

## Suggested Summer Reading Grades 7, 8, and 9

*Any available unabridged edition of a title is acceptable.*

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Adams, Douglas. *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. Ballantine Books, 1995. An adventure into the future with reluctant time traveler Arthur Dent. A wacky, fun science fiction read, suitable for all those with a seriously weird sense of humor!

Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Speak*. 2001. Melinda Sordino busted an end-of-summer party by calling the cops. Now her old friends won't talk to her, and people she doesn't even know hate her from a distance. The safest place to be is alone, inside her own head. But even that's not safe. Because there's something she's trying not to think about, something about the night of the party that, if she let it in, would blow her carefully constructed disguise to smithereens. And then she would have to speak the truth. This extraordinary first novel has captured the imaginations of teenagers and adults across the country.

Allende, Isabel. *City of the Beasts*. HarperCollins, 2002. Set in the lush and treacherous Amazonian rain forest, this is the story of 15-year-old Alexander Cold and 12-year-old Nadia Santos. Cold leaves his home and family to join his fearless grandmother, a magazine reporter, on an epic voyage with magical realism to a dangerous, remote part of the Amazon. A fast paced eco-thriller, it combines magic, mystery and feisty, eccentric characters to provide an unforgettable read.

Almond, David. *Skellig*. Laurel-Leaf Books, 2001. *Skellig* is a mystery, an adventure and a family story in which the main character, Michael, learns about nature, poetry, and the healing power of love from a creature that can only be defined as part man, part bird, part angel.

- Bauer, Joan. *Hope Was Here*. Putnam, 2000. When 16 year-old Hope and her aunt take new jobs as waitress and cook at the Welcome Stairways diner, they become involved with a political campaign to oust the town's corrupt mayor.
- Bell, Hilari. *A Matter of Profit*. HarperCollins, 2001. Sick of the horrors of conquering beings on other planets, Ahvrem will end his service as a soldier and save his sister from an unhappy marriage if he can discover who is behind a rumored plot to assassinate the Emperor.
- Bertrand, Diane Gonzales. *Trino's Choice*. Arte Publico, 1999. Frustrated by his poor financial situation and hoping to impress a smart girl, seventh grader Trino struggles to avoid a bad crowd led by an older teen with a vicious streak.
- Bitton-Jackson, Livia. *I Have Lived a Thousand Years: Growing Up in the Holocaust* Simon & Schuster, 1997. The author, who was thirteen when the Nazis invaded Hungary, describes in excruciating detail what it was like to be one of the few teenage inmates of Auschwitz and the miraculous twists of fate that helped her survive.
- Blackwood, Gary. *The Shakespeare Stealer*. Dutton, 1998. A young orphan boy is ordered by his master to infiltrate Shakespeare's acting troupe in order to steal the script of *Hamlet*.
- Bloor, Edward. *Tangerine*. Harcourt, 1997. Twelve-year-old Paul's family revolves around his football-hero brother, failing to notice as Paul fights for the right to play soccer when disqualified for his bad eyesight.
- Bradley, James. *Flags of our Fathers*. Delacorte, 2001. James Bradley examines the lives of the six young men (one of them Bradley's father) who raised the American flag over Iwo Jima in February 1945 and were immortalized by a famous photograph.
- Bradley, Kristen B. *Halfway to the Sky*. Delacorte, 2002. After her brother dies and her parents get divorced, twelve-year-old Katahdin sets out to hike the whole Appalachian Trail, from Georgia to Maine, on her own.
- Cabot, Meg. *All-American Girl*. HarperCollins, 2002. Sophomore Samantha Madison stops a presidential assassination attempt, is appointed teen ambassador to the United Nations, and catches the eye of the very cute First Son.

