

<p><i>Amelia Anne Is Dead and Gone</i> by Kat Rosenfield Dutton Juvenile, 2012, 304 pp., \$17.99</p> <p>Two similar lives and paths intersect briefly but tellingly in this suspense thriller. Small-town girl Becca can't wait to leave for college, but her attachment to her boyfriend James makes it unexpectedly hard for her to go. As his behavior becomes increasingly erratic, Becca procrastinates about her departure. Budding thespian Amelia Anne has been brutally murdered as the book opens, and the subsequent passages describe a woman preparing for a bright future after a romantic beach vacation with her boyfriend Luke. Readers will race through the book's pages to uncover the two women's commonalities, leading to one's death and the other's betrayal. As Becca's suspicions about others, especially one neighbor, escalate, so does the anger of Amelia Anne's boyfriend. Hinting at characters' motivation and omitting details, the author forces readers to draw their own conclusions. In the end, betrayals arise from unexpected places amid life's winding roads and detours.</p> <p>Barbara A. Ward Washington State University Pullman, WA</p>	<p><i>Anything But Ordinary</i> by Lara Avery Hyperion, 2012, 325 pp., \$16.99</p> <p>At 17, swimming champion Bryce Graham is one dive away from fulfilling her dream of competing in the Olympics. Instead, she plunges into a coma that steals five years of her life. When she finally wakes up, Bryce insists on returning home so that things can go back to normal—against the advice of her doctors. But is a “normal” life still possible? Her once close-knit family has been undone by their grief. Torn between the past and present, Bryce must find a way to make her second chance at life count.</p> <p>Avery's debut novel poses an interesting question: how does one let go of the past and move on with life after a tragedy? Although it contains some adult subjects—like drinking, sex, and suicide—that may be inappropriate for younger readers, Bryce's story would resonate with older adolescents who enjoy reading poignant dramas about romance, friendship, and family.</p> <p>Jessica S. Thomas Nashville, TN</p>
<p><i>Blood Wounds</i> by Susan Beth Pfeffer Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011, 248 pp., \$16.99</p> <p>Willa's family seems normal and happy. Her mother married Jack when Willa was young, giving Willa a better life away from the repressive small town of “No-where” Texas. But, when Willa's estranged biological father murders his wife and young daughters, this horrific crime churns up buried family secrets that make Willa question who she really is. She returns to the town her mother desperately tried to escape years ago to reopen the wounds of the past so that they can begin to heal.</p> <p>Pfeffer deals with disturbing but pertinent topics—divorce, mental illness, child abuse, and cutting. While many of these topics—and the brutality of the murder—make this novel unsuitable for younger readers, <i>Blood Wounds</i> would be a compelling independent read for high school students and particularly young women who, like Willa, are coping with a painful life event and trying to establish a stronger sense of self.</p> <p>Jessica S. Thomas Nashville, TN</p>	<p><i>Breaking Point</i> by Lesley Choyce Orca, 2012, 124 pp., \$9.95</p> <p>Cameron has almost always been able to run away from consequences. After a previous stay at a traditional juvenile delinquent center, Cameron is given the opportunity to go Camp Mosher, located on the coast of Nova Scotia far from anything else. As he puts to use his previous delinquent center political knowledge, he quickly finds Brianna and falls for her. But Brianna is trouble.</p> <p>Brianna influences Cameron to steal two kayaks and run away from Camp Mosher to begin their lives again. Despite his better judgment, they escape into the wilderness on the eve of an impending hurricane. As you follow Cameron's fast-paced story, you experience him making choices that will affect the rest of his life, for better or worse.</p> <p>Aubrey Kuppler Nashville, TN</p>

