

29 Canadian kids books & YA to look for in spring 2019

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CBC Books

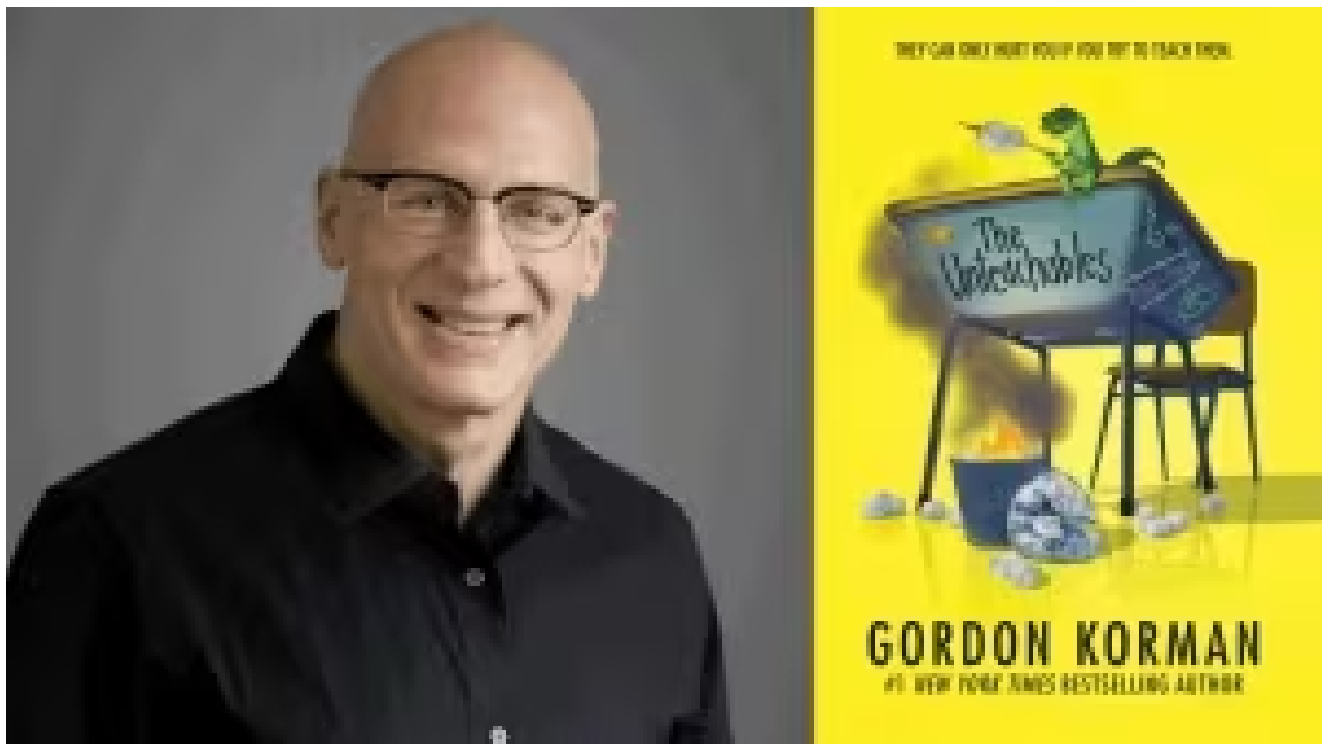
January 30, 2019

Books · Spring Book Preview

CBC Books · Posted: Jan 30, 2019 8:58 AM EST | Last Updated: February 4, 2019

A new year means new books! Here's a guide to Canadian picture books, middle-grade books and YA books that are coming out in the first half of 2019.

***The Unteachables* by Gordon Korman**



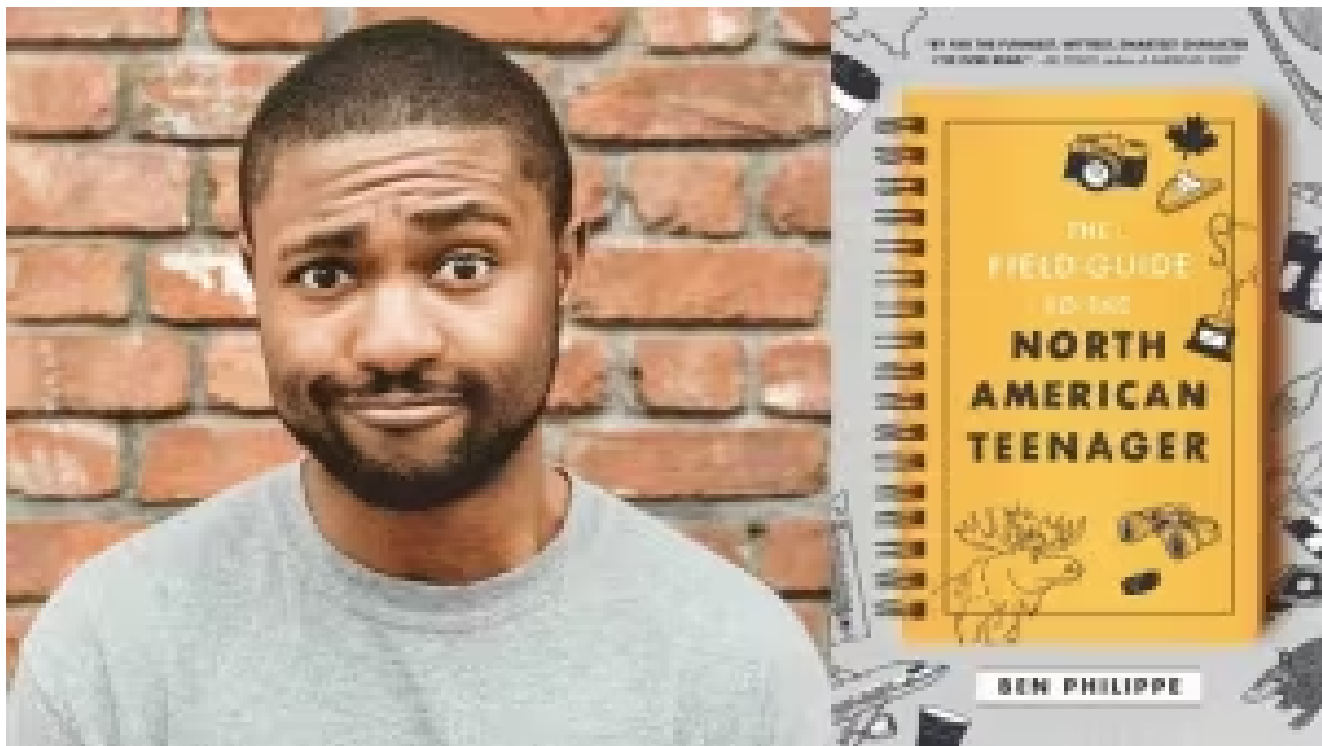
The Unteachables is a middle grade novel by Gordon Korman. (gordonkorman.com, Scholastic Canada)

Class SCS-8 at Greenwich Middle School are known as the "unteachables" — an idiosyncratic crew of personalities that range from high strung to sleepy and lost in thought. Led by a checked out teacher, the students each take turn telling their stories and figuring out whether they really are unteachable. Gordon Korman is a bestselling writer of humorous novels for middle grade readers, whose books include *Ungifted* and *Supergifted*.

When you can read it: Jan. 1, 2019

Gordon Korman on the joy of writing for young readers

***The Field Guide to the North American Teenager* by Ben Philippe**



The Field Guide to the North American Teenager is a YA book by Ben Philippe. (benphilippe.com, HarperCollins)

Norris Kaplan, a wisecracking black French Canadian teenager, knows he's in for a major culture shock when his family moves to Austin, Texas. He keeps track of his fellow high schoolers by placing them in categories: Cheerleaders, Jocks, Loners and the Manic Pixie Dream Girl. When people from the categories try and befriend him, Norris learns a lesson about his snarky attitude. Ben Philippe, who now lives in New York, has contributed to publications like Vanity Fair, The Guardian and Playboy.