- Cadnum, Michael. *Forbidden Forest: The Story of Little John and Robin Hood*. Orchard, 2002. Joining Robin Hood's band of outlaws changes Little John's quiet lifestyle into a series of adventures as he tries to protect a beautiful lady who was wrongfully accused of murdering her husband.
- Cart, Michael (compiler). *Tomorrowland: 10 Stories about the Future*. Scholastic, 1999. Favorite young adult authors Katherine Paterson, Rodman Philbrick, and others explore a variety of thought-provoking themes in future settings.
- Christie, Agatha. *Death On The Nile*. Bantam Books, 1983. Mystery adventure of the best sort. A must if you are a Christie fan.
- Christie, Agatha. *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd: A Hercule Poirot Novel*. First published 1926. Hercule Poirot investigates the murder of a retired businessman.
- Clement-Davies, David. *Fire Bringer*. Dutton, 2000. A panoramic quest through Scotland long ago with mythic deer as the characters of good, evil, adventure, romance, and even legend.
- Cleaver, Vera. *Where the Lilies Bloom*. A spunky 14-year-old girl, in a heroic effort, holds her orphaned family together after the death of their father.
- Cormier, Robert. *The Chocolate War*. First published 1974. A high school freshman is shunned and abused by faculty and peers when he refuses to join the school's annual fund raising drive.
- Cormier, Robert. *The Rag and Bone Shop*. Laurel Leaf Books, 2003. A young girl is brutally murdered. A boy named Jason was the last to see her alive—except, of course, for her killer. Unless Jason is the killer. An expert interrogator is brought in to question Jason; the truth is now sure to come out. Or is it? A tense and chilling thriller.
- Crichton, Michael. *Andromeda Strain*. First published 1969. Four American scientists race against an atomic deadline fighting a contaminating agent from outer space.
- Cushman, Karen. *Catherine, Called Birdy*. Harper Trophy, 1995. Catherine, a spirited and inquisitive young woman of a good family, narrates in diary form the story of her 14th year in the year 1290.
- Dash, Joan. *The World at her Fingertips: The Story of Helen Keller*. Scholastic, 2001. Despite the double handicaps of deafness and blindness, Helen

- Keller is portrayed as a very lively, intelligent, and sometimes stubborn and vulnerable woman of accomplishment.
- Dickinson, Peter. *Eva*. Delacorte, 1989. After a terrible accident, a young girl wakes up to discover that her mind has been implanted in the body of a chimpanzee.
- Duncan, Lois. *Killing Mr. Griffin*. First published 1978. A demanding teacher is kidnapped with disastrous consequences.
- Deuker, Carl. *Night Hoops*. Houghton Mifflin, 2000. While trying to prove that he should play on the varsity basketball team, freshman Nick Abbott must also deal with his parents' divorce and erratic behavior of a troubled classmate who lives across the street.
- Farmer, Nancy. *The Ear, the Eye and the Arm*. Puffin, 1995. In 2194 in Zimbabwe, General Matsika's three children are kidnapped and put to work in a plastic mine, while three mutant detectives use their special powers to search for them. A different book for sci-fi and fantasy lovers.
- Farmer, Nancy. *House of the Scorpion*. Atheneum, 2002. In a future where humans despise clones, Matt enjoys special status as the young clone of El Patron, the 142-year-old leader of a corrupt drug empire nestled between Mexico and the United States.
- Fleischman, Paul. *Whirligig*. Holt, 1998. Brian travels to the four corners of the US to build a whirligig in memory of a girl he killed while he was driving drunk.
- Fletcher, Susan. *Shadow Spinner*. Atheneum, 1998. Marjan, a 13-year-old girl, joins the harem in Ancient Persia to help Shahrazad find tales to entertain the Sultan.
- Greene, Bette. *The Summer of My German Soldier*. First published 1973. After helping a young German POW escape from an Arkansas prison, Patty suffers the consequences.
- Hautzig, Esther. *The Endless Steppe: Growing Up In Siberia*. Harper Trophy, 1987. An autobiographical account of 11-year-old Esther and her family during WWII and their struggle for survival in a Soviet labor camp.
- Herriot, James. *All Things Bright and Beautiful*. St. Martin's Press, 1999. Love and laughter abound in these stories of a country veterinarian. The short stories all involve an English veterinarian. Funny and poignant.

