

## **BOOKTALK**

### **Caudills:**

#### **Resistance by Jennifer Nielsen**

Chaya Lindner is a teenager living in Nazi-occupied Poland. Simply being Jewish places her in danger of being killed or sent to the camps. After her little sister is taken away, her younger brother disappears, and her parents all but give up hope, Chaya is determined to make a difference. Using forged papers and her fair features, Chaya becomes a courier and travels between the Jewish ghettos of Poland, smuggling food, papers, and even people.

Soon Chaya joins a resistance cell that runs raids on the Nazis' supplies. But after a mission goes terribly wrong, Chaya's network shatters. She is alone and unsure of where to go, until Esther, a member of her cell, finds her and delivers a message that chills Chaya to her core, and sends her on a journey toward an even larger uprising in the works -- in the Warsaw Ghetto.

Though the Jewish resistance never had much of a chance against the Nazis, they were determined to save as many lives as possible, and to live -- or die -- with honor.

#### **The Long Way Down by Jason Reynolds**

That's what fifteen-year-old Will has shoved in the back waistband of his jeans. See, his brother Shawn was just murdered. And Will knows the rules. No crying. No snitching. *Revenge*. That's where Will's now heading, with that gun shoved in the back waistband of his jeans, the gun that was his brother's gun. He gets on the elevator, seventh floor, stoked. He knows who he's after. Or does he? As the elevator stops on the sixth floor, on comes Buck. Buck, Will finds out, is who gave Shawn the gun before Will took the gun. Buck tells Will to check that the gun is even loaded. And that's when Will sees that one bullet is missing. And the only one who could have fired Shawn's gun was Shawn. Huh. Will didn't know that Shawn had ever actually USED his gun. Bigger huh. BUCK IS DEAD. But Buck's in the elevator? Just as Will's trying to think this through, the door to the next floor opens. A teenage girl gets on, waves away the smoke from Dead Buck's cigarette. Will doesn't know her, but she knew him. Knew. When they were eight. And stray bullets had cut through the playground, and Will had tried to cover her, but she was hit anyway, and so what she wants to know, on that fifth floor elevator stop, is, what if Will, Will with the gun shoved in the back waistband of his jeans, MISSES.

And so it goes, the whole long way down, as the elevator stops on each floor, and at each stop someone connected to his brother gets on to give Will a piece to a bigger story than the one he thinks he knows. A story that might never know an END...if WILL gets *off* that elevator.

### **Historical Fiction:**

#### **Salt to the Sea by Ruta Septys**

Winter 1945. WWII. Four refugees. Four stories.

Each one born of a different homeland; each one hunted, and haunted, by tragedy, lies, war. As thousands desperately flock to the coast in the midst of a Soviet advance, four paths converge, vying for passage aboard the *Wilhelm Gustloff*, a ship that promises safety and freedom. But not all promises can be kept . . .

### **Fantasy:**

## **Warbringer by Leigh Bardugo**

She will become one of the world's greatest heroes: WONDER WOMAN. But first she is Diana, Princess of the Amazons. And her fight is just beginning. . . .

Diana longs to prove herself to her legendary warrior sisters. But when the opportunity finally comes, she throws away her chance at glory and breaks Amazon law—risking exile—to save a mere mortal. Even worse, Alia Keralis is no ordinary girl and with this single brave act, Diana may have doomed the world.

Alia just wanted to escape her overprotective brother with a semester at sea. She doesn't know she is being hunted. When a bomb detonates aboard her ship, Alia is rescued by a mysterious girl of extraordinary strength and forced to confront a horrible truth: Alia is a Warbringer—a direct descendant of the infamous Helen of Troy, fated to bring about an age of bloodshed and misery.

Together, Diana and Alia will face an army of enemies—mortal and divine—determined to either destroy or possess the Warbringer. If they have any hope of saving both their worlds, they will have to stand side by side against the tide of war.

## **Science Fiction:**

### **Dry by Neal Shusterman**

The drought—or the Tap-Out, as everyone calls it—has been going on for a while now. Everyone's lives have become an endless list of don'ts: don't water the lawn, don't fill up your pool, don't take long showers.

Until the taps run dry.

Suddenly, Alyssa's quiet suburban street spirals into a warzone of desperation; neighbors and families turned against each other on the hunt for water. And when her parents don't return and her life—and the life of her brother—is threatened, Alyssa has to make impossible choices if she's going to survive.

## **Mystery:**

### **Need by Joelle Charbonneau**

*"No one gets something for nothing. We all should know better."*

Teenagers at Wisconsin's Nottawa High School are drawn deeper into a social networking site that promises to grant their every need . . . regardless of the consequences. Soon the site turns sinister, with simple pranks escalating to malicious crimes. The body count rises. In this chilling YA thriller, the author of the best-selling Testing trilogy examines not only the dark side of social media, but the dark side of human nature.

## **Honorable Mentions:**

### **Divided we Fall**

**Most Dangerous**

**The Faithful Spy**