When you can read it: Jan. 8, 2019

***The Love and Lies of Rukhsana Ali* by Sabina Khan**

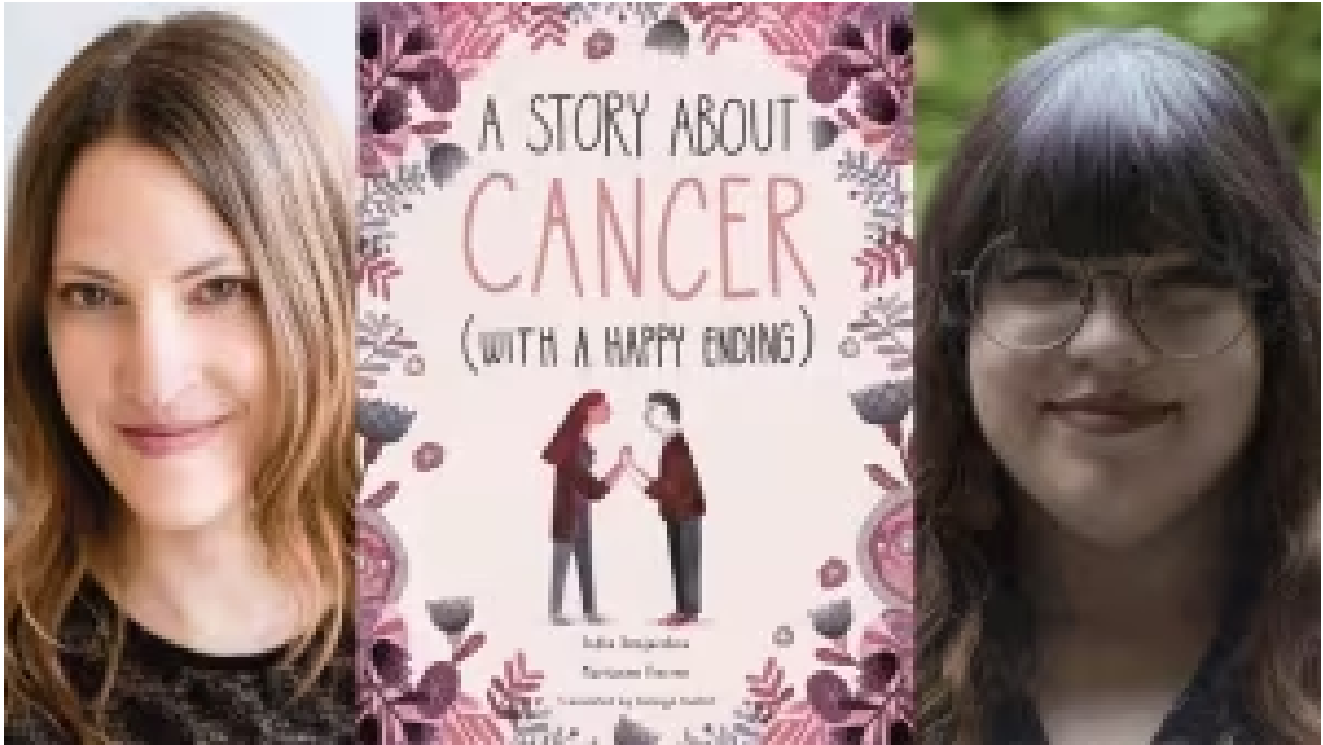


The Love & Lies of Rukhsana Ali is a YA novel by Sabina Khan. (sabina-khan.com, Scholastic)

Rukhsana Ali is 17 and balancing the expectations of her conservative Muslim parents with her desire to wear crop tops and date girls. When Rukhsana is caught kissing her girlfriend Ariana, she is sent to Bangladesh where she discovers her grandmother's old diary and is inspired to stand up for herself to her family. *The Love and Lies of Rukhsana Ali* is B.C. writer Sabina Khan's first novel.

When you can read it: Jan. 29, 2019

***A Story About Cancer (With a Happy Ending)* by India Desjardins,
illustrated by Marianne Ferrer, translated by Solange Ouellet**



A Story About Cancer (With a Happy Ending) is a picture book by India Desjardins and Marianne Ferrer.
(Stéphanie Picard, Quarto Group, Delaney Haight)

As she heads down the hospital hallway to a room where a doctor will tell her how long she has to live, a teenage girl contemplates her life with cancer and reflects on all the things and people she loves. This picture book is for readers aged 9 to 15. India Desjardins is also the author of the series *The Journal of Aurélie Laflamme*, which sold over two million copies in French, and *Marguerite's Christmas*, which won the Bologna Ragazzi Fiction Prize. Marianne Ferrer is a freelance illustrator from Montreal, originally from Venezuela.

When you can read it: Jan. 31, 2019

***The Girl and the Wolf* by Katherena Vermette, illustrated by Julie Flett**

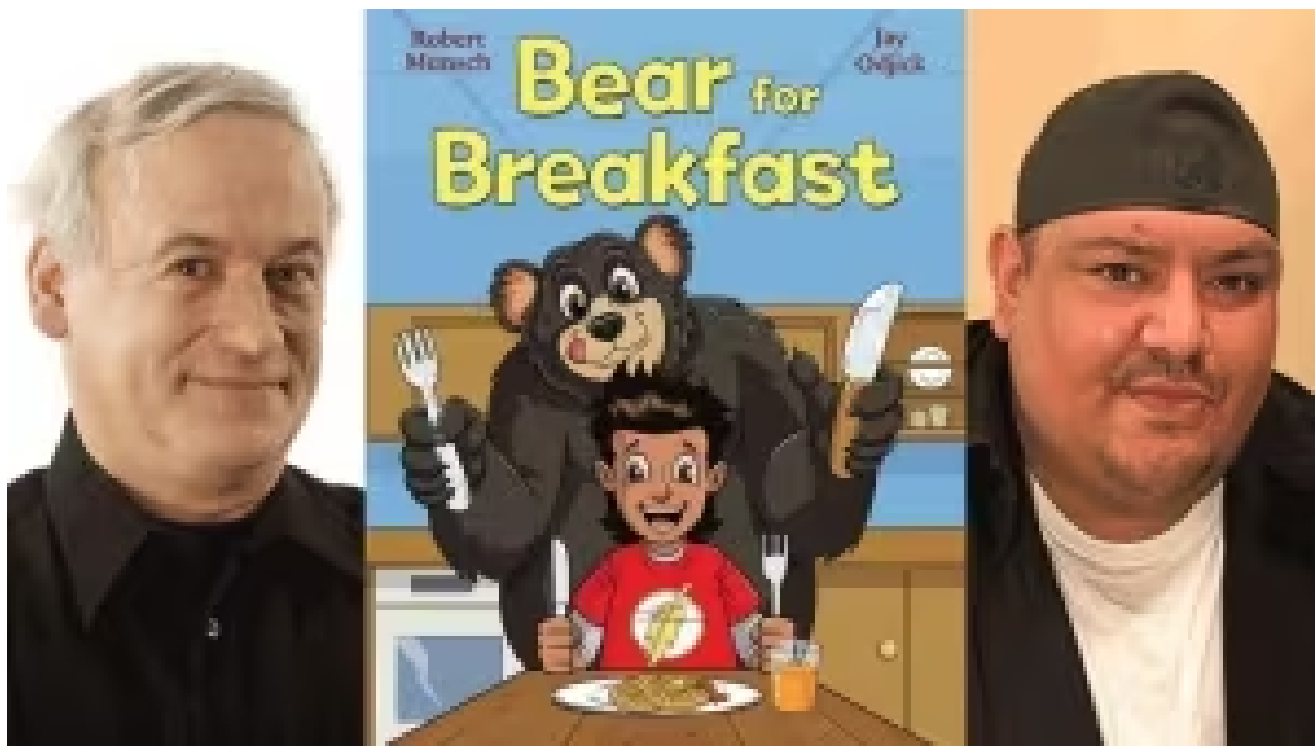


The *Girl and the Wolf* is a picture book by Katherena Vermette and Julie Flett. (Theytus Books, KC Adams)

In this picture book, a little girl gets lost in the woods while picking berries. A large grey wolf is able to tell where she is from by smelling her and helps her get home. In the meantime, the little girl realizes she had the skills to find her way back all along. Both Katherena Vermette and Julie Flett are Governor General's Literary Award-winning artists — Vermette for the poetry collection *North End Love Songs* and Flett for the children's book *When We Were Alone*.

When you can read it: Feb. 5, 2019

***Bear for Breakfast* by Robert Munsch, illustrated by Jay Odjick**



Bear for Breakfast is a picture book by Robert Munsch and Jay Odjick. (Submitted by Scholastic Canada)

Children's author Robert Munsch and illustrator Jay Odjick team up for a second picture book called *Bear for Breakfast*. In this tale, a boy named Donovan decides to catch a bear to eat for breakfast, just like his grandfather used to eat. When he goes hunting, Donovan discovers the bear might have other plans. The book is inspired by a visit with the Chippewan community in La Loche, Sask. in 1990, where Munsch met a boy named Donovan who said he loved to eat bear.

