

## Read for a Lifetime 2012-2013 Booklist

### Across the Universe

416 pages

Beth Revis

As the spaceship Godspeed travels toward a new earth, the lives of 100 cryogenically frozen settlers hang in the balance after someone endeavors to quietly murder them. The other passengers aboard the ship have never known life outside its walls and are enslaved by the machinations of Eldest, their tyrannical leader, who divides them into three distinct classes. When Amy, a frozen settler from earth, survives being thawed in a murder attempt, she immediately bonds with Elder, Godspeed's lone teen and future leader. Amy's individuality, her rebellion, and her fierce desire for freedom, inspire Elder to act on his own doubts and defy Eldest--his mentor and keeper--with shocking results.

### Angela's Ashes

368 pages

Frank McCourt

Having waited 40 years to tell his story, Frank McCourt doesn't pull any punches in his account of growing up dirt poor in Limerick, Ireland. Having immigrated to America earlier in life, McCourt's family returned to Ireland after his sister died in Brooklyn. It is there that things turn from bad to worse. According to McCourt, there is nothing worse than Irish Catholic poverty: his family moves to a row house in Limerick that is located next to the street's lavatory. Covering the ages spanning three to 19, *Angela's Ashes* is the story of Frank McCourt's struggle to escape from poverty and a tale of Ireland still seemingly in the dark ages. Barred from the good schools because of his class, teeth falling out from malnutrition, and facing life with a shiftless alcoholic father, McCourt nevertheless survives on his wits and manages to return to America to start his life over.

### Art of Racing In The Rain, The

336 pages

Garth Stein

If you've ever wondered what your dog is thinking, Stein's third novel offers an answer. Enzo is a lab terrier mix plucked from a farm outside Seattle to ride shotgun with race car driver Denny Swift as he pursues success on the track and off. Denny meets and marries Eve, has a daughter, Zoë, and risks his savings and his life to make it on the professional racing circuit. Enzo, frustrated by his inability to speak and his lack of opposable thumbs, watches Denny's old racing videos, coins koanlike aphorisms that apply to both driving and life, and hopes for the day when his life as a dog will be over and he can be reborn a man. When Denny hits an extended rough patch, Enzo remains his most steadfast if silent supporter.

### Before I Die

336 pages

Jenny Downham

Tessa has just months to live. Fighting back against hospital visits, endless tests, drugs with excruciating side-effects, Tessa compiles a list. It's her To Do Before I Die list. And number one is Sex. Released from the constraints of 'normal' life, Tessa tastes new experiences to make her feel alive while her failing body struggles to keep up. Tessa's feelings, her relationships with her father and brother, her estranged mother, her best friend, and her new boyfriend, all are painfully crystallized in the precious weeks before Tessa's time finally runs out.

### Beneath a Meth Moon

192 pages

Jacqueline Woodson

Laurel Daneau has moved on to a new life, in a new town, but inside she's still reeling from the loss of her beloved mother and grandmother after Hurricane Katrina washed away their home. Laurel's new life is going well, with a new best friend, a place on the cheerleading squad and T-Boom, co-captain of the basketball team, for a boyfriend. Yet Laurel is haunted by voices and memories from her past. When T-Boom introduces Laurel to meth, she immediately falls under its spell, loving the way it erases, even if only briefly, her past. But as she becomes alienated from her friends and family, she becomes a shell of her former self, and longs to be whole again. With help from an artist named Moses and her friend Kaylee, she's able to begin to rewrite her story and start to move on from her addiction.

### Between Shades of Gray

344 pages

Ruta Sepetys

Lina is just like any other fifteen-year-old Lithuanian girl in 1941. She paints, she draws, she gets crushes on boys. Until one night when Soviet officers barge into her home, tearing her family from the comfortable life they've known. Separated from her father, forced onto a crowded and dirty train car, Lina, her mother, and her young brother slowly make their way north, crossing the Arctic Circle, to a work camp in the coldest reaches of Siberia. Here they are forced, under Stalin's orders, to dig for beets and fight for their lives under the cruelest of conditions. Lina finds solace in her art, meticulously and at great risk-documenting events by drawing, hoping these messages will make their way to her father's prison camp to let him know they are still alive. It is a long and harrowing journey, spanning years and covering 6,500 miles, but it is through incredible strength, love, and hope that Lina ultimately survives.

