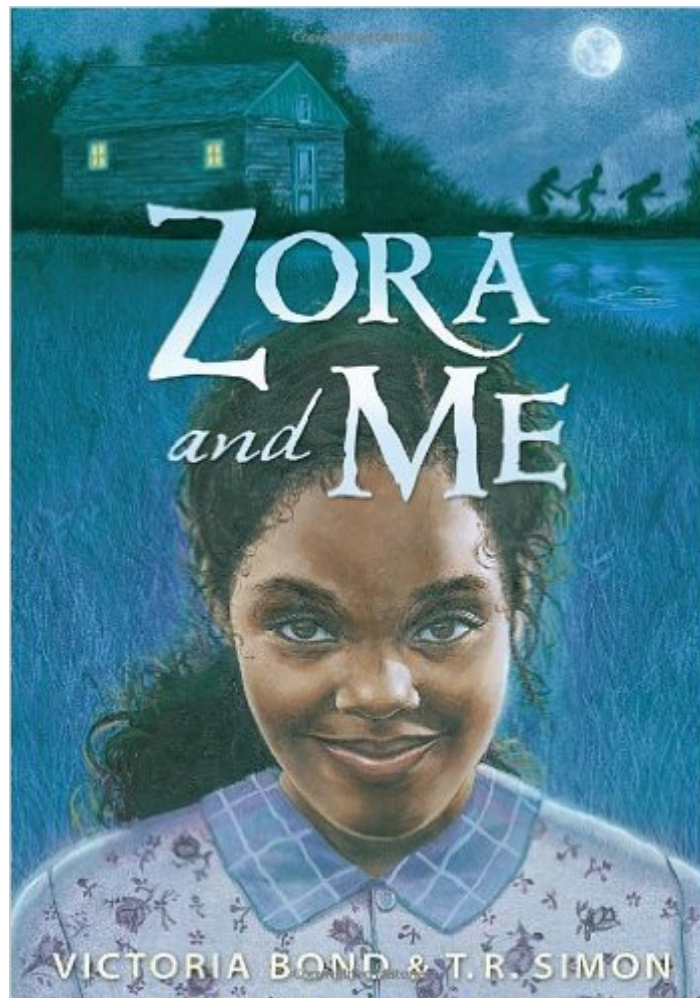


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# Zora And Me



## Synopsis

Winner of the 2011 John Steptoe New Talent (Author) Award! Racial duplicity threatens an idyllic African American community in the turn-of-the-century South in a dazzling debut inspired by the early life of Zora Neale Hurston. Whether she's telling the truth or stretching it, Zora Neale Hurston is a riveting storyteller. Her latest creation is a shape-shifting gator man who lurks in the marshes, waiting to steal human souls. But when boastful Sonny Wrapped loses a wrestling match with an elusive alligator named Ghost and a man is found murdered by the railroad tracks soon after, young Zora's tales of a mythical evil creature take on an ominous and far more complicated complexion, jeopardizing the peace and security of an entire town and forcing three children to come to terms with the dual-edged power of pretending. Zora's best friend, Carrie, narrates this coming-of-age story set in the Eden-like town of Eatonville, Florida, where justice isn't merely an exercise in retribution, but a testimony to the power of community, love, and pride. A fictionalization of the early years of a literary giant, this astonishing novel is the first project ever to be endorsed by the Zora Neale Hurston Trust that was not authored by Hurston herself.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Zora and Me by debut novelists Victoria Bond and T. R. Simon is one of the most anticipated children's releases this fall. The novel is inspired by the childhood of noted novelist and anthropologist Zora Neale Hurston, perhaps best known for her novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. I must admit that I have never read any of Zora Neale Hurston's novels, and had no

preconceived notions about her life and work before reading *Zora and Me*, but considering that the novel is aimed at middle grade readers, we must assume that they would have little familiarity with Zora Neale Hurston's works either, except perhaps with some of the folktales that she collected, which have been published as children's books. The authors use Carrie, a fictional best friend of Zora, to narrate the story, which is set in Eatonville, the all-black community in Florida where Zora Neale Hurston grew up, in the year 1900. Zora, even in fourth grade, is famous for her storytelling, or her lying, depending on how you look at it. Or maybe she's just "crazy as a hoot owl," as she is described by one town resident. But when she starts to tell wild stories of their reclusive neighbor Mr. Pendar being half alligator, half man, her classmate Stella has had enough. "You are too lying," Stella snapped. "You the lyingest girl in town! You are so lying, even when you tell the truth, it comes out a lie!" But no one cares, since "we all knew that nobody could tell a story better than Zora." In fact the authors give us many clues that Zora is no ordinary child. Carrie tells us that Zora "had a way of giving personality to everything in Eatonville. Flowers alongside the road weren't just flowers. One day they were royal guards saluting us on our walks home...that's how Zora saw things.

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