



WHERE STRONG VOICES
BECOME BESTSELLERS!



Fresh Fiction from New Voices

Summer 2011



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Fresh Fiction from New Voices



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Fresh Fiction from New Voices



New for Summer 2011!



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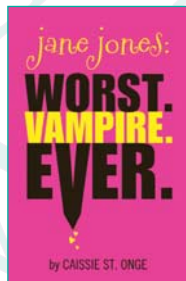
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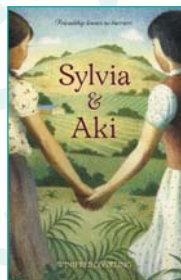
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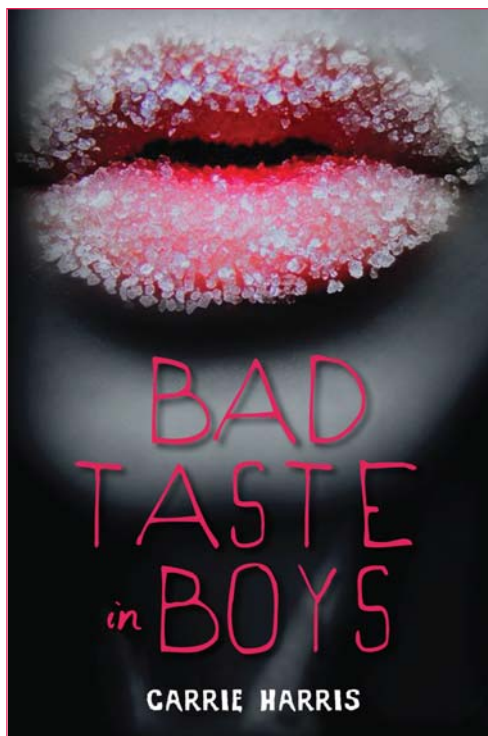
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It's a Second!

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Bad Taste in Boys

by Carrie Harris

Edited by Wendy Loggia

ISBN: 978-0-385-73968-9

\$17.99/\$19.99 Can.

Young Adult Fiction

On sale: 7/12/2011



Delacorte
Press

from the editor



We love celebrating author firsts, and with this book, I also get the chance to celebrate an editor “first,” that is, editing my first zom-rom-com. That’s a zombie romantic comedy for those of you who haven’t yet read Carrie Harris’s delightfully fun, fresh, and, yes, romantic, debut novel. Super-smartie Kate gets to play doctor, helping out her high school football team, until something disturbing happens. Kate finds out that the coach has given the team steroids. Except the vials she finds don’t exactly contain steroids. Whatever’s in them is turning hot gridiron hunks into mindless, flesh-eating zombies. Now seriously. Is that a hoot or what? I’m so proud to have had the very good taste of acquiring Carrie’s manuscript and can’t wait for you to take a bite of each and every word.

—Wendy Loggia

from **BAD TASTE IN BOYS**

Then Kiki walked through the door from the kitchen, and I breathed a sigh of relief. As soon as she saw me, she dropped an entire armful of paper products on the floor and waded through them to hug me.

"Oh, Kate, I'm so glad you're here!" she wailed, brushing hair out of her red, sweaty face—and somehow still managing to look good. "The squad was supposed to be here at three-thirty, and none of them showed. I tried to call, but no one's answering. They all better have darn good reasons for standing me up, or I'll bench them. I'm so . . . so . . . pissed!"

"It's okay." I put a hand on her shoulder. "It's just pancakes, Kiki. We can handle pancakes."

"But this is the big cheer-sponsored homecoming event. How does it look if none of the cheerleaders show up?"

"I don't think anyone will mind so long as there's food to eat. Just point me toward the cook tables and everything will be fine."

The griddle went together easily, because I was one of those people who actually followed instruction manuals. Within ten minutes, I was ready to switch it on. I'd never made pancakes before, but I was better than I'd expected after a few practice runs. It was like following a lab protocol, a process requiring impeccable timing and precise measurements. I devised a system to keep the line moving steadily while maintaining food temperature at acceptable levels. When Kiki brought me the batter, I tried to explain it to her, but her eyes glazed over about three words in. People just didn't appreciate my talent.

A couple of the cheerleaders finally showed up just in time to serve as cashiers, with some lame excuse about car trouble. Kiki read them the riot act; I probably would have grumped at them too if I hadn't been having fun despite myself. We opened at five o'clock and were immediately swamped. I fired off pancakes as

"But this is the big cheer-sponsored homecoming event. How does it look if none of the cheerleaders show up?"

quickly as I did Quiz Bowl answers, but the line kept growing anyway. People couldn't wait to fork over eight bucks for my cooking. I could probably have funded my college education with my mad pancake skills, but this money would be used to buy the cheerleaders new go-go boots. We all had our priorities.

I was so busy that the only time I saw my players was when I was filling their plates. None of them seemed sick, nor did anyone loom over me like Count Chocula on crack. I saw a lot of chalky gray skin tones, but it was mid-October in the Midwest, so I wasn't sure whether to blame their complexions on the mystery disease or our sucky weather. Mike didn't show.

I flipped pancakes at precisely timed intervals, and the line marched on. I took two paces to the left, squirted out six puddles of batter in row one, flipped row three, served row five, squirted out six more puddles, and so on. I had pancake making down to an art form.

Then I heard an improper sizzle.

My technique was so refined that I knew something was wrong. It was too early for row two to be sizzling, too late for row four. I didn't have any sausages cooking right now.

I did, however, have a hand on my griddle. It belonged to a woman with a mom bob, a vacant stare, and an athletic booster pin. She leaned across the griddle to offer me her plate, bracing herself with one hand. Palm down. Next to a bubbling pancake. I figured she must be an amputee, but I didn't smell burning plastic. It smelled kinda like bacon, actually.

Carrie Harris is a geek of all trades and proud of it. Brains are her specialty; she used to work in a lab where they were delivered daily via FedEx. After that, it seemed only natural to write a zombie book. Visit her at www.carrieharrisbooks.com.



Photo © Alexandra Moelling



Blood Magic

by Tessa Gratton

Edited by Suzy Capozzi

ISBN: 978-0-375-86733-0

\$17.99/\$19.99 Can.