**Bootleg: Murder, Moonshine, and the Lawless Years of Prohibition**      **160 pages**      **Karen Blumenthal**

It began with the best of intentions. Worried about the effects of alcohol on American families, mothers and civic leaders started a movement to outlaw drinking in public places. Over time, their protests, petitions, and activism paid off—when a Constitutional Amendment banning the sale and consumption of alcohol was ratified, it was hailed as the end of public drunkenness, alcoholism, and a host of other social ills related to booze. Instead, it began a decade of lawlessness, when children smuggled (and drank) illegal alcohol, the most upright citizens casually broke the law, and a host of notorious gangsters entered the public eye. Filled with period art and photographs, anecdotes, and portraits of unique characters from the era, this fascinating book looks at the rise and fall of the disastrous social experiment known as Prohibition.

**Butterfly Clues**      **336 pages**      **Kate Ellison**

Penelope, aka “Lo,” has several obsessive urges—she is drawn to multiples of the number three, repeats the word “banana” for security, and steals various items that she hoards and carefully organizes in her attic bedroom. These compulsions have intensified since her beloved older brother, Oren, died, as has her habit of roaming from her suburban home into different neighborhoods of Cleveland. On one such journey to a seedy section of town dubbed Neverland, Lo is almost hit by a stray bullet. When she learns that a girl was murdered nearby and discovers some of the dead girl’s jewelry at a flea market, Lo becomes determined to find the killer. The mystery pulls Lo into an underworld of strip clubs, drugs, and crime, and also introduces her to Flynt, a street artist who she connects with.

**Chain Reaction**      **320 pages**      **Simone Elkeles**

In this third installment in the Perfect Chemistry Series, Luis Fuentes has always been sheltered from the gang violence that nearly destroyed his brothers’ lives. But that didn’t stop him from taking risks—whether he’s scaling a mountain in the Rockies or dreaming of a future as an astronaut, Luis can’t stop looking for the next thrill. Nikki Cruz lives her life by three rules—boys lie to get their way, don’t trust a boy who says “I love you,” and never date a boy from the south side of Fairfield. Her parents may be from Mexico, but as a doctor’s daughter, she has more in common with her north-side neighbors than the Latino Blood at her school. Then she meets Luis at Alex’s wedding, and suddenly, she’s tempted to break all her rules. Getting Nikki to take a chance on a southsider is Luis’s biggest challenge, until he finds himself targeted by Chuy Soto, the new head of the Latino Blood. When Chuy reveals a disturbing secret about Luis’s family, the youngest Fuentes finds himself questioning everything he’s ever believed to be true. Will his feelings for Nikki be enough to stop Luis from entering a dark and violent world and permanently living on the edge?

**Chime**      **368 pages**      **Franny Billingsley**

Since her stepmother’s recent death, 17-year-old Briony Larkin knows that if she can keep two secrets—that she is a witch and that she is responsible for the accident that left Rose, her identical twin, mentally compromised—and remember to hate herself always, no other harm will befall her family in their Swampsea parsonage at the beginning of the twentieth century. The arrival of Mr. Clayborne, a city engineer, and his university-dropout son, Eldric, makes Briony’s task difficult. Clayborne’s plan to drain the swamp has made the Old Ones unhappy, particularly the Boggy Mun, who has plagued the village’s children with swamp cough in retaliation. When Rose’s lingering illness turns into a cough, Briony knows that she must do whatever it takes, even revealing her secrets, to save her sister. While thwarting the advances of an arsenic-addicted suitor, Briony must also deny her feelings for Eldric, even as he helps her solve the puzzle that has become her life.

**Dash and Lily’s Book of Dares**      **272 pages**      **Rachel Cohn and David Levithan**

Lily has left a red notebook full of challenges on a favorite bookstore shelf, waiting for just the right guy to come along and accept its dares. But is Dash that right guy? Or are Dash and Lily only destined to trade dares, dreams, and desires in the notebook they pass back and forth at locations across New York? Could their in-person selves possibly connect as well as their notebook versions? Or will they be a comic mismatch of disastrous proportions?

**Fault in Our Stars, The**      **336 pages**      **John Green**

Diagnosed with Stage IV thyroid cancer at 12, Hazel was prepared to die until, at 14, a medical miracle shrunk the tumors in her lungs...for now. Two years post-miracle, sixteen-year-old Hazel is post-everything else, too; post-high school, post-friends and post-normalcy. And even though she could live for a long time (whatever that means), Hazel lives tethered to an oxygen tank, the tumors tenuously kept at bay with a constant chemical assault. Enter Augustus Waters. A match made at a cancer kid support group, Augustus is gorgeous, in remission, and shockingly to Hazel, interested in her. Being with Augustus is both an unexpected destination and a long-needed journey, pushing Hazel to re-examine how sickness and health, life and death, will define her and the legacy that everyone leaves behind.

