

## Rescue & Jessica

by Jessica Kensky, Patrick Downes

Illustrated by Scott Magoon

**Publisher:** Candlewick

**Publish Year:** 2018

**CCBC Age Recommendation:** Ages 4-8

A young woman who has lost her leg finds a helpful companion in Rescue, her new service dog, in this story based on author Jessica Kensky's experience after losing both legs due to injuries received in the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing. While Rescue, who began life as a Seeing Eye trainee, transitions to service dog training and learns to fetch objects and open doors, Jessica is adjusting to life with her wheelchair and prosthetic leg. After meeting a service dog in the hospital, Jessica applies for her own. The two are matched, and Rescue helps Jessica physically—fetching objects and people, opening doors, and helping her up when she falls—as well as emotionally, comforting her when her second leg is amputated, and bringing joy into her life. A story that underscores the skill and versatility of service dogs and the value of their help and companionship also shows the fortitude of one young woman as she heals. ©2019 Cooperative Children's Book Center

## The Rough Patch

by Brian Lies

Illustrated by Brian Lies

**Publishers:** Greenwillow, HarperCollins

**Publish Year:** 2018

**CCBC Age Recommendation:** Ages 5-8

“Evan and his dog did everything together.” Their favorite among many things is working in Evan's garden. “But one day, the unthinkable happened.” The death of Evan's dog sends him into a spiral. First Evan destroys the garden, then he lets “spiky,” “prickly” weeds take over. But he leaves a rogue pumpkin vine that creeps under the fence into his garden alone—it's prickly and twisty, too. Soon he begins to tend the vine. Come fall, he takes the pumpkin to the fair, where he spends time with friends and wins third prize: ten dollars “or one of the pups in that box.” A story written with vivid, visceral language shows that sadness can lead to anger but the two emotions are not the same. Lush acrylic, oil, and pencil illustrations show Evan as an anthropomorphized fox, allowing kids space to consider their own feelings without being overwhelmed in a story in which grief and love go hand-in-hand, but

with time so do hope and healing. *Highly Commended, 2019 Charlotte Zolotow Award* ©2019 Cooperative Children's Book Center

## **Genesis Begins Again**

by Alicia D. Williams

**Publishers:** Atheneum, Caitlyn Dlouhy Books

**Publish Year:** 2019

**CCBC Age Recommendation:** Ages 11-14

Genesis's family gets a deal on a rental in a suburb outside Detroit through a coworker of her dad's. She loves the house but doesn't know how long they'll be able to stay given her dad's history of gambling and losing the rent in his effort to get ahead. They've been evicted four times. At her new, predominantly white middle school, Genesis is wary that not even the Black kids will be nice given the darkness of her skin—she's been called names like "Charcoal" in the past. Even Genesis's dad, dark-skinned like she is, has made clear when he drinks that he wishes Genesis was light-skinned like her mother, a rejection that's searing. Genesis finds release in singing, and the choir teacher tells Genesis she has a gift. But putting that gift on display in front of the entire school? Genesis, whose lack of self-worth is itemized in her ongoing list of all the things she hates about herself, can't image doing so, until doing so becomes the only way she can move forward. An unflinching, candid exploration of the pain and impact of colorism on an African American family builds to a moment of triumph, and hope for healing and change for both Genesis and her family. ©2020 Cooperative Children's Book Center

## **Black Girl Unlimited: The Remarkable Story of a Teenage Wizard**

by Echo Brown

**Publishers:** Christy Ottaviano Books, Henry Holt

**Publish Year:** 2020

**CCBC Age Recommendation:** Age 14 and older

**CCBC Location:** Fiction, Brown

Echo and her younger brothers are growing up in a family with limited economic resources and parents who find temporary respite from their struggles with drugs and alcohol. As

Echo also navigates a school system that undervalues Black students and underestimates their abilities, her determination to attend Dartmouth drives her to succeed. Then an abusive boyfriend assaults her and she shuts down, unable to get out of bed. Echo knows she and her mother are wizards who can freeze time. She realizes the two of them aren't alone with their magic when her mother calls on other women in their community to help Echo rise. A story that regularly jumps back in time—a shift marked visually on the page with a mid-sentence gap and broken vertical dash before the sentence picks up again at a time in the past that relates to the present—reveals Echo was sexually assaulted as a child, a memory she has deeply buried. In this arresting fictionalized account of the author's life growing up in Cleveland, systemic racism and personal trauma have palpable weight. The magical realism underscores the impact of that trauma while also illuminating the vulnerabilities and especially the strength of Echo and others in her African American family and community. Following Echo to her first year at Dartmouth, this is a story full of both pain and grace. ©2020 Cooperative Children's Book Center