When you can read it: Feb. 11, 2019

How Jay Odjick illustrated Robert Munsch's newest book

Comics Will Break Your Heart by Faith Erin Hicks

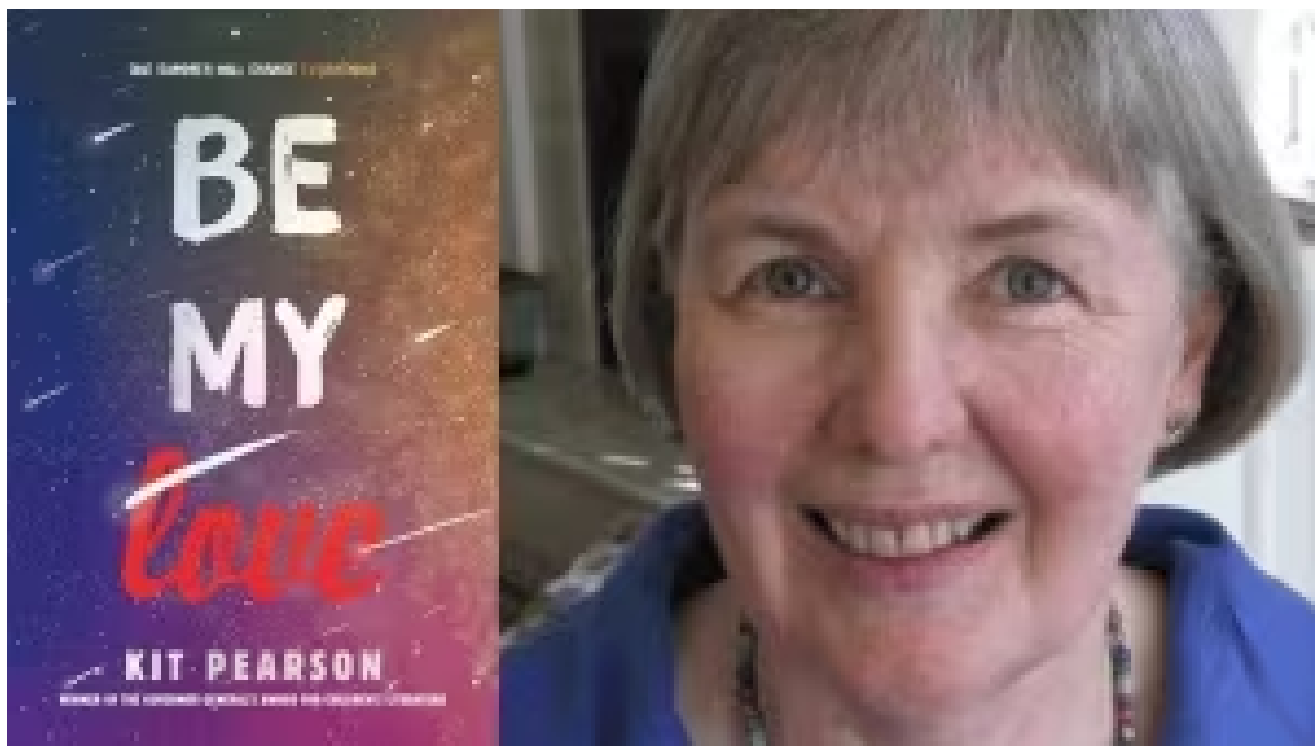


Comics Will Break Your Heart is a YA novel by Faith Erin Hicks. (Nathan Boone, Raincoast Books)

Miriam's grandfather co-created the iconic superhero series *TomorrowMen*, but doesn't get a dime for his work because he sold the rights for a pittance to his co-creator. Now the family's struggling to stay afloat and the future looks grim for Miriam. Things get complicated when heir to the *TomorrowMen* fortune moves to town — and, worse, he happens to be pretty cute. *Comics Will Break Your Heart* is for YA readers and is Faith Erin Hicks' first novel. She is also the author of the popular Nameless City graphic novel series.

When you can read it: Feb. 12, 2019

***Be My Love* by Kit Pearson**



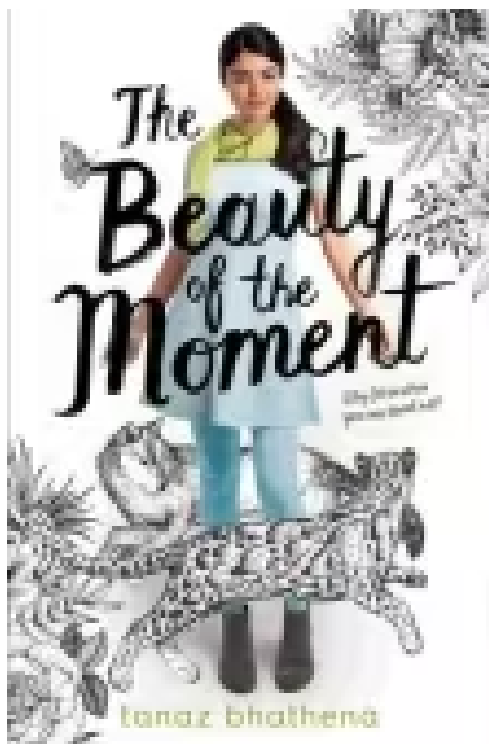
Be My Love is a YA novel by Kit Pearson. (HarperCollins, Katherine Farris)

Maisie has spent most of her summers frolicking on Kingfisher Island with her cousin Una. But this summer is different — Una has become "too mature" for Maisie and is obsessed with an older man named David Meyer. *Be My Love* is for readers aged 10 to 14. Kit Pearson is a beloved and prolific Canadian children's writer whose past work includes *A Day of Signs and Wonders* and *Awake and Dreaming*.

When you can read it: Feb. 12, 2019

Why Kit Pearson plows through the first draft of her books

***The Beauty of the Moment* by Tanaz Bhathena**



The Beauty of the Moment is a YA novel by Tanaz Bhathena. (Penguin Teen, Nettie Photography)

Teenagers Susan and Malcolm are opposites in many ways. She works hard to keep up with her parents' high expectations, while he's had a reputation for mischief since his mom died. They end up falling for each other — and finding more about themselves along the way. *The Beauty of the Moment* is Tanaz Bhathena's sophomore novel.

When you can read it: Feb. 26, 2019

***Stand on the Sky* by Erin Bow**



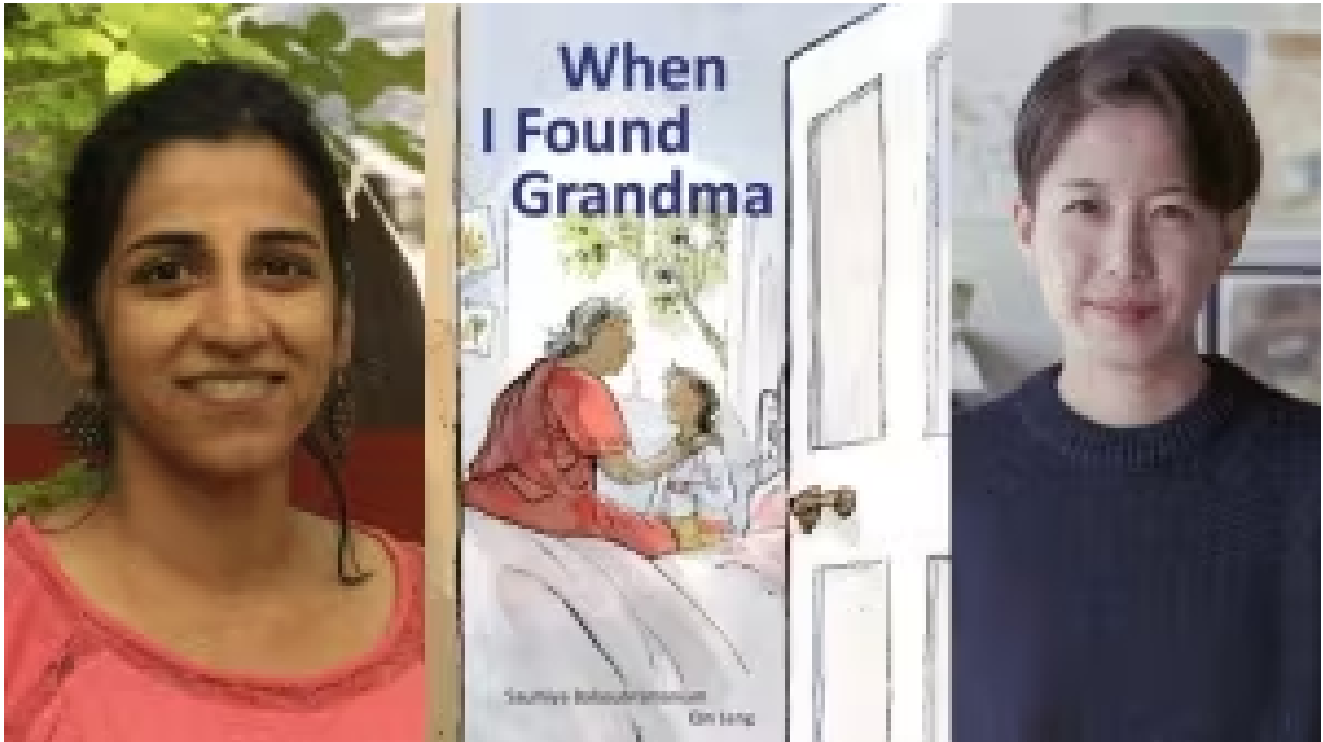
Stand on the Sky is a YA fantasy novel by Erin Bow. (Studio J, Scholastic)

In Aisulu's nomadic community, only men have traditionally learned to train eagles. But when her parents take her brother to a distant hospital, Aisulu secretly nurtures an orphaned baby eagle. *Stand on the Sky*, written for readers aged 9 to 12, is by Kitchener, Ont. writer Erin Bow who is also the author of *Plain Kate* and *The Scorpion Rules*.

