

ALL THINGS **AUDIO**

A *Booklist* Newsletter

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#01 — February 28, 2018



FROM THE EDITOR



Welcome to *All Things Audio*, the latest addition to *Booklist*'s family of newsletters, directed both to audio collection-development librarians and to audio lovers everywhere. This inaugural issue is devoted to an annotated listing of *Booklist*'s starred reviews of audiobooks published in 2017. These 81 reviews (just under one-fifth of the 420 audiobook titles we reviewed throughout the year) cover fiction and nonfiction titles for all ages and interests. About half of the 81 stars are included below. Follow the links to the full lists. We hope that this gathering of the best of the best will aid you in your retrospective collection-development efforts. Many of our stars of 2017 have appeared on various year-end "Best" lists, including *Booklist's Editors' Choice*, but others may have slipped from memory and could be just what you need to round out your audio collection—or enhance your personal listening!

Future issues of the newsletter, which will be published every other month, will highlight exceptional narrators and trends in the audiobook industry. We'll also include lists to help market audiobook collections and tips to expand listener advisory skills. Expect high-demand hot lists and news of forthcoming titles and narrators we're excited about. In addition to reviews of current titles not found in the print editions of *Booklist*, we'll also include reviews of our most recent starred titles. In other words, All Things Audio! To ensure that this free newsletter always arrives in your in-box, [subscribe now](#), and if you have ideas about what you'd like to see in upcoming issues, please email me (jsaricks@ala.org) or my coeditor Annie Bostrom (abostrom@ala.org).

—Joyce Saricks, Audio Editor

jsaricks@ala.org

[@Booklist_Joyce](https://twitter.com/Booklist_Joyce)

Feminist Reads,
a Penguin Reading list for
readers grades K-12!

Friday, March 2
1PM Central

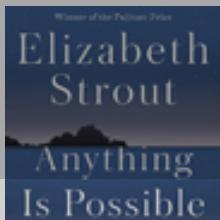


Penguin
Random House
PENGUIN YOUNG READERS



STARRED REVIEWS, 2017

Adult



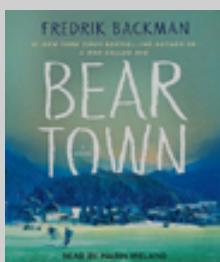
★ **Anything Is Possible.** By Elizabeth Strout. Read by Kimberly Farr. 8.5hr. Books on Tape, CD, \$40 (9781524774929).

Veteran performer Farr narrates magnificently, treating listeners to introspective, thoughtful, and humane interpretations of every individual among the colorful characters in nine interlocking stories.
[read more→](#)



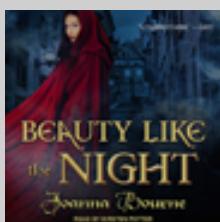
★ **Ararat.** By Christopher Golden. Read by Robert Fass. 10.5hr. Blackstone, CD, \$34.95 (9781455127474).

With the discovery of a cave filled with ancient remains, scientists release a monstrous evil on the world. Fass builds the sense of dread to a fever pitch. [read more→](#)



★ **Beartown.** By Fredrik Backman. Read by Marin Ireland. 13hr. Simon & Schuster Audio, CD, \$39.99 (9781508230977).

The only hope for Sweden's remote Beartown is its junior ice hockey team, until an accusation of rape against its star player divides the town. Ireland perfectly captures this intensely compelling story, from a gunshot in the opening scene to the unexpected but immensely satisfying conclusion. [read more→](#)



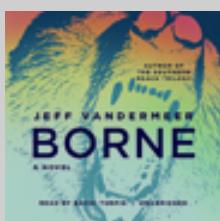
★ **Beauty like the Night.** By Joanna Bourne. Read by Kirsten Potter. 10hrs. Tantor, CD, \$32.98 (9781515914044).

She's a spy and he's a thief, but they have a shared history—and she owes him a debt that he aims to claim in this delightful historical romp, narrated to perfection by Potter with sprightly dialogue, sparkling wit, and wry humor. [read more→](#)



★ **Behind Her Eyes.** By Sarah Pinborough. Read by Bea Holland and others. 11.5hr. Macmillan, CD, \$39.99 (9781427282279).

