mateo’s pet snake shenanigans across the pages—and painting a comic picture of Emily and Sam working together to save their pet.

Cover: **A** | Design & typography: **A** | Illustrations: **A** | Editing: **A** | Marketing copy: **A**

PICTURE BOOKS

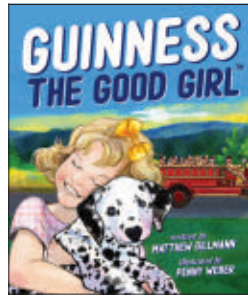
Guinness the Good Girl

Matthew Gillmann | Guinness the Good Girl, LLC

44p, hardcover, \$21.99, ISBN 978-1-961352-03-2

In this heart-warming children's book, Dottie, on the cusp of her eighth birthday, is finally getting "her biggest wish": the puppy she's always wanted. But first she has to make straight As on her report card and save up "50 big ones" to pay for a dog license. Dottie knows right away that she wants a Dalmatian puppy, and at the pet shop, Daphne's Dal House, she makes fast friends with a pup named "Nothin' but Trouble," though she has the good sense to rename the pup Guinness the Good Girl. As the pair bonds, Dottie trains Guinness to become a well-behaved dog that knows a few tricks (such as the biscuit roll), while Guinness teaches Dottie a thing or two as well, like the quickest way to get into a piggy bank and how to shuffle a crowd.

Set in Tune Town, a burg boasting colorful characters like Stan the Muscle Man and the President of Earl & Roth Enterprises, *Guinness the Good Girl* will keep young readers—and especially dog lovers—engaged,



Adorable adventures between a smart young girl and her Dalmatian.

Great for fans of Amanda McCordie's *Our Very Own Dog*, Alexandra Day's *Good Dog, Carl*.

town, proving to be "the good girl" Dottie knew she would from the start.

Penny Weber's illustrations capture the essence of a playful Dalmatian, capturing Guinness and her spots in a host of cute, comical, and exciting poses, each spirited and precise, although some of the human faces are less convincing. With educational facts about Dalmatians, such as their heart shaped noses and how they are born without their spots, young readers will grow to love Guinness and look forward to future books in this projected series.

Cover: **A** | Design & typography: **A** | Illustrations: **A** Editing: **A** | Marketing copy: **A**

MIDDLE GRADE

The Big Aquarium Adventure: Learn About Frogs, Fish, Turtles, Sharks, and Skates!

Nancy Roop | Developmental Texts

96p, hardcover, \$22.99, ISBN 978-1-957-82801-5

With inviting art and an inventive, intuitive layout blending comics, instant messages, and some more traditional text elements, this interactive children's book kicks off Roop's Alex and Jordan Explore series with a splash. Young Stephen shares his story of a family vacation to Baltimore's National Aquarium with his friend, Alex, who decides to use Stephen's story as a chance to brush up on his interviewing skills. Through Stephen's narrative young readers will learn about frogs, turtles, sharks, and skates, while Alex and later Jordan demonstrate practical skills like how to conduct an interview, how to research facts for a report, and the difference between writing fiction and nonfiction, plus vital guidance about handling some complex emotions.

Roop engages young readers through interactive questions, vibrant images of sea and amphibian life, and thought-provoking comparison charts that will get young minds thinking. Each character provides young readers with a new lesson: Stephen delves into ways to quail



Smart chapter book about sea life, researching, handling emotions, and more.

Great for fans of Cass Kim's *Stephanie's Spectacular Aquarium Visit*, Laura Daisy's *The Amazing Adventures of Us*.

fear, how to say no when feeling uncomfortable, and calming anxiety; Alex, the young reporter, highlights ways to interview through insightful questions and securing proper consent when sharing someone else's story; and Jordan explores the skill of research to be sure that the accurate knowledge is being provided. With keywords in each chapter and a glossary in the back matter, young readers will learn new words and all about sea animals through this informative story.

Serious information about the soft skeleton of a shark, the different habitats of sea creatures, and introductions to new and unusual seal life is mostly presented with a spirit of fun, though some text passages documenting facts learned at the aquarium are on occasion dry. Still, *The Big Aquarium Adventure* is a pleasure to look at on the page, alive with sharks, fish, frogs, and more, plus engaging comic panels and pop-in messages from the cast. Each chapter encourages readers to pause and think about the information provided and also asks engaging questions.

Cover: **A** | Design & typography: **A** | Illustrations: **A** Editing: **A** | Marketing copy: **A**

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ENDNOTES*

*OUR WEEKLY ANNOTATED GUIDE TO HOW A BOOK IS MADE



MARCIA SELLS
First-Generation
Ballerina, Dance Theatre
of Harlem

“Once Karen got to know us and we learned about her, it was easy considering her as the person to tell our story. We had very emotional and poignant meetings. The questions she asked sparked memories about meeting each other, meeting Arthur Mitchell, dancing in the company, seeing Dance Theatre of Harlem for the first time.”



NAOMI GIBBS
Executive Editor,
Pantheon

“I fell head over heels for this book. And then meeting with Karen and the Swans—even on Zoom—it was impossible not to champion their story. Everyone at Pantheon saw so much potential in it and was so moved by the history and their efforts to forge and inspire a larger sense of community, mentorship, and support in Black ballet.”



