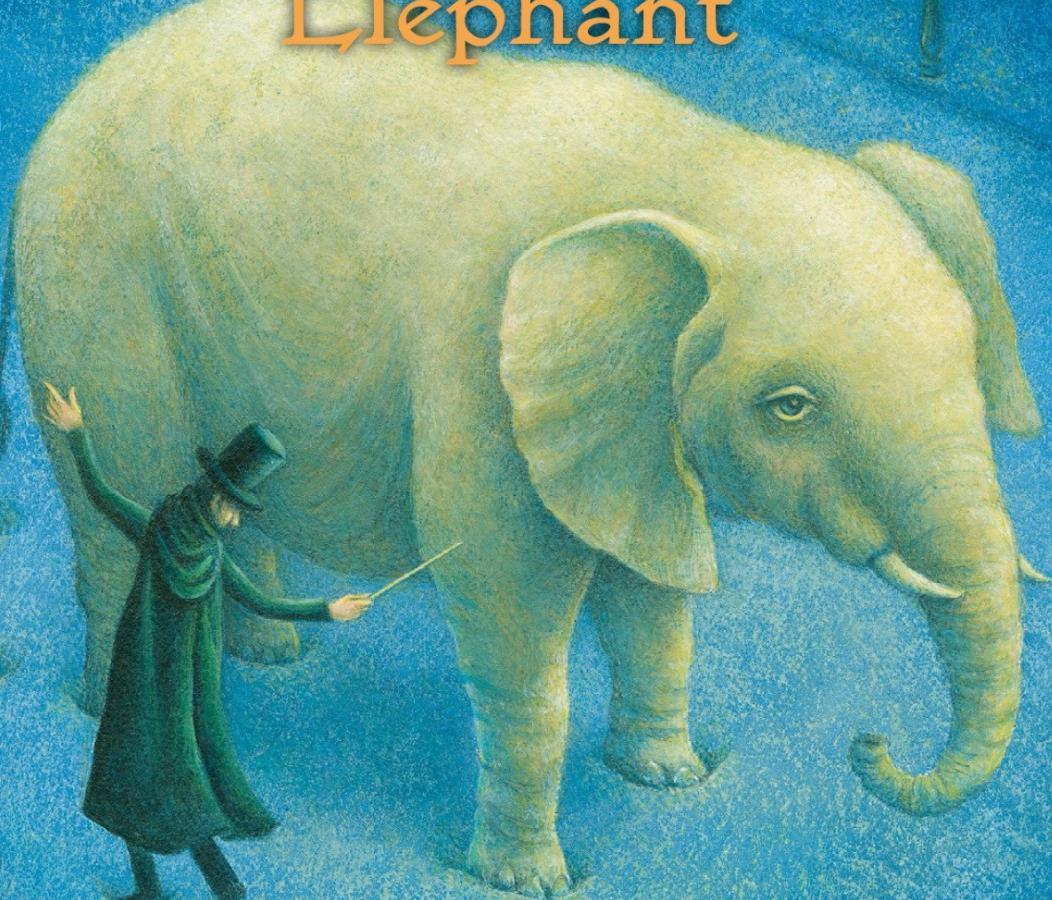


2022 martedì giugno 28 - mardi - juni 28

Kate DiCamillo

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

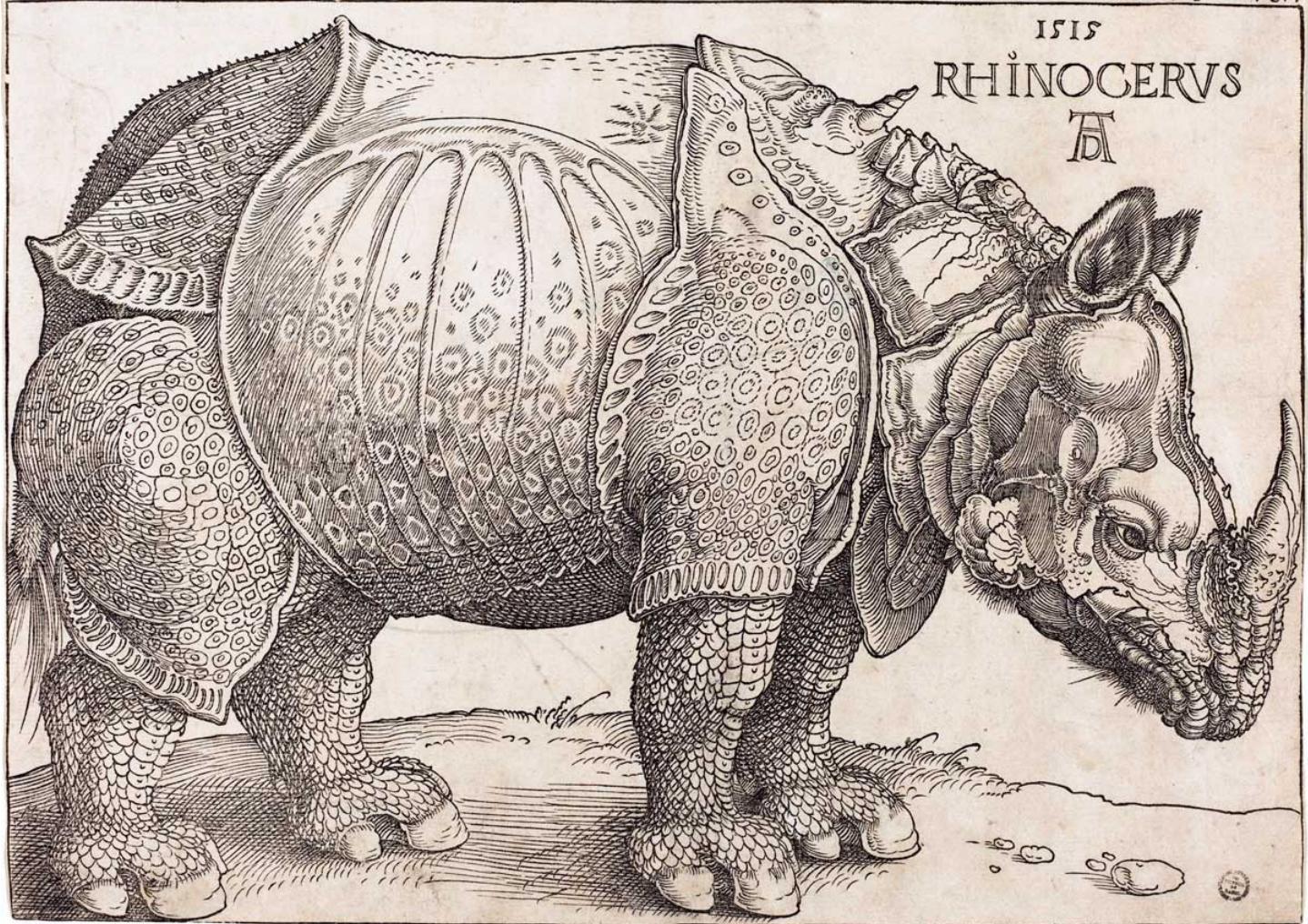
The Magician's  
Elephant



ILLUSTRATED BY YOKO TANAKA

## Chapter Sixteen

Nach Christus gepurt. 1513. Jar. Aldi. 1. May. Hat man dem grossmächtigen Kunig von Portugall Emanuell gen Lysabona pracht auf India/ein sollich lebendig Thier. Das nennen sie Rhinocerus. Das ist hye mit aller seiner gestalt als conderstet. Es hat ein farb wie ein gesprachete Schlechetrost. Und ist vō dicken Schalen überlegt fast fest. Und ist in der größ als der Helfande. Aber nydertrechte von paynen/vnd fast weh/affig. Es hat ein scharff stark Horn vom auß der nasen/Das begyndet es albeg zu merzen wo es bey staynen ist. Das dosig Thier ist des Helfs fangz tott seynde. Der Helfande fürchtet es fast vbel/dann wo es In ankumbe/so laufft Im das Thier mit den Kopff zwischen dyen soeden payn/vnd reyst den Helfande vnden am pauch auss vñ erwürgt In/des mag er sich nit erweyen. Dann das Thier ist also gewapent/das Im der Helfande nichts kan thun. Sie sagen auch das der Rhinocerus Schnell/graydig vnd Listig sey.