Young Adult Fiction

On sale: 4/26/2011



from the editor



I firmly believe that books can take readers to different places and times. But I also believe that a truly terrifying book has the ability to simultaneously transport *and* root you in place, making you keenly aware of every detail of your surroundings—the creaks in the house, the whoosh of the wind, the beating of your heart. And most deliciously, the push-pull you feel when turning each page—afraid of what else might befall the characters but desperate to know what comes next.

In *Blood Magic*, Tessa Gratton delivers all that and then some. Every time I read it, I am completely caught up in the claustrophobic world of nowheresville Missouri. My heart breaks for Silla who will do anything to uncover the truth behind her parents' horrific deaths. And I find my pulse racing as she nearly loses herself to blood magic and falls in love. Get ready for a viscous, visceral ride of a read. And I advise keeping a light on if you want to get any sleep.

—Suzy Capozzi

from **BLOOD MAGIC**

I held the book up in my two hands and let it fall open wherever it willed. When the fan of pages chose their sides, I lowered it and glanced at the spell: *Regeneration*.

To bring life. For careful application when flesh is infected or necrotized. To keep flowers strong.

The diagram was a spiral, beginning with a completed circle, and narrowing to the center like a snake. I only needed salt, blood, and breath. Easy.

With a stick, I drew a circle in the cemetery dirt, and from the plastic bag I'd brought of ingredients readily available in my kitchen, I pulled out a box of kosher salt. The crystals glittered between thin blades of grass as I sprinkled them around the circle. *Place the subject in the center of the circle, Dad had written.*

I chewed on the inside of my bottom lip. I had no cuts or dead flesh. And it was too far into autumn for flowers.

But a small cluster of dead leaves had collected against the base of the headstone across from me, and I got up to pick out a good one. Back in my seat, I gently placed the crinkled maple leaf inside my circle. The edges were black and curled, but I could still see lines of scarlet tracing the veins. Trees around here weren't losing many leaves yet, so this was probably left from last winter. It had soaked up a lot of time in the cemetery.

Now came the difficult part. I dug my pocket-knife out of my jeans and flipped open the blade. Resting the tip against my left thumb, I paused.

My stomach twisted as I contemplated how much it was going to hurt. What if this spell book was a huge joke? Was I crazy to even try? It was all impossible. Magic couldn't be real.

But it was written in Dad's hand, and he had *never* been that kind of mean. And

I chewed on the inside of my bottom lip. I had no cuts or dead flesh. And it was too far into autumn for flowers.

from **BLOOD MAGIC**

continued

he wasn't crazy—no matter what anybody said. Dad had believed in this, or he wouldn't have wasted his time with it. And I believed in Dad. I had to.

Either way, it was just a drop of blood.

I pushed the knife against my skin, puckering it but not breaking through. My whole body shivered. I was about to find out if magic was real. The electric thrill of terror was tangy on my tongue.

I cut deep.

A muffled cry escaped my tightly closed lips as blood welled against my skin, dark as oil. I held out my hand, staring at the thick drop slithering down my thumb. The pain was a dull ache that drew all the way up my arm and settled uncomfortably in my shoulder blade before fading into nothing. My hand trembled, and I wasn't afraid anymore.

Quickly, I let one, two, three drops of blood fall and splatter onto the leaf. They gathered in the bottom of it in a small pool. I leaned over, staring at the blood as if it could stare right back. I thought of Dad, of how much I missed him. I needed this to be real.

"*Ago vita iterum*," I whispered slowly, letting my breath brush the leaf and shake the tiny pool of blood.

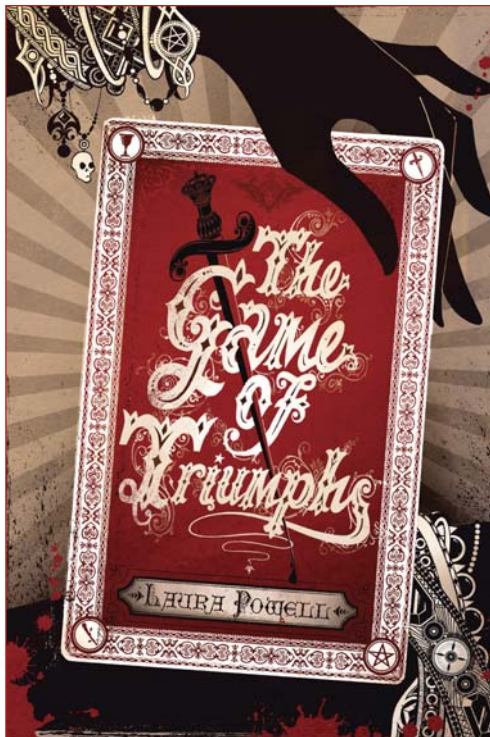
Nothing happened. Wind fluttered my hair again and I cupped my hands around the leaf to shield it. I peered down, thinking that the Latin was bad. Squeezing my wounded thumb, I let more blood gather and drip down. I repeated the phrase.

The leaf shuddered under my breath, and the edges unfurled like growing petals in a slow-motion camera. The scarlet center spread out, reaching for the tips and becoming a luscious, bright green. The leaf lay there in the circle, flat and fresh as if new-plucked.

Tessa Gratton has wanted to be a paleontologist or a wizard since she was seven. Too impatient to hunt dinosaurs, she still hopes to learn magic. She lives in Kansas with her partner, her cats, and her dog.



Photo © Natalie C. Parker



The Game of Triumphs

by Laura Powell

Edited by Nancy Siscoe

ISBN: 978-0-375-86587-9

\$16.99/\$18.99 Can.

Young Adult Fiction

On sale: 8/9/2011



Alfred A. Knopf

from the editor



I am so excited to share *The Game of Triumphs* by Laura Powell. It's part thriller, part fantasy, part action adventure—and all fabulous!

The game at the heart of the novel is one of the most intricate and ingenious creations I've read in a very long time. It's an ancient game of fortune, steeped in the language and lore of tarot, where players are dealt challenges they must complete to win prizes called triumphs.

The prizes are truly amazing—love, power, inspiration. Players can literally change their fortunes. But those challenges . . . those can be life-changing too. As in deadly!

Laura Powell tells the story of four teens drawn into this dangerous game—each with their own secrets, their own desperate reasons to risk all for a chance at a new fate.

Oh! This story is fast-paced, and high-stakes, and *dark*. I dare you to put it down!