**Heaven is For Real**      **163 pages**      **Todd Burpo**

*The* true story of the four-year old son of a small town Nebraska pastor who during emergency surgery slips from consciousness and enters heaven. He survives and begins talking about being able to look down and see the doctor operating and his dad praying in the waiting room. The family didn’t know what to believe but soon the evidence was clear. Told by the father, but often in Colton’s own words, the disarmingly simple message is heaven is a real place, Jesus really loves children, and be ready, there is a coming last battle.

**Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children****352 pages****Ransom Riggs**

A mysterious island. An abandoned orphanage. A strange collection of very curious photographs. It all waits to be discovered in *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*, an unforgettable novel that mixes fiction and photography in a thrilling reading experience. As our story opens, a horrific family tragedy sets sixteen-year-old Jacob journeying to a remote island off the coast of Wales, where he discovers the crumbling ruins of Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children. As Jacob explores its abandoned bedrooms and hallways, it becomes clear that the children were more than just peculiar. They may have been dangerous. They may have been quarantined on a deserted island for good reason. And somehow—impossible though it seems—they may still be alive.

**Night Circus, The****400 pages****Erin Morgenstern**

The circus arrives without warning. No announcements precede it. It is simply there, when yesterday it was not. Within the black-and-white striped canvas tents is an utterly unique experience full of breathtaking amazements. It is called *Le Cirque des Rêves*, and it is only open at night. But behind the scenes, a fierce competition is underway—a duel between two young magicians, Celia and Marco, who have been trained since childhood expressly for this purpose by their mercurial instructors. Unbeknownst to them, this is a game in which only one can be left standing, and the circus is but the stage for a remarkable battle of imagination and will. Despite themselves, however, Celia and Marco tumble headfirst into love—a deep, magical love that makes the lights flicker and the room grow warm whenever they so much as brush hands. True love or not, the game must play out, and the fates of everyone involved, from the cast of extraordinary circus performers to the patrons, hang in the balance, suspended as precariously as the daring acrobats overhead.

**Paper Covers Rock****192 pages****Jenny Hubbard**

At the beginning of his junior year at a boys' boarding school, 16-year-old Alex is devastated when he fails to save a drowning friend. When questioned, Alex and his friend Glenn, who was also at the river, begin weaving their web of lies. Plagued by guilt, Alex takes refuge in the library, telling his tale in a journal he hides behind *Moby-Dick*. Caught in the web with Alex and Glenn is their English teacher, Miss Dovecott, fresh out of Princeton, who suspects there's more to what happened at the river when she perceives guilt in Alex's writing for class. She also sees poetic talent in Alex, which she encourages. As Alex responds to her attention, he discovers his true voice, one that goes against the boarding school bravado that Glenn embraces. When Glenn becomes convinced that Miss Dovecott is out to get them, Alex must choose between them.

**Perfect****640 pages****Ellen Hopkins**

Everyone has something, someone, somewhere else that they'd rather be. For four high-school seniors, their goals of perfection are just as different as the paths they take to get there. Cara's parents' unrealistic expectations have already sent her twin brother Conner spiraling toward suicide. For her, *perfect* means rejecting their ideals to take a chance on a new kind of love. Kendra covets the perfect face and body—no matter what surgeries and drugs she needs to get there. To score his perfect home run—on the field and off—Sean will sacrifice more than he can ever win back. And Andre realizes that to follow his heart and achieve his perfect performance, he'll be living a life his ancestors would never have understood. Everyone wants to be perfect, but when perfection loses its meaning, how far will you go? What would *you* give up to be *perfect*?

**Pick-up Game: A Full Day of Full Court****176 pages****Marc Aronson, Editor**

It's one steamy July day at the West 4th Street Court in NYC, otherwise known as The Cage. Hotshot ESPN is wooing the scouts, Boo is struggling to guard the weird new guy named Waco, a Spike Lee wannabe has video rolling, and virgin Irene is sizing up six-foot-eight-and-a-half-inch Chester. Nine of YA literature's top writers, including Walter Dean Myers, Rita Williams-Garcia, Adam Rapp, Joseph Bruchac, and Sharon Flake reveal how it all goes down in a searing collection of short stories, in which each one picks up where the previous one ends. Characters weave in and out of narratives, perspectives change, and emotions play out for a fluid and fast-paced ode to the game.

**Playing With the Enemy****300 pages****Gary W. Moore**

15 year old Gene Moore was a farm boy living with his family in Sesser, Illinois. When he wasn't in school or helping his Pop with chores on the farm, Gene was playing baseball with the guys on the town team. Some were twice his age. The older fellows didn't mind having the Moore kid on their team because he could hit the ball farther than anyone else, he was the best catcher anyone had ever seen, he could throw men out from his knees, and not a ball ever got past him and could hit the ball a country mile. Headed for baseball stardom with the Brooklyn Dodgers, Gene's destiny was interrupted by Pearl Harbor. After playing ball for the Navy in the Azores and North Africa, Gene and his team were sent to the States for a special-and top secret-mission: guarding German sailors captured from U-505. Unable to field a team, Gene convinced his commander to allow him to teach the enemy how to play baseball while he and his teammates waited for the war to end so they could be called up into the Major Leagues. But Gene's future changed irrevocably in Louisiana. Inspired by true events, *Playing with the Enemy*, written by Gene's son Gary Moore, is the riveting story of a depression-era youth and his brush with destiny.

