

Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award 2010 Nominees

All the Lovely Bad Ones by Mary Downing Hahn

Travis and his sister, Corey, can't resist a good trick—so when they learn that their grandmother's sleepy Vermont inn has a history of ghost sightings, they decide to do a little "haunting" of their own. Scaring the guests proves to be great fun, and before long, the inn is filled with tourists and ghost hunters eager for a glimpse of the supernatural. But Travis and Corey soon find out that they aren't the only ghosts at Fox Hill Inn. Their thoughtless games have awakened something dangerous, something that should have stayed asleep. Restless, spiteful spirits swarm the inn, while a dark and terrifying presence stalks the halls and the old oak grove on the inn's grounds. To lay the ghosts to rest, Travis and Corey must first discover the dark history of Fox Hill and the horrors visited on its inhabitants years earlier.

A Crooked Kind of Perfect by Linda Urban

Ten-year-old Zoe Elias dreams of playing a baby grand piano at Carnegie Hall. But when Dad ventures to the music store and ends up with a wheezy organ instead of a piano, Zoe's dreams hit a sour note. Learning the organ versions of old TV theme songs just isn't the same as mastering Beethoven on the piano. And the organ isn't the only part of Zoe's life that's off-kilter, what with Mom constantly at work, Dad afraid to leave the house, and that odd boy, Wheeler Diggs, following her home from school every day. Yet when Zoe enters the annual Perform-O-Rama organ competition, she finds that life is full of surprises--and that perfection may be even better when it's just a little off center.

Crossing the Wire by Will Hobbs

When falling crop prices threaten his family with starvation, fifteen-year-old Victor Flores heads north in an attempt to "cross the wire" from Mexico into the United States so he can find work and send money home. But with no coyote money to pay the smugglers who sneak illegal workers across the border, Victor must struggle to survive as he jumps trains, stows away on trucks, and hikes grueling miles through the Arizona desert. Victor's journey is fraught with danger, freezing cold, scorching heat, hunger, and dead ends. It's a gauntlet run by millions attempting to cross the border. Through Victor's often desperate struggle, Will Hobbs brings to life one of the great human dramas of our time.

Dragon Slippers by Jessica Day George

Many stories tell of damsels in distress, who are rescued from the clutches of fire-breathing dragons by knights in shining armor, and swept off to live happily ever after. Unfortunately, this is not one of those stories. True, when Creel's aunt suggests sacrificing her to the local dragon, it is with the hope that the knight will marry Creel and that everyone (aunt and family included) will benefit handsomely. Yet it's Creel who talks her way out of the dragon's clutches. And it's Creel who walks for days on end to seek her fortune in the king's city with only a bit of embroidery thread and a strange pair

of slippers in her possession. But even Creel could not have guessed the outcome of this tale. For in a country on the verge of war, Creel unknowingly possesses not just any pair of shoes, but a tool that could be used to save her kingdom...or destroy it.

Elephant Run by Roland Smith

In 1941, bombs drop from the night skies of London, demolishing the apartment Nick Freestone lives in with his mother. Deciding the situation in England is too unstable, Nick's mother sends him to live with his father in Burma, hoping he will be safer living on the family's teak plantation. But as soon as Nick arrives, trouble erupts in this remote Burmese elephant village. Japanese soldiers invade, and Nick's father is taken prisoner. Nick is stranded on the plantation, forced to work as a servant to the new rulers. As life in the village grows more dangerous for Nick and his young friend, Mya, they plan their daring escape. Setting off on elephant back, they will risk their lives to save Nick's father and Mya's brother from a Japanese POW camp.

Emma-Jean Lazarus Fell Out of a Tree by Lauren Tarshis

Emma-Jean Lazarus is the smartest and strangest girl at William Gladstone Middle School. Her classmates don't understand her, but that's okay because Emma-Jean doesn't quite get them either. But one afternoon, all that changes when she sees Colleen Pomerantz crying in the girl's room. It is through Colleen that Emma-Jean gets a glimpse into what it is really like to be a seventh grader. And what she finds will send her tumbling out of a tree and questioning why she ever got involved in the first place.