When you can read it: Feb. 26, 2019

Erin Bow may be writing in a garden shed right now

***When I Found Grandma* by Saumiya Balasubramaniam, illustrated by Qin Leng**

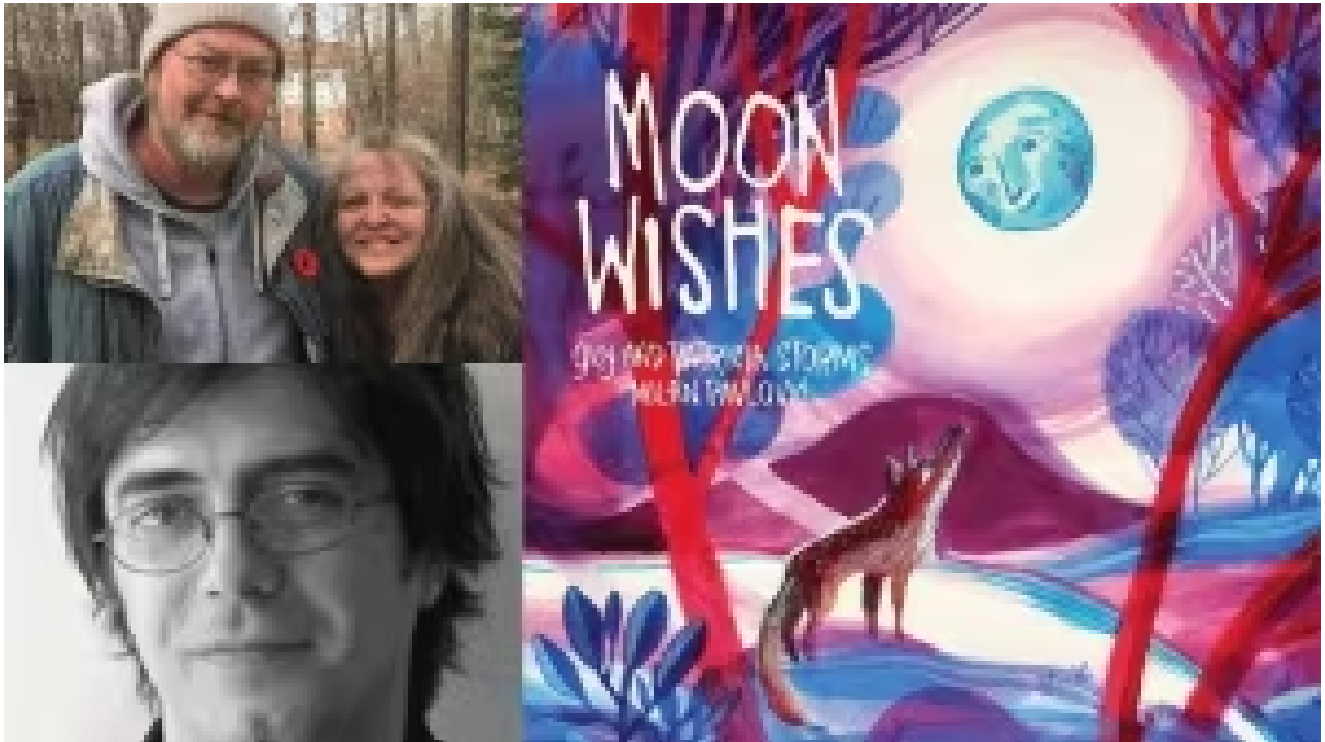


When I Found Grandma is a picture book by Saumiya Balasubramaniam and Qin Leng. (Rajni Radja, Groundwood Books, Lian Leng)

Maya is very excited that her grandma has come thousands of miles to visit her family. But she doesn't love how loudly her grandmother speaks or how her morning prayer bells wake her up. *When I Found Grandma* is a heartwarming tale about navigating differences that are both cultural and generational. This marks Saumiya Balasubramaniam's debut picture book. Qin Leng has illustrated several children's books including Sara O'Leary's *A Family is A Family is A Family* and her own book *I Am Small*.

When you can read it: March 1, 2019

***Moon Wishes* by Patricia Storms & Guy Storms, illustrated by Milan Pavlovic**



Moon Wishes is a picture book by Guy Storms, Patricia Storms and Milan Pavlovic. (Helen Booker, Jelena Reljic, Groundwood Books)

A bedtime story by Patricia Storms and Guy Storms, *Moon Wishes* describes how a moon's glow can light a path, glisten on snow and give peace to the weary. Milan Pavlovic, an illustrator from Toronto, creates dreamy watercolour paintings for this picture book.

When you can read it: March 1, 2019

Circle by Mac Barnett, illustrated by Jon Klassen



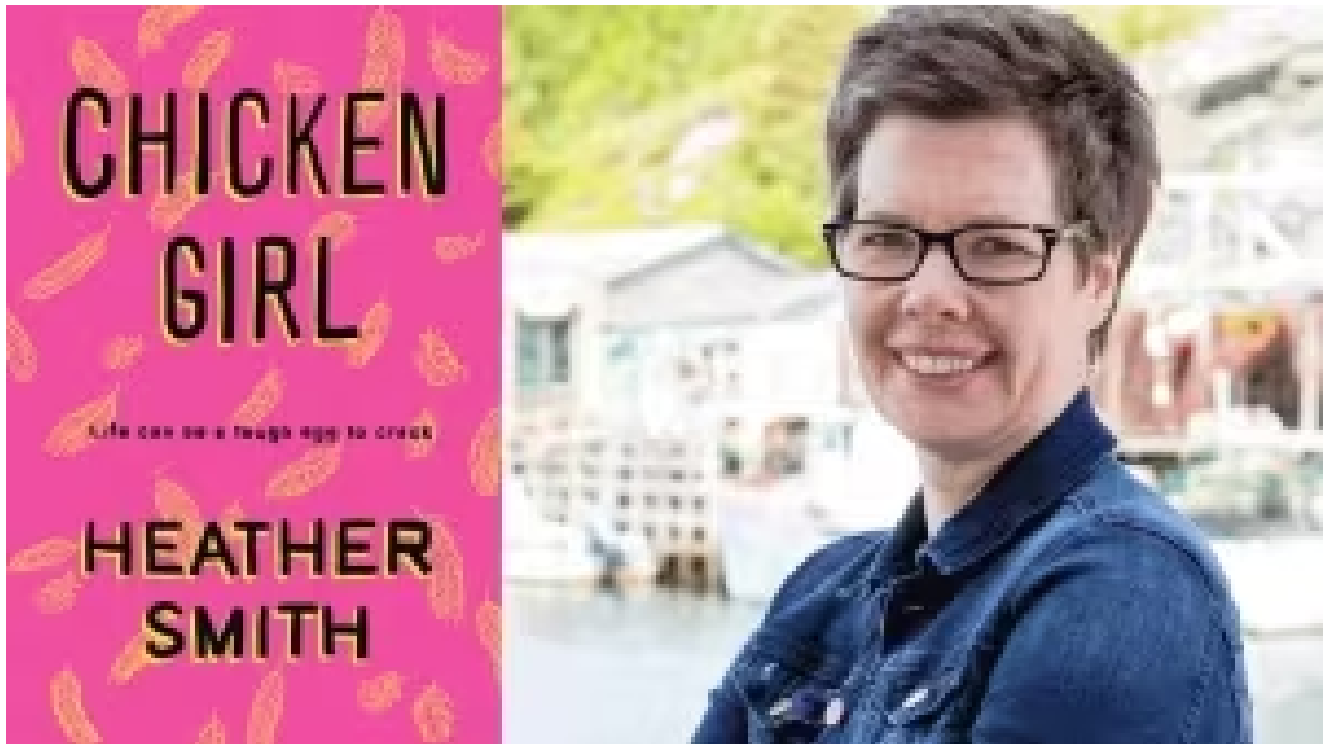
Circle is a picture book by Jon Klassen & Mac Barnett. (Submitted by Penguin Random House)

The final book in American Mac Barnett and Canadian Jon Klassen's shapes trilogy is all about Circle, who must save her friend Triangle when he breaks a rule. The bestselling pair are also the creators behind *Square*, *Triangle*, *Sam & Dave Dig a Hole* and *The Wolf, The Duck & The Mouse*.