—Nancy Siscoe

from *The Game of Triumphs*

Cat stepped forward holding out the crumpled card. “There was a man,” she said, “a man I followed here. I think he’s in some sort of trouble. Do you—have you—” She ground to a halt.

The man sitting nearest to her got up in one graceful movement, came across and took the card. Glancing at it—the blood, the swords, the lowering storm—he gave her a quizzical smile. “Trouble? Yes, I should think he is.” He looked to be in his late twenties, tousle-haired, with a boyishly sophisticated face and sleepy eyes.

Cat tried again. “He asked for help. Some people were after him. I . . . I followed them here.” She found she didn’t want to admit that it was *she* had set them on his trail.

“The player was attempting to cheat. Involving a bystander is an invalid move,” said one of the two women sitting around the table. “Wands should pay the forfeit.” She was in early middle age and darkly glamorous, wearing an evening dress of burgundy velvet. Her companions were a stern-faced black man, his hair just beginning to gray, and a blonde in a white pantsuit and dark glasses. Cat thought she looked stupid, wearing sunglasses in a lamp-lit room.

“I disagree with Lucrezia,” said the black man heavily. “The bystander intervened of her own accord. And since her actions were to the disadvantage of Wands, my player has already paid for his error.”

“Come now, Ahab!” chided the younger man. “It’s clear the intervention would never have occurred if Wands hadn’t broken the rules in the first place.”

The dark-haired woman turned to the blonde. “Odile? What’s your call?”

“There is only one rule of significance here,” she replied, sipping daintily from a cup of pale tea. “And that is, a bystander whose intervention has changed the course of the Game is no longer a bystander. We must issue the usual invitation

The dark-haired woman turned to the blonde. “Odile? What’s your call?”

and await further play.”

“What is this *about*?” Cat took another step toward the table and saw that the cards they were playing with were not from a normal deck. Tarot cards, maybe. So what were they doing—fortune-telling? Or had she stumbled into some creepy occult society? She shivered, and looked to the door.

“Please don’t be alarmed,” said the young man charmingly. “It’s only a game.”

“I don’t understand,” she said. “Who *are* you people?”

“Me? I’m Alastor, King of Swords,” said the young man, cocking his eyebrow at her and laughing. “And these are my companions: Ahab, King of Wands; Odile, Queen of Cups; and Lucrezia, Queen of Pentacles.”

The King of Swords slid a card over to her. It showed a figure dressed in patchwork rags, poised at the brink of a precipice.

“What’s this?” Cat asked.

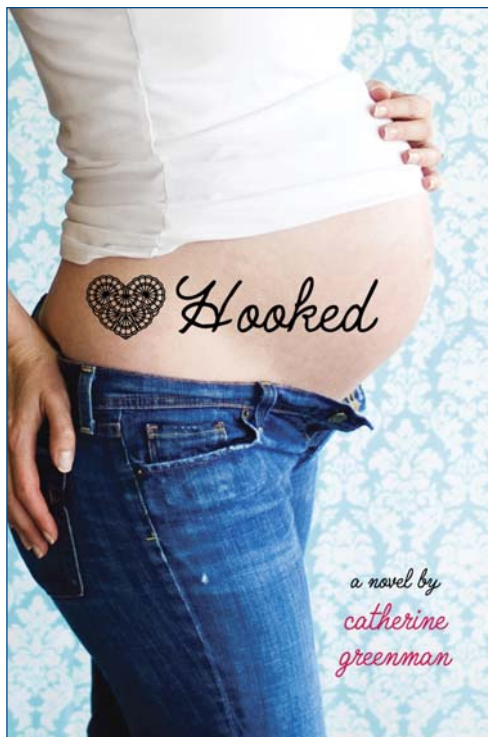
“The Fool,” said the black man impassively. The blonde waited, motionless as a mannequin. In the sudden silence, Cat noticed the other two staring at her intently, eagerly even. It was just so odd. They were odd, all of them.

“I’d best be off,” she said abruptly.

Alastor moved ahead to open the door for her. “I do hope you won’t intervene in play again. Second time round, we’d have to impose a forfeit. And then where would you be?” He winked conspiratorially as she brushed past, her heart jumping, anxious for fresh air, for crowds and noise again.

Laura Powell studied Classics at Oxford and worked in publishing before leaving to become a full-time writer. She currently lives in West London, where she is working on a sequel to *The Game of Triumphs* entitled *The Master of Misrule*.





Hooked

by Catherine Greenman

Edited by Stephanie Elliott

ISBN: 978-0-385-74008-1

\$16.99/\$18.99 Can.

Young Adult Fiction

On sale: 8/9/2011



from the editor



I have to admit, when this novel was pitched to me I wondered what there was left to say about teen pregnancy in this post-*Juno* world, where *16 and Pregnant* seems to be on MTV at all hours just to hammer home the idea that you really don't want to be *16 and Pregnant*. And I think because this is such a classic subject for problem novels and afterschool specials, we all think we know what happens when a teenager gets pregnant: she and the father think they'll stay together, but then the baby's born and it's too hard and they break up, and it ends up ruining the teen mother's life even though she loves the baby and would never give him up, etc., etc., keep it in your pants, kids.

But this novel captured me because, while it doesn't ignore the reality of teen motherhood, it also is not predictable. And a big part of the reason for that is that the characters are fabulous. I don't think I've ever read such amazingly realistic and flawed parents that you want to leap through the pages to alternately hug and strangle them. Catherine Greenman perfectly captures what it feels like to be in love—first with a guy, and then with a baby.

—Stephanie Elliott

from

Hooked

I left the bathroom to find Vanessa. She was in homeroom and I wasn't supposed to go in there. Mr. Scarpinato eyed me like I was going to start an insurrection.

**“It’s an emergency,” I
whispered, and for some
reason he let me pull her
into the corner.**

“It’s an emergency,” I whispered, and for some reason he let me pull her into the corner.

“What?” she asked.

“I’m pregnant.”

“No!” she said, her smile catching me off guard. It made me smile too.

“Yes.”

“Have you told him?”

“Not yet.”

“Okay, well, do that, and we’ll figure out the rest.” She looked out the window, thinking. “We can find out who Jamie’s doctor was.” Jamie was her cousin in New Jersey who’d had an abortion a year earlier. “I’ll call her.”

