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# Merci Suarez Changes Gears

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Merci Suárez Can't Dance

Mango, Abuela, and Me

Some Places More Than Others

The Power of One

Rebound

Don't Check Out This Book!

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Merci Suarez Changes Gears  
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The Girl Who Could Silence the Wind

All the Impossible Things  
Turtle Boy  
Shouting at the Rain

*Merci Suarez Changes  
Gears*

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## DAKOTA ALEX

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**Merci Suárez Can't Dance** Candlewick Press

A beautiful coming-of-age story for fans of Front Desk and *Merci Suárez Changes Gears*, this book celebrates identity, language, heritage, family, and the determination to follow one's own inner light. Have you ever been the best at something . . . only to lose it all? Luz Véliz is a soccer star—or rather, she was a soccer star. With her serious knee injury, it's unlikely she'll be back on the

field anytime soon. But without soccer, who is she? Even her dad treats her differently now—like he doesn't know her or, worse, like he doesn't even like her. When Luz discovers she has a knack for coding, it feels like a lifeline to a better self. If she can just ace the May Showcase, she'll not only skip a level in her coding courses and impress Ms. Freeman and intriguing, brilliant Trevor—she'll have her parents cheering her on from the sidelines, just the way she likes it. But something—someone—is about to enter the Vélizes' life. And when Solana arrives, nothing will be the same, ever again. Unforgettable characters,

family drama, and dauntless determination illuminate Luz's journey as she summons her inner strength and learns to accept others and embrace the enduring connection of family. Through it all, Luz's light is a constant—a guide for others, a path forward through the dark, and an ineffable celebration of her own eternal self. This is the second novel by Pure Belpré Honor winner Rebecca Balcárcel!

**FAST-PACED FAMILY DRAMA:** Fast-paced, deeply felt, and with all the high highs and low lows of adolescence, this story is downright fun—a page-turner even while it's dealing with serious issues.

**WHO AM I?** This book grapples with a topic so many young people deal with daily: one's relationship to heritage and culture. Luz confronts her ties to her home country, the place

of her father's birth, and her family itself in a thoughtful, emotional journey filled with humor, urgency, and grace.

**CODING IS COOL!:** Coding is a language many kids enjoy learning and are encouraged to master. The way this book frames coding and computer programming as an opportunity for communication, bonding, and building fun, practical skills will speak loudly to kids already interested in the field while also resonating with those who aren't.

**AN ALL-AMERICAN EXPERIENCE:** This is an important book for its thought-provoking, empathetic look at immigration in the United States and at how the threat of deportation informs the experiences of some of our country's most vulnerable communities. With lyrical prose, deeply felt characters, and

a relatable story, *Shine On, Luz* adds substantively to our fraught discussion about immigration and opens it to young readers. AUTHOR ON THE RISE: Rebecca Balcárcel won the Pura Belpré Author Honor, which recognizes literature for children or youth that best portrays the Latino cultural experience, for her first book, *The Other Half of Happy*. She is a beloved presence in the children's literature community and is making her mark as a writer to watch. Perfect for:

- Kids who love reading about family and friend drama
- Kids who love coding
- Parents
- Grandparents
- Educators

Fans of Meg Medina, Rebecca Stead, and Kelly Yang  
*Mango, Abuela, and Me Yearling*  
In a racially polarized classroom in 1970

Alabama, Lu's talent for running track makes her a new best friend — and tests her mettle as she navigates the school's social cliques. Miss Garrett's classroom is like every other at our school. White kids sit on one side and black kids on the other. I'm one of the few middle-rowers who split the difference. Sixth-grader Lu Olivera just wants to keep her head down and get along with everyone in her class. Trouble is, Lu's old friends have been changing lately — acting boy crazy and making snide remarks about Lu's newfound talent for running track. Lu's secret hope for a new friend is fellow runner Belinda Gresham, but in 1970 Red Grove, Alabama, blacks and whites don't mix. As segregationist ex-governor George Wallace ramps up his campaign against the current governor, Albert

Brewer, growing tensions in the state — and in the classroom — mean that Lu can't stay neutral about the racial divide at school. Will she find the gumption to stand up for what's right and to choose friends who do the same?

*Some Places More Than Others*

Bloomsbury Publishing USA

A romantic and exhilarating historical adventure about a girl who must unlock the secrets within *Paradise Lost* to save her father—perfect for fans of *Revolution and Code Name Verity*—from acclaimed author Anne Blankman, whose debut novel, *Prisoner of Night and Fog*, was a Sydney Taylor Notable Book for Teens in 2015. Six years have passed since England's King Charles II returned from exile to reclaim the throne, ushering in a new era of stability for his subjects.