<p>Code Name Verity by Elizabeth Wein Hyperion, 2012, 327 pp., \$10.98</p> <p>Fiction/Historical/WWII ISBN: 978-1-4231-5219-4</p> <p>After a plane crashes in France during World War II, two girls are separated. Queenie, a Scottish spy, is captured by the Gestapo and imprisoned at their headquarters. In order to live, Queenie must write a daily account of information she has gathered during her time as a spy that is then translated for the commander. Maddie, the pilot, is kept safe and tells her account of what is happening through diary entries she hides in her mattress. Both girls give their side of the story regarding their lives as a spy and a pilot during WWII and how they became friends. Both struggle with survival, courage, and constant worry that they will not make it another day. The records they leave behind provide the plot for this novel and a new outlook on war and the bonds it creates.</p> <p>Libby Byrnes Alpharetta, GA</p>	<p>Ditched: A Love Story by Robin Mellom Hyperion, 2012, 288 pp., \$16.99</p> <p>Realistic Fiction/Romance ISBN: 978-4231-4338-3</p> <p>When 16-year-old Justina Griffith wakes up in a ditch on the side of the road, she realizes that she has been dumped by her prom date. Unfortunately, her prom date is her best friend, and the boy she is in love with. Justina has spent almost a year trying to overcome a reputation for being an excessive kisser. Throughout those months, her friendship with Ian grew, and so did her love for him. She recounts her story to the cashier at the 7-Eleven, using the stains on her iridescent blue dress as clues to uncovering her crazy night.</p> <p><i>Ditched</i> is an entertaining light read. This story is perfect for an individual read. Although the recommended reading level is grade seven and up, I would not suggest this novel to a middle school student due to the language and marijuana and kissing references.</p> <p>Deanna Velazquez Nashville, TN</p>
<p>Double by Jenny Valentine Hyperion, 2012, 256 pp., \$16.99</p> <p>Identity/Psychological Thriller ISBN: 978-1-4231-4714-5</p> <p>Chap, tired of shuffling from place to place, seizes the opportunity to assume the identity of the boy on the flyer. For the first time in years, he experiences the sensation of being wanted, but the lie he harbors eats away at his comfort. One wrong word or gesture could cause the façade to crumble. He cannot fake being Cassiel Roadnight without someone guessing his lie. As Chap recalls the loss of the man he called Grandpa, he ponders his own true identity. He also wonders if family life drove Cass away, or if something more sinister was afoot. A mysterious stranger holds the key, and Chap's true identity is closer than he imagines.</p> <p>Readers will be spellbound by the dark secrets that unfold through well-crafted imagery.</p> <p>Greta Williams-Hopper Nashville, TN</p>	<p>Fighting for Dontae by Mike Castan Holiday House, 2012, 150 pp., \$16.95</p> <p>Realistic Fiction/Identity ISBN: 978-0-8234-2348-4</p> <p>Javier is a middle school adolescent torn between two worlds. He wants to help his mom at home and secretly loves to read. Yet, he finds himself involved in the neighborhood Mexican American gang, knowing the violence and drug use is wrong. Javier tries to keep a cool image with his friends at school until he takes an elective as a teacher's aide in the special ed class. Surprisingly, Javier describes the elective as the best part of his day and develops empathy and patience for students in the special ed classroom. After several close calls, Javier must make decisions for himself to balance his complicated life.</p> <p>Urban students who like the thrill of adventure and violence will appreciate this plot. This read is best fit for eighth grade and above due to the violence, drug use, and frequent profanity.</p> <p>Lindsey Nelson Nashville, TN</p>

<p><i>Freshman Year & Other Unnatural Disasters</i> by Meredith Zeitlin</p> <p>C. P. Putnam's Sons, 2012, 282 pp., \$16.99</p> <p>Kelsey Finkelstein knows that freshman year is important—no, absolutely crucial. In fact, she plans on upgrading her wardrobe, trying out for left wing on her school's soccer team, and finally winning over her lifelong crush, Jordan Rothman. What she doesn't plan for is fights with best friends, tyrannical soccer captains with scary eyebrows, and a mysterious newspaper photographer who always manages to capture her in seriously embarrassing situations. Although freshman year turns out to be slightly more disastrous than she had hoped for, Kelsey remains an optimist. Armed with an indomitable sense of humor and with a little help from her friends, she may just have her best year yet. Filled with witty dialogue and realistic situations, Meredith Zeitlin's clever and heartfelt novel will have readers cheering for Kelsey Finkelstein as she navigates her way through the unnatural disaster that is freshman year.</p> <p>Diana Liu Nashville, TN</p>	<p><i>Ghosts of the Titanic</i> by Julie Lawson</p> <p>Holiday House, 2012, 168 pp., \$16.95</p> <p>The trauma of working on the recovery of bodies and belongings after the Titanic catastrophe costs Angus Seaton his future. The young man never shakes the guilt of mistakenly pocketing the small purse of a young woman while he fought off exhaustion during the recovery. A mysterious figure haunts Angus and eventually haunts young Kevin Messenger. It is up to Kevin to unravel a mystery, 100 years in the making, before he suffers the same fate as Angus. How can he get his parents to believe that the voice he hears is not the product of an overactive imagination?</p> <p>Lawson intertwines the time periods as she sheds interesting insights into the fascinating lore of the great sea tragedy. Readers will want to learn even more about the aftermath.</p> <p>Greta Williams-Hopper Nashville, TN</p>