First Light by Rebecca Stead

Peter is thrilled to leave New York City to accompany his parents on an expedition to Greenland to study global warming. There he has visions of things that should be too far away for him to see. Generations ago, the people of Thea's community were hunted for possessing unusual abilities, so they fled beneath the ice. Thea needs help that only Peter can give. Their meeting reveals secrets of both their pasts, and changes the future for them both forever.

Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott by Russell Freedman

On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks refused to move to the back of the bus and give up her seat to a white man. This simple act sparked a nationwide movement for equality. Award-winning author Russell Freedman puts readers in the midst of a volatile and uplifting time.

Home of the Brave by Katherine Applegate

Kek comes from Africa. In America, he sees snow for the first time, and feels its sting. He's never walked on ice, and he falls. He wonders if the people in this new place will be like the winter--cold and unkind. In Africa, Kek lived with his mother, father, and brother. But only he and his mother have survived, and now she's missing. Kek is on his own. Slowly, he makes friends: a girl who is in foster care, an old woman who owns a rundown farm, and a cow whose name means "family" in his native language. As Kek

awaits word of his mother's fate, he weathers the tough Minnesota winter by finding warmth in his new friendships, strength in his memories, and belief in his new country.

Jeremy Fink and the Meaning of Life by Wendy Mass

In one month Jeremy Fink will turn thirteen. But does he have what it takes to be a teenager? He collects mutant candy, he won't venture more than four blocks from his apartment if he can help it, and he definitely doesn't like surprises. On the other hand, his best friend, Lizzy, isn't afraid of anything, even if that might get her into trouble now and then. Jeremy's summer takes an unexpected turn when a mysterious wooden box arrives in the mail. According to the writing on the box, it holds the meaning of life! Jeremy is supposed to open it on his thirteenth birthday. The problem is, the keys are missing, and the box is made so that only the keys will open it without destroying what's inside. Jeremy and Lizzy set off to find the keys, but when one of their efforts goes very wrong, Jeremy starts to lose hope that he'll ever be able to open the box. But he soon discovers that when you're meeting people named Oswald Oswald and using a private limo to deliver unusual objects to strangers all over the city, there might be other ways of finding out the meaning of life.

Kimchi & Calamari by Rose Kent

Kimchi and calamari. It sounds like a quirky food fusion of Korean and Italian cuisine, and it's exactly how Joseph Calderaro feels about himself. Why wouldn't an adopted Korean drummer—comic book junkie feel like a combo platter given:

- (1) his face in the mirror
- (2) his proud Italian family.

And now Joseph has to write an essay about his ancestors for social studies. All he knows is that his birth family shipped his diapered butt on a plane to the USA. End of story. But what he writes leads to a catastrophe messier than a table of shattered dishes—and self-discovery that Joseph never could have imagined.

The Mozart Question by Michael Morpurgo

Like any young boy, Paolo becomes obsessed with what he can't have — in his case, a violin. Hidden away in his parents' room, it beckons the boy to release the music inside it. The music leads Paolo to a family secret, a story of World War II that changed the course of his parents' lives. But once the truth is told, the family is reunited in a way no one had thought possible. From Michael Morpurgo and Michael Foreman comes a story about sharing the joy of music from one generation to the next and about music's power to transform and heal.

The Naked Mole-Rat Letters by Mary Amato

When her father begins a long-distance romance with a Washington, D.C. zookeeper, twelve-year-old Frankie sends fabricated e-mail letters to the zookeeper in an attempt to end the relationship in this story about family, friendship, and growing up.

Shark Girl by Kelly L. Bingham

On a sunny day in June, at the beach with her mom and brother, fifteen-year-old Jane Arrowood went for a swim. And then everything — absolutely everything — changed.