When you can read it: March 5, 2019

The 8 books Jon Klassen would love to illustrate

***Chicken Girl* by Heather Smith**

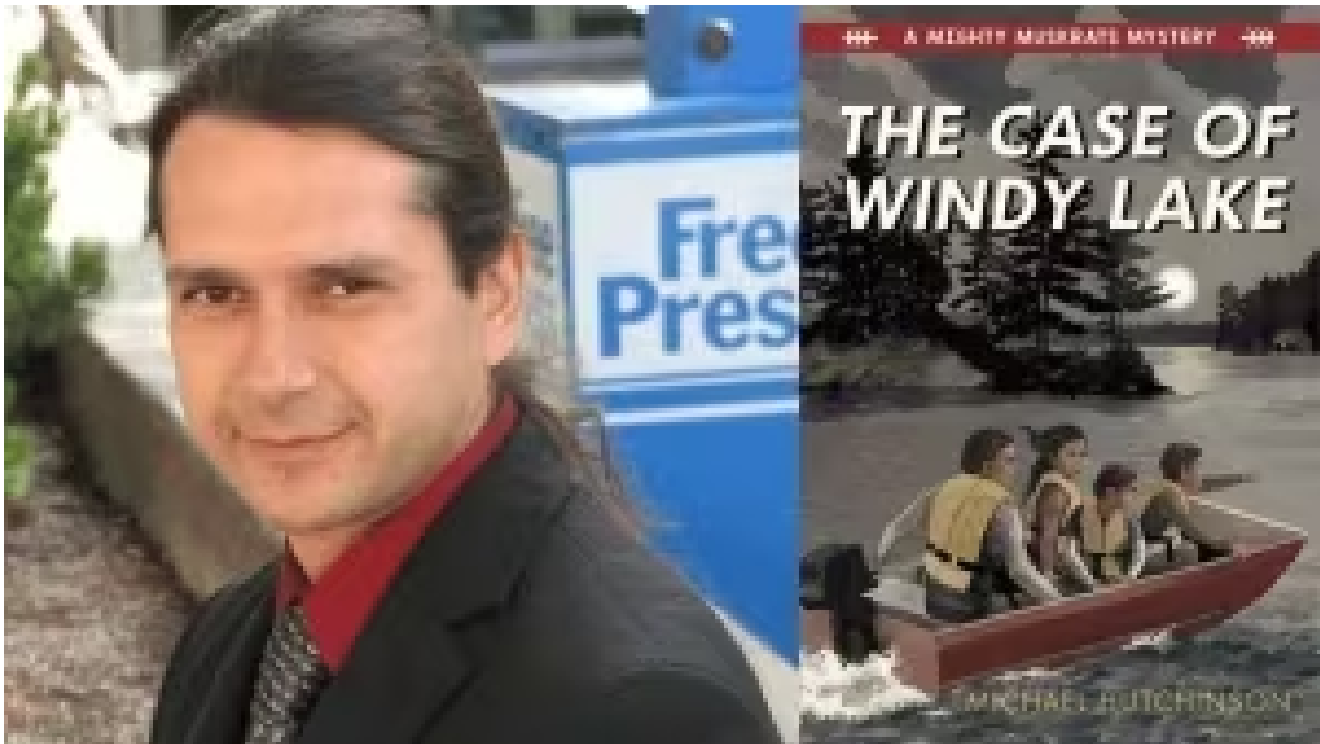


Chicken Girl is a YA novel by Heather T. Smith. (Submitted by Penguin Teen)

After being bullied online for dressing up as Rosie the Riveter, Poppy bitterly takes a job wearing a chicken suit at a fast food restaurant. While at work, Poppy meets a young girl that opens her eyes to the struggles of those around her. Heather T. Smith is a writer from Waterloo, Ont., who's previous novel-in-verse *Ebb & Flow* was a finalist for the 2018 Governor General's Literary Award for children's literature — text.

When you can read it: March 5, 2019

***The Case of Windy Lake* by Michael Hutchinson**

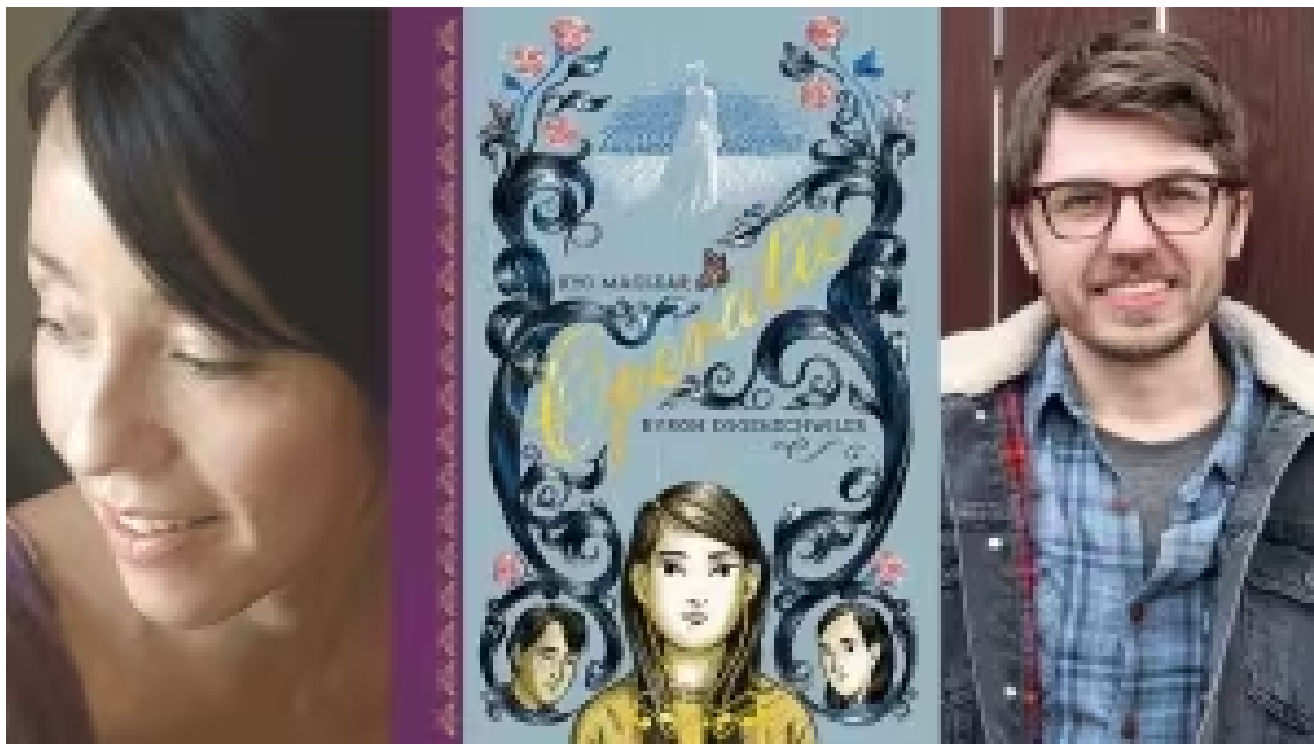


The Case of Windy Lake is a mystery novel by Michael Hutchinson. (@Mike_Hutchinson/Twitter.com, Second Story Press)

Cousins Sam, Otter, Atim and Chickadee are known as the Mighty Muskrats of Windy Lake First Nation. When an archaeologist goes missing, they investigate his disappearance amidst increasingly heated environmental protests. *The Case of Windy Lake*, written for readers aged 9 to 12, is the first book by Michael Hutchinson, who is a member of Misipawistik Cree Nation and press secretary for the National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations.

When you can read it: March 18, 2019

Operatic by Kyo Maclear, illustrated by Byron Eggenschwiler



Operatic is a YA novel by Kyo Maclear & Byron Eggenschwiler. (Submitted by Greenwood Books)

When her music class learns about opera, Charlie becomes obsessed with the life of Maria Callas. She looks to the ultimate diva for direction on how to cope with her feelings for her classmate Emile and her concerns for Luka, who hasn't showed up to school in weeks. *Operatic* is written for readers aged 10 to 14. Kyo Maclear is the author of many picture books, including *Bloom* and *Virginia Wolf*, as well as nonfiction books like *Birds Art Life*. Byron Eggenschwiler is a Calgary, Alta., illustrator who has contributed to publications like the New York Times, New Yorker and GQ.

