illustrations. This insightful picture book sensitively portrays Hannah's sadness and her return to equilibrium. —Carolyn Phelan

The Dam.
By David Almond. Illus. by Levi Pinfold.

This takes the true story of the Kielder Dam in Northumberland and imbues it with music and a touch of mysticism. The dam was constructed in 1981 in a valley where there were farms, houses, a school. When the dam was finished, the valley was to be flooded. Almond's story begins as a father and daughter walk the valley one last time, remembering the pipers, singers, and dance parties that once filled the area with soaring sounds. The daughter has her violin, the father his voice, and together they listen to it all. Pinfold's impressive artwork, covering spreads, serves as sturdy counterpoint to Almond's lyrical text. Particularly arresting are the 10 dark squares and rectangles that show the water covering all that's been before. Yet the promise of what comes next appears with the turn of a page, as people enjoy all the lake and its shore have to offer. A powerful piece of remembrance. —Irene Cooper

Eduardo Guadardo, Elite Sheep.

About to graduate from FBI (“Fairy-Tale Bureau of Investigations”) training and already a legend in his own mind, boastful Eduardo gambols eagerly into his first assignment: preventing a witch, a wolf, and a troll from kidnapping young schoolgirl Mary. “Your fleece is white as snow!” Mary exclaims. “You can follow me wherever I go.” That turns out to be a tough proposition, though, as Mary's path to school not only leads past all sorts of traps but also involves waterskiing and snowboarding. Sheread at least of his determination to do it alone, exhausted Eduardo beats for help . . . and discovers that the whole situation was a setup designed to convince him of the need for teamwork. Morris tucks glimpses of Mission: Impossible-style tech and exploits, plus a gingerbread G-man and other familiar folktale figures, into her comical cartoon illustrations. The first four verses of a certain folkloric figures, into her comical cartoon illustrations. The first four verses of a certain comic are introduced in mini-episodes featuring drawn cartoon images. A HUMDINGER for budding wordplay fans. —John Peters

Outside My Window.
By Linda Ashman. Illus. by Jamey Christoph.

A girl looks out her window at a magnolia tree in the sunlight yard below and asks, “What's outside your window?” Twelve replies come from kids around the world. A boy in New York City tells of town houses, a girl in the Canadian Rockies sees mountains, a river, and a freight train. In Ethiopia, a child watches rain clouds moving across the plains. A boy in Marrakesh says, “I see a busy boulevard, an open gate, adobe walls, the courtyard where we play.” This satisfying story concludes with a verse in which the original girl looks out at “the moon we share” and feels a closer kinship to all the others. Not mentioned in the text, the children's locations are revealed on the appended double-page spread. Christoph contributes a series of handsome digital illustrations that are nicely varied but similarly strong in structure, color, and use of light. A fine read-aloud choice for global awareness. —Carolyn Phelan

The Snow Lion.
By Jim Helmore. Illus. by Richard Jones.

Caro and her mother move to a new home with an all-white interior. As a lonely Caro explores the house, she is surprised to find a large white lion camouflaged in a blank wall. The illustrations depict Caro as happy and protected with her new friend, the Snow Lion. Gradually the lion encourages Caro to try some new things—perhaps the slide at the park? Visiting the child next door? Changes in Caro's world are demonstrated visibly. As the walls are painted with new colors, the lion moves out to the snow-covered garden. When summer comes, the lion appears in the clouds. Framed photographs show a small, red-haired Caro holding a man's hand, as well as another house, but his absence and the reason for the move are not explained. Young children will take the story at face value, understanding the anxiety Caro faces. Older readers may contemplate the idea of imaginary friends and why Caro needs the lion. Beautifully designed and executed, this book provides a gentle exploration of a challenging situation many children face. —Lucinda Whitehurst

Stop That Yawn!
By Caron Levis. Illus. by LeUyen Pham.

Gabby Wild is in a tooth-gnashing frenzy. She's got to prevent the people in Sleepytown from going to bed, because snuggling and snoring is such a bore. With Granny in tow, she jets off to keep downtown from settling down and uptown up. Despite her determined plans, Granny opens wide and her yawn is on the loose! Gabby enlists the animals' Midnight Marching Band to toot and blare; she sings, shouts, stumps, and fusses, but still the city gets cozy and quiet and peaceful. In a hilarious close-up, she looks directly at the reader, saying: “YOU ARE NOT sleepy, right? Grit your teeth, seal your lips! Whatever you do, don't you dare—YAWN!” At book's end, while Granny snuggles her cozily, Gabby parties all night in the land of her wildest dreams. The busy digitally colored panels rendered in coquille and india ink show imagined hectic activities. Appealing, dark-skinned Gabby is well dressed in the red dress, headband and riotous mop of hair that fits her energetic personality. —Lolly Cepson

By Brenda Peterson. Illus. by Wendell Minor.

Orca behavior, and the incredible true life of one orca in particular, are revealed through the eyes of fictional Mia, a girl on a whale-watching trip with her family in the San Juan Islands. Here Granny, a 105-year-old orca, born before the Titanic sank, presides over three pods of whales. As people on shore listen with hydrophones and headphones, the orcas, who can travel many miles a day, call to one another beneath the waves. Mia reflects on the threats that human carelessness can pose to orcas and their environment, as the whales arrive, breaking the surface of the water. An ending spread provides more detail about orcas and their abilities, Granny's pods, and Granny herself, who died, researchers believe, in 2016 at 105. The fictional framework, though occasionally stilted, will help keep younger readers engaged, and Minor's full-bleed paintings of the orcas and their admirers, especially the underwater scenes, are stunning. An intriguing, visually appealing introduction to a remarkable animal. —Maggie Reagan

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