<p><i>Haze</i> by Erin Thomas</p> <p>Orca, 2012, 175 pp., \$9.95</p> <p>The swim team at Strathmore Academy has been keeping secrets from the authorities for three years after a hazing incident went horribly wrong, ending a swimmer's life. Bram is trying out for the renowned swim team for the second year in a row, and he needs to make the team again in order to keep his scholarship to the prestigious school. Jeremy, who was there three years ago when the secret happened, wants to go public with the information and warns Bram not to go to this year's party. Suddenly, Jeremy is hurt in a hit-and-run accident that results in a coma. Bram is trying to solve the mystery of what happened with Abby, Jeremy's sister, and prove that his beloved coach is not responsible. Young reluctant readers are sure to enjoy this fast-paced book packed with mystery, cliff hangers, and lots of actions.</p> <p>Aubrey Kuppler Nashville, TN</p>	<p><i>Immortal City</i> by Scott Speer</p> <p>Penguin, 2012, 368 pp., \$17.99</p> <p>Maddy Montgomery is a regular 17-year-old girl living in a city where angels are paid to save people who can afford their protection. By chance, Maddy meets Jackson Godspeed, the most famous guardian angel, but she is unimpressed by his fame and fortune. Still, she finds herself attracted to him. Despite his title in society, Jackson falls for Maddy because she is the only person in the city who sees him for who he is aside from a famous guardian. When a dark force enters angel city, Jackson and Maddy not only fight for their relationship and their safety, but Maddy also discovers that she has family secrets of her own to reconcile.</p> <p>Libby Byrnes Alpharetta, GA</p>

<p><i>Losers in Space</i> by John Barnes Relationships/Science Fiction/Technology/Fame Viking Juvenile, 2012, 384 pp., \$18.99 ISBN: 978-0-67006-156-3</p> <p>Sixteen-year-old Susan Terraille, the daughter of a famous actor, craves fame about as much as anyone else living in 2129. Work has become passé, and Derlock, Susan's new boyfriend, concocts a plan to gain the world's attention by hijacking a spacecraft bound for Mars while supposedly visiting Susan's aunt. Things go wrong quickly, and Susan realizes that she cannot trust Derlock, for whom the end always justifies the means. As friendships unravel and lives are lost, the crew members must find a way back home with only limited windows of opportunity. Barnes handles his characters and their plight deftly while making observations about the obsession with celebrity that seems to typify life in the future, in many ways mirroring the current preoccupation with reality programming. Readers may be just as interested in the science-related "Notes for the Interested" sections that accompany the storyline, such as the characters' believable evolution during their space journey.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Barbara A. Ward Pullman, WA</p>	<p><i>Master of Deceit: J. Edgar Hoover and America in the Age of Lies</i> Espionage/Politics/American History by Marc Aronson Candlewick, 2012, 230 pp., \$25.99 ISBN: 978-0-76365-025-4</p> <p>J. Edgar Hoover was arguably one of the most powerful men in the United States during his lifetime. This thoughtful, thoroughly researched biography provides insight into the Federal Bureau of Investigation director whose hubris allowed him to consider himself above the law and to keep secret files on those he feared, disliked, or suspected of being Communist sympathizers. While describing Hoover's childhood and his later rise to power, this book is much more than Hoover's story; it's actually a vivid description of our nation during the '50s and '60s—a time of paranoia with parallels to the period after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Examining the past carefully for clues to our possible future, the author weighs the price of secrecy and security. Older teen readers will enjoy the book's archival photographs and the author's description of his own research and writing process, and will certainly want to read more about this ever-intiguing individual.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Barbara A. Ward Pullman, WA</p>
