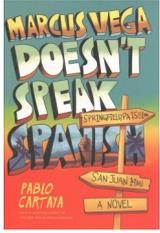


Staff Picks: Marcus Vega Doesn't Speak Spanish by Pablo Cartaya



[view in catalog](#)

Reviewed by Alejandria G.

At six feet tall and 180 pounds, Marcus isn't exactly the smallest 8th grader at Montgomery Middle School. But looks can be deceiving and he isn't quite the tough bully many seem to think he is. When the real school bully calls Marcus's younger brother a nasty word, Marcus fights back and faces suspension. Marcus's mom decides this suspension is the perfect time to hit the 'reset' button for their little family. She takes Marcus and his younger brother Charlie to the island of Puerto Rico, to reconnect as a family and meet relatives they never knew they had. But Marcus has a secret mission as they adventure across the island: to find his father, who moved back to Puerto Rico and walked out of their lives ten years ago.

[Read more](#)

Posted by Alejandria G. on May 11, 2019

[Marcus Vega Doesn't Speak Spanish](#)

[Children's](#)

[Diversity](#)

[Family Relationships](#)

[Read](#)

[Oh, the Things You Can Think](#)

[Alejandria G.'s blog](#)

Staff Picks: A Dash of Trouble by Anna Meriano



[view in catalog](#)

Reviewed by Alejandria G.

Leo Logroña is the youngest member of her family. And as the youngest member of her family, she is used to everyone always telling her she is too young to help.

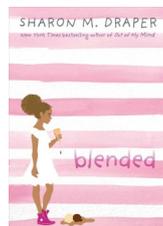
When the annual Día de los Muertos festival approaches, Leo thinks this will finally be the year she will be asked to help with festival preparations at her family's beloved bakery. But yet again, she is disappointed when she is told she is still too young. After sneaking out of school to make sure all is really okay at the bakery, Leo accidentally discovers the shocking family secret: she belongs to family of brujas -witches- who use their magic to bake up the sweetest (and luckiest) treats in town. [Read more](#)

Posted by Alejandria G. on April 9, 2019

[A Dash of Trouble](#)

[Children's](#)
[Diversity](#)
[Family Relationships](#)
[Magic](#)
[Read](#)
[Oh, the Thinks You Can Think](#)
[Alejandria G.'s blog](#)

Staff Picks: Blended by Sharon M. Draper



[view in catalog](#)

Reviewed by Christina J. [Read more](#)

Posted by Alejandria G. on February 26, 2019

[Blended](#)

[African American](#)

[Children's](#)

[Diversity](#)

[Family Relationships](#)

[Read](#)

[Oh, the Thinks You Can Think](#)

[Alejandria G.'s blog](#)

Home At Last



[view in catalog](#)

Reviewed by Lisa C.

November is [Picture Book Month](#) and [National Adoption Awareness Month](#), with a special focus on the adoption of children currently in foster care.

Home At Last, a collaborative effort of notable authors and illustrators Vera B. Williams and Chris Raschka, portrays the nervousness of Lester, a young boy adjusting to his new home with Daddy Albert and Daddy Rich. [Read more](#)

Posted by Lisa C. on November 20, 2018

[Home at last](#)

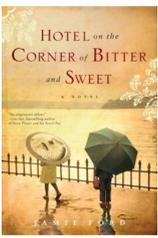
[Family Relationships](#)

[Picture Book](#)

[Oh, the Thinks You Can Think](#)

[Lisa C.'s blog](#)

Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet



[view in catalog](#)

On November 17, author Jamie Ford speaks at the Buskirk-Chumley Theater in Bloomington for the [NEA Big Read](#) and the library's biennial [Power of Words](#) program. Tickets are free, and can be picked up at the Main Library (at the [Friends of the Library Bookstore](#) or the [Friends office](#)) or [ordered online](#). As he often does, Jamie Ford writes about the clashing and melding of different cultures in his three historical novels: *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*, *Songs of Willow Frost*, and *Love and Other Consolation Prizes*. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on November 8, 2017

[Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet: A Novel](#)

[American History](#)

[Coming of Age](#)

[Family Relationships](#)

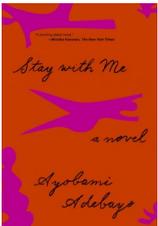
[Fiction](#)

[Multicultural](#)

[For the Love of Reading](#)

[Dory L.'s blog](#)

Stay with Me



[view in catalog](#)

With economy of language and a taut emotional underlying, [Ayobami Adebayo](#) tells the parallel tales of a young couple's marriage, alongside Nigeria's struggle for independence.