When you can read it: April 1, 2019

***The Center of the Universe* by Ria Voros**

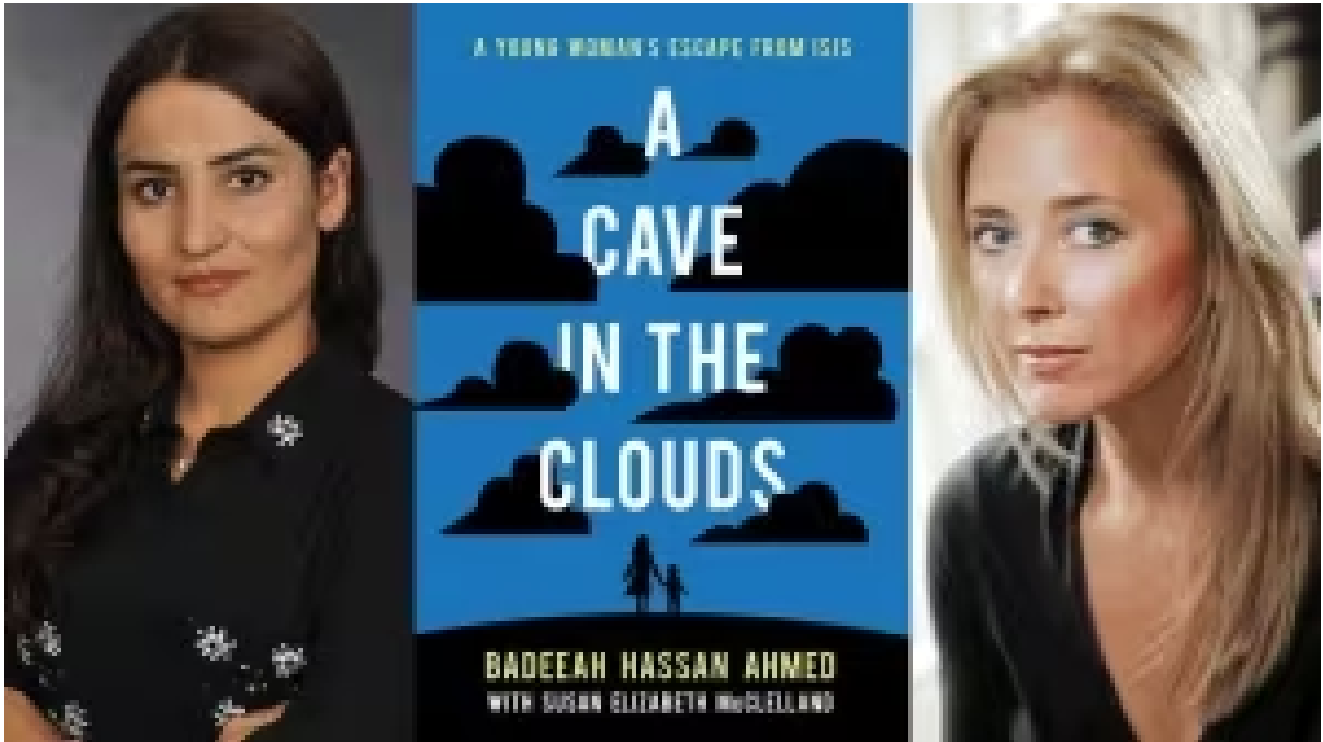


The Center of the Universe is a novel by Ria Voros. (Kids Can Press, [@RiaVoros/Twitter.com](https://twitter.com/RiaVoros))

Grace, an aspiring astrophysicist, isn't very close with her mother GG, a celebrity news anchor. When GG suddenly goes missing, Grace's family struggles to cope with her disappearance and deal with the media circus that has descended upon them. Ria Voros is a YA writer from Victoria, B.C.

When you can read it: April 2, 2019

***A Cave in the Clouds* by Badeeah Hassan Ahmed & Susan Elizabeth McClelland**

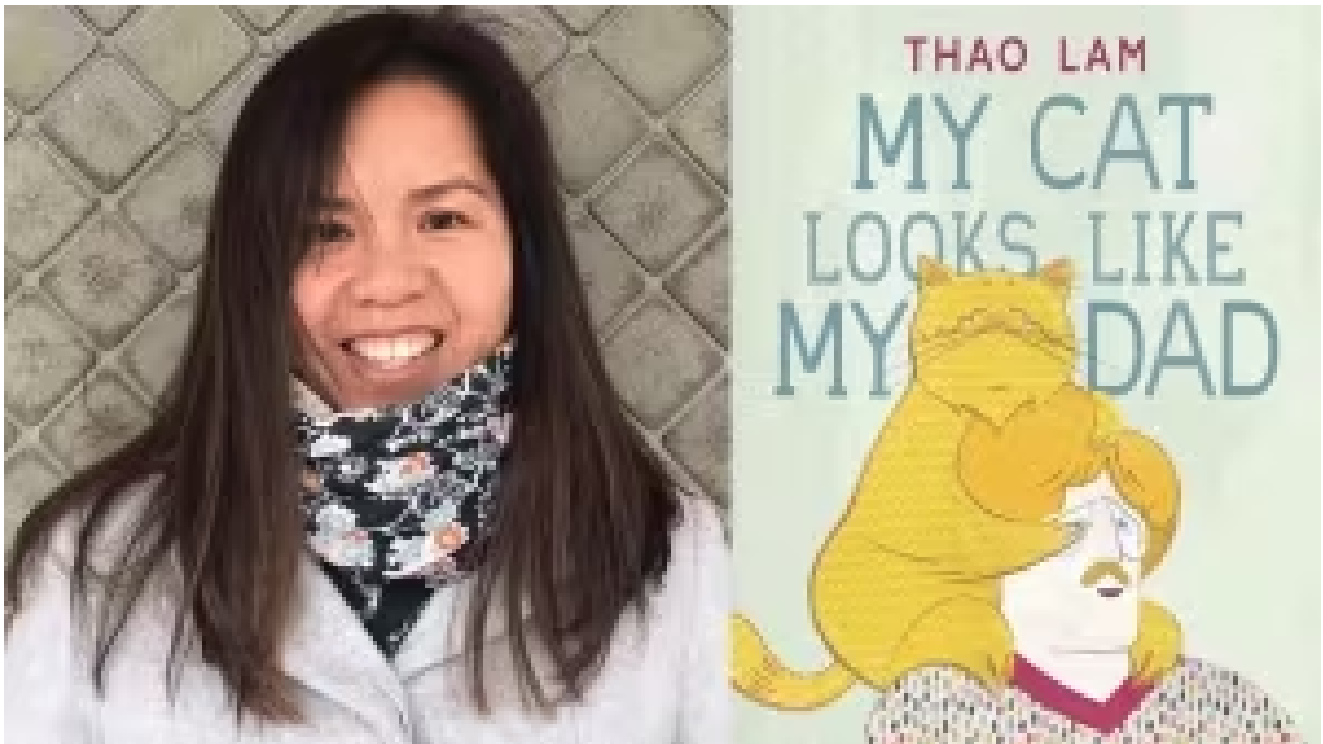


A *Cave in the Clouds* is a YA memoir by Badeeah Hassan Ahmed with Susan Elizabeth McClelland.
(Submitted by Annick Press)

In this memoir, Badeeah Hassan describes how she was captured and sold to a high-ranking ISIS commander at the age of 18. Hassan survived unimaginable horrors alongside her young nephew Eivan and friend Navine before escaping and reuniting with her family. She now studies nursing and language in Germany. She tells her story with the help of Toronto journalist Elizabeth McClelland.

When you can read it: April 9, 2019

***My Cat Looks Like My Dad* by Thao Lam**



My Cat Looks Like My Dad is a picture book by Thao Lam. (Submitted by Thao Lam)

A narrator, whose surprising identity is revealed at the end of the picture book, describes the ways in which their cat and dad are similar: they both have orange hair, love to nap and are occasionally brave. Thao Lam is also the author of the picture book *Wallpaper*.

