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Inside
Ol' Clip-Clop:
A Ghost Story

A Conversation with
Award-Winning Illustrator
Eric Velasquez

Q: What was your inspiration for the art in *Ol' Clip-Clop: A Ghost Story*?

A: Patricia McKissack's wonderful manuscript, and old, scary movies.

Q: What makes this book special to you? What important message do you feel it brings to young readers?

A: How your unconscious mind will ultimately betray you. Don't do mean things!

Q: What were your favorite books growing up?

A: *The Lollipop Party* and *The Sky Dog*

Q: What is your favorite memory from childhood?

A: There are so many wonderful moments. Learning to draw and discovering storytelling.

Q: Do you have any pets? If so, which one is your favorite?

A: My dog Daisy.

Q: What inspired you to illustrate and when did you know you would become an illustrator?

A: My mom would read to me as a child, and that's when I first fell in love with picture books.

Q: If there is one thing you could tell your readers about your life, what would you say?

A: I was persistent in attaining my dream.

“DID YOU KNOW?”

Q: Name three of your favorite children’s book authors of all time.

A: Tom Feelings, Jerry Pinkney, James Ransome

Q: What book have you most wanted to read but haven’t yet?

A: *Go Tell It on the Mountain* by James Baldwin

Q: What book from your childhood changed your life? Adulthood?

A: My childhood was influenced greatly by comic books. In high school, works of James Baldwin inspired me because he was writing about Harlem and the neighborhood I lived in. In college I discovered Fyodor Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment*, which remains one of my all-time favorites.

Q: If you could live in any book, which would it be?

A: *Grandma’s Records*

Q: What is your favorite food?

A: Caribbean food

Q: What food did you hate growing up but come to love in adulthood?

A: Wow, I still love and hate the same things.

Q: Who was your hero growing up? Who is it now?

A: Batman. Now, the Dark Knight



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ERIC VELAZQUEZ has won many awards for his work, including the Pura Belpré Book Award, the Carter G. Woodson Book Award, and the Coretta Scott King—John Steptoe Award for New Talent. He lives in New York. Visit his website at www.ericvelasquez.com.