Lemony Snicket Wins 2014 Charlotte Zolotow Award

Madison, WI -- *The Dark*, written by Lemony Snicket and illustrated by Jon Klassen, is the winner of the seventeenth annual Charlotte Zolotow Award for outstanding writing in a picture book. The award is given by the Cooperative Children's Book Center, a library of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and will be presented in Madison this spring.

Lemony Snicket’s playfully serious picture book personifies one of the most common fears of childhood. Laszlo doesn’t like the dark, which lives in his basement during the day. “At night, of course, the dark went out and spread itself against the windows and doors …” One night, the dark, which has a voice “as creaky as the roof of the house, and as smooth and cold as the windows,” lures Laszlo out of his room. The narrative builds anxiety and anticipation as Laszlo hesitantly descends through the house. Then a wonderful cascade of language creates a sudden shift in pace, mood and perspective, inviting readers and listeners to consider the dark in new light—as a presence with purpose. Lemony Snicket never trivializes children’s fear of the dark. Instead he acknowledges that fear while elegantly traversing the tension it creates to arrive at a point of reassurance and humorous possibility, where the dark is both illuminated and illuminating. *The Dark* was edited by Susan Rich, editor-at-large, and published in the United States in 2013 by Little, Brown Books for Young Readers.

The 2014 Zolotow Award committee named five Honor Books: *Building Our House*, written and illustrated by Jonathan Bean, edited by Wes Adams, and published by Farrar

The 2014 Zolotow Award committee also cited seven titles as Highly Commended: *Big Snow* written and illustrated by Jonathan Bean (Farrar Straus Giroux / Macmillan); *Max and the Tag-Along Moon* written and illustrated by Floyd Cooper (Philomel / Penguin Young Readers Group); *My Blue Is Happy* written by Jessica Young and illustrated by Catia Chien (Candlewick Press); *Niño Wrestles the World* written and illustrated by Yuyi Morales (A Neal Porter Book / Roaring Brook Press / Macmillan); *The Silver Button* written and illustrated by Bob Graham (U.S. edition: Candlewick Press); *Stripes of All Types* written and illustrated by Susan Stockdale (Peachtree); and *When No One Is Watching* written by Eileen Spinelli and illustrated by David A. Johnson (Eerdmans).

Established in 1998, the Charlotte Zolotow Award honors the work of Charlotte Zolotow,

The award is given annually for outstanding writing in a picture book for children in the birth through seven age range published in the United States in the preceding year. Members of the 2014 Zolotow Award committee were: Megan Schliesman, chair (Librarian, Cooperative Children’s Book Center, Madison, Wisconsin); Barb Huntington (Library Consultant, Retired, Madison, Wisconsin); Lynn Montague (Youth Services Librarian, Sun Prairie Public Library, Sun Prairie, Wisconsin); Duy Nguyen (Teacher, Emerson Elementary School, Madison, Wisconsin); and Kristine Klopp (Library Media Specialist, Boulder, Colorado).

The Cooperative Children's Book Center is a noncirculating library for adults with a professional, career or academic interest in children's and young adult literature. The Friends of the CCBC, Inc., is a nonprofit organization offering lectures, speaker receptions, book sales and other benefits for members, as well as assistance to the CCBC.

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