- Hesse, Karen. *Witness*. Scholastic, 2001. Residents of a small Vermont town give various points of view and opinions after the Ku Klux Klan tries to infiltrate it. Based on true events, the book takes place in 1924.
- Hobbs, Will. *Wild Man Island*. HarperCollins, 2002. After fourteen-year-old Andy slips away from his kayaking group to visit the wilderness site of his archaeologist father's death, a storm strands him on Admiralty Island, Alaska, where he manages to survive, encounters unexpected animal and human inhabitants, and looks for traces of the earliest prehistoric immigrants to America.
- Holt, Kimberly Willis. *When Zachary Beaver Came to Town*. Henry Holt and Co., 1999. During the summer of 1971 in a small Texas town, thirteen-year-old Toby and his best friend Cal meet the star of a sideshow act, 600-pound Zachary, the fattest boy in the world.
- Hughes, Dean. *Soldier Boys*. Atheneum, 2001. Two boys, one German and one American, are eager to join their respective armies during World War II, and their paths cross at the Battle of the Bulge.
- Jacques, Brian. *Triss*. Philomel, 2002. Triss, Shogg, and Welfo escape from slavery at Riftgard and are pursued across the sea toward Redwall by Princess Kurdah, Prince Bladd, and a band of freebooters who seek the rumored treasure of Brockhall.
- Jordan, Sherryl. *The Raging Quiet*. Simon & Schuster, 1999. Sixteen-year-old Marnie is unjustly accused of witchcraft after she discovers that the village madman is not crazy but deaf, and she begins to communicate with him through hand gestures.
- Klass, David. *Danger Zone*. Scholastic, 1998. Hoop action for basketball lovers. A likable narrator shows race relations and a person's desire to be accepted.
- Klass, David. *Home of the Braves*. Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2002. Eighteen-year-old Joe, captain of the soccer team, is dismayed when a hotshot player shows up from Brazil and threatens to take over both the team and the girl whom Joe hopes to date.
- Konigsburg, E. L. *Silent to the Bone*. Atheneum, 2000. When he is wrongly accused of gravely injuring his baby half-sister, thirteen-year-old Branwell loses his power of speech, and only his friend Connor is able to reach him and uncover the truth about what really happened.

- Koss, Amy Goldman. *The Girls*. Dial, 2000. Individually the girls are proud to be part of the “in” clique, but some of them question the benefits of belonging to the group when they see through the charming but manipulative leader.
- Krisher, Trudy. *Spite Fences*. Reprinted by Laure Leaf, 1996. Thirteen-year-old Maggie Pugh, during the summer of 1960 in Kinship, Georgia, struggles with prejudice and injustice and must decide whether to tell anyone about the horrible thing she saw. A camera helps Maggie see the truth.
- LeGuin, Ursula. *The Wizard of Earthsea*. First published 1968. After pride causes him to unleash a demon, Zed is compelled to chase or escape from the ever-pursuing shadow. (*Earthsea Trilogy*)
- L’Engle, Madeleine. *A Ring of Endless Light*. First published 1980. Vicky’s telepathic communication with dolphins comforts her during the time her grandfather is dying from leukemia. Newbery Honor Book.
- Levitin, Sonia. *Escape from Egypt: A Novel*. Little, Brown, 1994. When Moses comes to the Promised Land, Jesse, a Hebrew slave, finds his life changed by his growing faith in God and his friendship with half-Egyptian, half-Syrian Jennat. Consider also *The Return*, a fictional tale of the Ethiopian Jews’ return to Israel.
- Lipsyte, Robert. *The Brave*. HarperCollins, 1991. A hot-tempered Native American wanna-be fighter trains with a former boxer who is now a policeman.
- Lobel, Anita. *No Pretty Pictures: A Child of War*. Greenwillow, 1998. The author, known as an illustrator of children’s books, describes her experiences as a Polish Jew during World War II and later in Sweden. National Book Award Finalist.
- London, Jack. *The Call of the Wild*. First published 1931. Set during the Gold Rush, this is the story of Buck, a dog stolen from his home and transported to Alaska where he must survive in a pack of wolves.
- London, Jack. *White Fang*. Puffin Books, 1994. The story of the taming of a wild wolf dog through the patience and devotion of one man. A good book for animal lovers.
- Lowry, Lois. *Gathering Blue*. Laurel-Leaf Books, 2002. All who enjoyed *The Giver* in grade 5 will enjoy this sequel. Written in the same style, it explores yet

