

The Year's Best Books for Kids

Robots and lost dogs and ghosts, oh my! Ten standouts to enthrall the younger set

By SUE CORBETT

Tom Gauld

The Little Wooden Robot and the Log Princess

Fairy tale tropes are upended in Gauld's charming tale of royal siblings who take turns rescuing each other. (4-8)

Stacey Lee

The Downstairs Girl
A maid of Chinese ancestry in 1890

Atlanta has a surprising side hustle—as an advice columnist challenging the city's prejudices. (12-17)

Karla Arenas Valenti

Lotería
Clara has been chosen for a game of chance—the Mexican card game Lotería—in this spellbinding story about fate versus free will. (8-12)

Gary Paulsen

Gone to the Woods
In a searing but uplifting memoir, the author of *Hatchet* tells of the harrowing childhood he overcame. (8-12)

Eugene Yelchin

The Genius Under the Table

What was life like behind the Iron Curtain? Yelchin wittily recounts his hardscrabble upbringing in Cold War Russia. (10-15)



There's a

Ghost

in this

House

Oliver Jeffers

There's a Ghost in This House

Now you see 'em, now you don't: translucent overlay pages let readers join a little girl in a spooky (but not too scary) game of hide-and-seek inside the Victorian mansion she calls home. (4-8)

Amber McBride

Moth

A powerful novel-in-verse about how tragedy transforms the lives of Moth, an orphaned ballerina grieving the loss of her family, and Sani, a depressed Navajo boy in search of his roots. (12-17)

Yuyi Morales

Bright Star

A newborn fawn awakens to a dangerous world in this sumptuously illustrated picture book set in the Sonoran Desert. (4-8)

Marta Bartolj

Every Little Kindness

This "lost dog" story explains the concept of paying it forward, wordlessly, as one kindness leads to another until, finally: a joyous reunion between girl and pup. (5-8)

Rita Williams-Garcia

A Sitting in St. James

The lives of the privileged and the exploited intertwine in Williams-Garcia's masterpiece of historical fiction set in antebellum Louisiana. (YA)