This compelling tale shifts from a deceptively mundane love triangle to a riveting and suspenseful page-turner. The trio of skilled narrators puts listeners inside the characters' heads in this menacing tale of obsession and deceit. [read more→](#)



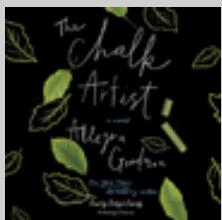
★ **Borne.** By Jeff VanderMeer. Read by Bahni Turpin. 12.5hr. Blackstone, CD, \$34.95 (9781504779753).

Turpin's intimate and hypnotic reading mirrors scavenger Rachel's thoughts, words, and emotions in this mix of survival sf drama and post-ecological-disaster novel, a complex, imaginative, open-ended, provocative, and gritty novel. [read more→](#)



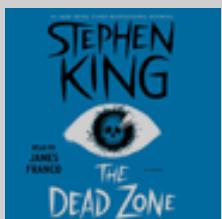
★ **The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao.** By Junot Díaz. Read by Lin-Manuel Miranda and Karen Olivo. 10hr. Books on Tape, CD, \$40 (9780525493990).

Tony Award winners Miranda and Olivo fluidly deliver complicated passages, moving from Spanish to English, didactic to idiomatic, while maintaining a gleeful irreverence in the saga of "ghetto nerd" Oscar. [read more→](#)



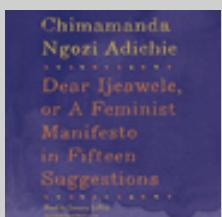
★ **The Chalk Artist.** By Allegra Goodman. Read by Orlagh Cassidy. 10.5hr. Books on Tape, CD, \$50 (9780385367745).

Cassidy's mesmerizing reading propels Goodman's latest novel—a contemporary portrait of dueling sensibilities, with subtle commentary on the upper and middle classes, literature and technology, and how they coexist—with genuine emotion and sincerity. [read more→](#)



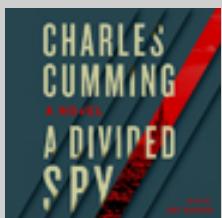
★ **The Dead Zone.** By Stephen King. Read by James Franco. 17hr. Simon & Schuster Audio, CD, \$39.99 (9781508218647).

Awakening from a five-year-long coma after an accident, John Smith discovers he can see the future when he touches a person or object, a skill with terrifying potential. Franco's perceptive narration intensifies the power of King's words. [read more→](#)



★ **Dear Ijeawele; or, A Feminist Manifesto in Fifteen Suggestions.** By Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. Read by January LaVoy. 1hr. Books on Tape, CD, \$15 (9780525494706).

Compelling in print, Adichie's advice for raising a feminist is made more so in audio with LaVoy's thoughtful reading of the author's empowering and practical suggestions for instilling confidence and respect in all members of society. [read more→](#)



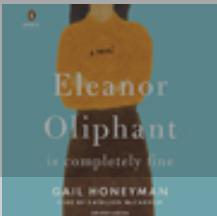
★ **A Divided Spy.** By Charles Cumming. Read by Jot Davies. 11.5hr. Macmillan, CD, \$39.99 (9781427282057).

Davies reads the twisty espionage tale of trust and deceit to perfection, with impeccable pacing and timing, as ex-British spy Thomas Kell seeks his lover's murderers. [read more→](#)



★ **A Duke in Shining Armor.** By Loretta Chase. Read by Kate Reading. 11.5hr. Harper, DD, \$24.99 (9780062791788).

Reading delights listeners with her animated and beguiling performance of historical romance filled with madcap adventure, witty repartee, a delightful mix of sensual and comical tones, and characters to cheer for. [read more→](#)



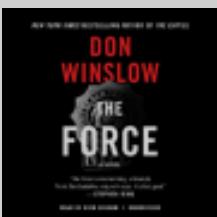
★ **Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine.** By Gail Honeyman. Read by Cathleen McCarron. 11hr. Books on Tape, CD, \$40 (9781524749705).