## [All of a Sudden and Forever: Help and Healing After the Oklahoma City Bombing](#)

by Chris Barton

Illustrated by Nicole Xu

**Publishers:** Carolrhoda, Lerner

**Publish Year:** 2020

**CCBC Age Recommendation:** Ages 6-10

A picture book about the Oklahoma City Bombing focuses on the healing and community support that took place after the fact. In April 1995, a bomb planted in a truck exploded, killing 168 people in a nearby office building. The act of domestic terrorism affected not only those who died or were injured, but also their families and friends and others who watched the tragic event unfold on television. While “the awfulness of that moment can never be undone,” the story continues. A nearby American elm tree, which survived the bombing, became a focal point of hope and healing for many. Its seeds were collected and planted, the saplings later given to survivors. Some survivors told their stories. Others offered and received support from one another. Many found solace at a memorial built for victims of the bombing. Perhaps most importantly, “when other terrible things happen,” the act of comforting and supporting one another in the face of tragedy will continue. Survivors of one traumatic event will comfort those affected by another. Although based on

a specific event, this sincere narrative of communal healing has broad applicability and the potential to resonate with survivors of various types of trauma. ©2021 Cooperative Children's Book Center

## **Isaiah Dunn Is My Hero**

by Kelly J. Baptist

**Publishers:** Crown, Random House

**Publish Year:** 2020

**CCBC Age Recommendation:** Ages 9-12

Since ten-year-old Isaiah Dunn's father passed away, his grieving mother has started drinking and lost her job. They've lost their apartment too. Isaiah, his mom and four-year-old sister, Charlie, are living in a motel room, a fact Isaiah is hiding from his best friend. African American Isaiah finds comfort in his father's old notebooks, full of poetry and short stories about Isaiah as a superhero. Writing is important to poet Isaiah, too. Credibly naïve, he's hoping to earn enough selling poems to get his family into an apartment again; he also enters one of his father's short stories into a contest at the library, hoping for the cash prize. It takes second place, winning an amount far from enough to change their lives. But their lives are improving for other reasons, from his friendship with Angel, a classmate who bullied him until they discover through a conflict resolution program how much they have in common, to the help of a former neighbor who takes them in. Isaiah's mom, who's overwhelmed but trying, goes into rehab, and a public librarian whose been mentoring Isaiah helps him spearhead a library project to honor his late dad. Isaiah is a vibrant, likable character caught in the midst of family struggles that are very real. If the story's upbeat outcome on every front is a little too good to be true, it feels welcome, and a testament to the importance of kindness, community, and compassion. ©2021 Cooperative Children's Book Center

## **The Boy and the Gorilla**

by Jackie Azua Kramer

Illustrated by Cindy Derby

**Publisher:** Candlewick

**Publish Year:** 2020

**CCBC Age Recommendation:** Ages 4-8

**CCBC Location:** Picture Book, Azua Kramer

When a young white boy is grieving over his mother's death, a gorilla appears to act as a comforting presence and to answer the boy's questions. "How do you know when someone dies? *A person's body stops working*. Like their heartbeat? *Yes*." All the while, the boy's father is in the scene, also obviously grieving quietly on his own. Eventually, he replaces the gorilla as the comforting presence who can answer his son's questions. The gorilla is not anthropomorphized and he's huge, like grief itself, in this lovely, tender story reminiscent of Charlotte Zolotow's *Mr. Rabbit and the Lovely Present* in the presence of a wise but easy-going animal companion who answers a child's innocent but difficult questions. The soft-edged illustrations perfectly complement the gentle, restrained tone of the narrative. ©2021 Cooperative Children's Book Center

## **A Stopwatch from Grampa**

by Loretta Garbutt

Illustrated by Carmen Mok

**Publisher:** Kids Can

**Publish Year:** 2020

**CCBC Age Recommendation:** Ages 4-8

"When summer started, I got Grampa's stopwatch. I don't want his stopwatch. I want him." Remembering the many ways the stopwatch was part of being together, whether Grampa timed eating bubblegum ice cream or how long it took a caterpillar to travel up a pant leg, feels too painful for this grieving white child. The stopwatch is buried in a sweater drawer, and stays there as seasons pass. When the stopwatch is finally rediscovered, the sharp pain of loss has ebbed, and the watch triggers warm and welcome memories of the beloved grandparent. This story about loss, grief, and healing is both appealing and accessible. ©2021 Cooperative Children's Book Center