When you can read it: April 15, 2019

***Mya's Strategy to Save the World* by Tanya Lloyd Kyi**

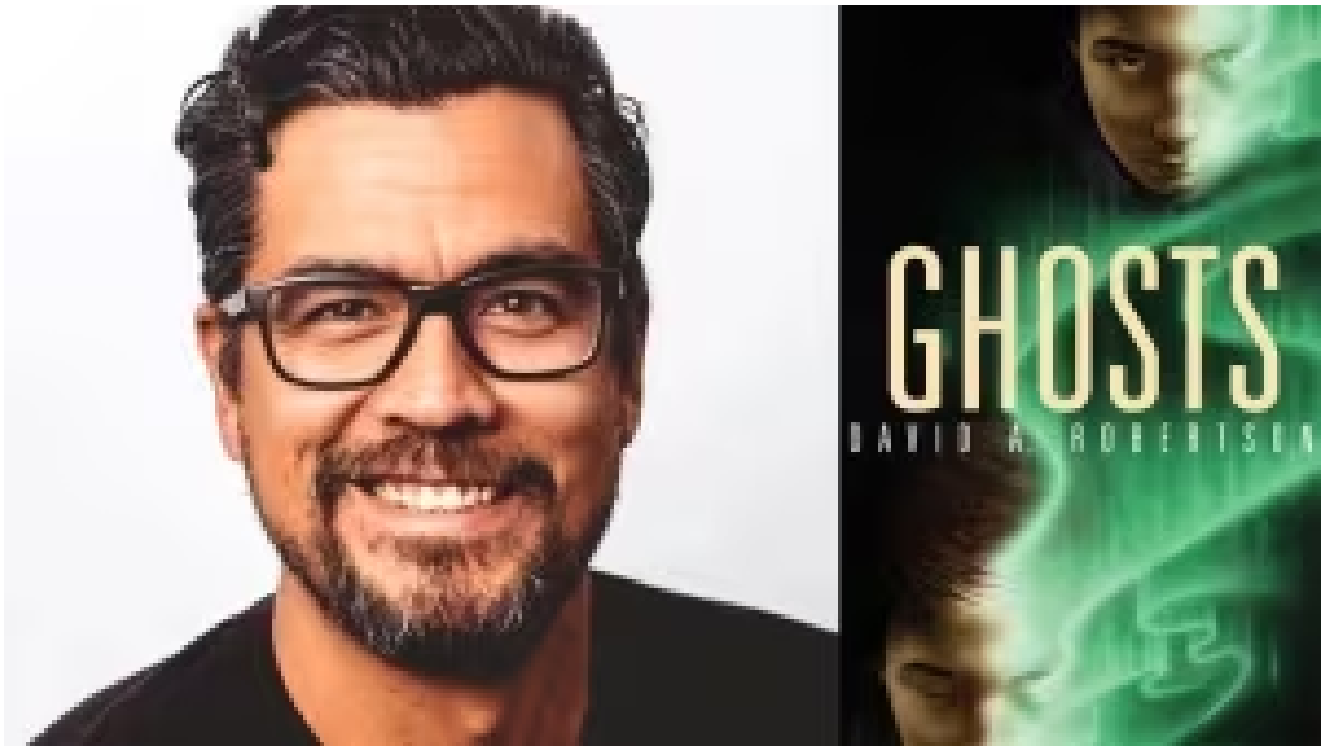


Mya's Strategy to Save the World is a YA novel by Tanya Lloyd Kyi. (tanyalloydki.com, Puffin Canada)

This book for middle-grade readers follows a girl named Mya, who runs her school's social justice club and dreams of working for the United Nations. Her more immediate dreams include owning a cell phone, which her parents have emphatically denied her. Lloyd Kyi's previous books include *Prince of Pot* and *Eyes & Spies*.

When you can read it: April 30, 2019

***Ghosts* by David A. Robertson**



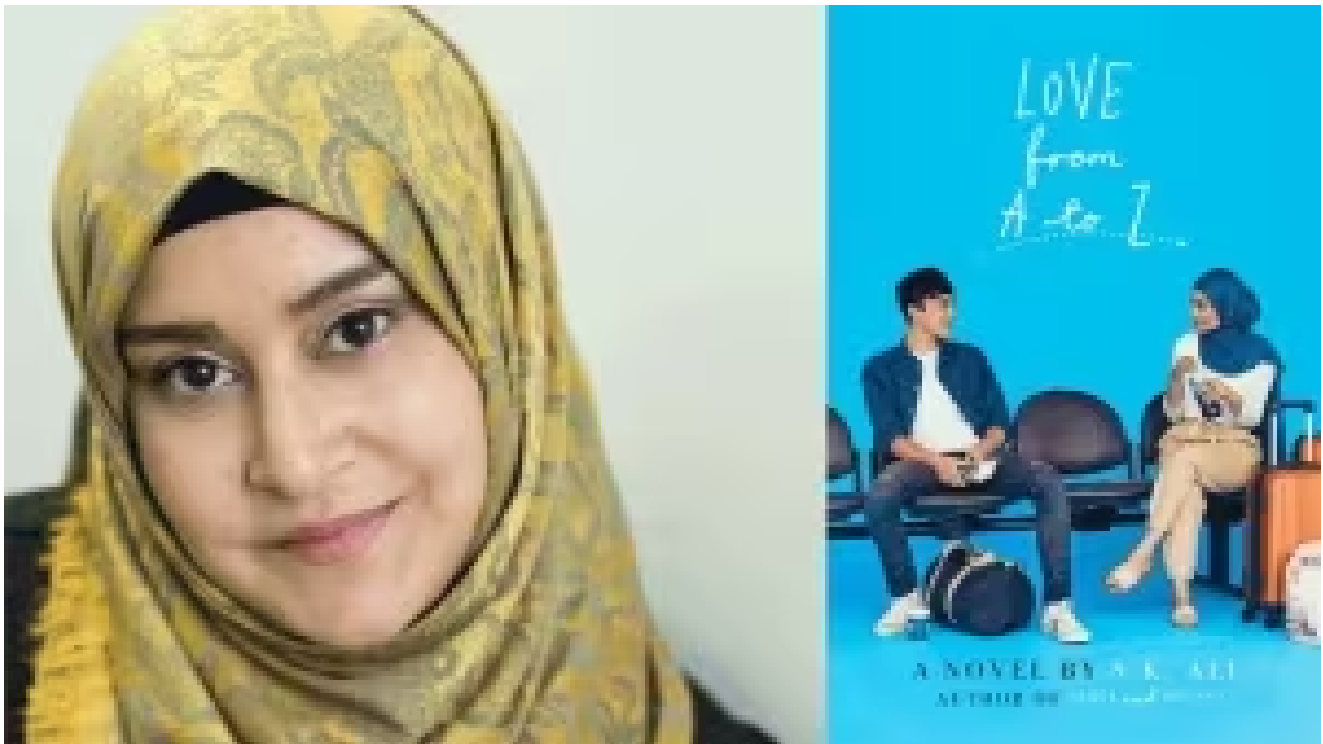
David A. Robertson is the author of the YA novel *Ghosts*. (HighWater Press)

Ghosts is the third book in David A. Robertson's Reckoner series following an Indigenous teen named Cole Harper, who returns home after many years away. In *Ghosts*, Cole is dead and time is running out for Wounded Sky First Nation as Mihko Laboratories, which manufactured an illness that once afflicted the community, has reopened its research facilities.

When you can read it: May 1, 2019

'Write what you're passionate about.' David A. Robertson's advice for his younger self

***Love from A to Z* by S.K. Ali**



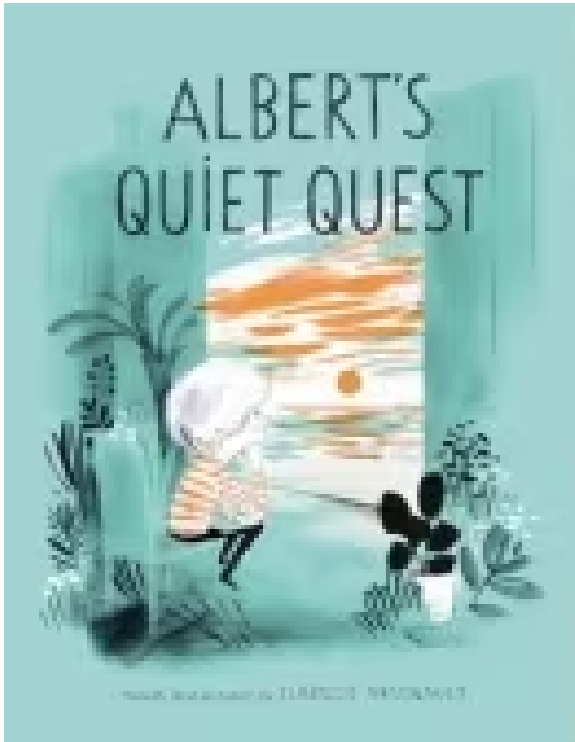
Love from A to Z is a YA novel by S.K. Ali. (Andrea Stenson, Simon & Schuster)

When Zayneb gets suspended for standing up to a xenophobic teacher, she's sent to her aunt's house in Doha, Qatar for an early spring break. She ends up meeting Adam, a teenager trying to hide his multiple sclerosis diagnosis from his grieving father. *Love from A to Z*, a YA novel, is S.K. Ali's second book, following *Saints and Misfits*.