McCarron's fabulous narration sets listeners firmly in Glasgow among a range of accents and eccentric characters—especially the prickly Eleanor—in this witty, warmhearted novel. [read more→](#)



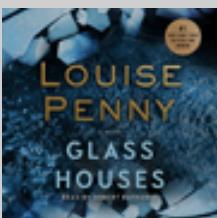
★ **Everything All at Once: How to Unleash Your Inner Nerd, Tap into Radical Curiosity, and Solve Any Problem.** By Bill Nye. Read by the author. 12.5hr. Recorded Books, CD, \$123.75 (9781501948992).

Self-confessed supernerd Nye employs his comedic timing and engaging enthusiasm to present his theories on just about everything, along with personal anecdotes and a call to action to keep science in the forefront. [read more→](#)



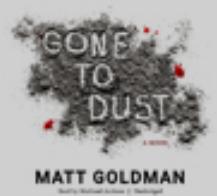
★ **The Force.** By Don Winslow. Read by Dion Graham. 13.5hr. Blackstone, CD, \$39.95 (9781504680608).

Graham's dazzling performance of this gritty and provocative drama of a corrupt police detective takes listeners inside the complex issues through menacing tones and spot-on characterizations. [read more→](#)



★ **Glass Houses.** By Louise Penny. Read by Robert Bathurst. 13.5hr. Macmillan, CD, \$39.99 (9781427287397).

Bathurst's cadence and pacing keep the complicated plotting under control while his voice reflects the dark mood and building tension in Armand Gamache's thirteenth case. [read more→](#)



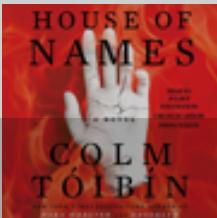
★ **Gone to Dust.** By Matt Goldman. Read by MacLeod Andrews. 7.5hr. Blackstone, CD, \$34.95 (9781504768818).

Vacuum-cleaner dust surrounding the body may obscure clues, but that doesn't stop Minneapolis PI Nils Shapiro from solving the crime in this debut mystery, with Shap and a host of others convincingly performed by Andrews. [read more→](#)



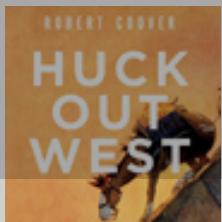
★ **Grant.** By Ron Chernow. Read by Mark Bramhall. 48hr. Books on Tape, CD, \$75 (9780525529224).

Bramhall's compelling reading brings a sense of immediacy and intimacy to this magisterial, warts-and-all biography of a skilled soldier and a man of unrivaled decency. [read more→](#)



★ **House of Names.** By Colm Tóibín. Read by Juliet Stevenson and others. 9hr. Simon & Schuster Audio, CD, \$29.99 (9781508227908).

This fine retelling of King Agamemnon and Queen Clytemnestra's tale of suffering, scheming, murder, and remorse sizzles in the hands of this team of fine narrators, who enliven characters and events in an intense and intimate novel. [read more→](#)



★ **Huck Out West.** By Robert Coover. Read by Eric Michael Summerer. 9.5hr. HighBridge, CD, \$34.99 (9781681683812).

Having lit out "for the territories," Huck Finn participates in key moments in U.S. history. Summerer's delightful narration mirrors Twain's style and offers an opportunity to spend time with Huck and friends. [read more→](#)

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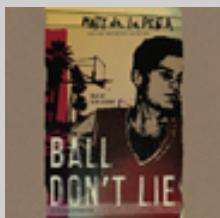
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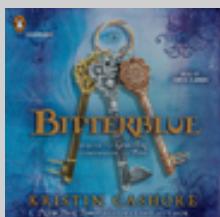
★ **Almost Paradise.** By Corabel Shofner. Read by Eileen Stevens. 5.5hr. Blackstone, CD, \$29.95 (9781538434505). Gr. 5–7.

Ruby Clyde is a bit of a pistol, and Stevens' wonderfully effective narration perfectly animates this 12-year-old and a large cast of equally memorable characters as Ruby sets out to take care of herself and her widowed mother. [read more→](#)



★ **Ball Don't Lie.** By Matt de la Peña. Read by Dion Graham. 7hr. Listening Library, CD, \$40 (9781524778675). Gr. 9–12.

The rhythms of basketball infuse Graham's splendid reading of this gritty sports drama featuring 17-year-old Sticky and his life on and off the court. [read more→](#)



★ **Bitterblue.** By Kristin Cashore. Read by Xanthe Elbrick. 16.5hr. Listening Library, CD, \$65 (9781524774943). Gr. 9–12.

