



# Kate DiCamillo

## TeachingBooks Original Movie Transcript

Kate DiCamillo, interviewed in her home in Minneapolis, Minnesota on November 12, 2005.

This is a literal transcript of the spoken word found in the movie available on TeachingBooks.net. It is offered here to give you a quick assessment of the program topics, as well as to enable people with auditory disabilities access to the words.

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I was a kid who lived to read. It was the primary pleasure of my existence. It's still one of the primary pleasures of my existence. It's where I draw my sustenance. And as a kid, it was where I drew my sustenance.

### On Words

I love words. I love the way they sound. When I write, when I'm in the penultimate or the ultimate draft, it's all done out loud. The only way I can progress is listening to how it sounds.

[Reads briefly from *The Tale of Despereaux*.]

*Because of Winn-Dixie* is about a ten-year-old motherless girl who walks into a Winn-Dixie grocery store and comes back with a dog. And this dog, in combination with this fabulous kid — because Opal is fabulous — opens doors everywhere, not only inside Opal, but in the people that she meets in town.

### On Hope in Stories

Telling a story is a hopeful act. Not only is it courageous, as Isaac Denison would have it, but it's an act of hope. It's an answer.

*The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* is about a rabbit — who is made entirely of china — named Edward Tulane. In the beginning of the story, Edward is more enamored of himself than he is of anybody else. He's a very fine rabbit. He's vain, he's arrogant, and he doesn't care whether Abilene loves him or not. Then as the journey progresses — as he gets passed from hand to hand — he learns what it means to love. Edward Tulane becomes finer and finer in soul and heart than he was at the beginning of the journey.

### Unlikely Friendships

Unlikely friendships pervade the books. Mercy Watson is a pig. She lives with Mr. and Mrs. Watson. They are not pigs. Despereaux and the princess, Opal and Winn-Dixie, Opal and Gloria

Dump, Opal and Otis, Opal and Miss Frannie Block — those are all unlikely things. Sistine and Rob [from *The Tiger Rising*] are very unlikely together.

It's keeping your heart open to the people that cross in front of you — or the dogs, or the mice.

### **On Mice as Heroes**

People say, "Why are mice always in children's books?" To me, it's a no-brainer. When you're a kid, you're often treated as a pest. You feel small, pushed aside. You feel powerless, and so I love that Despereaux, weighing two ounces, goes down into a dungeon and saves a human princess. To me it's a triumph of the human spirit.

### **Meet Edward**

[Holding her china rabbit that was the physical inspiration for *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*.] This is Edward, who was a Christmas gift from my friend. I'm spectacularly thrilled to have him because people always ask where stories come from, and I don't know. But this time, I have a physical prop right here. Look, see?

### **Books by Kate DiCamillo**

- LOUISE: THE ADVENTURES OF A CHICKEN (illustrated by Harry Bliss), Joanna Cotler Books / HarperCollins Children's Books, 2008
- GREAT JOY (illustrated by Bagram Ibatoulline), Candlewick Press, 2007
- MERCY WATSON TRICK OR TREAT (illustrated by Chris Van Dusen), Candlewick Press, 2007
- MERCY WATSON GOES FOR A RIDE (illustrated by Chris Van Dusen), Candlewick Press, 2006
- MERCY WATSON FIGHTS CRIME (illustrated by Chris Van Dusen), Candlewick Press, 2006
- MIRACULOUS JOURNEY OF EDWARD TULANE, THE (illustrated by Bagram Ibatoulline), Candlewick Press, 2006
- MERCY WATSON TO THE RESCUE (illustrated by Chris Van Dusen), Candlewick Press, 2005
- TALE OF DESPEREAUX, THE (illustrated by Timothy Basil Ering), Candlewick Press, 2003
- TIGER RISING, THE, Candlewick Press, 2001
- BECAUSE OF WINN-DIXIE, Candlewick Press, 2000

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