I ran my finger along the radiator dust, picturing Jamie, her red hair falling off the sides of a doctor’s table, her freckly, pointy knees sticking up in the air. I looked at Vanessa, watching me with her arms folded. “What the hell?” I said, shaking my head at her.

“Don’t worry,” she said, grasping my shoulders. People were staring at us. “We’ll figure it out.”

Mr. Scarpinato cleared his throat, pulled a piece of chalk out of his brown polyester pants and started writing on the blackboard for his next class.

from

Hooked

continued

I went back to the bathroom to call Will.

“So, yeah,” I said.

“No way,” he exhaled. “What do we do?” Any trace of wistfulness in his voice from the night before had vanished.

“We’re finding a doctor.”

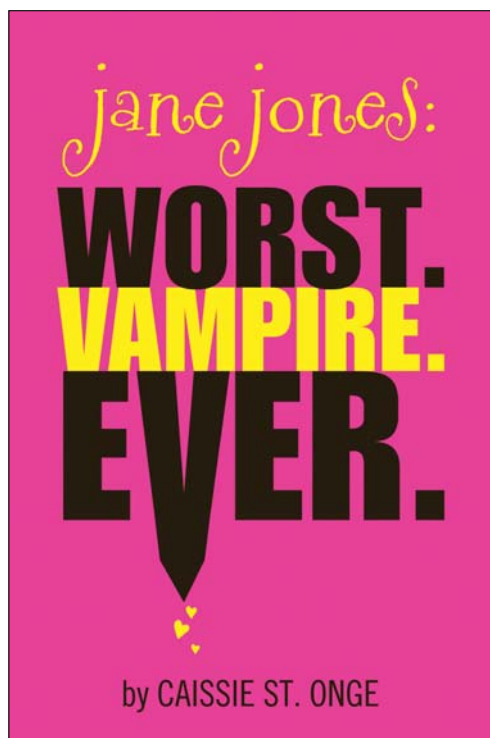
“Well, I’ll go with you.”

“No,” I blurted. “It’s okay. Vanessa’s going to come.” I knew right away I had to keep him out of it. In the back of my head I worried that any shared-downer experience would be dangerous for us, and I couldn’t have that. I hung up, stuck my phone in my jeans pocket and stared at myself in the bathroom mirror, the new me.

Catherine Greenman grew up in New York City and lives there now with her family.



Photo © Richard d' Albert



**Jane Jones:
Worst. Vampire. Ever.**

by Caissie St. Onge
Edited by Shana Corey

ISBN: 978-0-375-86891-7

\$8.99/\$9.99 Can.

Young Adult Fiction

On sale: 5/10/2011

On Sale: 7/14/2009



from **the editor**



I've never considered myself a vampire person, but Caissie St. Onge's *Jane Jones* completely changed that—this book had me at first bite.

For Jane, being a vampire is nothing like you usually read about. She's not beautiful. She's not rich. She doesn't "sparkle." She's just an average, slightly awkward girl from an ordinary suburban family (who happen to be vampires). Jane's from the wrong side of the tracks so she doesn't fit in with the cool vampire kids at school or with the humans kids (who don't know that she's a vampire, they just think she's Irish). Even the Goth kids who are obsessed with vampires and wear capes to school won't sit with her! To top it all off, she's battling an overprotective mom, a clique of mean girls (the kind who really do have fangs), and the most embarrassing allergy in the history of the undead: she's blood intolerant.

This book is so smart, so well written and clever, so original and action packed and page turning and truly, genuinely laugh-out-loud hysterical, that I fell absolutely 100% in love with it. I hope you will too!

—Shana Corey

from *jane jones*:
WORST.VAMPIRE.EVER.

Funny how a moment is enough time for your whole life to pass before your eyes, but not long enough to think of a decent plan for escaping a crappy situation. Knowing there was no way to get out of it, I knelt beside Astrid and said, “Okay, I’ll drink.”

“Good girl,” she cooed, winking as she hefted the pale, bare leg of Ian Holcomb into my lap. There were two small holes in the soft, white pit of his knee, ringed with what looked almost like a lipstick kiss at the bottom of a love letter, but in the shade of his own blood.

The rest of Ian was facedown in the dirt, dozing happily, I presume. He was wasted, but in the traditional human sense. Probably on his dad’s Vodka and his mom’s sugar-free Red Bull. Whatever he’d been drinking, Astrid had made it a point to thank him personally for inviting her to such an awesome rager. Then she made it a point to lean in close to his chest and say, “I’m having an awesome time.” When Ian suggested they get some air, she said, “That would be awesome.” I have to admit, what Astrid lacked in vocabulary, she made up for in cunning. Now she was hosting her own little party by the side of the road, and the bar was fully stocked with Ian’s elevated blood-alcohol level.

**As I bent over poor,
dumb Ian’s popliteal
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gonna make this look
good?**

As I bent over poor, dumb Ian’s popliteal artery, I asked myself two questions. What the hell am I even doing here? And How am I gonna make this look good?

I pushed my glasses up my nose, then shoved my face right up against Ian’s leg. I closed my eyes and did my best to imitate the rapture I was supposed to be feeling as I sank my fangs into the flesh of the JV football captain. Only, I wasn’t sinking

my fangs into anything. I was completely faking it and I might have gotten away with it, too, if I hadn't gone in for that one last convincing slurp. That was when Ian, in his stupor, snorted and jerked the way you do when you dream that you're falling. The sudden motion must have raised his blood pressure for just a second, but one second was all it took for arterial blood spray to hit me full in the face. Horrified, I dropped Ian's leg as my hands flew up, too late to block the gruesome mist. My cheeks were slick. The lenses of my glasses were covered with sticky, warm drops.

"Jane!" Astrid howled. "What an idiot. You should see your face! You look totally hilarious." Oh, I'm sure I did look totally hilarious. We've all seen Carrie, right? Everybody knows that there's nothing more hysterically funny than a teenager suddenly and unexpectedly drenched in blood. Unfortunately, in my case, I didn't have the telekinesis necessary to make a tree fall on Astrid to shut her up. Unfortunately, I was having a difficult time even standing up.

