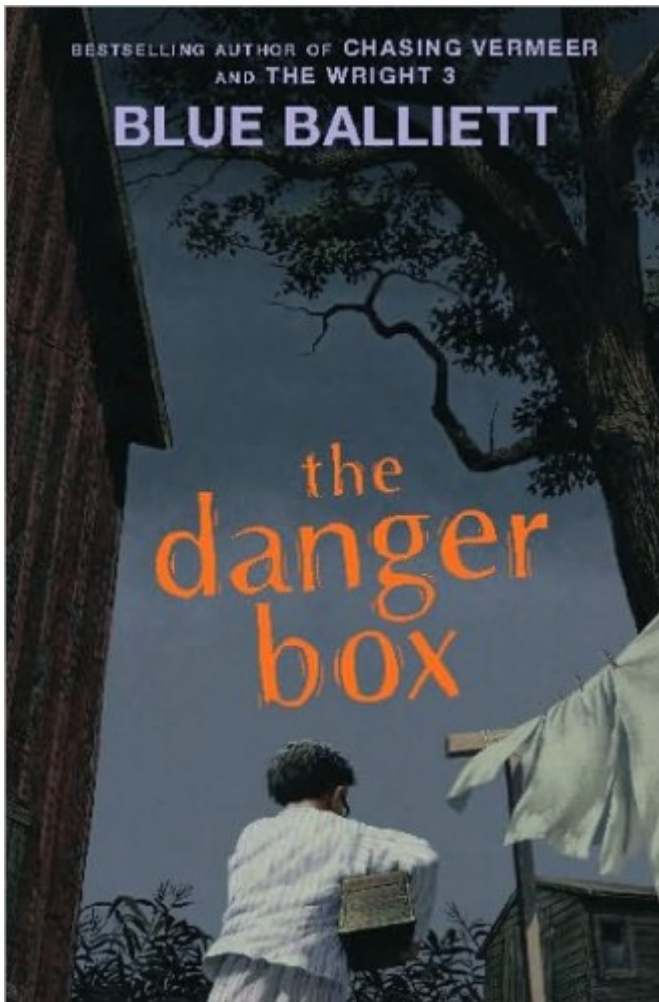


CC recommends: Children's literature

selected by [Nancy Hull](#) in the [December 14, 2010](#) issue

In Review



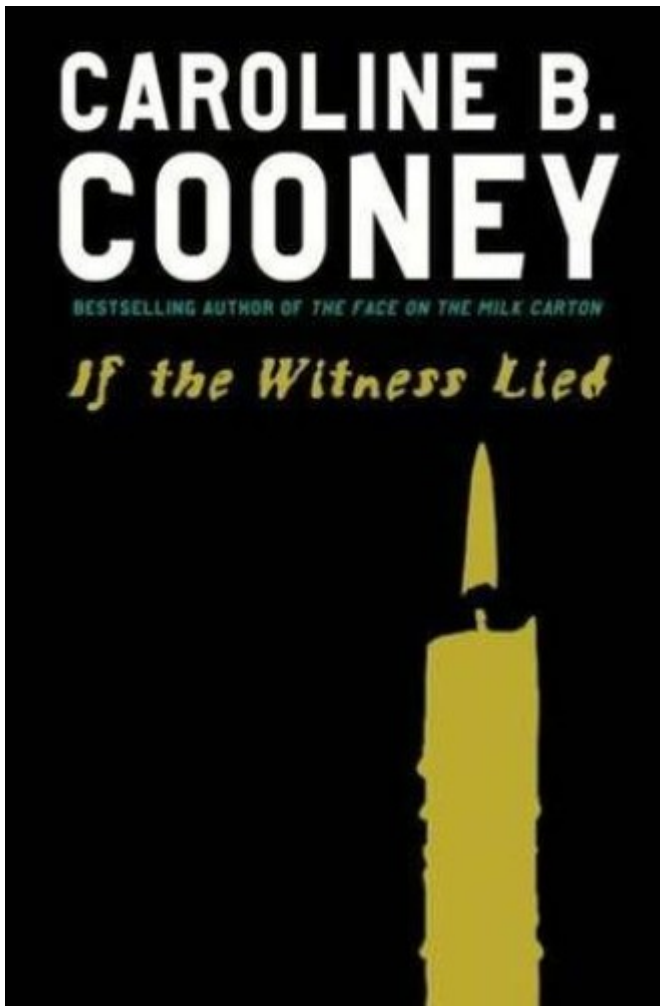
The Danger Box

By Blue Balliett
Scholastic



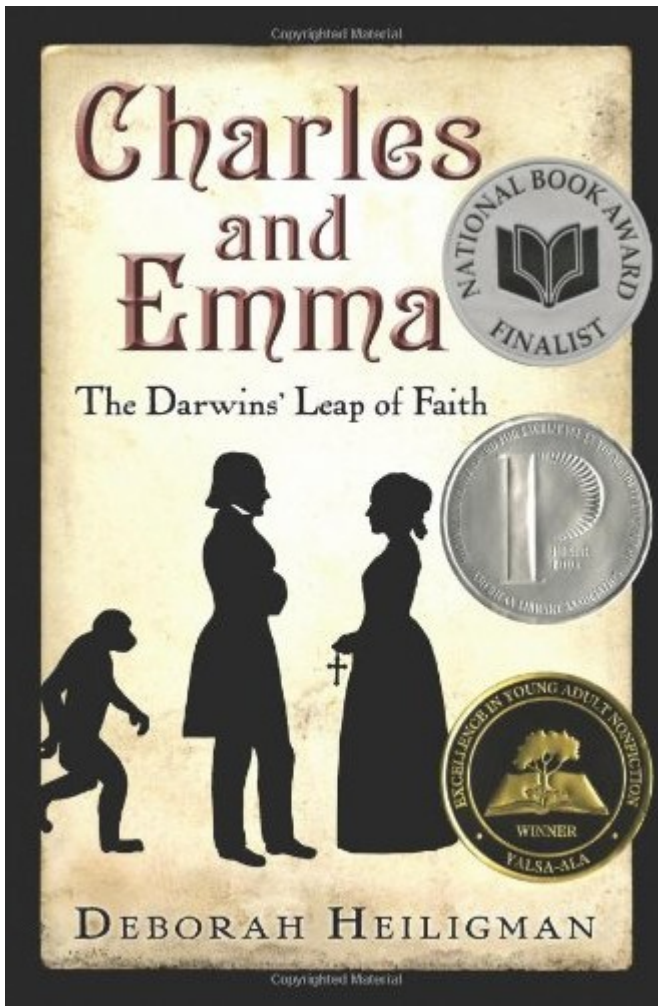
Moon Over Manifest

By Clare Vanderpool
Delacorte



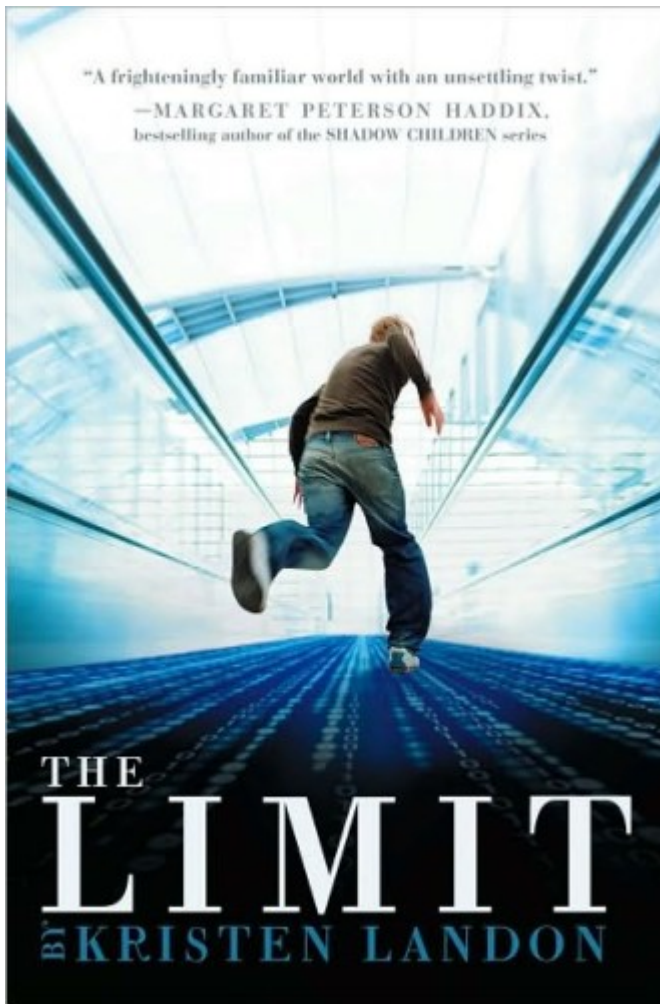
If the Witness Lied

By Caroline B. Cooney
Delacorte



Charles and Emma

By Deborah Heiligman
Henry Holt



The Limit

By Kristen Landon

Aladdin



A Tale Dark and Grimm

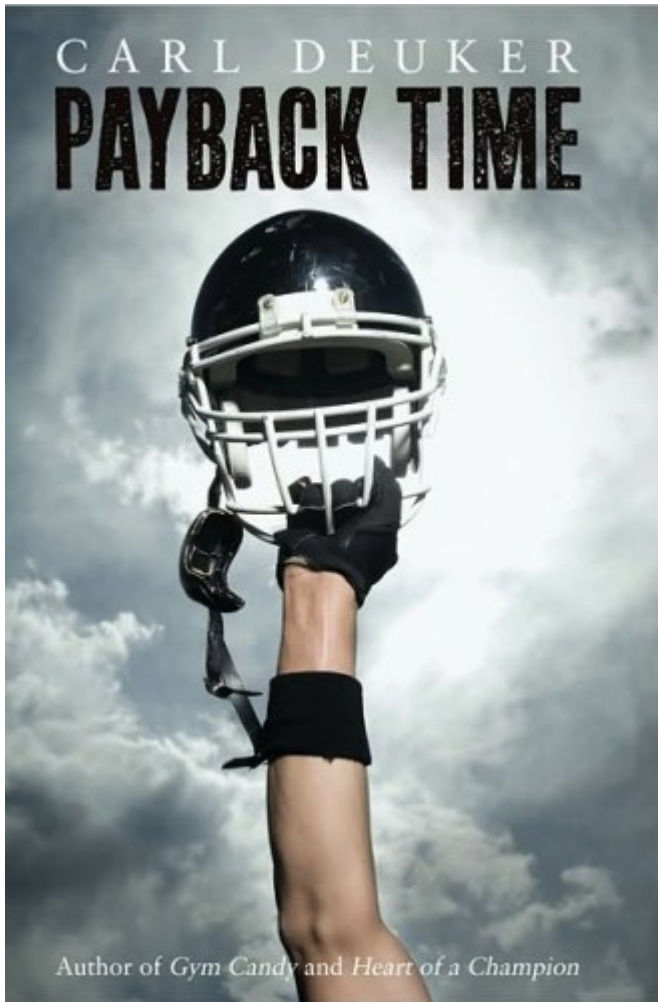
By Adam Gidwitz

Dutton



Suspect

By Kristin Wolden Nitz
Peachtree Publishers



Payback Time

By Carl Deuker
Houghton Mifflin

Ages ten and up

Blue Balliett, *The Danger Box*. Zoomy's arrival in a basket and his quirky mannerisms are as mysterious as the treasure he finds stashed in the shed. Fiendish strangers, a blazing fire and a "firecracker girl" keep readers focused on Zoomy's quest for answers about himself and the dangerous box.

Clare Vanderpool, *Moon Over Manifest*. When Abilene jumps from the train in Manifest, she sets out to find the truth about her father, who has sent her to live with a bootlegger turned preacher. She unveils the secret of a town of immigrants who once suffered under a greedy mine owner and a haunting past.