<p><i>Me and Earl and the Dying Girl</i> by Jesse Andrews Relationships/Death/Art Harry N. Abrams/Amulet Books, 2012, 304 pp., \$16.95 ISBN: 978-1-41970-176-4</p> <p>Until this year, Greg Gaines has managed to remain unnoticed, tolerated by the various cliques in his high school but really fitting nowhere. He and his friend Earl, a foul-mouthed teen with aspirations for a better life, write and film their own movies, sometimes featuring the family feline, Cat Stevens. When Greg's former friend, Rachel Kushner, is diagnosed with leukemia, he unwillingly spends time with her, entertaining her with stories, jokes, and the films. As Greg hides behind his camera, he finally realizes that Rachel's uniqueness will be lost once she's gone. Although the narrator's voice is intrusive, self-deprecating, and downright annoying at times, it allows Greg to shield himself from his feelings about Rachel's illness and impending death. This poignant yet unexpectedly hilarious story will move teen readers coping with loss or pondering their own mortality. Art doesn't imitate life here; instead, it amplifies reality for the budding filmmaker.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Barbara A. Ward Pullman, WA</p>	<p><i>My Life in Black and White</i> by Natasha Friend Coping/Relationships/Self-Esteem Viking Juvenile, 2012, 304 pp., \$17.99 ISBN: 978-0-67001-303-6</p> <p>Sophomore Lexi's life is the envy of others. Not only does she have looks to die for, but she also has a great boyfriend in Ryan and a loyal best friend in Taylor. Everything changes during a disastrous night when she is betrayed by the two at a party and then is injured in a car wreck. In her eyes, her facial injuries make her less physically attractive than she was, and she lashes out at those around her, since she fears facing the world as less than beautiful. Now that she has lost her beauty, the thing that defined her, Lexi embarks on a journey leading to self-awareness and self-acceptance. The anger, jealousy, and vengefulness she experiences along the way are described realistically, with the author building sympathy for Lexi while also showing her behaving badly. Teen readers will empathize with Lexi's struggle to reinvent herself amid the book's multifaceted characters.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Barbara A. Ward Pullman, WA</p>

<p><i>Rebel McKenzie</i> by Candice Ransom Disney Hyperion, 2012, 288 pp., \$16.99</p> <p>This summer, Rebel McKenzie wants to attend the Ice Age Kids' Dig and Safari Camp; in fact, she is willing to run away from home in order to pursue her passion for the Pleistocene era. Unfortunately, a nosy convict and improper footwear foil her hitchhiking plans, and soon, Rebel finds herself babysitting her sleepwalking nephew Rudy in the boring mobile home community of Grandview Estates. Despite her less than ideal situation, Rebel is determined to make it to paleontology camp. Her solution? Win the local beauty pageant and use the prize money for the camp's registration fee. But as Rebel soon finds out, she might need a little guidance from some unexpected friends if she wants to be crowned as Miss Frog Level. In <i>Rebel McKenzie</i>, author Candice Ransom has woven a cast of quirky characters into a charming story about friendship, growing up, and most important, being true to oneself.</p> <p>Diana Liu Nashville, TN</p>	<p><i>Riot Act</i> by Diane Tullison Orca, 2012, 128 pp., \$9.95</p> <p>After the local team loses a hockey game, 17-year-olds Nick and Daniel, along with other fans, begin torching cars and destroying buildings in a riot throughout the town. Nick finds an incriminating photograph on the Internet and decides to turn himself in to the authorities; however, Daniel finds himself in an unexpected position that "earns" him the title of "hero." How? Daniel breaks a store window, attempting to escape the riot, but winds up helping a young girl.</p> <p>Because this book is very short, it is perfect for reluctant readers who judge a book by its size. This fast read has well-developed characters and plot. While the reading level is very low, the content of the book makes it appropriate for older middle school and high school students.</p> <p>Deanna Velazquez Nashville, TN</p>
