

HOLIDAY HOUSE



Dear Readers,

While raising my daughter, I often struggled to stay positive, keep one step ahead of the bills, and be a strong role model even when the going was tough. That wasn't always easy, particularly when I chose tough professions like farming and the arts.

When I saw an NPR article about Barbara Moore, the first woman bricklayer in Baltimore, I was inspired by her story. It's always encouraging to see other women in non-mainstream careers, and I wanted to write a story that explored this still-less-than-common-for-women profession.

Around the same time, the sports media was asking the question, "Will we ever see a female pitcher in the majors?" **I had the essence of my story: a mother and a daughter, equally driven, supporting each other as they pursued their goals.**

More than anything, I wanted to convey a sense that though it can be difficult to excel in sports or in business, working hard and staying positive will take you a long way. I didn't want to write a sappy story, but I did want to convey the importance of family—and the idea that a mom and daughter can make an impressive team.

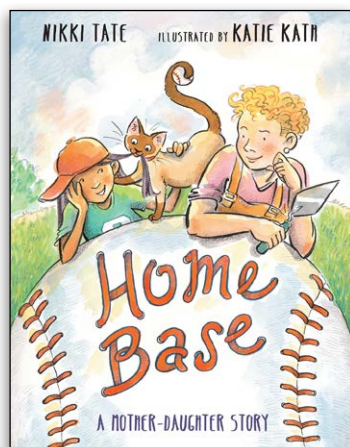
In many ways, the fierce determination, mutual support, and camaraderie that emerge between the mother and daughter in *Home Base* remind me of my relationship with my own daughter. There were many small ways my daughter and I supported each other as she was growing up, and Katie Kath's illustrations captured that idea perfectly.

Finally, bricklayers (and farmers) are physically strong. I used to be a bit embarrassed about my muscly shoulders and arms, but that changed when my athletic daughter embraced her strength and power—first as a gymnast and then as a soccer player. Horseback riding, farming, and rock climbing have made me strong and I wanted to find a way to celebrate the pair's physical strengths and emotional moxie as well as their powerful familial bonds.

Nikki Tate

Author

Home Base



HOME BASE

by Nikki Tate

illustrated by Katie Kath

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