At 18, Bitterblue, queen of Monsea, escapes the castle confines to discover what is really happening in her kingdom. Elbrick creates memorable characters and reflects Bitterblue's growing maturity and courage as she experiences betrayal, forgiveness, and thrilling romance. [read more→](#)



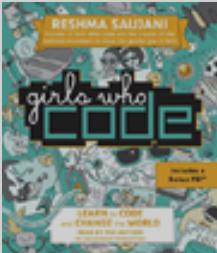
★ **Dear Martin.** By Nic Stone. Read by Dion Graham. 4.5hr. Listening Library, CD, \$38 (9781524782344). Gr. 9–12.

After Justyce McAllister, at the top of his prep-school class, is unaccountably arrested and an innocent victim of police brutality, he seeks solace and answers from the teachings of Martin Luther King Jr. in this raw look at racial inequality in America, made even more gripping by Graham's stellar narration. [read more→](#)



★ **The Dreadful Tale of Prosper Redding.** By Alexandra Bracken. Read by Kirby Heyborne. 10hr. Recorded Books, CD, \$87.75 (9781501962387). Gr. 4–7.

Talented narrator Heyborne enriches this suspenseful first series entry with delicious characterizations, from clueless young Prosper, whose body hosts an ancient demon, to the fiercely fiendish demon himself. [read more→](#)



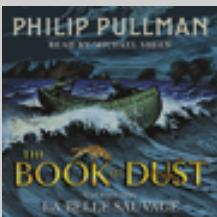
★ **Girls Who Code: Learn to Code and Change the World.** By Reshma Saujani. Read by the author. 3hr. Listening Library, CD, \$27 (9781524778248). Gr. 6–10.

Author Saujani's narration bring elements of intimacy and immediacy to this account of a national organization to promote coding by girls. She demonstrates various projects that girls involved in the program can complete. [read more→](#)



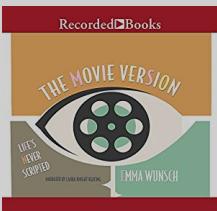
★ **The Hate U Give.** By Angie Thomas. Read by Bahni Turpin. 12hr. Harper, CD, \$24.99 (9780062677082). Gr. 9–12.

In this masterfully performed audiobook, Turpin narrates from the point of view of 16-year-old Starr Carter, caught between her black neighborhood and white private school when racial violence erupts. [read more→](#)



★ **La Belle Sauvage.** By Philip Pullman. Read by Michael Sheen. 13.5hr. Listening Library, CD, \$60 (9780525522997). Gr. 7–12.

In this prequel to Pullman's His Dark Materials trilogy, Sheen's virtuoso performance spotlights the heart-stopping action and colorful characters, as young Malcolm Polstead battles evil forces to save baby Lyra's life. [read more→](#)



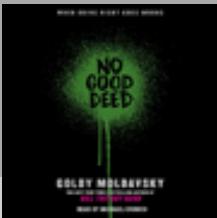
★ **The Movie Version.** By Emma Wunsch. Read by Laura Knight Keating. 9.5hr. Recorded Books, CD, \$87.75 (9781501938627). Gr. 9–12.

Keating narrates this thoughtful novel about the impact of mental illness with sensitivity, honesty, and humor, as Amelia, Toby, and their family grieve, fall apart, and begin to heal. [read more→](#)



★ **My Lady Jane.** By Cynthia Hand and others. Read by Katherine Kellgren. 14hrs. Harper, DD, \$28.99 (9780062468123). Gr. 9–12.

The ineffable Kellgren narrates this madcap alternate-history romp through Tudor England with gleeful bellowing and sinister whisperings, navigating the multiple perspectives and plot twists with aplomb. [read more→](#)



★ **No Good Deed.** By Goldy Moldavsky. Read by Michael Crouch. 8.5hr. Scholastic, CD, \$39.99 (9781338035902). Gr. 9–12.