1513

RHINOCERVS  
A

born in 1964  
published in 2009

- HANS ICKMAN pushed Madam LAVAUGHN's wheelchair,
  - and LEO MATIENNE had hold of PETER's hand.
- The four of them moved quickly through the snowy streets.
  - They were heading to the home of the countess.
- "I do not understand," said Madam LAVAUGHN.
  - "I find this all highly irregular."
    - "I believe the time has come,"
    - said HANS ICKMAN.
- "The time? The time? The time for what?"
- said Madam LAVAUGHN.
- "Do not speak to me in riddles."
- "The time for you to return to the prison."
- "But it is the middle of the night, and the prison is that way," said Madam LAVAUGHN, flinging a heavily bejeweled hand behind her. "The prison is in entirely the opposite direction."
- "There is something else that we must tend to first," said LEO MATIENNE.
- "And what is that?" said Madam LAVAUGHN.
- "We must retrieve the elephant from the home of the countess," said PETER,
  - and take her to the magician."
- "Retrieve the elephant?"

- said **Madam LAVAUGHN**.
- “Retrieve the elephant? Take the elephant to the magician?
- Is he mad?
- Is the boy mad?
- Is the policeman mad?
- Has everyone gone mad?”

- “Yes,” said **HANS ICKMAN** after a long moment.
- “I believe that is the case.”
- Everyone has gone a little mad.”

- “Oh,” said **Madam LAVAUGHN**, “very well. I see.”

- They were silent together then:

- the noblewoman and her servant, the policeman and the boy walking beside him. There was only the sound of the wheelchair moving through the snow and three pairs of footsteps striking the muffled cobblestones.

- It was **Madam LAVAUGHN** who at last broke the silence.

- “Highly irregular,” she said, “but quite interesting, very interesting indeed. Why, it seems as if anything could happen, anything at all.”

- “Exactly,” said **HANS ICKMAN**.

- In the prison,
  - in his small cell, the magician paced back and forth.
- “And if they succeed?” he said.
- “If they manage, somehow, to bring the elephant here? Then there is no helping it. I must speak the words. I must try to cast the spell again. I must work to send her back.”

- The magician paused in his pacing and looked up and out his window and was amazed to see snowflake after snowflake dancing through the air.

- “Oh, look,” **he said, even though he was alone.**
- “It is snowing — how beautiful.”
- The magician stood very still.

- He stared at the falling snow. And suddenly, he did not care at all that he would have to undo the greatest thing he had ever done.

- He had been so lonely, so desperately, hopelessly lonely for so long.
- He might very well spend the rest of his life in prison, alone.
- And he understood that what he wanted now was something much simpler, much more complicated than the magic he had performed.
- What he wanted was to turn to somebody and take hold of their hand and look up with them and marvel at the snow falling from the sky.
- “This,” he wanted to say to someone he loved and who loved him in return. “This.”

- **PETER** and **LEO MATIENNE** and **HANS ICKMAN** and **Madam LAVAUGHN** stood outside the home of the **countess QUINTET**;
- they stared together at the massive, imposing elephant door.

- “Oh,” said **PETER**.
- “We will knock,” said **LEO MATIENNE**. “That is where we will begin, with knocking.”
- “Yes,” said **HANS ICKMAN**. “We will knock.”
- The three of them stepped forward and began to pound on the door. Time stopped.

- **PETER** had a terrible feeling that the whole of his life had been nothing but standing and knocking, asking to be let into some place that he was not even certain existed.

- His fingers were cold.
- His knuckles hurt. The snow fell harder and faster.

- "Perhaps this is a dream," said **Madam LAVAUGHN** from her chair.  
"Perhaps the whole thing has been nothing but a dream."

- **PETER** remembered the door in the wheat field.
  - He remembered holding **ADELE**.
  - And then he remembered the terrible, heartbroken look in the elephant's eyes.
- "Please!" he shouted. "Please, you must let us in."
- "Please!" shouted **LEO MATIENNE**.
- "Yes," said **HANS ICKMAN**, "please."

- And from the other side of the door came the screech of a dead bolt being thrown.

- And then another and another. And slowly, as if it were reluctant to do so, the door began to open.

- A small, bent man appeared. He stepped outside and looked up at the falling snow and laughed.

