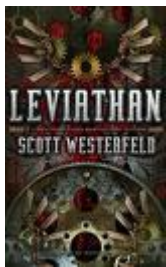


New Books – April 2010



Leviathan (Scott Westerfeld)

This is World War I as never seen before. The story begins the same: on June 28, 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife are assassinated, triggering a sequence of alliances that plunges the world into war. But that is where the similarity ends. This global conflict is between the Clankers, who put their faith in machines, and the Darwinists, whose technology is based on the development of new species. After the assassination of his parents, Prince Aleksandar's people turn on him. Accompanied by a small group of loyal servants, the young Clanker flees Austria in a Cyklop Stormwalker, a war machine that walks on two legs. Meanwhile, as Deryn Sharp trains to be an airman with the British Air Service, she prays that no one will discover that she is a girl. She serves on the Leviathan, a massive biological airship that resembles an enormous flying whale and functions as a self-contained ecosystem. When it crashes in Switzerland, the two teens cross paths, and suddenly the line between enemy and ally is no longer clearly defined.



Roar (Emma Clayton)

In a bleak future, humans use terrible chemicals to fight The Animal Plague that causes all of the world's animals to go rabid and renders most of the planet uninhabitable. The population now covers in overcrowded walled cities. Mika, 12, and his parents live in London in terrible conditions. His twin, Ellie, supposedly drowned a year earlier, but Mika is convinced that she still lives. He's right. The story begins with Ellie and a tiny monkey named Puck fleeing a spaceship in a stolen Pod Fighter. Sadly, their attempt to escape is foiled by the evil Mal Gorman, who has a plan to co-opt the entire first generation of children born after the Plague and make them into an army for his own nefarious purposes. And Gorman has special plans for kids like Mika and Ellie, whose mutations give them unique abilities. To save his sister, Mika will have to win a contest involving simulator battle games and many deadly challenges, using abilities he never knew he had.



I So Don't Do Mysteries (Barrie Summy)

With the help of her mother and her grandfather, both of whom happen to be deceased, Sherry Holmes Baldwin is out to stop an evil rhino killer. The seventh grader thought her trip to San Diego to stay with her great-aunt, along with her friend Junie and Junie's cousin, would be filled with sunbathing and shopping. That was until her mother's ghost appeared to her and informed Sherry that she needed help with an important Academy of Spirits assignment. If she fails to stop whoever is plotting to kill rhinos at the Wild Animal Park, she will be banished to an afterlife reserved for Academy failures.



The Brooklyn Nine (Alan Gratz)

In loosely connected chapters, Gratz examines how one Brooklyn family is affected by the game of baseball. Ten-year-old German immigrant Felix Schneider arrives in America in the mid-19th century and uses his speed to good advantage both on the ball field and as a runner delivering the goods his uncle, a cloth cutter, produces. His fortunes and his family's take a turn for the worse, however, when his legs are badly injured in the great Manhattan fire of 1845 (where he encounters volunteer firefighter Alexander Cartwright, the father of modern baseball). Subsequent "innings" deal with Felix's son, Louis, who has compassion for a Confederate soldier because of their shared love of baseball; Walter Snider, a Brooklyn Superbas batboy who secures a tryout for legendary Negro Leagues star Cyclone Joe Williams and discovers the ugliness of anti-Semitism and racial prejudice; and Jimmy Flint, a 10-year-old in 1957, who worries about the class bully, Sputnik, nuclear annihilation—and the Dodgers leaving Brooklyn.

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Thirteenth Child (Patricia Wrede)

In this alternative history, a magical barrier protects most people from the dangerous magical creatures of the Wild West. Eff is a 13th unlucky child who supposedly will cause doom and misfortune, and is twin sister to Lan, the lucky and extra-magical 7th son of a 7th son. This novel covers a lot of ground both in time, following Eff from when she's 5 until she's 18, and in distance, as Eff's family moves to the Western frontier when Eff's magic-professor father and practical mother decide that the move will hide Eff and Lan's differences. Then Lan's potential is revealed after he causes an annoying classmate to float. When he leaves to go to school back East, Eff follows her own path to learning more about magic, including assisting in caring for the magical creatures at her father's college. Her narration provides background about life in this version of early America, where magic helps with daily chores but brings its own dangers.