Teen activist Gregor Maravilla wants to feed starving children, but his experiences at Camp Save the World suggest that not all teens are as altruistic. Crouch expertly moves among the characters with ease, vocally representing a full spectrum of emotion that gives richness and depth to the performance. [read more→](#)



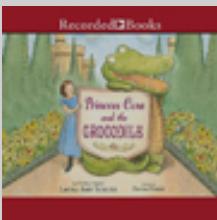
★ **The One Memory of Flora Banks.** By Emily Barr. Read by Nicola Barber. 9hr. Listening Library, CD, \$45 (9781524774790). Gr. 9–12.

A brain tumor's removal left 17-year-old Flora with an amnesia affecting her short-term memory, but she remembers kissing her best friend's boyfriend and decides to follow him to Arctic Norway. Barber evokes the story with sensitivity and authenticity. [read more→](#)



★ **The Pearl Thief.** By Elizabeth Wein. Read by Maggie Service. 8hr. Brilliance/Bolinda, CD, \$14.99 (9781489403681). Gr. 9–12.

Service's spot-on accents and convincing characterizations in this lyrical and immersive coming-of-age story make this prequel to Wein's award-winning *Code Name Verity* a listening experience not to be missed. [read more→](#)



★ **Princess Cora and the Crocodile.** By Laura Amy Schlitz. Read by Davina Porter. 30min. Recorded Books, CD, \$15.75 (9781501959035). Gr. 1–3.

Even kings and queens, it turns out, can be helicopter parents, leaving little princesses overscheduled, underappreciated, and fed up. Porter's performance of Princess Cora, her talking crocodile, and more in this rollicking confection is perfection. [read more→](#)



★ **Refugee.** By Alan Gratz. Read by Michael Goldstrom and others. 8hr. Scholastic, CD, \$34.99 (9781338191073). Gr. 7–10.

Exceptional readers tackle Gratz's compelling novel and animate the stories of three young refugees from different countries and eras, using vocal spins and accents in subtle yet effective ways. [read more→](#)



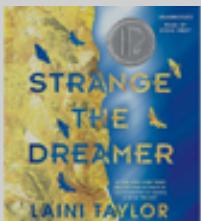
★ **See You in the Cosmos.** By Jack Cheng. Read by Kivlighan de Montebello and a full cast. 6hr. Listening Library, CD, \$35 (9781524750022). Gr. 4–7.

Sound effects balance the narration and draw the listener into the setting in this sad and sweet coming-of-age story told through audio recordings as Alex learns that what makes a family is not always what we expect. [read more→](#)



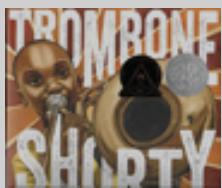
★ **Storm Horse.** By Nick Garlick. Read by Mark Williams. 5hr. Recorded Books, CD, \$51.75 (9781501944314). Gr. 4–7.

Williams' remarkable reading sets the tone of this adventure-filled historical novel about a bullied orphaned boy and a gallant horse and grounds the tale exactly where it needs to be: in listeners' hearts.
[read more→](#)



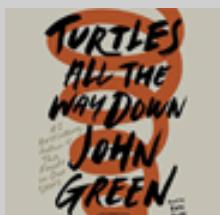
★ **Strange the Dreamer.** By Laini Taylor. Read by Steve West. 18.5hr. Hachette, CD, \$30 (9781478913054). Gr. 9–12.

With breathtaking suspense and clarity, West transports listeners to a world where courage and destruction, betrayal, secrecy, and love are intertwined, and where a young librarian and a girl with mysterious gifts join forces to fight evil. [read more→](#)



★ **Trombone Shorty.** By Troy Andrews. Read by Dion Graham. 1hr. Live Oak, CD, \$12.95 (9781430125945). Gr. 3–5.

Bursts of exuberant music and Graham's splendid narration add zest to this beautifully produced audio presentation of Troy "Trombone Shorty" Andrews' award-winning picture-book autobiography about how the celebrated contemporary musician discovered a love for playing music.
[read more→](#)



★ **Turtles All the Way Down.** By John Green. Read by Kate Rudd. 7.5hr. Listening Library, CD, \$35 (9780525591047). Gr. 9–12.

Rudd's wonderfully effective narration immerses listeners in the stories of two damaged teens in this thoughtful and touching novel that explores the effects of obsessive-compulsive disorder. [read more→](#)

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