As all the vampire kids circled around to get a better look at me, I realized something very bad had just happened. Whether it had dripped into my mouth as I sat there slack-jawed, or whether it had aerosolized and gone up my nose, somehow, I had ingested at least a tiny amount of blood. While I may have looked bad, I was about to look a whole lot worse. See, like it doesn't suck enough to be a teenager who's a vampire who's a complete dork, I also have this other problem. I'm blood-intolerant.

Caissie St. Onge is an Emmy-nominated comedy writer who's worked for David Letterman, Rosie O'Donnell, and VH1's *Best Week Ever*. Caissie lives in Connecticut with her husband and two sons.

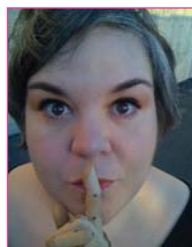
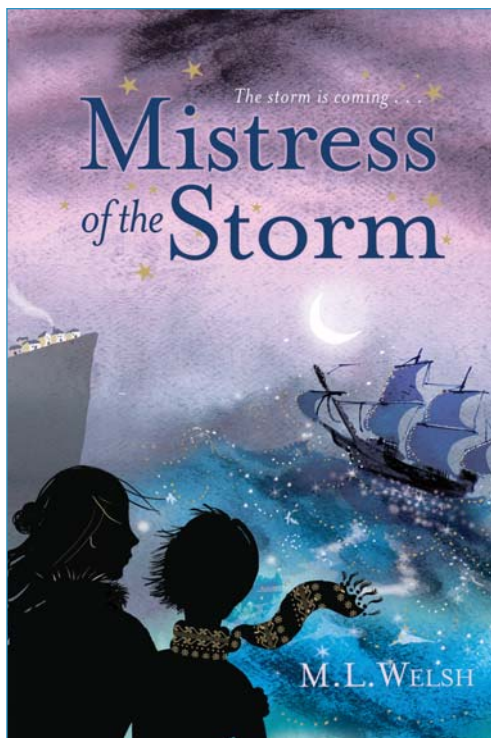


Photo © Eli Debenham



Mistress of the Storm

by M. L. Welsh

Edited by Hannah Featherstone

ISBN: 978-0-385-75244-2

\$16.99/\$18.99 Can.

Middle-Grade Fiction

On sale: 6/14/2011



from the editor



When I first read *Mistress of the Storm*, I was completely swept away by the salt-sprayed, wave-drenched adventure story that Melanie had woven. Filled with magic and mystery, and featuring quite possibly the scariest grandmother you'll ever come across in children's literature, at the heart of this story is a lonely little girl who makes new friends and eventually finds a way to fit in.

Melanie's first book is the result of a New Year's resolution—a final bid to write a novel and find an agent, or stop daydreaming about becoming an author altogether. Luckily for us, Melanie isn't the kind of person who just dreams!

Her debut novel will whisk you away from the real world, and has an irresistible warmth that makes it the perfect book to curl up with. But beware, there's so much delicious-sounding food—toasted crumpets, sticky jam tarts and moist plum cake—that you'll soon be reaching for the biscuit tin.

—Hannah Featherstone

from *Mistress of the Storm*

Wellow library was quiet. Verity expected it to be quiet. She came here all the time and always had the run of it. Which is why it came as a shock to see a giant of a man kneeling on the floor, in tears.

Wellow is famed, of course. But it is remote too—a far-flung outpost of this great land we call Albion. And he was the most exotic man she had ever seen. Verity knew it wasn't polite to stare, but she couldn't help it. His skin was so dark it had a sheen of blue to it. Though hunched on the floor, he was clearly tall—well over six foot—and handsome, with high cheekbones, wide full lips and almond-shaped eyes. His clothes were equally foreign: a long velvet coat made of squares of chocolate brown, burnt orange and bottle green covered a white linen shirt and moleskin trousers. His boots were leather with soft flat soles.

Wellow library sits at the junction of two cliff-top paths. One leads to the harbour. The visitor chose the other, running down the narrow track to Steephill Cove.

Books were scattered on the floor all around him. In his lap lay a large red volume; his head was bowed over it as silent tears ran down his face. His hand clutched a tiny peg doll carved from a dark shiny wood. It was covered with a few scraps of faded material which might once—a long time ago—have been brightly coloured. An air of unutterable sadness hung over him. Verity's presence didn't seem to have registered at all.

It was like finding a panther in your sitting room. Something so vital, so alive, was never meant for the dust-filled air of Wellow library. Verity was filled with an overwhelming urge to comfort the stranger. Without thinking, she took a step towards him . . . And broke the spell. He looked up as if the world had come into focus.

His cheeks were wet and his gaze direct. Slowly he took in everything about her—and more slowly still, the faintest and saddest of smiles appeared. He sprang up from the floor, clutching the book, and ran past Verity to the front door. With one swift push he was gone.

from *Mistress of the Storm*

continued

Verity stared in astonishment at the spot where he had been. Miss Cameron, the librarian, continued with her indexing at the entrance. Verity came to life. Running after the man, she burst through the double doors and chased him down the street. More than anything in the world she wanted to know who he was.

Wellow library sits at the junction of two cliff-top paths. One leads to the harbour. The visitor chose the other, running down the narrow track to Steephill Cove.

‘Wait,’ shouted Verity, sprinting. ‘Please wait.’

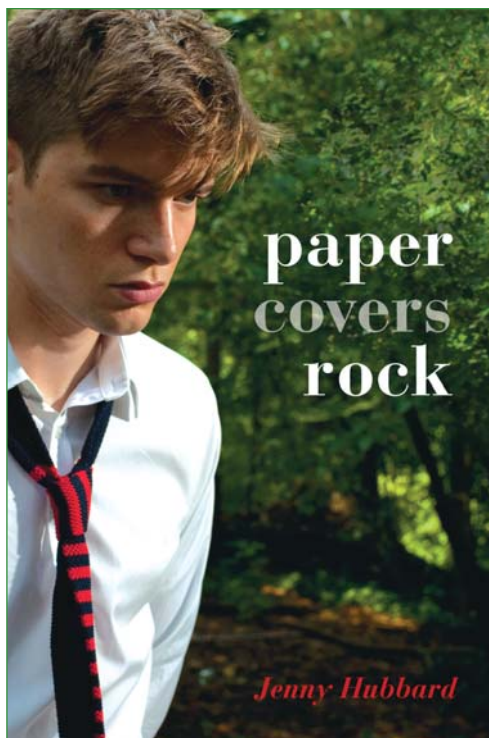
Below them on the shore lay the fishermen’s boats, their nets gathered in the bilges. Verity was going so fast she had to grab the iron railing every few seconds to steady herself. The stranger didn’t slacken his pace in the slightest. He was on the shore now and heading for a small rowing boat beached there. He untied it and started pushing it out towards the sea.