LINDA HUANG
Art Director, Pantheon

“I wanted to evoke the elegance, glamor, and beauty of ballet and looked at vintage ballet posters for inspiration. The gold background was inspired by paintings of the Harlem Renaissance. But the challenge was compositional: how to feature all five dancers on the cover. I found a solution with the type sitting at the bottom, with several dancers perched on the type and a few leaping in the air.”



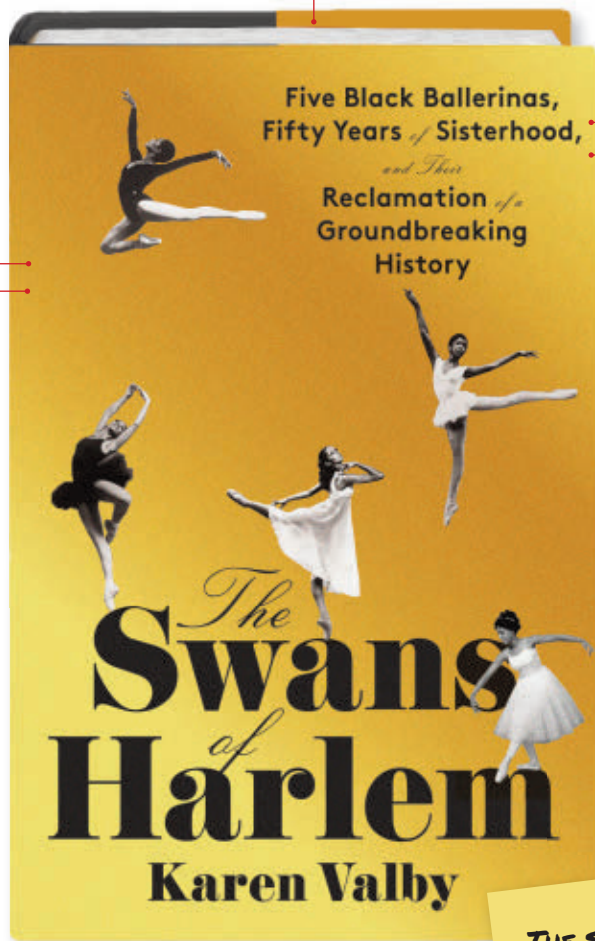
KAREN VALBY
Author

“Fundamentally, I consider this book a gift to my daughters—young Black girls who are dancers themselves. They deserve to know about the Swans, and to feel surrounded by the power of example. Writing in this case felt like an act of mothering.”



BARBARA JONES
Literary Agent, Stuart
Krichevsky Literary
Agency

“Karen Valby reported and wrote this book. It’s her work. But it is the Swans’ content, their story. Karen and the Swans share copyright and proceeds. There was a lively auction for the book and not one publisher questioned this arrangement. I didn’t imagine this arrangement would be unique, but it turns out to be somewhat unusual.”



**THE SWANS OF
HARLEM**

Karen Valby
Pantheon, Apr.

ISBN 978-0-593-31752-5

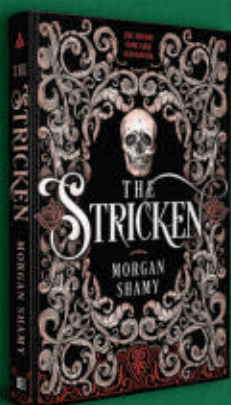
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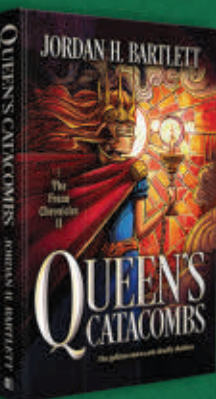
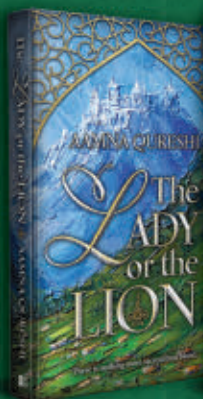
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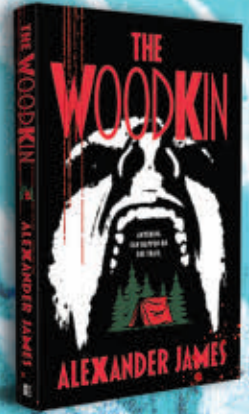
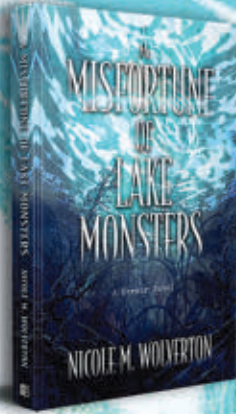
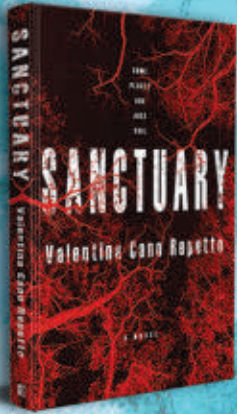
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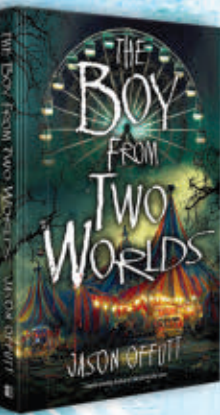
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