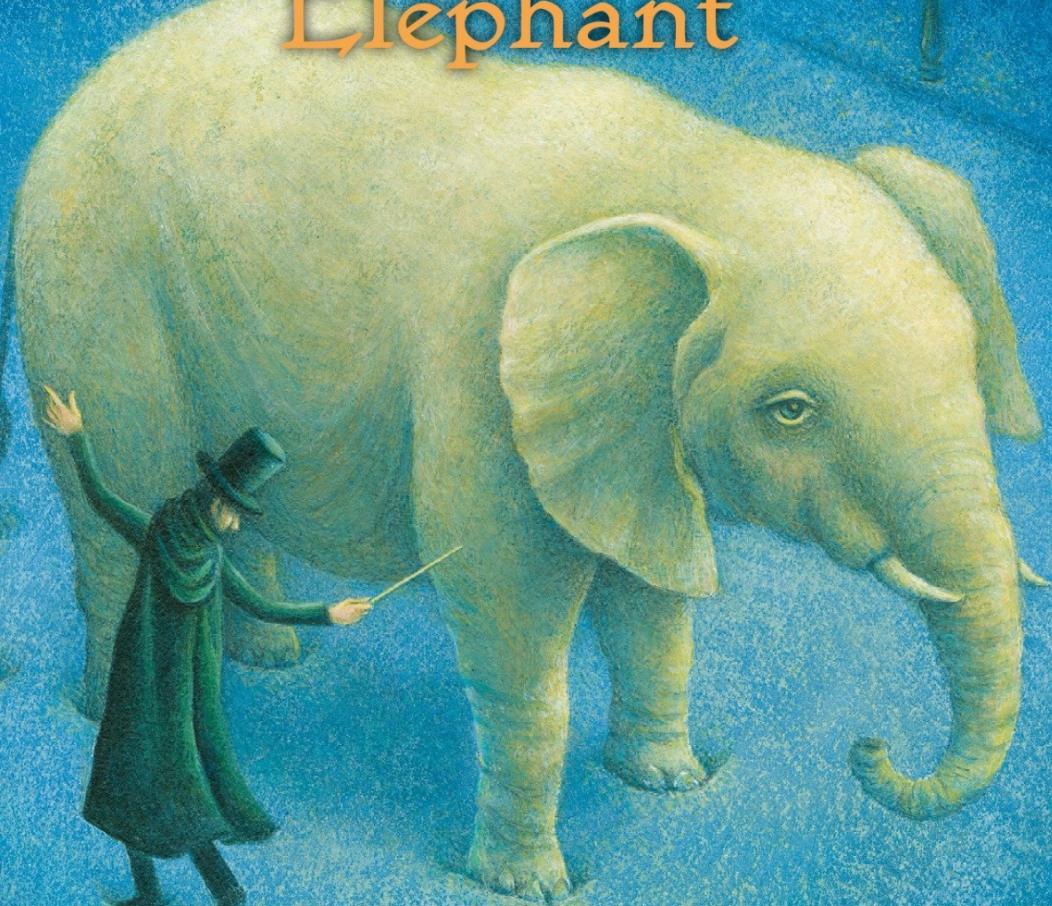


2022 martedì giugno 28 - mardi - juni 28 → juli 01

Kate DiCamillo

#1 NEW YORK TIMES BEST-SELLING AUTHOR
KATE DiCAMILLO

The Magician's
Elephant



ILLUSTRATED BY YOKO TANAKA

Chapter Ten



born in 1964
published in 2009

- The weather worsened.
- Although it did not seem possible, it became colder.
- Although it did not seem possible, it grew darker.
- It would not snow.

- And in the cold, dark dorm room at the **ORPHANAGE OF THE SISTERS OF PERPETUAL LIGHT**,
ADELE continued to dream of the elephant.
- The dream was so persistent that **ADELE** could, after a time, repeat **verbatim** the words that the elephant spoke to **Sister MARIE** when she came to the door.
 There was, in particular, one sentence that the elephant spoke that was so full of beauty and promise that **ADELE** took to saying it to herself during the day:
*It is the one you are calling **ADELE** I am coming for to keep.*
- She said these words over and over, as if they were a poem or a blessing or a prayer.
*It is the one you are calling **ADELE** I am coming for to keep; it is the one you are calling **ADELE** I am coming for to keep —*

- “Who are you talking to?” said an older girl named **LISSETTE**.
- She and **ADELE** were in the orphanage kitchen together, bent over a bucket, working at peeling potatoes.
- “No one,” said **ADELE**.
- “But your lips were moving,” said **LISSETTE**. “I saw them move. You were saying something.”



- “I was saying the elephant’s words,” said **ADELE**.
 - “The elephant’s words?”
- “The elephant from my dreams. She speaks to me.”
- “Oh, of course, silly me, the speaking elephant from your dreams,” said **LISSETTE**. She snorted.
- “The elephant knocks at the door and asks for me,” said **ADELE**. She lowered her voice. “I believe that she has come to take me away from here.”
 - “To take you away?” said **LISSETTE**.
 - Her eyes narrowed.
 - “And where would she take you?”
- “Home,” said **ADELE**.
 - “Ha! Listen to her!” said **LISSETTE**.
 - “Home.” She snorted again.
 - “How old are you?”
- “Six,” said **ADELE**. “Almost seven.”
 - “Yes, well,
 - you are very exceptionally, amazingly stupid
 - for almost seven years old,” said **LISSETTE**.

- There came a knock at the kitchen door.
- “Hark!” said LISSETTE.
 - “Someone knocks! Maybe it is an elephant.”
- She got up and went to the door and threw it wide.
- “Look, ADELE,” she said, turning back with a terrible smile on her face.
- “Look who is here. It is an elephant come to take you home.”
- There was not, of course, an elephant at the door.
- Instead, there stood the neighborhood beggar and his dog.
- “We have nothing to give you,” said LISSETTE in a loud voice.
 - “We’re orphans. This is an orphanage.” She stamped her foot.
 - “We have nothing to give,” sang the beggar,
 - “but look, ADELE, an elephant, and this is wonderful news.”
- ADELE looked at the beggar’s face and saw that he was truly, terribly hungry.
 - “Look, ADELE, an elephant,” he sang,
 - “but you must know that the truth is always changing.”

- “Don’t sing,” said LISSETTE.
 - She slammed the door shut and came and sat down next to ADELE.
- “You see, now, who comes and knocks at the door here? Blind dogs. And beggars who sing meaningless songs. Do you think that they have come to take us home?”
 - “He was hungry,” said ADELE.
 - She felt an **unsolicited** tear roll down her cheek.
 - It was followed by another and then another.
- “So what?” said LISSETTE. “Who do you know who isn’t hungry?”
 - “No one,” answered ADELE truthfully.
 - She, herself, was always hungry.
- “Yes,” said LISSETTE, “we are all hungry. So what?”

- ADELE could think of nothing to say in reply.
 - All she had were the words of a dream elephant. They were not much, but they were hers, and she began again to say them to herself:
- *It is the one you are calling ADELE I am coming for to keep;*
- *it is the one you are calling ADELE I am coming for to keep;*
- *it is the one you are calling ADELE –*
 - “Quit moving your lips,” said LISSETTE.
 - “Can’t you see that no one intends to come for us?”