When you can read it: May 7, 2019

YA novelist S.K. Ali on why we need more Muslim stories

***Albert's Quiet Quest* by Isabelle Arsenault**

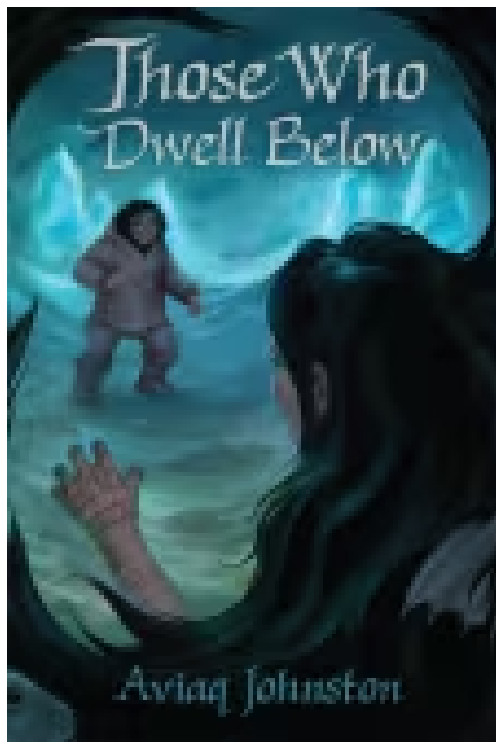


Albert's Quiet Quest is a picture book by Isabelle Arsenault. (Tundra Books, Cindy Boyce)

In this picture book, an introverted young boy named Albert dreams of finding a quiet sunset beach to read on. Instead, he's surrounded by the loud and raucous kids in his Mile End neighbourhood in Montreal. Isabelle Arsenault is a three time winner of the Governor General's Literary Award for young people's literature — illustration. Her books include *Colette's Lost Pet* and *Louis Undercover*, which was written by Fanny Britt.

When you can read it: May 7, 2019

***Those Who Dwell Below* by Aviaq Johnston, illustrated
by Toma Feizo Gas**



Those Who Dwell Below is a fantasy YA novel by Aviaq Johnston. (Inhabit Media)

After being trapped in a spirit world, a young shaman named Pitu returns to his life in the Arctic. When Pitu gets wind of a nearby community that is starving, he realizes he must travel to the depths of the ocean to meet with the sea goddess Nuliajuk. *Those Who Dwell Below*, written for readers 12 and up, is a sequel to Aviaq Johnston's debut novel, *Those Who Run in the Sky*, which was a finalist for the Governor General's Literary Award for young people's literature — text.

When you can read it: May 7, 2019

Why author Aviaq Johnston's stories are rooted in the Arctic

***We Contain Multitudes* by Sarah Henstra**



We Contain Multitudes is a YA novel by Sarah Henstra. (paolascattolon.com, Penguin Teen)

An letter-writing assignment brings together high schoolers Kurl — an ex-football player known for fighting and for being held back a year — and Jo — a gay, nerdy teenager who loves poetry. As their fledgling, unexpected friendship grows, Jo and Kurl face homophobia and bullying from their peers and families. *We Contain Multitudes* is Sarah Henstra's second YA novel. She recently won the Governor General's Literary Award for fiction for the book *The Red Word*.

When you can read it: May 14, 2019

Why Sarah Henstra keeps writing

***The Worst Book Ever* by Elise Gravel**



The Worst Book Ever is a comic book by Elise Gravel. (Submitted by Drawn & Quarterly)

The characters in Elise Gravel's book *The Worst Book Ever* positively hate the journey she's taking them on. Sick of the boring adventure and tired character tropes, they decide to take matters into their own hands. Montreal artist Elise Gravel is the author of many popular comics for kids, including *I Want a Monster!* and *The Mushroom Fan Club*.

When you can read it: May 28, 2019

Want to learn how to draw? Here are 5 tips from Elise Gravel

***Lunch Quest* by Chris Kuzma**

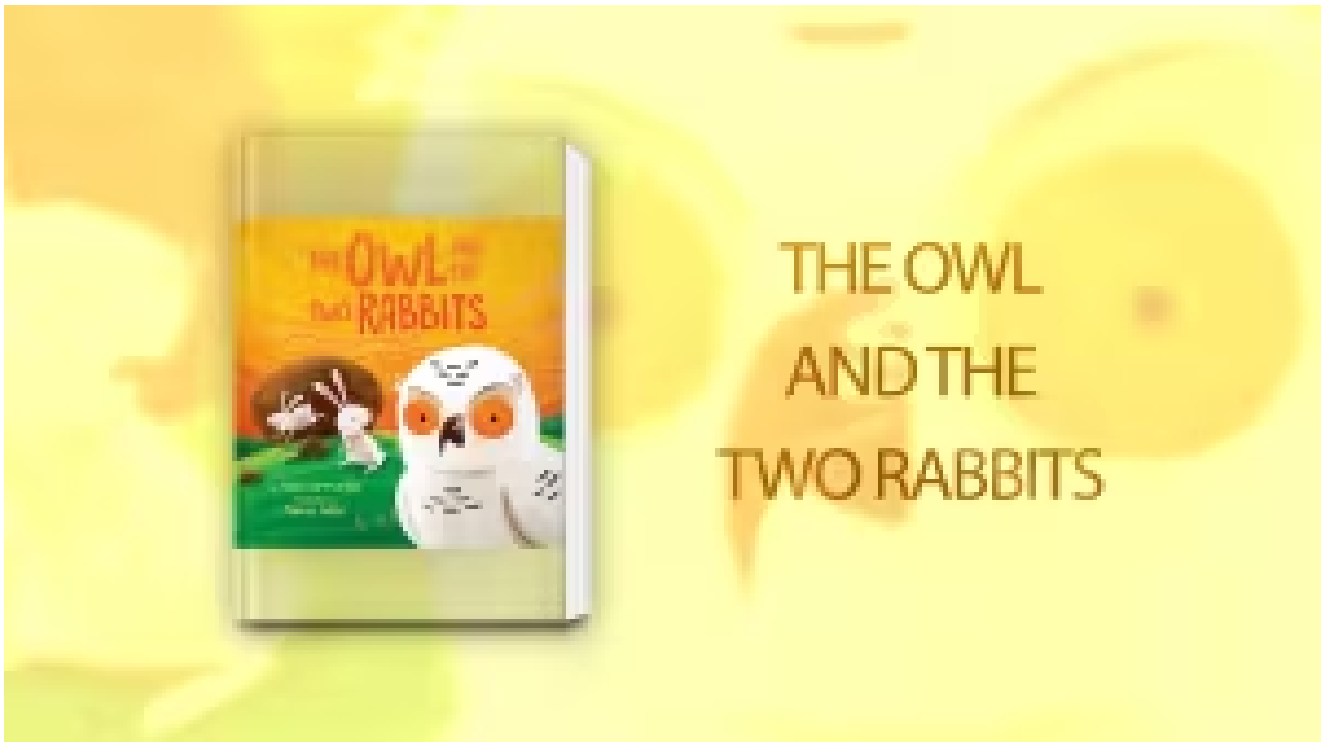


Lunch Quest is a comic by Chris Kuzma. (Submitted by Koyama Press)

In *Lunch Quest*, a hungry rabbit goes searching for lettuce and instead finds a universe of skater kids in his lettuce cubby. Zany adventures await the characters of this bright and colourful comic book. Chris Kuzma is a freelance illustrator based in Toronto. *Lunch Quest* is his first all-ages graphic novel.

When you can read it: June 21, 2019

***The Owl and the Two Rabbits* by Nadia Sammurtok, illustrated by Marcus Cutler**



The Owl and the Two Rabbits is a picture book by Nadia Sammurtok & Marcus Cutler. (Inhabit Media)

In this traditional Inuit story, two rabbit sisters play on the open tundra in spite of their parents' warnings. When a hungry owl finds the sisters, a wild chase ensues and the rabbits must use their guile to escape. Nadia Sammurtok is an Inuit writer and educator now based in Iqaluit, Nunavut. Marcus Cutler is a children's illustrator from Ontario.

When you can read it: June 25, 2019

***Boonoonoonous Hair!* by Olive Senior, illustrated by Laura James**



Boonoonoonous Hair! is a picture book by Olive Senior and Laura James. (Caroline Forbes, Neville Gordon, Tradewind Books)

In this charming picture book for young readers, a girl learns to embrace her wild, hard-to-manage curly hair. Olive Senior is an award-winning writer, whose books include the short story collection *The Pain Tree* and the picture book *Anna Carries Water*, which is also illustrated by New York artist Laura James.

When you can read it: June 30, 2019

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19 works of Canadian nonfiction to check out in spring 2019