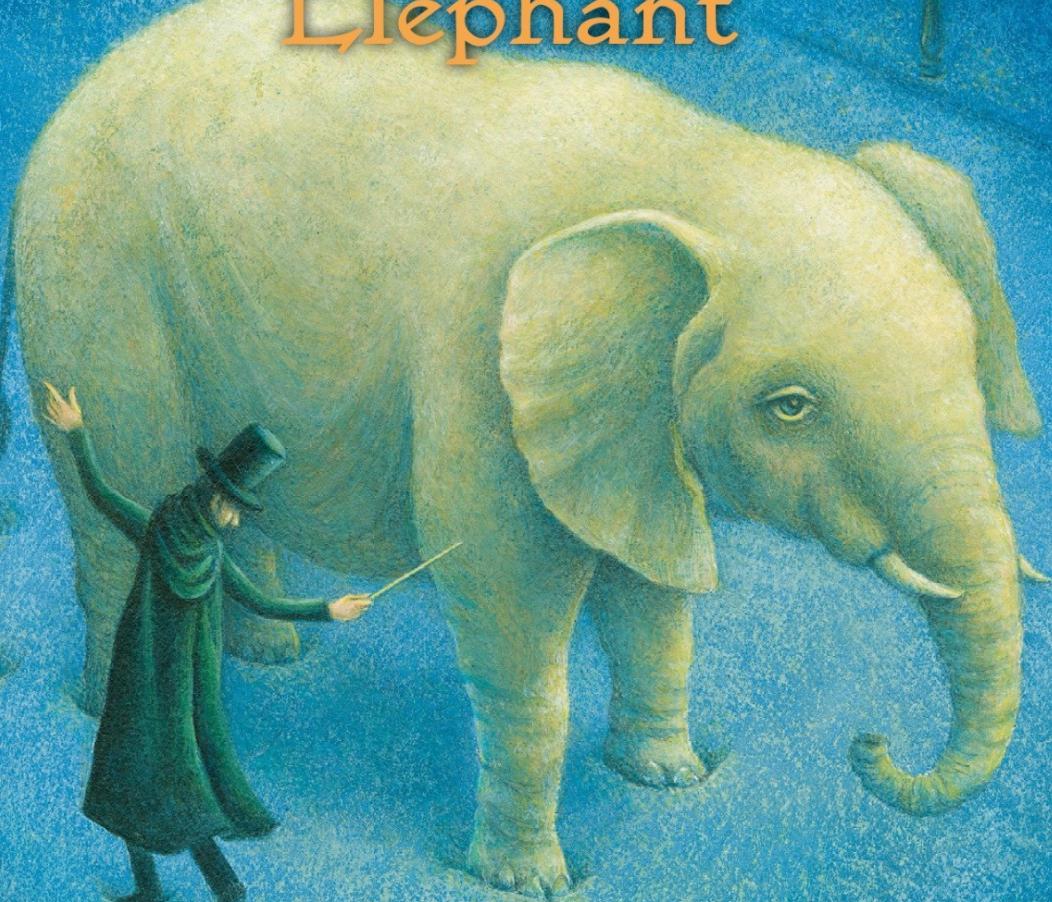


2022 martedì giugno 28 - mardi - juni 28 → juli o

Kate DiCamillo

#1 NEW YORK TIMES BEST-SELLING AUTHOR  
**KATE DiCAMILLO**

The Magician's  
Elephant



ILLUSTRATED BY YOKO TANAKA

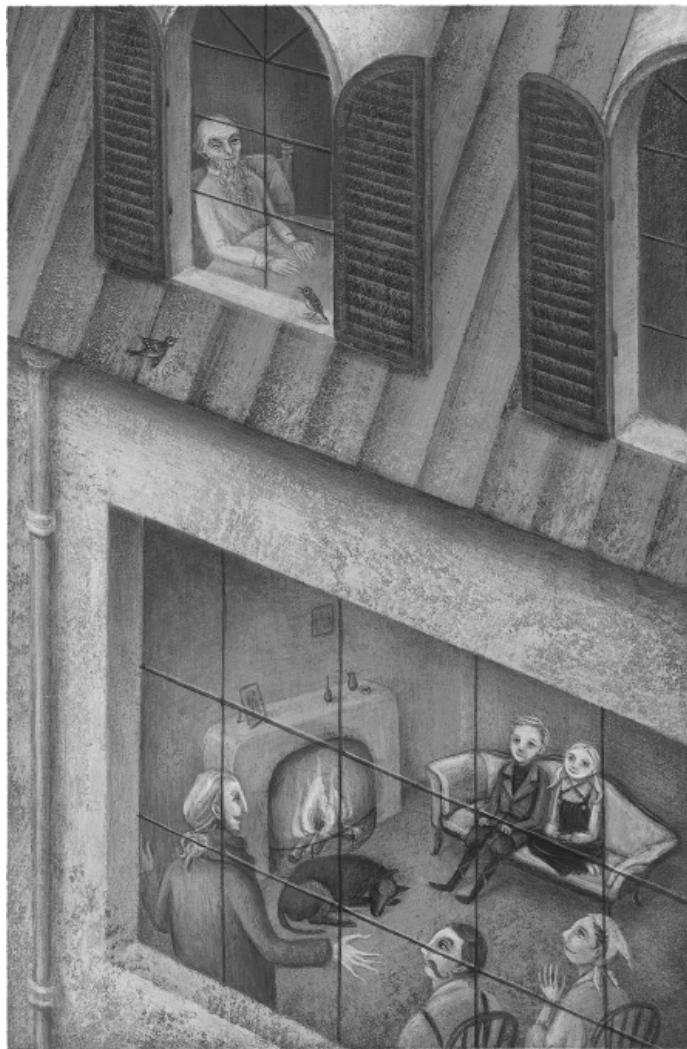
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## Chapter Nineteen



born in 1964  
published in 2009

- **IDDO** slept in front of the fire when he came to visit.
  - And **TOMAS** sang.
  - They did not ever, the two of them, stay for long.
- But they visited often enough that **LEO** and **GLORIA** and **PETER** and **ADELE** learned to sing, along with **TOMAS**, his strange and beautiful songs of elephants and truth and wonderful news.



- Often, when they were singing,
  - there came from the attic apartment a knocking sound.
- It was usually **ADELE** who went up the stairs to ask **VILNA LUTZ** what it was he wanted.
  - He could never answer her properly.
  - He could only say that he was cold and that he would like for the window to be closed;
  - sometimes, when he was in the grips of a particularly high fever,
  - he would allow **ADELE** to sit beside him and hold his hand.
- “We must outflank the enemy!”
  - he would shout.
- “Where, oh where, is my foot?”
- And then, in despair, he would say,
  - “I cannot take her. Truly, I cannot. She is too small.”
    - “Shhh,” said **ADELE**.
    - “There, there.”
- She would wait until the old soldier fell asleep, and then she would go back down the stairs to where **GLORIA** and **LEO** and her brother were waiting for her.
- And when she walked into the room,
  - it was always, for **PETER**, as if she had been gone a very long time.
- His heart leaped up high inside of him, astonished and overjoyed anew at the sight of her,
  - and he remembered, again, the door from his dream and the golden field of wheat.
- All that light, and here was **ADELE** before him:
  - warm and safe and loved.
- It was, after all, as he had once promised his mother it would be.