Told alternately by Yejide and her husband, Akin, the book opens late in the story to a woman packing her bags. She's done this many, many times before, but something—whether deep feelings or fear—has always stopped her from making the trip to her southwestern Nigerian hometown of Ilesa, once the site of a magical kingdom. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on October 31, 2017

[Stay with Me](#)

[Family Relationships](#)

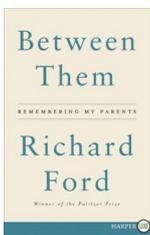
[Fiction](#)

[Multicultural](#)

[For the Love of Reading](#)

[Dory L.'s blog](#)

Between Them: Remembering My Parents



[view in catalog](#)

It's a life-changing experience in adulthood when you begin to see your mother and father as individuals, separate from their parenting roles.

Richard Ford wrote a memoir of his father decades ago, as well as one of his mother, penned more recently. Now, in this joint memoir, he again remembers his parents, Parker and Edna, who both grew up in Arkansas. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on July 10, 2017

[Between Them: Remembering My Parents](#)

[Family Relationships](#)

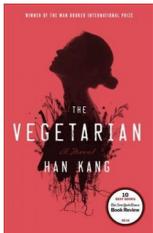
[Memoir](#)

[For the Love of Reading](#)

[Information, Answers & Reviews](#)

[Dory L.'s blog](#)

The Vegetarian



[view in catalog](#)

For me, books are a form of traveling to distant places, places I will probably never see. Because of this, I decided to check out this [Man Booker Prize](#) winner about South Korea.

My experience with books set in Korea has centered on North Korea?mostly nonfiction, except for [Adam Johnson's](#) stellar novel *The Orphan Master's Son* that won the Pulitzer in 2012.

The Vegetarian begins with the speaker, Cheong, saying, "Before my wife turned vegetarian, I'd always thought of her as unremarkable in every way." Cheong, an ambitious businessman, then states that he deliberately chose his wife because she was so bland.

But late one night, Yeong-hye wakes from a dream. Cheong finds her in the kitchen in the dark; she does not respond to his words or even his touch. The next day, Yeong-hye, almost in a trancelike state, throws away all the meat and fish from their refrigerator and freezer. She never willingly eats flesh again. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on March 16, 2017

[The Vegetarian](#)

[Family Relationships](#)

[For the Love of Reading](#)

[Information, Answers & Reviews](#)

[Dory L.'s blog](#)

The Six: the Lives of the Mitford Sisters



[view in catalog](#)

Having grown up in a family of six sisters (and two brothers), I understand the influences, cooperation and competition that six sisters often have for each other. The similar interests, wildly divergent ones, pet names shared, and shifting alliances.

The Mitford sisters: Nancy, Pamela, Diana, Unity, Jessica, and Deborah were born between 1904 and 1920, so their youth encompassed the roaring and irreverent 1920s as well as the anxious, and violent pre-war period before WW II. The last of the Mitford sisters, Deborah, died only two years ago.

They had an idyllic childhood on a country estate, and were left mainly to themselves, a nanny and a tutor. They were almost totally home-schooled. They read deeply books from their parent's library and were fascinated by the world of ideas. All except Pamela, who loved farming and developed close connections with animals and the land. Just before dying she sighed and said she wished only for one more hunt. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on December 14, 2016

[The Six: The Lives of the Mitford Sisters](#)

[Family Relationships](#)

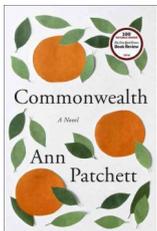
[Nonfiction](#)

[For the Love of Reading](#)

[Information, Answers & Reviews](#)

[Dory L.'s blog](#)

Commonwealth



[view in catalog](#)

Fifty per cent of all North American children experience the divorce of their parents. Talented author Ann Patchett explores her own family's divorce in this novel, altered, of course, as all fiction is.

A chance meeting at a 1960s christening causes two families to divide and then merge in new ways. The novel jumps around in the lives of the Cousinses and Keatings. Fix Keating is a Los Angeles cop, and Bert Cousins, an attorney who moves to Virginia. When Cousins falls hard for Keating's wife, Beverly, at the christening, two families are forever tied though they end up living across the continent from each other.

The novel proceeds from the perfectly realized christening where many of the guests are cops and the families of cops, and many of the partiers get drunk including some of the children, to one lakeside vacation where the blended children of the two families seek their own adventures while their parent and step-parent laze away in bed until mid-afternoon. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on December 6, 2016

[Commonwealth](#)

[Family Relationships](#)

[Fiction](#)

[For the Love of Reading](#)

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