## **The Coquies Still Sing: A Story of Home, Hope, and Rebuilding**

by Karina Nicole Gonzalez

Illustrated by Krystal Quiles

**Publisher:** Roaring Brook

**Publish Year:** 2022

**CCBC Age Recommendation:** Ages 4-8

A resilient family rebuilds after the devastation of Hurricane María. “Co-quí, co-quí. Oh, how I love thee!” Elena sings in response to Puerto Rico’s native coquí frogs, which live in the mango tree beside her family’s house. After dark, the air fills with the sound of their song. But this evening, the wind is stronger than usual. There’s a hurricane on the way, and the family must prepare. As rain pours and wind howls, Papi comforts Elena with her song, “Co-quí, co-quí. Oh, how I love thee.” Afterward, the family surveys the damage. The storm has taken their roof and garden and stripped the mango tree. They are without electricity, water, and access to the road. But they are alive. Together with her family and their community, Elena helps clean up, plant seeds, and share food. When things feel hard, the still-living mango tree brings comfort; like Elena, its roots are strong. Finally, buds appear on the tree once again, and although “home has forever changed,” the familiar sound of the coquíes’ song has returned. Back matter provides additional information about the injustices many Puerto Ricans continue to face after Hurricane María. Ultimately hopeful, this story is nonetheless honest in its portrayal of the hurricane’s devastation on Puerto Rico and its inhabitants. ©2022 Cooperative Children’s Book Center

## [Hopeless in Hope](#)

by Wanda John-Kehewin

**Publisher:** HighWater

**Publish Year:** 2023

**CCBC Age Recommendation:** Age 12 and older

**CCBC Location:** Fiction, John-Kehewin

Fourteen-year-old Eva, who is Cree, lives in a small Canadian community with her little brother, Marcus, and her beloved grandmother, Nokhum, who takes care of them. Her mother, Shirley, is an alcoholic, unpredictable and unreliable; her negligence sent Eva into temporary foster care when she was little. Now Nokhum provides love and warmth and stability, although uncertainty is unescapable with money tight and Shirley in and out of their lives. When Nokhum breaks her hip, Shirley tries to pull herself together, but Eva and Marcus end up in separate foster homes after a frightening incident. Eva doesn’t like her social worker, and resents being separated from Marcus, but Grace, her foster parent, proves to be a reliable guardian. One of five Native teens in the house, Eva slowly builds

trust—trust in Grace, trust in her housemates and, finally, trust in her mother, who is working hard in recovery. Eva is also reluctantly learning more about her mother's and Nokhum's past through her mom's journal. Although she's always thought of Nokhum as infallible, it turns out Shirley grew up in foster care because Nokhum, too, was an alcoholic during her daughter's childhood, drinking after the trauma of residential school and losing her own mother. The intergenerational trauma of residential schools is a strong theme throughout Eva's tale, as is recovery—and the fact that recovery often includes relapse. Eva's story ends in a place of hope as she looks toward a brighter future. ©2023 Cooperative Children's Book Center

## Miracle

by Karen S. Chow

**Publishers:** Christy Ottaviano Books, Little, Brown

**Publish Year:** 2023

**CCBC Age Recommendation:** Ages 9-12

Chinese American Amie shares a love of music with her father, Ba-ba. Amie's mother provides the structure to their home routine, with scheduled time for homework, violin practice, evening walk, and health regimens for Ba-ba's cancer treatments. Sixth grader Amie's best friends are Bella (white) and Rio (Latino); they see themselves as a Harry-Ron-Hermione trio. When Ba-ba dies, this close network provides support for Amie, but also creates tension. She feels like Harry Potter—famous for family tragedy, with everyone looking at her and wanting to know if she's okay. Meanwhile, her mother channels her grief into action by taking on more activities, much to Amie's frustration. Overwhelmed by her feelings, Amie is unable to play violin, which has been an important means of expression as well as a connection to her father. The loss of that connection, along with her guilt at not visiting Ba-ba in the hospital on his last day alive, eats away at Amie in a moving middle grade novel that explores the rawness and pain of grief with tremendous honesty. Each chapter begins with a musical vocabulary word and a black and white line drawing, and Amie's family's blend of Chinese and American traditions feels both fresh and authentic in a story that sees Amie turn the corner toward healing. ©2023 Cooperative Children's Book Center