Except for Elizabeth Milton. The daughter of notorious poet John Milton, Elizabeth has never known her place in this shifting world—except by her father's side. By day she helps transcribe his latest masterpiece, the epic poem *Paradise Lost*, and by night she learns languages and sword fighting. Although she does not dare object, she suspects that he's training her for a mission whose purpose she cannot fathom. Until one night the king's men arrive at her family's country home to arrest her father. Determined to save him, Elizabeth follows his one cryptic clue and journeys to Oxford, accompanied by her father's mysterious young houseguest, Antonio Viviani, a darkly handsome Italian scientist who surprises her at every turn. Funny, brilliant, and

passionate, Antonio seems just as determined to protect her father as she is—but can she trust him with her heart? When the two discover that Milton has planted an explosive secret in the half-finished *Paradise Lost*—a secret the king and his aristocratic supporters are desperate to conceal—Elizabeth is faced with a devastating choice: cling to the shelter of her old life, or risk cracking the code, unleashing a secret that could save her father . . . and tear apart the very fabric of society.

**The Power of One** Candlewick Press  
Apolonia "Lina" Flores is a sock enthusiast, a volleyball player, a science lover, and a girl who's just looking for answers. Even though her house is crammed full of books (her dad's a bibliophile), she's having trouble figuring

out some very big questions, like why her dad seems to care about books more than her, why her best friend's divorced mom is obsessed with making *cascarones* (hollowed eggshells filled with colorful confetti), and, most of all, why her mom died last year. Like colors in *cascarones*, Lina's life is a rainbow of people, interests, and unexpected changes. In her first novel for young readers, Diana López creates a clever and honest story about a young Latina girl navigating growing pains in her South Texan city.

Rebound Candlewick Press

Family is family, no matter what it looks like. Readers will cheer for this pitch-perfect story, just right for fans of such books as *The Great Gilly Hopkins* and *Fish in a Tree*. For as long as Robinson

Hart can remember, it's just been her and Grandpa. He taught her about cars, baseball, and everything else worth knowing. But Grandpa's memory has been getting bad—so bad that he sometimes can't even remember Robbie's name. She's sure that she's making things worse by getting in trouble at school, but she can't resist using her fists when bullies like Alex Carter make fun of her for not having a mom. Now she's stuck in group guidance—and to make things even worse, Alex Carter is there too. There's no way Robbie's going to open up about her life to some therapy group, especially not with Alex in the room. Besides, if she told anyone how forgetful Grandpa's been getting lately, they'd take her away from him. He's the only

family she has—and it's up to her to keep them together, no matter what. Praise for *Just Like Jackie*: "I was truly moved by this refreshing story about a scrappy young heroine and her struggle to protect her family."—Sara Pennypacker, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Pax* "*Just Like Jackie* is a lovely story of acceptance—about what makes a family and how we make our own families, and about embracing our differences."—Ann M. Martin, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Rain Reign* "A fresh coming-of-age novel as feisty, funny, and forthright as its protagonist. Robinson overcomes obstacles with wit, grit, and a growing compassion for others, showing us that families are what we make them and happiness is found in the simple gifts we



take for granted. A rich, rewarding read all around."—John David Anderson, author of *Ms. Bixby's Last Day* "As close to perfect as a book for middle grade children can get!"—Cammie McGovern, author of *Just My Luck ?* "Stoddard debuts with a quiet but powerful narrative that gently unpacks Alzheimer's, centers mental health, and moves through the intimate and intense emotional landscape of family—what seems to break one and what can remake it. Validating, heart-rending, and a deft blend of suffering and inspiration."—Kirkus Reviews (starred review) "A home-run story that will resonate with all who feel they might not fit into the perfect definition of a family."—School Library Journal "Debut author Stoddard crafts a winning

narrator in *Robinson*. A beautiful story about the true meaning of family, perfect for fans of Lynda Mullaly Hunt."—Booklist

[Don't Check Out This Book!](#) Versify

A little girl pitches in to help her tía save up for a big old car — and take the whole family to the beach — in a story told with warmth and sweetness. Tía Isa wants a car. A shiny green car the same color as the ocean, with wings like a swooping bird. A car to take the whole family to the beach. But saving is hard when everything goes into two piles — one for here and one for Helping Money, so that family members who live far away might join them someday. While Tía Isa saves, her niece does odd jobs for neighbors so she can add her earnings to the stack. But even with her help, will they ever

have enough? Meg Medina's simple, genuine story about keeping in mind those who are far away is written in lovely, lyrical prose and brought to life through Claudio Muñoz's charming characters.