Coffeehouse Angel (Suzanne Selfors)

In quaint, Scandinavian Nordby, WA, orphaned high school sophomore Katrina Svensen lives above her grandmother's struggling old-world coffeehouse. College applications are due, and she's desperate to discover a true talent, like best friends Vincent, a trophy-laden swimmer, and Elizabeth, an artist, have. Opening the coffeehouse one morning, Katrina discovers a young man prostrate in its alley. Assuming he's homeless or on a bender, she leaves him day-old pastries and fresh coffee, then locks herself inside and calls Vincent. The next time Katrina sees the handsome vagrant, Malcolm, he's declaring in school assembly that he must reward Katrina's unselfish deed with her greatest desire. Malcolm's a messenger angel, but his several attempts to grant the girl's heart's desire go awry. Naming this desire proves difficult for her as she wonders whether she should choose to keep the rival coffeehouse's owner away from her grandmother's business and his daughter away from Vincent, find her passion, or perhaps keep the handsome Malcolm around.



Ruined: A Novel (Paula Morris)

Rebecca couldn't feel more out of place in New Orleans, where she comes to spend the year while her dad is traveling. She's staying in a creepy old house with her aunt. And at the snooty prep school, the filthy-rich girls treat Rebecca like she's invisible. Only gorgeous, unavailable Anton Grey seems to give Rebecca the time of day, but she wonders if he's got a hidden agenda. Then one night, in Lafayette Cemetery, Rebecca makes a friend. Sweet, mysterious Lisette is eager to talk to Rebecca, and to show her the nooks and crannies of the city. There's just one catch: Lisette is a ghost.

A ghost with a deep, dark secret, and a serious score to settle.

As Rebecca learns more from her ghost friend -- and as she slowly learns to trust Anton Grey -- she also uncovers startling truths about her own history. Will Rebecca be able to right the wrongs of the past, or has everything been ruined beyond repair?



Melting Stones (Tamora Pierce)

The council of mages, The Winding Circle, has received a request from the Battle Islands for assistance. Their plants are dying and their rivers are turning to acid, and the situation is getting worse. The Circle sends two mages, along with a student who has gotten herself into a bit of trouble. Evvy has a choice—either go on the mission or be confined to Discipline Cottage. Her mentor is one of the mages, so she chooses to accompany them. When they arrive at the island, they discover that Evvy might be useful after all. What follows is a riveting story that has many inventive and exciting plot twists and turns.

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Waiting for Normal (Leslie Connor)

We've seen this situation before: a parent neglects a child, while the child seeks a wider community to find support. Here that child is 12-year-old Addie, who lives with Mommers in a trailer on a busy street in Schenectady after her adored stepfather and half sisters move upstate. Mommers has lost custody of the "littles" because of neglect, and though she and Addie can laugh together, once Mommers hooks up with Pete, she is not much for good times—though she brings the bad times home. Addie finds solace in occasional visits to her sisters and in her neighbors, especially Soula, ill from her chemotherapy treatments. Connor takes a familiar plot and elevates it with smartly written characters and unexpected moments. Addie starts out being a kid who thinks she has to go along to get along, but as Mommers' actions become more egregious, her spine stiffens. And though Addie loves her time upstate, she is willing to forgo it when the normality she has there is more painful than positive.



Time of the Witches (Anna Myers)

An orphan named Drucilla has finally has a place to call home with the Putnam family in Salem. Although her adopted mother is strange—haunted by a troubled past—Dru feels drawn to her as the mother she never had. When a new reverend and his family move into town with their servant Tituba, life takes a strange turn as young girls begin to fall ill and accusations of witchcraft begin to swirl. Reluctant to turn her back on the Putnams or her peers and overwhelmed by the power of groupthink among the other girls in town, Dru becomes one of the accusers herself. But when her best friend Gabe is accused, she must find a way to end the hysteria, or risk losing him forever.



Antsy Does Time (Neal Shusterman)

In this sequel to *The Schwa Was Here* (Dutton, 2004), Brooklynite Antsy Bonano, 14, finds another peculiar friend, a Swedish import named Gunnar Ümlaut. When a balloon from the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade gets away, Antsy and his friends Howie and Ira head into Manhattan to follow the debacle. On the way, they run into their classmate Gunnar. Watching the catastrophe unfold, he confides to Antsy that he's been "coming to disasters" lately, and that he's dying of Pulmonary Monoxic Systemia. Gunnar says he has only six months to live, so Antsy gives him one of his own, drawing up a legal-looking document, and, before he knows it, the whole school's giving Gunnar months of their lives. Spending more time at Gunnar's house, Antsy falls for his friend's older sister, and also notices that things seem off.