Ages 12 and up

Caroline B. Cooney, *If the Witness Lied*. Jack Fountain's life is a mess. His mother died choosing to forego cancer treatment so that her fourth child could be born healthy. Jack's father meets a tragic (and puzzling) death on the family's property. Left to hold the family together, Jack watches his siblings drift apart. But within 24 hours hope emerges for this broken family.

Deborah Heiligman, *Charles and Emma: The Darwins' Leap of Faith*. This nonfiction account provides a new perspective on the scientist and his life. Focusing often on Darwin's wife, Emma—who took an opposite stance from his on religion and the afterlife—these stories offer a sensitive and personal glimpse into the man, his lingering illnesses and his sincere devotion to his eight children and beloved wife.

Kristen Landon, *The Limit*. "An eighth-grade girl was taken today," the first line goes, and readers are caught up in this tale of a government that tracks families' spending habits. When Matt's parents become financially irresponsible, he is transported to a workhouse where he is tested and assigned a job that will help him earn enough money to satisfy the money monitors.

Adam Gidwitz, *A Tale Dark and Grimm*. For those who long for the Grimm tales as they were—grim—this lively retelling will lead you along a Hansel and Gretel path unlike any you've traveled. Interweaving the candy house kids with eight other narratives, the author relates some of the more gruesome moments in the Grimm collection. These stories are not for the fainthearted. Enter with caution and prepared to laugh.

Ages 13 and up

Kristin Wolden Nitz, *Suspect*. Jen's high school exams have just ended when she is coerced by her father to assist her Grandma Kay at the Schoenhaus Inn. Grandma has a mystery weekend planned that might offer clues to the dubious disappearance of Jen's mother. An old boyfriend and an intriguing "uncousin" play roles in a pretend mystery and in Jen's puzzling future.

Carl Deuker, *Payback Time*. Mixing sports, mystery and teen angst, this novel presents the challenges faced by Dan True, an overweight high school senior. When Dan loses his bid to be editor of the school paper and is assigned to the sports beat, he thinks his journalism career is over. But Dan knows he's onto something when Coach McNulty angrily rejects Dan's questions about the superstar football player

who rarely leaves the bench.