



## *Dave at Night* by Gail Carson Levine

**Subjects:** Orphans; Jews—New York; African Americans; Harlem Renaissance

**Award:** Best Books for Young Adults

**Book List:** Gifted

**Props:** Flat (Newsboy) hat, music—“Rocket 88” by James Cotton

**J**

*(Put on hat)* I'm Dave Caros, I live in New York, I'm Jewish, I'm 11, I'm an orphan and I excel at making trouble. I have been known to smear glue on the school bullies chair, let a mouse loose in the classroom, and bat a ball into the teacher's rear end (not exactly on purpose). I don't know—trouble just seems to find me. My papa called me “Dave the Daredevil”. He'd always laugh, even though he tried not to, when I told of the trouble I'd gotten into in school that day. I love Papa. I'm sure I would have loved my mama too, but I never knew her, she died giving birth to me. See, I cause trouble even when I'm not trying to. I became an orphan on the day Papa died. It was Tuesday, October 26, 1926. He fell off the roof of a house he was helping to build. That's the day my real trouble started. Ida, my stepmother didn't want me and said she would find a way to get rid of me. She said she couldn't afford to feed and clothe me. Gideon, my older brother, he's going to live with Uncle Jack without me. Uncle Jack says I'm too noisy, that maybe next year he'd send for me. Who needs them anyway, I can take care of myself.

True to her world, Ida gives me away. She takes me to the HHB, Hebrew Home for Boys. When I first saw the place, my eyes traveled up to where a pointy tower rose, like a witch's hat. The whole building was only four stories high but each story was very tall. The building wasn't

made for people. It was made for witches, with plenty of room for their hats. It was the last place I'd have guessed was a Home, the last place for kids to live in. When I walked in, the door thudded closed behind me and clicked shut. As soon as I heard the click, I wanted to leave.

So I did. I snuck out into Harlem and found a whole new world. It is amazing! All night, *(turn on music)* there is jazz music, dancing, fortune-telling, palm readings, poetry—it's magic. And I met a girl, Irma Lee. She's my age and she's wonderful. How I wish I could just leave the HHB and never go back, but I can't *(turn off music)*, at least not yet. The superintendent, Mr. Bloom, took my carving of Noah's Ark. The carving Papa gave me, the carving that was in my suitcase when I arrived in the school, but now is gone. No, I can't leave the HHB until I have my carving back. But as soon as I do, I am out of here. I will go into the big city, I'll find Irma Lee, and we'll have a real adventure.

Don't miss the adventure for yourselves. Read *(Hold up book)* *Dave at Night* by Gail Carson Levine. This book is based on true events. It is based on the childhood of Gail Levine's (the author of this book) own father. In the beginning of the book, she dedicates it to her father, the real Dave.