Verity raced down the last few steps and across the sand. She stopped and stood on the beach, salt water gently soaking its way through her shoes, and called out one last time: ‘Please wait.’

Finally he looked up. Lost for words, Verity realized she didn’t have one good reason for chasing this man all the way down the cliff. Not one good reason. Just an overwhelming sense that it was important to do so.

Melanie Welsh grew up in the sailing town of Cowes, on the Isle of Wight, which is the source of inspiration for the fictional town of Wellow in which *Mistress of the Storm* is set. Melanie now lives on the Suffolk coast with her husband and their two sons.





Paper Covers Rock

by Jenny Hubbard

Edited by Michelle Poploff

ISBN: 978-0-385-74055-5

\$16.99/\$18.99 Can.

Young Adult Fiction

On sale: 6/14/2011



Delacorte
Press

from the editor



Bestselling author Pat Conroy calls this “one of the best young adult books I’ve read in years.”

I was immediately drawn in by this manuscript written in journal format by Alex, a boarding school junior, who’s devastated when he fails to save a friend who is drunk when he dives into the river and hits his head on a rock. When questioned, Alex and his friend, Glenn, begin weaving their web of lies. Plagued by guilt, Alex tells his tale in a journal he hides behind *Moby Dick* in the school library.

Caught in the web with the boys is their younger English teacher, Miss Dovecott, who suspects there’s more to what happened when she perceives guilt in Alex’s writing for class. She also sees and encourages Alex’s poetic talent. As Alex responds to her attention, he discovers his true voice, one that opposes the boarding school bravado that Glenn embraces. But Glenn’s convinced Miss Dovecott will nail them and Alex must choose between them,

I think you too will be impressed by Jenny’s ability to capture teenage boys’ voices and the boarding school milieu.

—Michelle Poploff

from **paper covers rock**

Call me Is Male.

When my dad gave me this journal two years ago and said “Fill it with your impressions,” I imagine he had a more idyllic portrait of boarding school life in mind. I imagine he pictured a lot of bright things, sending his only child to an institution whose official motto is Ad Lux. But these pages have remained blank. I have not had much to say until now—when now is everything.

If you are reading this, you have happened upon it by accident. Call me Is Male.

**Welcome to the
sidelines, Dear Reader.**

My apologies to Herman Melville, from whom I may have to steal a few words to tell the story that is about to be told, that is in the middle of being told, that will never stop being told. Such is the nature of guilt; such is the nature of truth. But it is the nature of guilt to sideline the truth.

Welcome to the sidelines, Dear Reader.

If you get bored with my literary efforts, with the plot or characters, if you find that good ol’ Is Male is putting you to sleep, read a real novel, a Great American one. Read Moby-Dick. Read to your heart’s content. Though if you are a reader, the heart is never content.

Newspapers may tell you the plot, but they never tell you the real story. And they never, ever tell you what started the whole thing to begin with. But when the end is death, maybe what comes before doesn’t matter. What happens on September 30 is still going to happen.

So, what happens?

1. The bell rings at exactly 11:45. I have been waiting for this bell. I own a watch just so I can set it to Birch School time, just so I can know exactly when this Saturday bell, the one that dismisses us from six days of classes in a row, will ring. The Birch School, like all boys’ boarding schools, is timeless; time drags on forever here, which makes the bell mean something.

2. I leave the classroom for the dining hall and eat lunch. (Not worth elaborating on—sorry boys'-school food.)

3. I go back to my room to change clothes. (We all wear blazers and ties to class.) My room feels depressing at this time of day, when I am normally in class during the week. The carpet looks like it hasn't been changed in twenty years because it probably hasn't, and in the corner near my closet, some other guy who had this room before left cigarette burns that I have never noticed until this moment. My roommate, Clay, hasn't made his bed (typical), and a half-eaten bag of Doritos sags near his pillow.

4. I start down the hill to the river by myself at approximately 12:30, but my friend Thomas catches up with me. We arrive at the designated meeting spot at approximately 12:50. No sign yet of Glenn and Clay, so Thomas asks me a question: "Do you remember what it is that makes the sky blue?" Because on this day, the sky is bluer than it has ever been.

"I think it has something to do with the spectrum of light and the nitrogen in the atmosphere absorbing all of the other colors except blue," I say.

"It's weird to think about living under a green sky, or a red one."

I agree.

Thomas says, "Blue is the right color for it, that's for sure."

I say, "I always thought it was weird to think about how you're under the same exact sky as some kid in China who has no idea that you exist, and you have no idea that he exists, only that there has got to be at least one kid in China looking at the sky right now."

"Isn't it night over there, though?"

"Yeah, but there still has to be some Chinese kid looking at it."

"Maybe he's counting stars," says Thomas. "Did you used to do that?"

I did.

Jenny Hubbard is a poet and playwright and has taught English in both high school and college for many years.



Photo © Kristi Stanfill



The Revenant

by Sonia Gensler

Edited by Michelle Frey

ISBN: 978-0-375-86701-9

\$16.99/\$18.99 Can.

Young Adult Fiction

On sale: 6/14/2011



from the editor



A haunting ghost story, a chilling murder mystery, and forbidden love converge in this Victorian-era thriller from an exceptional debut author. Set in an all-Cherokee girl's school in the Old West, seventeen-year-old Willemina Hammond has “borrowed” some credentials to land a position as a teacher there—and finds herself confronted with the ghost of a former student. Willie is determined to learn more about the girl's death, but the closer she gets to unraveling the secrets behind the murder, the closer she gets to

becoming a victim herself.

The Revenant grabbed me from the first sentence and never let go. It's the complete package: an unforgettable narrator; a captivating setting; and a plot that's part suspense, part ghost story, part romance, and 100% alluring. It keeps you gripping your seat while it artfully explores ideas about Spiritualism, friendship, race, betrayal, and our often false perceptions of our own families. *The Revenant* is a divine combination of wide appeal and literary grace.