**Prayer for Owen Meany, A****543 pages****John Irving**

In the summer of 1953, two eleven-year-old boys—best friends—are playing in a Little League baseball game in Gravesend, New Hampshire. One of the boys hits a foul ball that kills the other boy's mother. The boy who hits the ball doesn't believe in accidents; Owen Meany believes he is God's instrument. What happens to Owen, after that 1953 foul ball, is extraordinary and terrifying.

**Running Dream, The****352 pages****Wendelin Van Draanen**

Jessica thinks her life is over when she loses a leg in a car accident. She's not comforted by the news that she'll be able to walk with the help of a prosthetic leg. Who cares about walking when you live to run? As she struggles to cope with crutches and a first cyborg-like prosthetic, Jessica feels oddly both in the spotlight and invisible. People who don't know what to say, act like she's not there. Which she could handle better if she weren't now keenly aware that she'd done the same thing herself to a girl with CP named Rosa. A girl who is going to tutor her through all the math she's missed. A girl who sees right into the heart of her. With the support of family, friends, a coach, and her track teammates, Jessica may actually be able to run again. But that's not enough for her now. She doesn't just want to cross finish lines herself—she wants to take Rosa with her.

**Scorpio Races****416 pages****Maggie Stiefvater**

It happens at the start of every November: the Scorpio Races. Riders attempt to keep hold of their water horses long enough to make it to the finish line. Some riders live, others die. At age nineteen, Sean Kendrick is the returning champion. He is a young man of few words, and if he has any fears, he keeps them buried deep, where no one else can see them. Puck Connolly is different. She never meant to ride in the Scorpio Races. But fate hasn't given her much of a choice. So she enters the competition - the first girl ever to do so. She is in no way prepared for what is going to happen.

**Unwind****352 pages****Neal Shusterman**

In America after the Second Civil War, the Pro-Choice and Pro-Life armies came to an agreement: The Bill of Life states that human life may not be touched from the moment of conception until a child reaches the age of thirteen. Between the ages of thirteen and eighteen, however, a parent may choose to retroactively get rid of a child through a process called "unwinding." Unwinding ensures that the child's life doesn't "technically" end by transplanting all the organs in the child's body to various recipients. Now a common and accepted practice in society, troublesome or unwanted teens are able to easily be unwound. With breath-taking suspense, this book follows three teens who all become runaway Unwinds: Connor, a rebel whose parents have ordered his unwinding; Risa, a ward of the state who is to be unwound due to cost-cutting; and Lev, his parents' tenth child whose unwinding has been planned since birth as a religious tithing.

**Where Things Come Back****240 pages****John Corey Whaley**

Just when seventeen-year-old Cullen Witter thinks he understands everything about his small and painfully dull Arkansas town, it all disappears. In the summer before Cullen's senior year, a nominally-depressed birdwatcher named John Barling thinks he spots a species of woodpecker thought to be extinct since the 1940s in Lily, Arkansas. His rediscovery of the so-called Lazarus Woodpecker sparks a flurry of press and woodpecker-mania. Soon all the kids are getting woodpecker haircuts and everyone's eating "Lazarus burgers." But as absurd as the town's carnival atmosphere has become, nothing is more startling than the realization that Cullen's sensitive, gifted fifteen-year-old brother Gabriel has suddenly and inexplicably disappeared. While Cullen navigates his way through a summer of finding and losing love, holding his fragile family together, and muddling his way into adulthood, a young missionary in Africa, who has lost his faith, is searching for any semblance of meaning wherever he can find it. As distant as the two stories seem at the start, they are thoughtfully woven ever closer together and through masterful plotting, brought face to face in a surprising and harrowing climax.

**Why We Broke Up****368 pages****Daniel Handler** Min Green and

Ed Slaterton are breaking up, so Min is writing Ed a letter and giving him a box. Inside the box is why they broke up. Two bottle caps, a movie ticket, a folded note, a box of matches, a protractor, books, a toy truck, a pair of ugly earrings, a comb from a motel room, and every other item collected over the course of a giddy, intimate, heartbreaking relationship. Item after item is illustrated and accounted for, and then the box, like a girlfriend, will be dumped.