## Boyogi: How a Wounded Family Learned to Heal

by David Barclay Moore  
Illustrated by Noa Denmon

**Publisher:** Candlewick

**Publish Year:** 2023

**CCBC Age Recommendation:** Ages 4-8

**CCBC Location:** Picture Book, Moore

A young boy's father has returned "from far away," where he was a soldier, changed. Daddy used to be fun, but now he's angry and sad and spends a lot of time in his room. The boy's mother explains that Daddy's mind is hurt by bad things that happened while he was gone, and she assures the boy that they are trying to figure out how to help Daddy feel better. One day Mommy insists Daddy come with her to a yoga class at the Y. The boy goes, too, and watches as the instructor explains the importance of practicing yoga with calm, positive thoughts, adding that anyone who practices yoga is called a yogi. Soon the boy and his daddy are regular attendees. "My favorite was the Cobra Pose, because it made me feel like a snake!" Daddy tells him, "You're a regular little *boyogi*." Daddy adds that yoga has helped him feel better—less jumpy and nervous and sad. "My therapist tells me yoga has helped a lot." Clean-lined digital art illustrates this child-centered story about a Black family impacted by one parent's PTSD. ©2023 Cooperative Children's Book Center

#### CCBC Recommended Books about Grief and Loss

### [Blue](#)

by Laura Vaccaro Seeger  
Illustrated by Laura Vaccaro Seeger

**Publishers:** Neal Porter Books, Roaring Brook

**Publish Year:** 2018

**CCBC Age Recommendation:** Ages 3-7

Various shades of blue are part of the life of a boy and his dog as both of them grow and change. Seeger's masterful acrylic paintings offer a surprise with every single page turn, whether in clever die-cuts or in the paired words that play on the color and concept of "blue." Every double-page spread suggests its own story as it captures a moment in time, encouraging readers to think about what came before that moment and what will come after. "Maybe blue," for example, shows a spill of yellow paint on the boy's mostly blue painting. There is also a book-long narrative that unfolds in the interplay between the boy and his dog over time, from babyhood to adulthood, puppyhood to old age. By story's end, "blue" has become a mood, as the poignant moment when the boy—now



grown—must say goodbye arrives (“So blue”) in a work that is funny and sad, powerful and tender.  
©2019 Cooperative Children’s Book Center

## [Clap When You Land](#)

by Elizabeth Acevedo

**Publishers:** HarperCollins, HarperTeen

**Publish Year:** 2020

**CCBC Age Recommendation:** Age 13 and older

Camino Rios lives in the Dominican Republic with her aunt; her mother is dead and her father, who lives in the United States, visits for three months every summer. Yahaira Rio lives in New York City with her father and mother; her dad travels to the Dominican Republic for three months every summer to visit family. Just months apart in age, neither knows about the other until the plane carrying their father crashes. Each is stunned by his sudden death and the revelation she has a sister. Their grief is further complicated by other factors: Camino’s dad paid for her schooling, and she hoped he’d help her move to the United States to pursue her dream of becoming a doctor. He also paid for her safety, and now a young man who trafficks girls and young women is threatening her. Yahaira, who’d barely spoken to her dad since discovering he already had a wife in the Dominican Republic when he married her mom, is struggling with the gulf that had been between them, and her mother’s anger. Their two compelling voices alternate in this novel-in-verse with a riveting emotional arc that illuminates many complexities of family but also shows the sisters’ relationship developing into something deep and lasting. This story gives a glimpse into the anguish of the fall 2001 plane crash that in part inspired it—an event in the headlines briefly before being eclipsed by ongoing coverage of 9/11. ©2021 Cooperative Children’s Book Center

