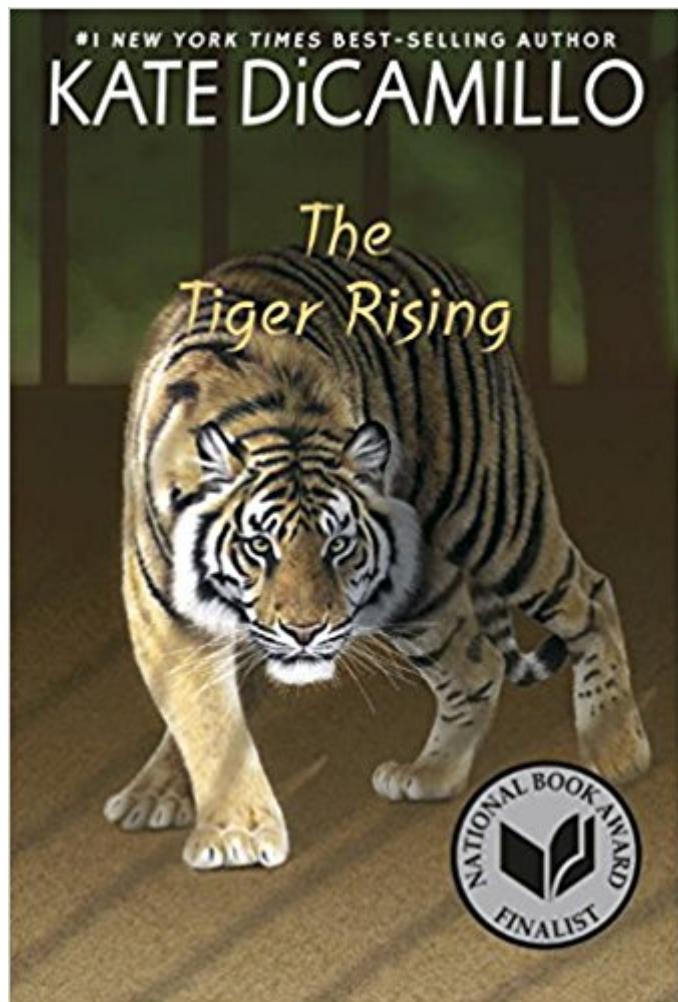


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The Tiger Rising



Synopsis

A National Book Award finalist by Newbery Medalist Kate DiCamillo. Walking through the misty Florida woods one morning, twelve-year-old Rob Horton is stunned to encounter a tiger—a real-life, very large tiger—“pacing back and forth in a cage. What’s more, on the same extraordinary day, he meets Sistine Bailey, a girl who shows her feelings as readily as Rob hides his. As they learn to trust each other, and ultimately, to be friends, Rob and Sistine prove that some things—“like memories, and heartache, and tigers—“can’t be locked up forever. Featuring a new cover illustration by Stephen Walton.

Book Information

Paperback: 144 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 318 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #2,498 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #1 in Children’s Books > Animals > Lions, Tigers & Leopards #22 in Children’s Books > Children’s Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Parents #30 in Children’s Books > Children’s Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > New Experiences

Age Range: 10 - 12 years

Grade Level: 5 - 7

Customer Reviews

Kate DiCamillo’s first novel *Because of Winn-Dixie* won a Newbery Honor in 2000 for the no-nonsense charm and wisdom of its down-home young heroine, Opal. Also set in Florida, *The Tiger Rising* is more of a short story in scope, the tale of 12-year-old Rob Horton who finds a caged tiger in the woods behind the Kentucky Star Motel where he lives with his dad. The tiger is so incongruous in this setting, Rob views the apparition as some sort of magic trick. Indeed, the tiger triggers all sorts of magic in Rob’s life—for one thing, it takes his mind off his recently deceased mother and the itchy red blisters on his legs that the wise motel housekeeper, Willie May, says is a manifestation of the sadness that Rob keeps “down low.” Something else for Rob to think about is

Sistine (as in the chapel), a new city girl with fierce black eyes who challenges him to be honest with her and himself. Spurred by the tiger, events collide to break Rob out of his silent introspection, to form a new friendship with Sistine, a new understanding with his father, and most important, to lighten his heart. This novel is about cages--the consequences of escape as well as imprisonment. The story and symbolism are clear as a bell, and the emotions ring true. (Ages 9 and older) --Karin Snelson --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

