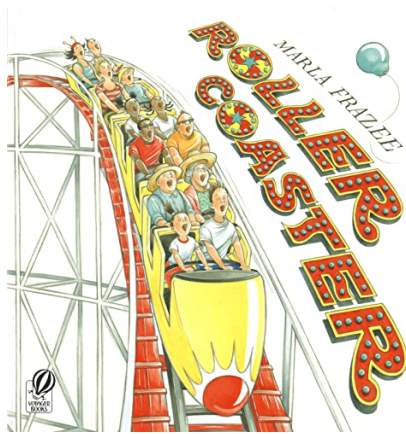


2023 Phoenix Picture Book Award Winner

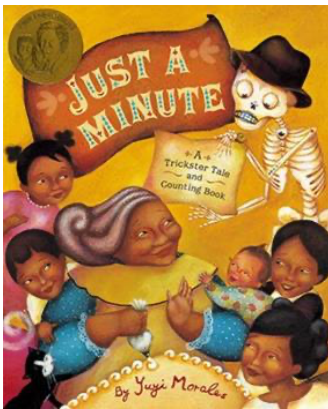


***Roller Coaster*, written and illustrated by Marla Frazee, Harcourt, 2003**

Simply put, *Roller Coaster* is rollicking good fun. It simultaneously captures the embodied rush, along with the joy and tension, of riding a roller coaster and how such an experience can draw together a random, diverse group of strangers, even if just for a moment. Frazee's fluid line, limited word choice, and careful page layout track each stage of the roller coaster ride. Readers can feel the high expectations of waiting in line, getting into the car, and the slow climb to the first peak. Detailed

facial expressions of characters depict every possible reaction, every up-and-down on the speedy loop-de-loops of the roller coaster ride. Even the end of the adventure seems anything but stasis as wobbly legs try to balance again, some riders have upset tummies, and yet others nearly race to get in line again. The illustrations' forward momentum drives the action, and Frazee's clever use of color and font as integral elements of the roller coaster's motion heightens the reader's sense of climbing aboard for the explosive ride.

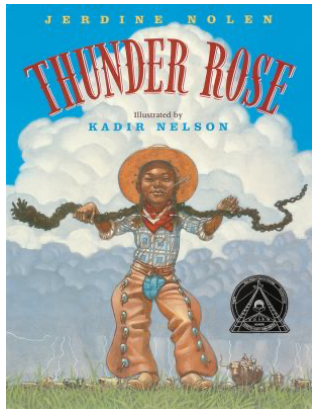
2023 Phoenix Picture Book Honor Books



***Just a Minute: A Trickster Tale and Counting Book*, written and illustrated by Yuyi Morales, Chronicle, 2003**

This refreshing and haunting trickster tale uses the liveliest pastel illustrations to show how Grandma Beetle repeatedly holds death—aka Señor Calavera, a brilliantly rendered puppet-like skeleton in a subtly expressive death mask—at bay for “just a minute.” Morales's complex book not only seamlessly integrates the genres of folktale and counting book but also deftly balances storytelling across the interaction of its witty storyline, poetic words, and culturally rich images. Humor and

cleverness abound, as do Mexican traditions, including the importance of family, as Grandma Beetle tricks Señor Calavera by completing household tasks in preparation for her birthday celebration with her grandchildren. Through the tale's sweeping energy and the characters' marvelously expressive interactions, Morales crafts a story of a delayed departure that will charm readers and possibly even trick them into learning to count.



Thunder Rose, written by Jerdine Nolen and illustrated by Kadir Nelson, Harcourt, 2003

This superhero story contributes to Old West folklore in centering a Black girl, born on a dark and stormy night, surrounded by powerful lightning strikes. Nolen and Nelson depict a hero who is larger than life not just because of her physical strength and magical powers but also because of her love for her family and her joy in life. This multilayered story offers a complex theme that extends beyond the usual tall tale to emphasize the power of beauty and gentleness. While the text-image interaction is subtle, Nelson's majestic images add specificity to Nolen's cadent text, particularly in how his sculptural art style showcases Rose's physical, mental, and emotional strength, while rooting this story of an epic Black girl hero in an impressive and very human legacy of family and love.