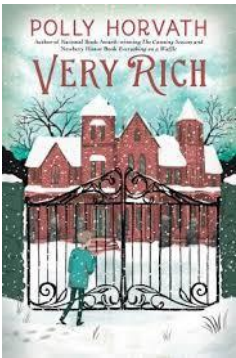




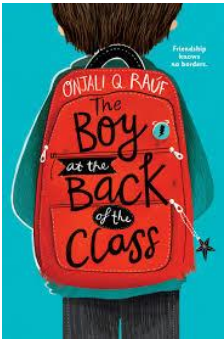
2021-2022 It List Nominees



Very Rich By Polly Horvath

Published September 25th 2018 by Puffin Books

Ten-year-old Rupert Brown comes from an ordinary family. They live in a small house in the poorest section of Steelville, Ohio, and have little money or food. So when Rupert inadvertently finds himself spending Christmas at the house of Turgid River -- the richest boy in town -- he is blown away to discover a whole other world, including all the food he can eat and wonderful prizes that he wins when the family plays games, prizes he hopes to take home to his family so they can have Christmas presents for the very first time. But this windfall is short-lived when Rupert loses it all in one last game and goes home empty-handed. Each member of the Rivers family feels guilty about what happened and, unbeknownst to each other, tries to make it up to Rupert in their own unique way, taking him on one unlikely adventure after another.



The Boy at the Back of the Class by Onjali Q. Rauf

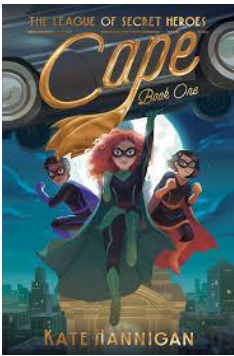
Published August 6th 2019 by Delacorte Press

In the vein of timely titles such as Alan Gratz's *Refugee* comes a touching, accessible middle-grade debut about the ongoing Syrian refugee crisis, as well as the life-changing power of friendship and standing as an ally.

There used to be an empty chair at the back of Mrs. Khan's classroom, but on the third Tuesday of the school year a new kid fills it: nine-year-old Ahmet, a Syrian refugee.

The whole class is curious about this new boy--he doesn't seem to smile, and he doesn't talk much. But after learning that Ahmet fled a Very Real War and was separated from his family along the way, a determined group of his classmates bands together to concoct the Greatest Idea in the World--a magnificent plan to reunite Ahmet with his loved ones.

Balancing humor and heart, this relatable story about the refugee crisis from the perspective of kids highlights the community-changing potential of standing as an ally and reminds readers that everyone deserves a place to call home.



Cape

By Kate Hannigan

Published August 6th 2019 by Aladdin

A brilliant girl puzzler discovers she's part of a superhero team!

Josie O'Malley does a lot to help out Mam after her father goes off to fight the Nazis, but she wishes she could do more—like all those caped heroes who now seem to have disappeared. If Josie can't fly and control weather like her idol, Zenobia, maybe she can put her math smarts to use cracking puzzles for the government.

After an official tosses out her puzzler test because she's a girl, it soon becomes clear that an even more top-secret agency has its eye on Josie, along with two other applicants: Akiko and Mae. The trio bonds over their shared love of female superhero celebrities, from Fantomah to Zenobia to the Black Cat. But during one extraordinary afternoon, they find themselves transformed into the newest (and youngest!) superheroes in town. As the girls' abilities slowly begin to emerge, they learn that their skills will be crucial in thwarting a shapeshifting henchman of Hitler, and, just maybe, in solving an even larger mystery about the superheroes who've recently gone missing.

Inspired by real-life women from World War II—the human computers and earliest programmers called “the ENIAC Six”.



Remarkables

by Margaret Peterson Haddix

Published September 24th 2019 by Katherine Tegen Books

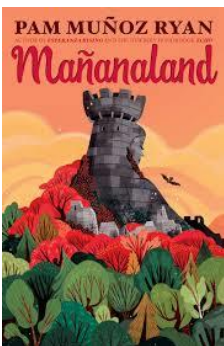
New York Times bestselling author Margaret Peterson Haddix, the master of cliffhangers, delivers a pulse-pounding mystery perfect for fans of Jacqueline West and Kat Yeh, full of secrets, surprises, and the power of family.

One minute they're there: laughing and having fun at the house next door. The next minute, the teens are gone. *Like magic*. Marin can't believe her eyes. Who are they? Can anyone else see them? What makes them so happy?

Marin is lonely in this new town of hers and eager to figure out more. Then she meets Charley, who reveals that he knows about them, too.

He calls them the “Remarkables.” Charley warns her to stay away from the Remarkables—and him. Charley and Marin both have painful secrets they're holding on to, but could solving the mystery of the Remarkables help them both?

In addition to building an intriguing world filled with mystery, Haddix also grounds the story with real issues that many children face. Characters deal with the complexities of bullying, the guilt children experience when parents have addiction issues, and the uplifting power found in strong families of all shapes and sizes.



Mañanaland

by Pam Muñoz Ryan

Published March 3rd 2020 by Scholastic Press

Maximiliano Córdoba loves stories, especially the legend Buelo tells him about a mythical gatekeeper who can guide brave travelers on a journey into tomorrow.

If Max could see tomorrow, he would know if he'd make Santa Maria's celebrated fútbol team and whether he'd ever meet his mother, who disappeared when he was a baby. He longs to know more about her, but Papá won't talk. So when Max uncovers a buried family secret--involving an underground network of guardians who lead people fleeing a neighboring country to safety--he decides to seek answers on his own. With a treasured compass, a mysterious stone rubbing, and Buelo's legend as his only guides, he sets out on a perilous quest to discover if he is true of heart and what the future holds.