- "Yes," he said. "You knocked?"  
◦ And then he laughed again.

- **BABARTOK WHYNN** laughed even harder when **PETER** told him why they had come.

- "You want — ha, ha, hee — to take the elephant from here to the — ha, ha, hee, wheeeeeee — to the magician in prison so that the magician may perform the magic to send the elephant — wheeeeeee — home?"

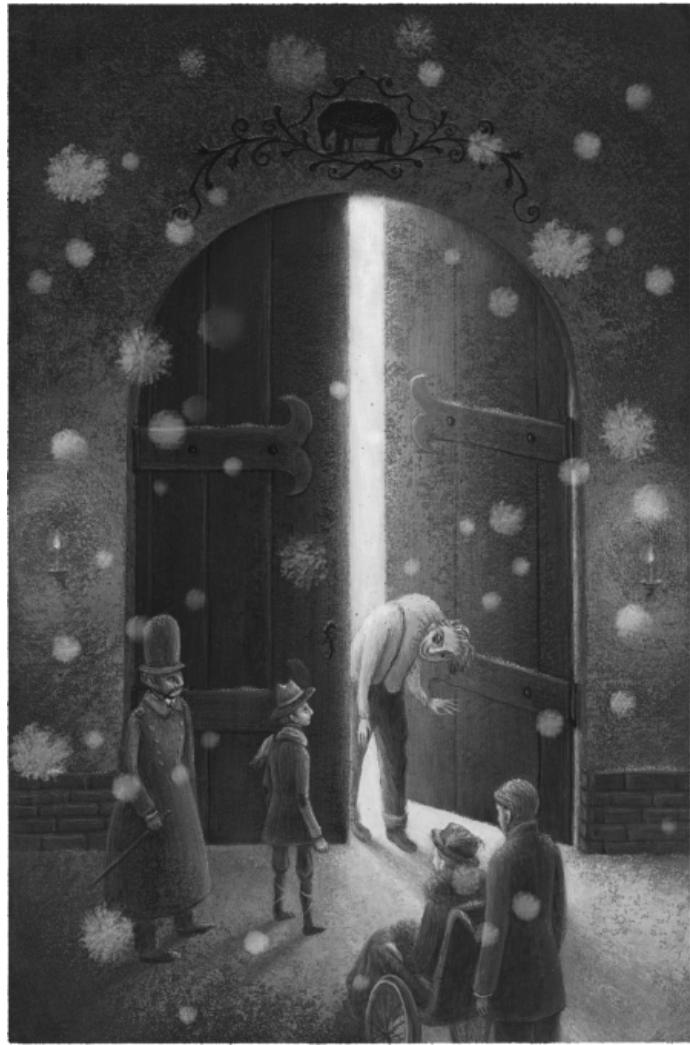
- He laughed so hard that he lost his balance and had to sit down in the snow.

- "Whatever is so funny?"  
◦ said **Madam LAVAUGHN**.

- "You must tell us so that we may laugh along with you."

- "You may laugh along with me," said **BABARTOK WHYNN**,  
◦ "only if you find it funny to — ha, ha, hee — think of me dead."

- Imagine if the **countess** were to wake tomorrow and find that her elephant had disappeared, and that I, **BABARTOK WHYNN**, was the one — ha, ha, hee — who had allowed the beast to be spirited away?"



- The little man was shaken by a hilarity so profound that his laughter disappeared altogether, and no sound at all came from his open mouth.

• “But what if you were not here, either?”  
said LEO MATIENNE.

• “What if you, too, were gone on the morrow?”

- “What is that?” said BBARTOK WHYNN. “What did you — ha, ha, hee — say?”

• “I said,” said LEO MATIENNE,  
“what if you, like the elephant,  
were gone to the place you were meant,  
after all, to be?”

- BBARTOK WHYNN stared up at LEO MATIENNE and HANS ICKMAN and PETER and Madam LAVAUGHN.

- They were all holding very still, waiting.  
He held still, too, and considered them, gathered together there in the falling snow.
- And in the silence he at last recognized them.  
They were the figures from his dream.

- In the ballroom of the countess QUINTET, when the elephant opened her eyes and saw the boy standing before her, she was not at all surprised.
- She thought simply,  
*You. Yes, you. I knew that you would come for me.*