*Nessie Quest* HarperCollins

Worn down by the constant petitions of the villagers who think she has special powers, sixteen-year-old Sonia leaves behind her shawl covered with milagros and her mountain home and sets out to live a life of her own choosing in the capital city.

Inkling Roaring Brook Press

Little Lobo, a Mexican American, and Bernabe, his dog, deliver supplies to vendors at the Mercado, a busy border town market.

¡Vamos! Let's Go to the Market Penguin

When bossy Edna Santos sets her sights on the new boy who happens to be Merci's school-assigned Sunshine Buddy, Merci becomes the target of Edna's jealousy. Things aren't going well at home, either: Merci's grandfather and most trusted ally, Lolo, ha

**May B.** HarperCollins

Fans of Erin Entrada Kelly's *Hello, Universe* and Melissa Savage's own *Lemons* will devour this voice-driven novel packed with humor and heart about two friends who head off on an adventure to find the Loch Ness Monster. Ada Ru thought her parents were finally going to agree to a Fitzhugh family vacation to Disney World the summer before sixth grade. Then her father announces he's taking a teaching position in Scotland, and moving the

family there for the entire summer. Obviously, Ada Ru is anything but happy. She doesn't like their new home, she hates haggis, and she certainly doesn't like the idea that she will be away from her best friend all summer. To top it all off, there is said to be a monster in the lake near their house! That's when she meets Hamish Bean Timmy, Hammy Bean for short, captain of the Nessie Quest Monster Chaser boat tour. He knows everything there is to know about the fabled Loch Ness Monster and Scotland. But as the two unlikely friends embark on an epic adventure to spot the lake monster, they end up discovering more than they ever could have imagined.

**Traitor Angels** Knopf Books for Young Readers

From Newbery Medalist Meg Medina comes the bittersweet story of two girls who will always be each other's número uno, even though one is moving away. A big truck with its mouth wide open is parked at the curb, ready to gobble up Evelyn's mirror with the stickers around the edge . . . and the sofa that we bounce on to get to the moon. Evelyn Del Rey is Daniela's best friend. They do everything together and even live in twin apartments across the street from each other: Daniela with her mami and hamster, and Evelyn with her mami, papi, and cat. But not after today—not after Evelyn moves away. Until then, the girls play amid the moving boxes until it's time to say goodbye, making promises to keep in touch, because they know that their friendship will always be

special. The tenderness of Meg Medina's beautifully written story about friendship and change is balanced by Sonia Sánchez's colorful and vibrant depictions of the girls' urban neighborhood.

Midnight War of Mateo Martinez

Delacorte Press

When a failed wheat crop nearly bankrupts the Betterly family, Pa pulls twelve-year-old May, who suffers from dyslexia, from school and hires her out to a couple new to the Kansas frontier.

**Indian No More** Youth Large Print

"For Merci Suárez, eighth grade means a new haircut, nighttime football games, and an out-of-town overnight field trip. At home, it means more chores and keeping an eye on Lolo as his health worsens. It's a year filled with more responsibility and independence, but

also with opportunities to reinvent herself. Merci has always been fine with not being one of the popular kids like Avery Sanders, who will probably be the soccer captain and is always traveling to fun places and buying new clothes. But then Avery starts talking to Merci more, and not just as a teammate. Does this mean they're friends? Merci wants to play it cool, but with Edna always in her business, it's only a matter of time before Merci has to decide where her loyalty stands"--

**Tia Isa Wants a Car** Penguin

In Meg Medina's follow-up to her Newbery Medal-winning novel, Merci takes on seventh grade, with all its travails of friendship, family, love--and finding your rhythm.

**She Persisted: Sonia Sotomayor**

Candlewick Press

While violence runs rampant throughout New York, a teenage girl faces danger within her own home in Meg Medina's riveting coming-of-age novel. Nora Lopez is seventeen during the infamous New York summer of 1977, when the city is besieged by arson, a massive blackout, and a serial killer named Son of Sam who shoots young women on the streets. Nora's family life isn't going so well either: her bullying brother, Hector, is growing more threatening by the day, her mother is helpless and falling behind on the rent, and her father calls only on holidays. All Nora wants is to turn eighteen and be on her own. And while there is a cute new guy who started working with her at the deli, is dating even worth the risk when the killer likes

picking off couples who stay out too late? Award-winning author Meg Medina transports us to a time when New York seemed balanced on a knife-edge, with tempers and temperatures running high, to share the story of a young woman who discovers that the greatest dangers are often closer than we like to admit — and the hardest to accept.