Now she's counting down the days until she returns to school with her fake arm, where she knows kids will whisper, "That's her — that's Shark Girl," as she passes. In the meantime there are only questions: Why did this happen? Why her? What about her art? What about her life? In this striking first novel, Kelly Bingham uses poems, letters, telephone conversations, and newspaper clippings to look unflinchingly at what it's like to lose part of yourself - and to summon the courage it takes to find yourself again.

Shooting the Moon by Frances O'Roark Dowell

When twelve-year-old Jamie Dexter's brother joins the Army and is sent to Vietnam, Jamie is plum thrilled. She can't wait to get letters from the front lines describing the excitement of real-life combat: the sound of helicopters, the smell of gunpowder, the exhilaration of being right in the thick of it. After all, they've both dreamed of following in the footsteps of their father, the Colonel. But TJ's first letter isn't a letter at all. It's a roll of undeveloped film, the first of many. What Jamie sees when she develops TJ's photographs reveals a whole new side of the war. Slowly the shine begins to fade off of Army life - and the Colonel. How can someone she's worshipped her entire life be just as helpless to save her brother as she is?

A Small White Scar by K. A. Nuzum

Will can see his future stretch out before him. It's as clear as the plains that lead to La Junta and the first-place winnings at the rodeo. He will become a man, a cowboy with a life of his own. But his twin brother, Denny, follows, bringing with him the memory of that small white scar. Ahead lies adventure; behind, responsibility. And on the road between, Will and Denny will travel together—brothers united by blood.

Someone Named Eva by Joan M. Wolf

On the night Nazi soldiers come to her home in Czechoslovakia, Milada's grandmother says, "Remember, Milada. Remember who you are. Always." Milada promises, but she doesn't understand her grandmother's words. After all, she is Milada, who lives with her mama and papa, her brother and sister, and her beloved Babichka. Milada, eleven years old, the fastest runner in school. How could she ever forget? Then the Nazis take Milada away from her family and send her to a Lebensborn center in Poland. There, she is told she fits the Aryan ideal: her blond hair and blue eyes are the right color; her head and nose, the right size. She is given a new name, Eva, and trained to become the perfect German citizen, to be the hope of Germany's future—and to forget she was ever a Czech girl named Milada.

The Thing About Georgie by Lisa Graff

The thing about poodles is that Georgie Bishop hates to walk them. The thing about Jeanie the Meanie is that she would rather write on her shoe than help Georgie with their Abraham Lincoln project. The thing about Georgie's mom is that she's having a baby—a baby who will probably be taller than Georgie very, very soon. The thing about Georgie . . . well, what is the thing about Georgie?

The Wednesday Wars by Gary D. Schmidt

Meet Holling Hoodhood, a seventh-grader at Camillo Junior High, who must spend Wednesday afternoons with his teacher, Mrs. Baker, while the rest of the class has religious instruction. Mrs. Baker doesn't like Holling—he's sure of it. Why else would she make him read the plays of William Shakespeare outside class? But everyone has bigger things to worry about, like Vietnam. His father wants Holling and his sister to be on their best behavior: the success of his business depends on it. But how can Holling stay out of trouble when he has so much to contend with? A bully demanding cream puffs; angry rats; and a baseball hero signing autographs the very same night Holling has to appear in a play in yellow tights! As fate sneaks up on him again and again, Holling finds Motivation—the Big M—in the most unexpected places and musters up the courage to embrace his destiny, in spite of himself.

The White Giraffe by Lauren St. John

The night Martine Allen turns eleven years old is the night her life changes completely. Martine's parents are killed in a fire, so she must leave her home to live on an African wildlife reserve with a grandmother she never even knew she had. When Martine arrives, she hears tales of a mythical animal living there—a white giraffe. They say no one has ever seen the animal, but it does leave behind footprints. Her grandmother insists that the white giraffe is just a legend, but then, one stormy night, Martine looks out her bedroom window straight into the eyes of the tall silvery animal. Could it be just Martine's imagination, or is the white giraffe real? And if so, why is everyone keeping its existence a secret?