- another society. This time the heroine has to struggle to simply stay alive in the face of growing hostility following the death of her mother.
- Lynch, Chris. *Slot Machine*. Harper Trophy, 1996. When overweight thirteen-year-old Elvin Bishop is sent to camp at St. Paul's Seminary Retreat Center, he and his two best friends are forced to try out various sports in order to find out where they belong.
- Lipsyte, Robert. *The Contender*. HarperTrophy, 1987. A great book about alternatives for teenagers whose friends are getting into trouble. This is a realistic story about a teenager and the world of boxing.
- Macy, Sue. *A Whole New Ball Game: the Story of the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League*. Holt, 1993. A wonderful survey of the women's baseball league which competed from 1943 to 1954.
- Mazer, Norma Fox. *Good Night, Maman*. Harcourt Brace, 1999. After spending years fleeing from the Nazis in war-torn Europe, twelve-year-old Karin Levi and her older brother, Marc, find a new home in a refugee camp in Oswego, New York.
- McCaffrey, Anne. *Dragonsong*. Alladin Paperbacks, 2003. Menolly's fisherman father will not allow her to develop her talent and become a harper. When she runs away, she faces the deadly menace of flesh-eating "thread" falling from the sky but finds protection and companionship from the near-mythical fire lizards. Two more books, *Dragonsinger* and *Dragondrums*, continue the story of Menolly, fire lizards, and their cousins, the thread eating dragons.
- McKinley, Robin. *The Hero and the Crown*. Reissued by Ace Charter, 1989. Fighting the dragon made Aerin a legend and a true hero who would wield the power of the blue sword. Students really enjoy this book.
- McKinley, Robin. *Spindle's End*. Putnam, 2000. The infant princess Briar Rose is cursed on her name day by Pernicia, an evil fairy, and then whisked away by a young fairy to be raised in a remote part of a magical country, unaware of her real identity and hidden from Pernicia's vengeful powers.
- McLaren, Clemence. *Inside the Walls of Troy*. Laurel-Leaf Books, 1998. This book is a past ALA Book for Young Adults. The critic's comments inside the book state, "These ancient stories are made as fresh and vivid as any modern tale by the electrifying characters and the sensual details."

- Meyer, Carolyn. *White Lilacs*. Harcourt Brace, 1993. In 1921 Dillon, Texas, twelve-year-old Rose Lee sees trouble threatening her black community when the whites decide to take their land for a city park.
- Miklowitz, Gloria. *Secrets in the House of Delgado*. Eerdmans, 2001. In Spain in 1492, fourteen-year-old Maria, a Catholic orphan, becomes a servant to a wealthy family of Conversos, converted Jews, at a time when the Jews are being expelled from the country and when the Inquisition is diligently searching for religious heretics.
- Mowat, Farley. *Never Cry Wolf*. First published 1968. One of Canada's greatest storytellers and conservationists describes life among Arctic wolves and caribou.
- Murphy, Jim. *Blizzard: The Storm that Changed America*. Scholastic, 2000. Presents a history, based on personal accounts and newspaper articles, of the massive snow storm that hit the Northeast in 1888, focusing on the events in New York City.
- Myers, Walter Dean. *Hoops*. Laure Leaf, 1983. Seventeen-year-old Lonnie Jackson hopes that basketball will be his ticket out of Harlem until the savage underworld of sports and big money forces him to make a choice.
- Myers, Walter Dean. *Monster*. Amistad, 2001. Steve Harmon, 16, is accused of serving as a lookout for a robbery of a Harlem drugstore. The owner was shot and killed, and now Steve is in prison awaiting trial for murder. From there, he tells about his case and his incarceration. Many elements of this story are familiar, but Myers keeps it fresh and alive by telling it from an unusual perspective.
- Na, An. *A Step from Heaven*. Front Street, 2001. A young Korean girl and her family find it difficult to learn English and adjust to life in America.
- Naidoo, Beverley. *The Other Side of Truth*. HarperCollins, 2001. Smuggled out of Nigeria after their mother's murder, Sade and her younger brother are abandoned in London when their uncle fails to meet them at the airport, and they are fearful of their new surroundings and of what may have happened to their journalist father.
- Namioka, Lensey. *Ties That Bind, Ties That Break*. Delacorte Press, 1999. Ailin, rebelling against the ancient Chinese tradition of binding girls' feet, loses her family's support and makes a new life in the United States.