—Michelle Frey

from *The Revenant*

I turned to Miss Crenshaw. “What are we to tell the doctor?”

The principal’s face drooped with fatigue. “I’ve no idea. I suppose we could say we have another case of sleepwalking, though I’m not sure how to explain the overturned desk.”

“More sleepwalking?”

His lips curved in a faint smile. “I’m starting to wonder what you feed these girls that makes them so active in their sleep, Miss Crenshaw.”

She clamped her mouth shut as we heard the front door open, a sound followed by the clatter of footsteps in the corridor.

When the doctor entered, his face was grim. He nodded at the principal before kneeling next to Lucy. I could hardly bear to see Lucy’s face contorting with pain as he examined her. A sudden nausea beset me, and I had to breathe deeply in order to keep my supper from ending up on the floor.

Finally, after binding the leg with a splint provided by Jimmy, the doctor stood. “Her leg is broken—a compound fracture, I’m afraid. But I can find no other injuries.” He rubbed his forehead and stifled a yawn. He turned back to the principal, his face drawn with

confusion and fatigue. “How did the desk fall on her?”

“We simply don’t know, Dr. Stewart,” said Miss Crenshaw, her voice mild.

“More sleepwalking?” His lips curved in a faint smile. “I’m starting to wonder what you feed these girls that makes them so active in their sleep, Miss Crenshaw.”

The principal bowed her head.

As Jimmy and the doctor carried Lucy out of the room on a makeshift stretcher

from *The Revenant*
continued

made of quilts, Olivia pulled me aside.

“I never expected Ella’s spirit to turn so violent. I’m afraid these accidents will only grow more terrible if we don’t do something,” she whispered. “It seems to be feeding on the girls’ fear.”

I couldn’t contradict her. I’d just seen something—*felt* something—I’d never thought to encounter, and Papa’s steadfast skepticism had deserted me. “What does it want? Revenge?”

Olivia frowned. “Perhaps nothing so dire. It may be desperate to make contact because it longs for peace or . . . some sort of release. We won’t know if we don’t ask.”

“We ask? Why don’t *you* ask?”

“As I told you before, I am sensitive. And I have the knowledge and experience. But I can’t do it alone.”

My stomach twisted. *This is how a teacher loses her position.*

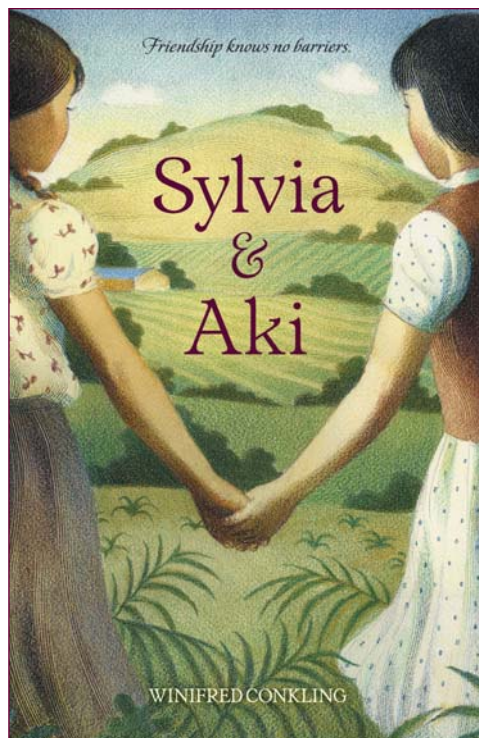
Olivia took my hand and squeezed it tightly. “I know what I’m doing. We shall not be found out.”

“Fine,” I said. “Tell me what to do.”

Sonia Gensler grew up in a small Tennessee town and spent her early adulthood collecting impractical degrees from various Midwestern universities. A former high school English teacher, she now writes full-time in Oklahoma.



Photo © Eden Wilson



Sylvia & Aki

by Winifred Conkling

Edited by Nicole Geiger

ISBN: 978-1-58246-337-7

\$16.99/\$18.99 Can.

Middle-Grade Fiction

On sale: 7/12/2011



Tricycle Press

from the editor

This is one of those projects that leaves an editor scratching her head in wonder: A true story, influential all the way to the Supreme Court—how can so few people know about it? Winifred Conkling's account of friendship, bravery, and justice bowled me over from day one. Sylvia Mendez and Aki Munemitsu met in World War II-era Southern California when Sylvia's family leased the Munemitsu's farm after they were sent to a Japanese internment camp. Sylvia lived in Aki's very room—even played with a doll Aki was forced to leave behind. But Sylvia could not enroll in Aki's local school because Sylvia is Mexican.

A friendship blooms between the fields of Orange County and the forbidding Arizona desert, as each girl navigates the mine fields of her time and place. An intense legal battle rages in Orange County, culminating in the end of school segregation in California. Children know Rosa Parks and now they know Claudette Colvin. Well, just like Claudette's story preceded Rosa's, Mendez vs. Westminster set the stage for Brown vs. Board of Education. This is an incredible story from our nation's past that deserves to be more widely known.

—Nicole Geiger

from Sylvia & Aki

The first witness to be called was James L. Kent, superintendent of schools in the Garden Grove School District, which was one of the five districts in Orange County. Hoover School was in his district. Sylvia's father's attorney, Mr. Marcus, asked: "Who decides which schoolchildren will attend?"

"The Board of Trustees tells me to take charge of that part," Mr. Kent said.

"Now, is it a fact, sir, that the School Board policy is that children of Mexican parentage shall attend Hoover School "

"No, sir," Mr. Kent interrupted.

"between the first and sixth grades?" Mr. *How can he be so calm?*
Marcus finished.

"No," Mr. Kent said. "However, the policy does read that for Spanish-speaking students and students who need help, we have set up Hoover School."

"What do you mean by 'Spanish-speaking students'?" asked Mr. Marcus.

"Those children who come to school with a language handicap."

"That applies just to the Mexican children, doesn't it?" Mr. Marcus asked.

"So far, yes," Mr. Kent said. . . .

The lawyer for the school system told the judge that having separate schools was good for the Mexican children because it allowed them to take "Americanization" instruction to learn American values and customs.