## [Aviva vs. the Dybbuk](#)

by Mari Lowe

**Publisher:** Levine Querido

**Publish Year:** 2022

**CCBC Age Recommendation:** Ages 9-13

Next to the synagogue, in the building that houses the mikvah (ritual bath), Aviva lives with her mother, Ema, and a dybbuk—visible only to Aviva—who delights in wreaking minor havoc. Ema, who used to teach at Aviva’s Orthodox girls’ school, has struggled with severe

depression since the death of Aviva's father six years prior. Left mostly to fend for herself at home, Aviva feels isolated and lonely at school as well; after her father's death, she had a falling out with her best friend, Kayla. During a machanayim game at recess, a tense incident involving the two girls results in a classmate's injury. As punishment, Aviva and Kayla, both white, are ordered to work together to drum up excitement for their class's upcoming mother-daughter Bas Mitzvah Bash. In spending time together, the two rekindle their friendship. The discovery of an underwater door in the mikvah—which, after draining the tub, the girls open to discover a passageway leading to the synagogue—and the antics of the mischievous dybbuk inspire them to create a spooky scavenger hunt for the girls at the Bash. Meanwhile, a swastika etched in wet concrete in front of the synagogue has the community on alert; later, when the synagogue is ransacked, Aviva senses traumatic, repressed memories beginning to surface. A captivating tale of grief and loss counters terrifying instances of antisemitism with the comfort and love of Orthodox Jewish life and community. ©2022 Cooperative Children's Book Center

## [The Circles in the Sky](#)

by Karl James Mountford

Illustrated by Karl James Mountford

**Publishers:** Candlewick Studio, Candlewick

**Publish Year:** 2022

**CCBC Age Recommendation:** Ages 5-9

Curious about the new and unusual song sung by the chorus of birds that wakes Fox each morning, he follows the birds through the forest. In a quiet meadow, Fox discovers that one of the birds is on the ground, still and unmoving. Unfamiliar with death, Fox is unsure why Bird won't respond to his offers of food or invitations to sing. The digitally rendered illustrations magnify what Fox can't yet comprehend, but what readers can understand. Below Bird, a cutaway of earth shows numerous animal skeletons and shells buried in dirt, suggesting the inevitability of death. The seasons of life are further echoed in the earthy-hued geometric backdrops. A black and white moth enters the scene, and gently offers explanations to Fox about Bird's mortality. Confused and frustrated, Fox howls at Moth and begs for the truth about Bird. "I was trying to be kind," said Moth. "Sad things are hard to hear. They are pretty hard to say, too. They should be told in little pieces." This beautifully illustrated picture book offers direct and thoughtful ways to process death and grief. ©2022 Cooperative Children's Book Center

## [Don't Look Back: A Memoir of War, Survival, and My Journey from Sudan to America](#)

by Achut Deng, Keely Hutton

**Publishers:** Farrar Straus Giroux, Macmillan

**Publish Year:** 2022

**CCBC Age Recommendation:** Age 13 and older

Interviewed in 2020 by the *New York Times* about the effects of COVID-19 on immigrants at a meat-packing plant in South Dakota, Achut Deng worked with children's book author Keely Hutton to tell her full story in this riveting memoir. Achut was born during a time of political upheaval in southern Sudan in the mid-1980s. After the southern Sudanese split into two factions, violence came close to her home. She was seven the night Nuer soldiers invaded her Dinka village. Fleeing with her grandmother, Koko, and teenage aunt and uncle, she never saw her home again. The second night, Koko died while protecting Achut. Soldiers rescued Achut and the few survivors. Achut, orphaned, became connected with her mother's good friend Adual, who cared for Achut while they were in a military prison camp. Eventually escaping, Achut, Adual, and a group of women and children made the difficult journey by foot to a refugee camp in Kenya. Years later, after experiencing the death of Adual and the traumas of daily life at the under-resourced camp, Achut was selected to move to the United States, along with a few male family members with whom she was reunited. While under the care of her relatives, Achut was sexually abused and contemplated suicide. With the determination that guided her so many times before, Achut escaped and built a life for herself. Despite a young life full of loss and cruelty, Achut's visceral and harrowing memoir carries an undercurrent of hope and love. ©2022 Cooperative Children's Book Center