- Nicolson, William. *The Wind Singer: An Adventure*. Hyperion, 2000. After Kestrel Hath rebels against the stifling rules of Amaranth society and is forced to flee, she, along with her twin brother and a tagalong classmate, follow an ancient map in quest of the legendary silver voice of the wind singer, in an attempt to heal Amaranth and its people.
- Oates, Joyce Carol. *Big Mouth and Ugly Girl*. Harper Tempest, 2002. When sixteen-year-old Matt is falsely accused of threatening to blow up his high school and his friends turn against him, an unlikely classmate comes to his aid.
- Park, Linda Sue. *When My Name Was Keoko*. Houghton Mifflin, 2002. With national pride and occasional fear, a brother and sister face the increasingly oppressive occupation of Korea by Japan during World War II, which threatens to suppress Korean culture entirely.
- Paulsen, Gary. *The Rifle*. Bantam, 1995. A priceless, handcrafted rifle, fired throughout the American Revolution, is passed down through the years until it fires on a fateful Christmas Eve in 1994.
- Pierce, Tamora. *Song of the Lioness* (Random House, 2003), *The Immortals* (Random House, 2003), and *Sandry's Book--Circle of Magic* (Scholastic, 1999). These are series of creative books recommended by Grade 7 students. The same author wrote the Alanna series.
- Plummer, Louise. *The Unlikely Romance of Kate Bjorkman*. Delacorte, 1995. Seventeen-year-old Kate writes her first romance novel, using her own hopes for romance with her older brother's friend, Richard.
- Posner, Aaron and Chaim Potok. *The Chosen*. Dramatist's Play Service, 2000. A compelling book about Jewish tradition and friendship and about finding one's way.
- Raskin, Ellen. *Figgs and Phantoms*. Puffin Books, 1989. Another winner from the author of the popular *The Westing Game*. A gripping story sure to please any adolescent with a taste for mystery and fantasy.
- Rees, Celia. *Witch Child*. Candlewick, 2000. In 1659, fourteen-year-old Mary Newbury keeps a journal of her voyage from England to the New World and her experiences living in a community of Puritans near Salem, Massachusetts when her neighbors suspect her of being a witch.

- Reiss, Johanna. *The Upstairs Room*. HarperTrophy, 1990. A Dutch Jewish girl describes the 2 ½ years she spent in hiding in the upstairs bedroom of a farmer's house during World War II.
- Reuter, Bjarne B. *The Boys from St. Petri*. Dutton, 1994. In 1942, a group of young men begins a series of increasingly dangerous pranks and protests against the German invaders of its Danish homeland.
- Rinaldi, Ann. *Wolf by the Ears*. Scholastic, 1991. Harriet Hemmings, rumored to be the daughter of Thomas Jefferson, struggles to decide whether to escape or remain a slave at Monticello.
- Roberts, Monty. *The Man Who Listens to Horses*. Random, 1997. A real horse whisperer, Roberts presents his interesting life story, as well as his gentle and humane approach to horse training.
- Rostkowski, Margaret. *After the Dancing Days*. Reprinted by HarperTrophy, 1998. A forbidden friendship with a badly disfigured soldier in the aftermath of WWI forces 13-year-old Annie to redefine the word "hero."
- Salisbury, Graham. *Lord of the Deep*. Delacorte, 2001. Working for his stepfather on a charter fishing boat in Hawaii teaches thirteen-year-old Mikey about fishing, taking risks, making sacrifices, and facing some of life's difficult choices.
- Shusterman, Neal. *Downsiders*. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. 1999. When fourteen year-old Lindsay meets Talon and discovers the Downsiders world which had evolved from the subway built in New York in 1867, she and her new friend experience the clash of their two cultures.
- Sleator, William. *The Boxes*. Dutton, 1998. Annie opens two mysterious boxes and unleashes a swarm of telepathic creatures that can slow down time.
- Smith, Betty. *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*. Perennial, 1998. In this story of childhood and family relationships, young Francie comes of age with some unlikely heroes in the poverty of the Brooklyn slums.
- Smith, Dodie. *I Capture the Castle*. St. Martin's Press, 1999. A young girl keeps a diary about love, jealousy, and simply growing up in a medieval castle in rural England in the middle of the twentieth century. A lovely book about first love and family loyalties.