Americanization? Doesn't that mean to make someone an American who isn't one?
Sylvia wanted to say the she was just as American as he was. She wanted to tell him she had spoken English her entire life, that she could speak two languages English and Spanish not just one.

Lots of the kids at Hoover School speak fluent English, Sylvia thought. That lawyer

doesn't know what he's talking about.

Sylvia looked over at her father. *How can he be so calm? If he can do it, I'll try, too.*

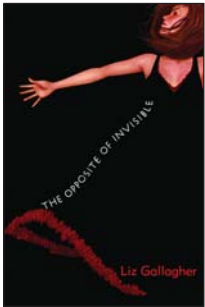
Winifred Conkling is currently working toward her Master of Fine Arts in Writing for Children and Young Adults. *Sylvia & Aki* is her first book for children.



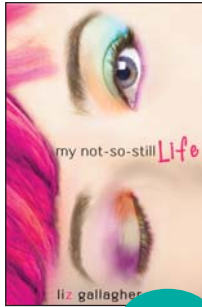
IT'S A SECOND!

Find out what former “It’s a First” novelists have been up to.

LIZ GALLAGHER



“It’s a First”

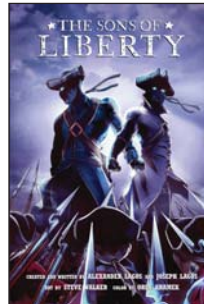


NEW!

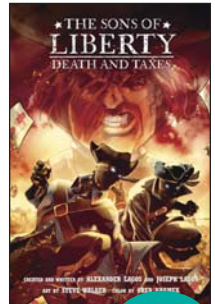
Vanessa’s never really fit in at school, where all the kids act and dress the same. She’s an artist who lands her dream job the art supply store, Palette. But when a new mysterious guy named James leads her into new and sometimes risky situations, Vanessa wonders if she’s really ready for the adult world she longs to be a part of?

ALEXANDER AND JOSEPH LAGOS

Several years have passed since Graham and Brody escaped the bonds of slavery. Now, when the streets of Philadelphia erupt in violence, the two boys must decide: will they use their extraordinary abilities to aid the growing rebellion or to suppress it?



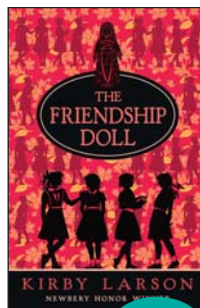
“It’s a First”



NEW!

KIRBY LARSON

In 1927, Miss Kanagawa and her 57 doll-sisters were sent from Japan to America as Ambassadors of Friendship. Their story will take you across the continent and into adventure. Of the 58 Friendship Dolls, only 45 remain. What happened to the missing sisters and will anyone ever be able to discover the truth about their disappearance?



“It’s a First”

NEW!

JILLIAN LARKIN



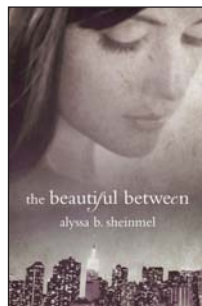
The second explosive novel in the sexy, dangerous, and ridiculously romantic Flappers series, where bobbed hair and cool jazz reign—and the city never sleeps.

“It’s a First”

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ALYSSA B. SHEINMEL

High school junior Nick Brandt is intent on getting a girlfriend, and Eden Reiss is the one that he wants. But when the phone rings on an otherwise ordinary Tuesday night, life for Nick and his parents will never be the same. While Nick discovers that his idyllic home life is something else entirely, he also uncovers a newfound confidence; he’s become a bolder version of himself, no longer afraid to question his parents, and no longer afraid to talk to Eden.



“It’s a First”

NEW!

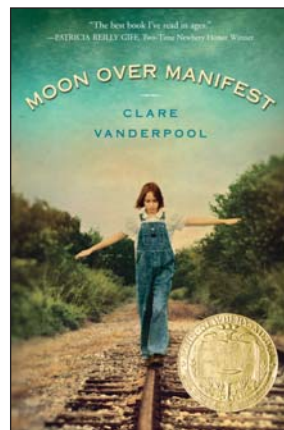
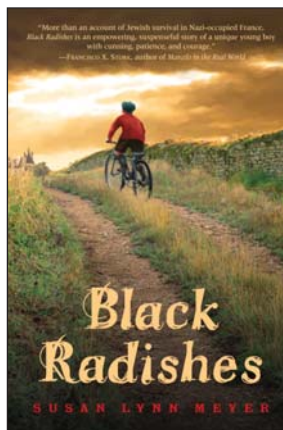
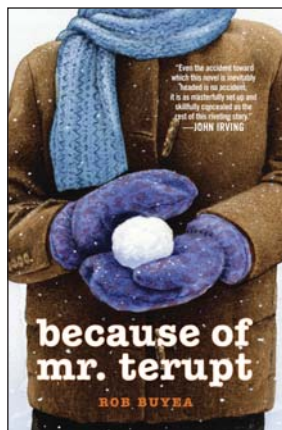
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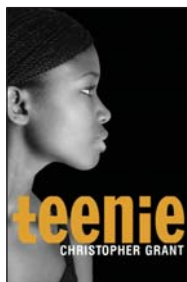
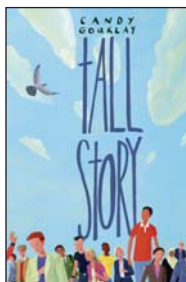
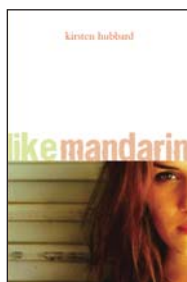
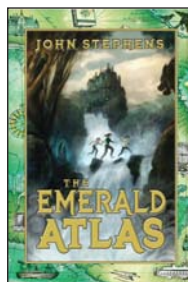
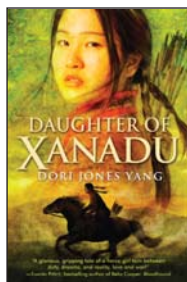
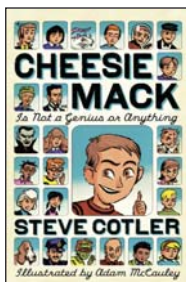
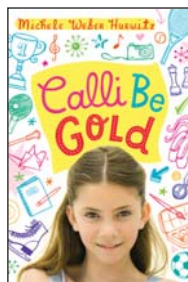
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