DiCamillo's second novel may not be as humorous as her debut, *Because of Winn-Dixie*, but it is just as carefully structured, and her ear is just as finely tuned to her characters. In the first chapter, readers learn that Rob lost his mother six months ago; his father has uprooted their lives from Jacksonville to Lister, Fla.; the boy hates school; and his father's boss, Beauchamp, is keeping a caged wild tiger at Beauchamp's abandoned gas station. The author characterizes Rob by what he does not do ("Rob had a way of not-thinking about things"; "He was a pro at not-crying"), and the imprisoned tiger becomes a metaphor for the thoughts and feelings he keeps trapped inside. Two other characters, together with the tiger, act as catalyst for Rob's change: a new classmate, Sistine ("like the chapel"), who believes that her father will rescue her someday and take her back to Pennsylvania, and Willie May, a wise and compassionate woman who works as a chambermaid at Beauchamp's hotel. The author delves deeply into the psyches of her cast with carefully choreographed scenes, opting for the economy of poetry over elaborate prose. The climax is sudden and brief, mimicking the surge of emotion that overtakes Rob, who can finally embrace life rather than negate it. DiCamillo demonstrates her versatility by treating themes similar to those of her first novel with a completely different approach. Readers will eagerly anticipate her next work. Ages 10-up. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

As I was reading this book, I thought how well-written it is and interesting. In fact, it help my interest enough so that I read it in two sittings. Unfortunately, I was reading about three YA novels at the time and found it difficult to recall the content. I looked back and remembered that it was about children who are fighting emotional battles and find healing through friendships with peers and even exotic animals. Yes, there is a real tiger in the story. I would have it in my classroom library and recommend it to all of my students. It is about sixth grade or below reading level.

The Tiger Rising is a very well written book. Kate DiCamillo is one of my favorite authors and this

book did not disappoint. It is a book that my students and I could not get enough of. Each day at the end of our read aloud time, my students would beg for just one more chapter, or one more page, or one more paragraph, or one more sentence, or one more word! We enjoyed this book because there is so much symbolism and so many problems that young children can connect to throughout the entire book. I highly recommend reading this book with a group of children because it allows for a lot of discussion about character traits, motivations, struggles, symbolism, and theme.

Quite a depressing book. Our family is a Kate DiCamillo fan so we decided to read this book. We got about half way through and quit reading it because nobody was impressed.

My 10 yr old is a very good reader and obsessed with tigers. She saw this and begged me to buy it for her kindle. I did so and didn't think too much about it. It had good ratings and awards, seemed to be within her reading level. Unfortunately, she came down crying one night b/c of the ending. Just be aware if you have a younger reader or a sensitive child that this may be a book to "wait" on until they are a bit older.

Good book. I was a little disappointed by the ending. Kind of abrupt. Otherwise, it's a good read with my upper elementary school aged child.

An enjoyable and inspiring reading

I am a therapist and work with wounded people and the grief they contain. I keep 4 or 5 copies on my shelf to loan out. The story has many interpretations, but always creates a reaction. More concrete interpretations tend to focus on the loss and the shooting of the tiger. However, with a bit of guidance, almost all can see the importance of Rob "opening the suitcase" and the loving response of his father. In the end, I believe it is a magnificent and brief invitation to access and open the hidden feelings that make us human and to see the power of asking for what we need ("Say her name.") Worth reading over and over.

I think I like The Tiger Rising better in retrospect than I did when I read it. It's a lot like looking back on how your parents raised you and realizing that all the go to bed, eat your vegetables, and occasional spankings weren't random acts of cruelty but rather a part of a plan implemented out of love. Likewise it took me awhile to recover from the cold shock of Kate DiCamillo's ending to

appreciate all she had done in this book. The Tiger Rising is the story of two children: shy, sad Rob who has recently lost his mother, and stubborn, sharp Sistine whose father ran off with another woman abandoning her in a small, southern town she hates. Both hate school and long for friendship . . . enter the tiger. A tiger does not belong in a rusty, iron cage behind a southern hotel, but that is where he is, and the wonder of this creature captures the children. What is there to do but allow the tiger to escape? The writing is truly amazing. As Rob puts it (about Sistine, but it applies to Ms. DiCamillo): "Her words sounded the way all those things made him feel, as if the world, the real world, had been punched through, so that he could see something wonderful and dazzling on the other side of it." Also, I always hesitate before calling someone a Christian author. It's as if I think the moment I do a P.R. Agent will write me and inform me that actually she is a Shiite Muslim, so I won't call Kate DiCamillo a Christian author. I will say, however, that she is an author Christians can rest comfortably in and have no fear. She is a great writer.

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