We're Not From Here

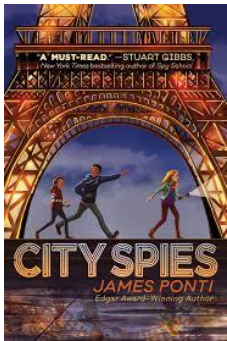
by Geoff Rodkey

Published March 10th 2020 by Yearling Books

Imagine being forced to move to a new planet where YOU are the alien! From the creator of the Tapper Twins, *New York Times* bestselling author Geoff Rodkey delivers a topical, sci-fi middle-grade novel that proves friendship and laughter can transcend even a galaxy of differences.

The first time I heard about Planet Choom, we'd been on Mars for almost a year. But life on the Mars station was grim, and since Earth was no longer an option (we may have blown it up), it was time to find a new home.

That's how we ended up on Choom with the Zhuri. They're very smart. They also look like giant mosquitos. But that's not why it's so hard to live here. There's a lot that the Zhuri don't like: singing (just ask my sister, Ila), comedy (one joke got me sent to the principal's office), or any kind of emotion. The biggest problem, though? The Zhuri don't like us. And if humankind is going to survive, it's up to *my* family to change their minds. No pressure.



City Spies

By James Ponti

Published March 10th 2020 by Aladdin

Sara Martinez is a hacker. She recently broke into the New York City foster care system to expose her foster parents as cheats and lawbreakers. However, instead of being hailed as a hero, Sara finds herself facing years in a juvenile detention facility and banned from using computers for the same stretch of time. Enter Mother, a British spy who not only gets Sara released from jail but also offers her a chance to make a home for herself within a secret MI6 agency.

Operating out of a base in Scotland, the City Spies are five kids from various parts of the world. When they're not attending the local boarding school, they're honing their unique skills, such as sleight of hand, breaking and entering, observation, and explosives. All of these allow them to go places in the world of espionage where adults can't.

Before she knows what she's doing, Sarah is heading to Paris for an international youth summit, hacking into a rival school's computer to prevent them from winning a million euros, dangling thirty feet off the side of a building, and trying to stop a villain...all while navigating the complex dynamics of her new team.

No one said saving the world was easy...



Seekers of the Wild Realm

By Alexandra Ott

Published July 7th 2020 by Aladdin

Fablehaven meets *How to Train Your Dragon* in this action-packed fantasy about a young boy and girl who become reluctant allies when caring for a baby dragon—the first in a brand-new duology!

Twelve-year-old Bryn has always dreamed of becoming a Seeker, just like her dad. Only the Seekers are allowed to journey from their small village into the fantastical, untamed wilderness of their island known as the Wild Realm. Once there, they obtain magical items for the village and use magic to protect and heal the incredible creatures native to the Realm.

When one of the elderly Seekers retires, leaving a vacant position, Bryn knows this may be her chance. There's just one problem: Only boys have ever been Seekers. And the training master makes it clear he will not be training a girl.

But then Bryn's biggest rival for the Seeker position, a boy named Ari, shows up at her door. He reveals the baby dragon



he's been hiding, and the two strike a deal—if Bryn helps care for the dragon, Ari will share all his training with her.

Even as the two bond over their love of magical animals and their secret trips into the Wild Realm, Bryn doesn't completely trust Ari's motives. Especially as she suspects Ari may know more than he's letting on about the enemy clan stirring up unrest in their village.

When all these secrets come to a head and the stakes are at their highest, Bryn realizes it's up to her to save her family...and the Realm.



Sky Song

By Abi Elphinstone

Published November 17th 2020 by Aladdin

A cursed girl and a young inventor join forces to search for an ancient, forgotten song with the power to bring down a wicked Queen in this epic fantasy adventure perfect for fans of *The Girl Who Drank the Moon* and *Furthermore*.

The snowy kingdom of Erkenwald was once a magical place—until an evil ice witch cursed the land and began stealing the voices of the kingdom's people to increase her powers.

Eska is one of the many prisoners of the Ice Queen. With no memories of her past, Eska only knows that she cannot allow the Ice Queen to take her voice, that it might be special in some way...

When young inventor Flint sneaks into the Ice Queen's palace in an attempt to rescue his mother, he ends up rescuing Eska instead. Together, Flint and Eska must journey to the Never Cliffs and beyond in search of an ancient, long-forgotten song with the power to end the Ice Queen's reign and return voice back to the people of Erkenwald.

This is the story of an eagle huntress, a boy inventor, and a wicked queen in a castle made from ice. But it's also a story about finding a place to belong, even at the farthest reaches of the world.



Stella

By McCall Hoyle

Published October 6th 2020 by Bloomsbury Publishing PLC

Even dogs deserve a second chance.

Ever since she was a puppy, Stella was trained to use her powerful beagle nose to sniff out dangerous chemicals and help her handler keep people safe. But during a routine security inspection, Stella misses the scent of an explosive. The sound of the blast is loud and scary. Unable to go back to work because of her anxiety, Stella is retired as a working dog.

When a young girl named Cloe wants to adopt Stella, the beagle knows this is her last chance to prove her worth. But how? When Stella smells a strange chemical inside Cloe's body, a scent that surges just before the girl has a seizure, Stella's nose makes the connection. But how can Stella warn her new family without them thinking she's having an anxiety attack? How can she convince others that she can be a new kind of service dog and hopefully save Cloe's life?

Told from Stella's perspective, this story is about a special dog who must find the courage to overcome her fears in order to help save a young girl with epilepsy.