- Spinelli, Jerry. *Stargirl*. Knopf, 2000. Stargirl, a teen who animates quiet Mica High with her colorful personality, suddenly finds herself shunned for her refusal to conform.
- Stoker, Bram. *Dracula*. First published 1897. A courageous band of men and women vow to destroy the sinister and brilliant vampire Count Dracula.
- Sykes, Shelley. *For Mike*. Delacorte, 1998. When Jeff's best friend Mike disappears in the fall of their senior year, Jeff has disturbing dreams in which Mike urges him to come get him, and a secret begins to unfold.
- Taylor, Mildred. *The Land*. Fogelman, 2001. Paul-Edward, the son of a part-Indian, part-African slave mother and a white plantation owner father, finds himself caught between the two worlds of his parents as he pursues his dream of owning land in the aftermath of the Civil War.
- Taylor, Theodore. *The Bomb*. Harcourt, 1995. In preparation for atomic bomb tests in the 1940s, the U.S. government relocates native residents of the Bikini Atoll in the South Pacific.
- Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*. First published 1937. Bilbo Baggins, a respectable, well-to-do hobbit, lives comfortably in his hobbit-hole until the day the wandering wizard Gandalf chooses him to take part in an adventure from which he may never return.
- Tomlinson, Theresa. *The Forestwife*. Orchard, 1993. Fifteen-year-old Marian escapes a forced marriage to live in Sherwood Forest at the time of Robin Hood and King Richard I.
- Trueman, Terry. *Stuck in Neutral*. HarperCollins, 2000. Fourteen-year-old Shawn McDaniel, who suffers from severe cerebral palsy and cannot function, relates his perceptions of his life, his family, and his condition, especially as he believes his father is planning to kill him.
- Twain, Mark. *Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. Penguin Books, 1987. The funny story about the carefree days of boyhood on the Mississippi River based on Twain's memories of his own boyhood. Both girls and boys alike can appreciate Sawyer's zany adventures.
- Van Draanen, Wendelin. *Flipped*. Knopf, 2001. In alternating chapters, two teenagers describe how their feelings about themselves, each other, and their families have changed over the years.

- Vande Velde, Vivian. *Never Trust a Dead Man*. Harcourt Brace, 1999. Wrongly convicted of murder and punished by being sealed in the tomb with the dead man, seventeen-year-old Selwyn enlists the help of a witch and the resurrected victim to find the true killer.
- Vecchione, Patrice (editor). *Truth & Lies: An Anthology of Poems*. Henry Holt, 2001. Gathers poetry from different ages and cultures, revealing many shades of being true and telling lies.
- Verne, Jules. *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. First published 1869. A nineteenth-century science fiction tale of an electric submarine, its eccentric captain, and the undersea world, which anticipated many of the scientific achievements of the twentieth century.
- Voigt, Cynthia. *Izzy, Willy-Nilly*. Ballantine, 1986. Izzy's drunk date crashes the car, crippling her and changing her young life forever.
- Werlin, Nancy. *Are You Alone on Purpose?* Fawcett Books, 1996. This is a great book about a nerdy girl who revels in the title Queen Nerd. Her twin brother is autistic and gets most of the attention in the family. A really weird accident brings friendship to Alison and an unlikely peer. A wonderful book for boys or girls.
- Whelan, Gloria. *Homeless Bird*. HarperCollins, 2000. Thirteen-year-old Koly faces the harsh life of a widow in India and must embroider saris in order to survive. National Book Award for Young Adult Literature 2000.
- Wilson, Diane Lee. *I Rode a Horse of Milk White Jade*. HarperTrophy, 1999. This book shows the culture and history of Mongolia in the time of Kublai Khan. A young girl has a dream and her white horse helps her fulfill her dreams. This book was in the Teens' Top Ten Best Books 1999 sponsored by the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA).
- Wolff, Virginia. *True Believer*. Atheneum, 2001. At fifteen, LaVaughn finds herself facing new emotions when her childhood friend returns to their dismal inner-city neighborhood.
- Zindel, Paul. *The Pigman*. First published 1968. A teenage boy and girl, high school sophomores from unhappy homes, describe their bizarre relationship with an old man.