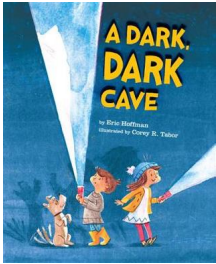


A Dark, Dark Cave Named 2017 MLA Mitten Award Winner



The Michigan Library Association (MLA) is pleased to announce *A Dark, Dark Cave* by Eric Hoffman and illustrated by Corey R. Tabor, published 2016 by Viking Books for Young Readers, is the winner of the 2017 MLA Mitten Award.

In *A Dark, Dark Cave*, a sister and younger brother and their tail-wagging dog descend into the depths of a dark, dark cave leaving a pale moon shining behind. With flashlight beams leading the way, they discover fluttering bats, rock formations, creepy-crawlies, and huge glowing eyes. Exploration reaches its climax when paws reach out and a huge shadowy figure appears in the cave's entrance. "That's too loud, kids. Find a quiet game. The baby's sleeping." Expressing exuberant creativity, the two siblings happily resume playing "in what used to be a dark, dark cave."

"*A Dark, Dark Cave* captures the true flavor of that most wonderful element of childhood: make-believe -- and celebrates the power of imaginative play as two siblings explore a dark, dark cave." said Dena Moscheck, Mitten Award Work Group Chair. "The cadence of the text invites readers to participate, both verbally and imaginatively, and the details in the illustrations, combined with the element of surprise, will have children wanting to reread the story to look for clues and relive the excitement of exploring a dark, dark cave -- each time with a greater sense of "knowing" and comfort."

Eric Hoffman has worked for thirty-five years in Maryland, Ohio, and California helping preschoolers create caves, forts, nests, barns, and other hideouts. Some of his works include *Best Best Colors*

,
Heroines and Heroes
and
Play Lady

. In addition to his own books, his work with young children is featured in the book and video *Starting Small*

, part of the Southern Poverty Law Center's Teaching Tolerance Project. He lives and writes in

a sunny house in Santa Cruz.

Corey Tabor is the author and illustrator of *Fox and the Jumping Contest* and the illustrator of *A Dark, Dark Cave*

. He creates his illustrations with pencil and watercolor and a dose of digital wizardry. Corey lives in Seattle with his lovely wife and spends his time making pictures and stories.

The Mitten Award, established in 1999, is designed “to recognize and promote quality literature for youth in picture book format, and the ability to communicate to that audience through literature.” The award selection work group is comprised of Michigan librarians who consider hundreds of children’s books annually to determine a winner.

This year’s honor books include:

- *Maybe Something Beautiful* by Isabel Campoy, Theresa Howell, illustrated by Rafael López
- *They All Saw a Cat* written and illustrated by Brendan Wenzel
- *The Snurtch* by Sean Ferrell, illustrated by Charles Santoso
- *A Family is a Family is a Family* by Sara O'Leary, illustrated by Qin Leng

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