<p><i>Small Damages</i> by Beth Kephart Philomel, 2012, 304 pp., \$17.99</p> <p>After her father's unexpected death, things fall apart for 18-year-old Kenzie Spitzer. While her mother moves on with a new catering business, Kenzie relies on her boyfriend Kevin to help her cope. But reliable Kevin isn't so reliable once Kenzie becomes pregnant, and her mother arranges a flight to Spain where a wealthy couple will adopt the child. As no word of rescue arrives from Kevin, and Kenzie languishes in Spain feeling banished and miserable, she bonds with the life that is growing inside her as well as with those around her, including Estela, the grumpy cook whose secrets influence Kenzie's own decisions about her unborn child. Memorable language evokes Seville's heat and flavors as Kenzie explores its architectural treasures and learns to prepare the same savory dishes prepared by Estela. While not surprising, the book's ending will prompt much discussion among teens about choices easily made and sometimes regretted.</p> <p>Barbara A. Ward Pullman, WA</p>	<p><i>Splendors and Glooms</i> by Laura Amy Schlitz Candlewick Press, 2012, pp. 384, \$17.99</p> <p>Cassandra, a dying witch in a secluded castle, possesses a portentous fire opal. An evil Italian puppeteer, Gaspare Grisini, commandeers two orphans to perform a puppet show with him in the London streets of 1860. Clara, the only daughter of a wealthy doctor and his wife, sees the performance and wants the trio to entertain at her 12th birthday party. The tension builds when Clara disappears after the show along with Grisini and the two orphans.</p> <p>They all converge at Strachan's Ghyll where Clara has been transformed into a marionette by the diabolical Grisini. Grisini covets the witch's gemstone, and he must steal it from Cassandra in order to get her destructive powers, which will also save her from a fiery death. He magically summons his two wards so they can steal the fire opal for him. The period is outlined in realistic detail as the story unfolds. A complex, convoluted tale, the novel is worth the astute reader's attention.</p> <p>Judith A. Hayn Little Rock, AR</p>

<p>Survive by Alex Morel Razorbill, 2012, 259 pp., \$17.99</p> <p>Survival Stories/Depression/Suicide/Romance ISBN: 978-1-59514-510-9</p> <p>Jane Solis has a foolproof suicide plan. Having played by the treatment center's rules and convinced her doctors that she is healthy enough to fly home for Christmas, she prepares to swallow the pills that will kill her during the flight. But the plane crashes in a wilderness area, leaving only Jane and her annoying seatmate, Paul Hart, as survivors. Suddenly, as much as she had wanted to die, Jane now wants to live, and the two walk and climb as far as they can in order to improve their chances of being spotted by any rescuers. They form a strong connection as they rely on each other for survival, even sharing secrets. When Paul is injured severely, he insists that Jane leave for help, possibly saving the two of them. Teen readers will be touched by this poignant romance while debating their decisions and pondering their own capacity to survive.</p> <p>Barbara A. Ward Pullman, WA</p>	<p>The Fine Art of Truth or Dare by Melissa Jensen Speak, 2012, 380 pp., \$8.99</p> <p>Romance/High School ISBN: 978-0-14-242090-4</p> <p>For Ella Marino and her friends Frankie and Sadie, Truth or Dare is a way of life. Not only does it keep their friendship in balance (truths keep Frankie from exaggerating too much), but it also keeps things interesting (dares encourage Sadie to come out of her shell every once in a while). For Ella though, Truth or Dare has always been about the truths because they, unlike flashy dares, make life less complicated and allow her to fly under the radar. But by some strange twist of fate, Ella finds herself tutored by the popular and impossibly charming Alex Bainbridge, and suddenly all of the simple truths that she had once surrounded herself with become a lot more complicated. In <i>The Fine Art of Truth or Dare</i>, Melissa Jensen has created a lighthearted story about a girl who learns that she must take a few dares in order to find out what she truly wants.</p> <p>Diana Liu Nashville, TN</p>
<p>The Disenchantments by Nina LaCour Dutton Books, 2012, 308 pp., \$16.99</p> <p>Fiction/Summer Road Trips ISBN: 978-0-525-42219-8</p> <p>As the summer after graduation kicks off, Colby is ready for the best year of his life. First, he will be touring the Pacific Northwest with his best friend Bev and her band, the Disenchancements. Afterwards, Colby and Bev will be taking a one-way flight to Paris to embark upon their yearlong European backpacking journey. However, once the tour begins, Colby receives some astonishing news: Bev is leaving him and their traveling plans behind for an art school on the other side of the country. Despite Bev's betrayal, the show must go on. And as the summer quickly passes, Colby struggles not only with Bev's growing distance, but with what to do with his suddenly uncertain future. In <i>The Disenchantments</i>, Nina LaCour weaves together a captivating story about music, art, and growing up that perfectly captures the feelings of a group of friends who are waiting for a new chapter of life to begin.