Just Like Jackie Random House Digital, Inc.

One small act of kindness can change the world. From esteemed bullying expert and author of *The Invisible Boy*, Trudy Ludwig and Little Elliot illustrator Mike Curato comes a tale as simple--and simply inspiring--as the golden rule. When one child reaches out in friendship to a classmate who seems lonely, she begins a chain reaction of kindness that

ripples throughout her school and her community. One kind act begets another, small good deeds make way for bigger ones, and eventually the whole neighborhood comes together to build something much greater than the sum of its parts. From acclaimed bullying expert Trudy Ludwig, *The Power of One* not only conveys a message of kindness, it offers concrete steps that kids can take to make a difference in their own communities. As Trudy says in the final line of the book: "Acts and words of kindness DO count, and it all starts with ONE."

*The Book of Boy* HarperCollins

"A poignant tale of intergenerational connection, transition, and patience. . . . Heartfelt, layered, and beautiful." — Booklist (starred review) Mia's abuela

has left her sunny house with parrots and palm trees to live with Mia and her parents in the city. While they cook, Mia helps Abuela learn English, and Mia learns some Spanish, too, but it's still hard for Abuela to learn enough words to tell Mia her stories. Then Mia sees a parrot in the pet-shop window and has the perfect idea for how to help them all communicate a little better. Here is an endearing tale that speaks loud and clear about the love that binds families across the generations.

[Confetti Girl](#) Candlewick Press

From the award-winning author of *Melissa*, the story of a boy named Rick who needs to explore his own identity apart from his jerk of a best friend. Rick's never questioned much. He's gone along with his best friend, Jeff, even when Jeff's

acted like a bully and a jerk. He's let his father joke with him about which hot girls he might want to date even though that kind of talk always makes him uncomfortable. And he hasn't given his own identity much thought, because everyone else around him seemed to have figured it out. But now Rick's gotten to middle school, and new doors are opening. One of them leads to the school's Rainbow Spectrum club, where kids of many genders and identities congregate, including Melissa, the girl who sits in front of Rick in class and seems to have her life together. Rick wants his own life to be that . . . understood. Even if it means breaking some old friendships and making some new ones. As they did in their groundbreaking novel *Melissa*, in Rick,

award-winning author Alex Gino explores what it means to search for your own place in the world . . . and all the steps you and the people around you need to take in order to get where you need to be.

*Shine On, Luz Véliz!* Carolrhoda Books®  
SYDNEY TAYLOR BOOK AWARD WINNER

A boy who has spent his life living inside a shell discovers the importance of taking chance in this "winner" (Booklist, starred review) of a friendship story that's perfect for fans of *Wonder*.

Seventh grade is not going well for Will Levine. Kids at school bully him because of his funny-looking chin. And for his bar mitzvah community service project, he's forced to go to the hospital to visit RJ, an older boy struggling with an incurable disease. At first, the boys don't get

along, but then RJ shares his bucket list with Will. Among the things he wants to do: ride a roller coaster; go to a school dance; swim in the ocean. To Will, happiness is hanging out in his room, alone, preferably with the turtles he collects. But as RJ's disease worsens, Will realizes he needs to tackle the bucket list on his new friend's behalf before it's too late. It seems like an impossible mission, way outside Will's comfort zone. But as he completes each task with RJ's guidance, Will learns that life is too short to live in a shell. "Everyone deserves a friend like Will Levine." --Lynne Kelly, author of *Song for a Whale*  
*Flying Lessons & Other Stories*  
 Candlewick Press  
 From award-winning author Pablo Cartaya comes a deeply moving middle

grade novel about a daughter and father finding their way back to each other in the face of their changing family and community. A SCHNEIDER FAMILY BOOK AWARD HONOR FOR MIDDLE GRADE  
 Emilia Torres has a wandering mind. It's hard for her to follow along at school, and sometimes she forgets to do what her mom or abuela asks. But she remembers what matters: a time when her family was whole and home made sense. When Dad returns from deployment, Emilia expects that her life will get back to normal. Instead, it unravels. Dad shuts himself in the back stall of their family's auto shop to work on an old car. Emilia peeks in on him daily, mesmerized by his welder. One day, Dad calls Emilia over. Then, he teaches her how to weld. And over time,



flickers of her old dad reappear. But as Emilia finds a way to repair the relationship with her father at home, her community ruptures with some of her classmates, like her best friend, Gus, at

the center of the conflict. Each *Tiny Spark* by Pablo Cartaya is a tender story about asking big questions and being brave enough to reckon with the answers.