- The magician became a **goatherd** and married a woman who had no teeth.
  - She loved him, and he loved her,
  - and they lived with their goats in a hut at the foot of a steep hill.
- Sometimes, on summer evenings, they climbed the hill and stood together and stared up at the constellations in the night sky.
  - The magician showed his wife the star that he had gazed upon so often in prison, the star that, he felt, had kept him alive.
- “It is that one,” he said, pointing. “No, it is that one.”

- “It makes no never mind which it was, **FREDERICK**,”
  - his wife said gently.
  - “All of them are beautiful.”

- And they were.
- The magician never again performed an act of magic.

- The elephant lived a very long time.
  - And in spite of what they say about the memory of elephants,
- she recalled none of what had happened.
  - She did not remember the **opera house** or the magician or the **countess** or **BARTOK WHYNN**.
  - She did not remember the snow that fell so mysteriously from the sky.
- Perhaps it was too painful for her to remember.
  - Or maybe the whole of it seemed to her like nothing more than a terrible dream that was best forgotten.
- Sometimes, though,
  - when she was walking through the tall grass or standing in the shade of the trees,
- **PETER**’s face would flash in front of her,
  - and **she was struck with a peculiar feeling of having been well and truly seen, of having at last been found, saved.**
- And then the elephant was grateful,
  - although she did not know to whom and could not think why.

- And as the elephant forgot the **city of BALTESE** and its inhabitants, so they, too, forgot her.

Her disappearance caused a stir and then was forgotten.

**She became to them a strange and unbelievable notion that faded with time.**

- Soon, no one spoke of her miraculous appearance or her inexplicable disappearance; all of it seemed too impossible to have ever happened to begin with, to have ever been true.
- But it did happen.