</p> <p>Diana Liu Nashville, TN</p>	<p>The Infests by Sean Beaudoin Candlewick, 2012, 384 pp., \$16.99</p> <p>Zombies/Relationships/Science Fiction ISBN: 978-0-76365-947-9</p> <p>An equally brainy blending of chilling and hilarious, this book imagines the coming zombie apocalypse and may prevent readers from ever eating chicken again. When prisoner Nick (Nero) Sole accidentally cuts himself severely while working at a poultry processing plant, he is blamed for the ensuing mayhem, and is sent on a camping trip with several other prisoners. Awakening to the sights and sounds of their counselors dining on some of their companions after finishing chicken dinners, they race toward a mountain lodge for safety. Channeling the voice of a celebrity wrestler, Nero assumes leadership in slaving off the relentless attacks from the ever-growing zombie hordes. Connoisseurs of puns and clever writing will relish the references to zombies as "Moaners" and "Shamburglars." Not for the squeamish due to its graphic descriptions of carnage, this story is as much a zombie travelogue as a romantic romp, since Nero finds love, after a fashion.</p> <p>Barbara A. Ward Pullman, WA</p>

<p><i>The Knife and the Butterfly</i> by Ashley Hope Perez Carolrhoda Books, 2012, 264 pp., \$17.95</p> <p>Loss/Mystery ISBN: 978-0-7613-6156-5</p> <p>After a violent confrontation with a rival gang, Azael wakes up in a juvenile detention center, an environment that he knows well. The familiarity of these surroundings, however, belies something much stranger and more profound than Azael could ever expect from this experience—he isn't allowed to call anyone, hasn't met with a lawyer, and is made to observe a fellow inmate, Lexi, through one-way glass for hours at a time. Azael's caseworker, Gabe, cryptically insists that there isn't much time left for Azael to accomplish what he is supposed to do. As Azael pieces Lexi's life together, he is struck by how familiar they both are with loss—home, family, friends, safety, and stability. Perez gives the reader sympathetic yet critical insight into the world of gangs in Houston, Texas, and is careful to show the narratives of loss that drive so many young people to join them.</p> <p>Jesse Gray Nashville, TN</p>	<p><i>The Obsidian Blade</i> by Pete Hautman Candlewick Press, 2012, pp. 308, \$16.99</p> <p>Science Fiction/Coming of Age ISBN: 978-0-7636-5403-0</p> <p>Thirteen-year-old Tucker's life changes the day his father, Reverend Feye, is fixing a shingle on the roof and disappears. An hour later, he returns, looking worn and older, with a young girl. Then his father loses his faith and his mother descends into depression, making life intolerable for Tucker. After both parents mysteriously vanish, Tucker moves in with his estranged Uncle Kosh. Tucker begins to think that these bizarre happenings might somehow be related to floating disks that glow and fade, often over the house. He even wonders if these disks teleport captives to different periods in history and the future? Tucker enters one in hopes of finding his parents.</p> <p>Hautman creates a complex, spellbinding plot along with a charming, compelling hero. The genre fan will end up with more questions than answers in this first volume of a trilogy; those who devour science fiction and time travel will await the next adventure impatiently.</p> <p>Judith A. Hayn Little Rock, AR</p>
<p><i>The Princesses of Iowa</i> by M. Molly Backes Candlewick, 2012, 464 pp., \$16.99</p> <p>Popularity/Relationships/Self-Esteem ISBN: 978-0-76365-312-5</p> <p>Election to their Iowa high school homecoming court has always been the goal for popular Paige Sheridan and her best friends Nikki and Lacey, but after being involved in a drunk-driving accident at the end of junior year, Paige's priorities change. A spot on the homecoming court loses its promised luster. As she examines her goals and identity, Paige recognizes almost insurmountable disparities between what she wants and her friends' motivations. Along with Paige, teen readers realize that outer appearances have little to do with inner happiness.</p> <p>The author deftly and honestly describes the changes in this popular senior's life, as well as how easily she has distanced herself from her own accountability. This is a thoughtful book about family dynamics, the price of popularity, and the need to take a stand for the things that really matter. The multifaceted characters are likely to remind readers of their own classmates.