## [Enter the Body](#)

by Joy McCullough

**Publisher:** Dutton

**Publish Year:** 2023

**CCBC Age Recommendation:** Age 14 and older

Four of Shakespeare's young female characters—Lavinia, Cordelia, Ophelia, and Juliet—have died countless times on stage and will do so countless more, because that is how their stories were written. Until now. Gathered in the "Trap Room," the space beneath the stage,

they begin to share the unscripted parts of their lives. In differing verse narrative styles, Juliet, Ophelia, and Cordelia each reveal that they are so much more than characters in service to a plot. They are young women who live and dream and laugh and ache, who long for lost mothers, lost opportunity, and lost love. Soon they begin to converse, an entertaining exchange in 21st-century young adult voices in which they poke and prod and critique, challenging one another to shape their stories into something new. None of them is initially so bold as to imagine a wholly different outcome for herself, but when Cordelia, the most cynical and eye-rolling among them, figures out why silent Lavinia has not spoken—her tongue has been cut out and hands cut off so she cannot name her rapist—she understands that speaking up when others can't is necessary, and imagining boldly is an act that lifts them all. This fiercely imaginative, astonishingly original and arresting work is a novel that can also be read as a play. Just as it challenges its characters, it challenges readers to think critically about these young women's narrow existence on the stage, and the expansive possibilities of their lives. ©2023 Cooperative Children's Book Center

## Cape

by Kevin Johnson

Illustrated by Kitt Thomas

**Publisher:** Roaring Brook

**Publish Year:** 2023

**CCBC Age Recommendation:** Ages 4-8

A spare first-person text marked by powerful descriptive moments follows a young Black boy on the day of his father's funeral. He has a new haircut, a new suit, and his cape— "in case I remember." But he doesn't want to remember, or listen to what's being said around him. "Memories make my swallow hurt." He and his auntie go to the cemetery and then back to the house and "a party where no one smiles." The cape is to block unwanted memories—he'll use it like a shield. But the memories are unstoppable, and when the boy eventually does remember, he recalls his dad's laugh, his dad's love, and the day his dad gave him the cape. "I remember the way to my smile." The illustrations are a mix of full-page scenes and spots that make thoughtful use of white space. ©2023 Cooperative Children's Book Center

## Beneath

by Cori Doerrfeld

Illustrated by Cori Doerrfeld

**Publisher:** Little, Brown

**Publish Year:** 2023

**CCBC Age Recommendation:** Ages 4-7

Grandpa wants to talk about Finn’s “horrible mood,” but Finn declines, believing that Grandpa doesn’t understand how Finn is feeling. Finn agrees to a walk but insists on remaining cloaked in a blanket. “‘Don’t worry,’ said Grandpa. ‘I’ll remember to think of what’s beneath.’” As the two amble through the woods and along the shore, Grandpa talks about things that can be seen and things that cannot. Though they may be hidden, there are roots growing beneath trees and fish teeming beneath a motionless boat. Sometimes we know what’s beneath (eggs under a nesting bird) and sometimes we don’t (what is that fox digging up?). And while we can see “what’s happening on the outside,” there’s also plenty going on beneath the surface of plants, animals, and even people: experiences, explanations, emotions. The digital art echoes this concept visually, providing glimpses beneath and inside the landscape and other creatures. When Grandpa tells Finn that “[b]eneath someone who looks like they won’t understand ... is someone who knows exactly how you feel,” Finn embraces his offer of connection. This child-friendly narrative successfully balances the concrete with the figurative and offers plenty of moments for contemplation, understanding, and discussion in both the text and illustrations. ©2023 Cooperative Children’s Book Center

## Duel

by Jessixa Bagley

Illustrated by Aaron Bagley

**Publisher:** Simon & Schuster

**Publish Year:** 2023

**CCBC Age Recommendation:** Ages 10-14

Sixth grader Lucy knows starting middle school will be complicated rather than eased by the presence of her older sister, eighth grader Gigi. The two don’t get along, having deep-seated jealousy and animosity that grew out of grief following the death of their dad (Black) a few years before. He was a fencing instructor and taught them both; now Gigi is vying for captain of the school fencing team, while Lucy has given up the sport. Each sister firmly believes that their father favored the other. Their mom (white) is overwhelmed by work and parenting on her own, and it feels to both sisters like she’s checked out, always telling them to resolve their disputes independently. When an argument in the school cafeteria leads to a public challenge, Lucy throws herself back into training, while Gigi works out a

way to veil the duel as team tryout to disguise the sisters' showdown. As they each prepare, the fighting and sniping continues, while flashbacks reveal what slowly brought them to this place of disconnection. A graphic novel with abundant information about fencing works as an introduction to the sport on one level, while exploring the complexities of grief as it impacts individuals and a family on another. A note from the author expands on the duality of *Duel*, complemented by an illustrator's note from her collaborator husband. ©2023 Cooperative Children's Book Center