



Corey R. Tabor is the winner of the 2019 (Theodor Seuss) Geisel Award for *Fox the Tiger* (Balzer + Bray/HarperCollins). He delivered his acceptance remarks at the ALSC Book and Media Awards Program on Monday, June 24, 2019, during the American Library Association Annual Conference.

For more information about the Geisel Award, visit <http://bit.ly/geisel-award>.



Geisel

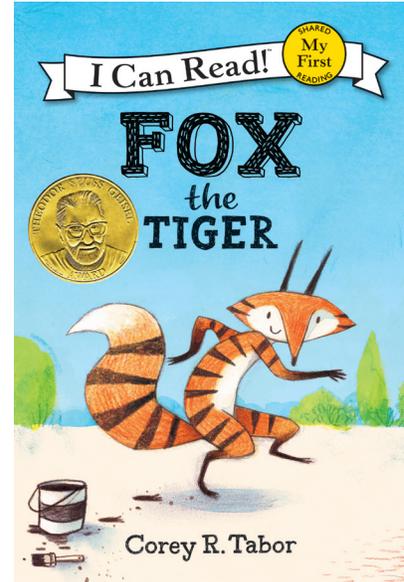
AWARD ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

Thank you so much to the Geisel Committee and the ALSC for this award. And congratulations to Emily, Dori, Nancy, David, and Sergio. I'm truly honored to be in such good company.

The first book I can remember reading to myself was a big, floppy, dog-eared, paperback collection of *Calvin and Hobbes* comics. It wasn't the first book I ever read (my mom assures me). That was almost certainly an early reader. Something by Arnold Lobel, or P.D. Eastman, or Dr. Seuss. Like my own early readers, it might even have worn that proud banner, that joyful proclamation: I Can Read!

But the first thing I have a clear memory of reading to myself is that *Calvin and Hobbes* collection. It was called *Weirdos from Another Planet!*, and it wasn't even close to an early reader. Sometimes it went right over my head, but I didn't mind. I was entranced. I can still remember reading that book, curled up cozy in a nest of blankets after spending a day playing in the snow. I can still remember exactly how reading it made me feel. It made me feel like the world was big and magical, and that it could be made even bigger and more magical with some imagination, and a good friend, and maybe more than a little mischief. Even now the nostalgia hits me like a truck, or, since we're talking about *Calvin and Hobbes*, it hits me like a runaway red wagon, a charging dinosaur, an enthusiastic tiger.

The other day I was thinking about



this speech and about *Calvin and Hobbes*, and feeling especially nostalgic, so I pulled out that floppy old, well-loved book (I still have it) and I was flipping through when I found something surprising.

Calvin is talking to his best friend Hobbes, who is a tiger. "I wish I was a tiger," says Calvin. He goes on to paint himself with stripes, and calls himself a tiger.

My book, *Fox the Tiger*, begins with Fox saying, "I wish I were a tiger." He goes on to paint himself with stripes, and calls himself a tiger. (That's where the similarities end, which I mention just in case Bill Watterson's lawyer is listening.)

Clearly though, the books we read and love as kids stick with us our

Author and illustrator Corey R. Tabor's debut picture book, *Fox and the Jumping Contest*, was released in 2016 and is the first title in his Fox series. The Geisel Award-winning *Fox the Tiger* also received a 2018 Cybils Easy Reader Award. His artwork for *Fox and the Bike Ride* was part of the 2017 Original Art Exhibit at the Society of Illustrators' Museum of Illustration. Tabor lives in Seattle with his wife and son.



Geisel

AWARD ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

whole lives. (They can even change our lives.) To think that my book could be *that* book for even a single reader . . . well, I can't imagine anything bigger.

I've got a whole multitude of people to thank for this award, and for helping me along the way.

Thank you to my wife, Mandy. There's a reason her name is on the first page of this book. Among so many other things, Mandy is my first reader and editor. There would be no Fox without Mandy.

Thank you to my son Will for being.

Thank you to my agent Rebecca Sherman who believed in Fox from the very beginning; and to Andrea Morrison who kindly pulled me from the slush.

Thanks to my editor Donna Bray who gave Fox a home and made him so much better than I could have on my own; and to Dana Fritts who helps shape my words and pictures into real-life books; and to the rest of the team at Balzer + Bray and HarperCollins for making the book magic happen.

Thanks to my Metalpig picture book pals for the support and friend-

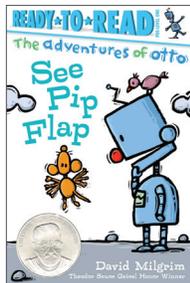
ship and inspiration; and to all the kind and generous people I've met through the SCBWI over the years.

Thank you to my Mom and Dad for everything, but specifically for teaching me to love reading, for raising me in a house so close to the library, and for reading to me every night.

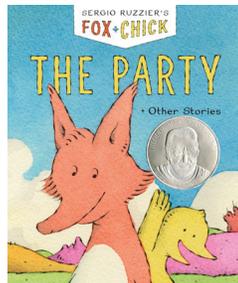
And finally, thanks again to the Geisel Committee. Foxes and tigers are pretty great, sure, but everyone knows that librarians are the best.

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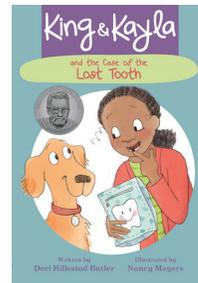
2019 GEISEL HONOR BOOKS



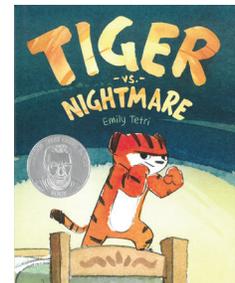
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