</p> <p>Barbara A. Ward Pullman, WA</p>	<p><i>The Waiting Sky</i> by Lara Zielin Putnam Juvenile, 2012, 224 pp., \$16.99</p> <p>Family/Responsibility/Growing Up ISBN: 978-0-39925-686-8</p> <p>Jane McAllister has been the responsible one in the family ever since her older brother Ethan left for college. She reconciles the bills, cleans the house, and makes excuses for her mother's alcoholism. Leaving one type of disaster-in-the-making at home, she spends the summer chasing a natural kind of disaster, tornadoes, across the Midwest with her brother and a crew who collect data and take photographs. Ethan's crew tries to get as close as they can to the twisters without being injured.</p> <p>The author effectively portrays the lives of the siblings, chasing after one form of destruction while avoiding the chaos at home. The descriptions clearly show just how powerful twisters can be, prompting Jane to realize that her mother's own self-destructive choices spell ruin for anyone in her path. Despite being perched on the edge of disaster, Jane chooses a possibly brighter future for herself, no longer enabling her mother.</p> <p>Barbara A. Ward Pullman, WA</p>

<p><i>The White Zone</i> by Carolyn Marsden Lerner, 2012, 192 pp., \$17.95</p> <p>Realistic Fiction/Ethnicity ISBN: 978-0761373834</p> <p>Nouri, a Shiite Muslim, and Talib, a half-Sunni/half-Shiite, are cousins who have spent their childhoods together. But as war rages in Baghdad, divisions between the Shites and Sunnis grow stronger. When Nouri's uncle is murdered in a Sunni attack, Nouri begins to resent all Sunnis, including Talib. Meanwhile, Talib struggles to understand why his family is being blamed and mistreated. Just when it seems the fighting will never end, snow falls on Baghdad, something that has never before happened. It is in this miraculous moment that the two opposing religious sects are able to agree on one thing—the incredible beauty of the falling snow.</p> <p>Marsden's work is highly pertinent to today's society in which people are quick to overgeneralize others based on their race or religion. The alternating points of view in this story allow the reader to see both sides of a current social and religious struggle.</p> <p>Marlowe Brant Nashville, TN</p>	<p><i>Trafficked</i> by Kim Purcell Penguin Group, 2012, 384 pp., \$11.98</p> <p>Fiction/Trafficking ISBN: 978-0-670-01280-0</p> <p>After both of her parents are killed in a tragic bombing accident, Hannah is presented with an opportunity to leave her home in Moldova to start a new life in the United States of America. She envisions working as a nanny during the day and learning English as a student at night. After arriving in America, she not only learns that she will be unable to attend school, but also is treated as a slave in the home of her "new family." She is threatened with prostitution and even the father of the children she takes care of takes advantage of her sexually. When the mother finds out about their relations, she takes matters into her own hands and leaves Hannah wondering if she will even survive the night in a house she can no longer call a home.</p> <p>Libby Byrnes Alpharetta, GA</p>
<p><i>What's Left of Me</i> by Kat Zhang Harper, 2012, 356 pp., \$17.99</p> <p>Dystopian/Identity ISBN: 978-0-06-211487-7</p> <p>Eva and Addie began their lives the way they were supposed to—two souls working together in one body. One soul was supposed to become dominant, but Eva is still there in Addie's thoughts, even though she can no longer control their body. Their parents are worried because their daughter is not settling. Aware of the way society views these hybrids, Eva and Addie work to trick the doctors into thinking that Addie is the only soul in their body. Everything goes according to plan until they meet a girl who tries to help Eva regain control, a risk that could cost them their lives.</p> <p>Eva and Addie's story will be loved by readers who enjoy thinking about the "what if?" and issues of identity. Their story offers a compelling start to The Hybrid Chronicles, Zhang's first work.</p> <p>Marlowe Brant Nashville, TN</p>	<p><i>Publishers who wish to submit a book for possible review should send a copy of the book to:</i> <i>Melanie Hundley</i> <i>1021 Delmas Ave.</i> <i>Nashville, TN 37216-3630</i> <i>To submit a review for possible publication or to become a reviewer, contact Melanie Hundley at melanie.hundley@vanderbilt.edu.</i></p>

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