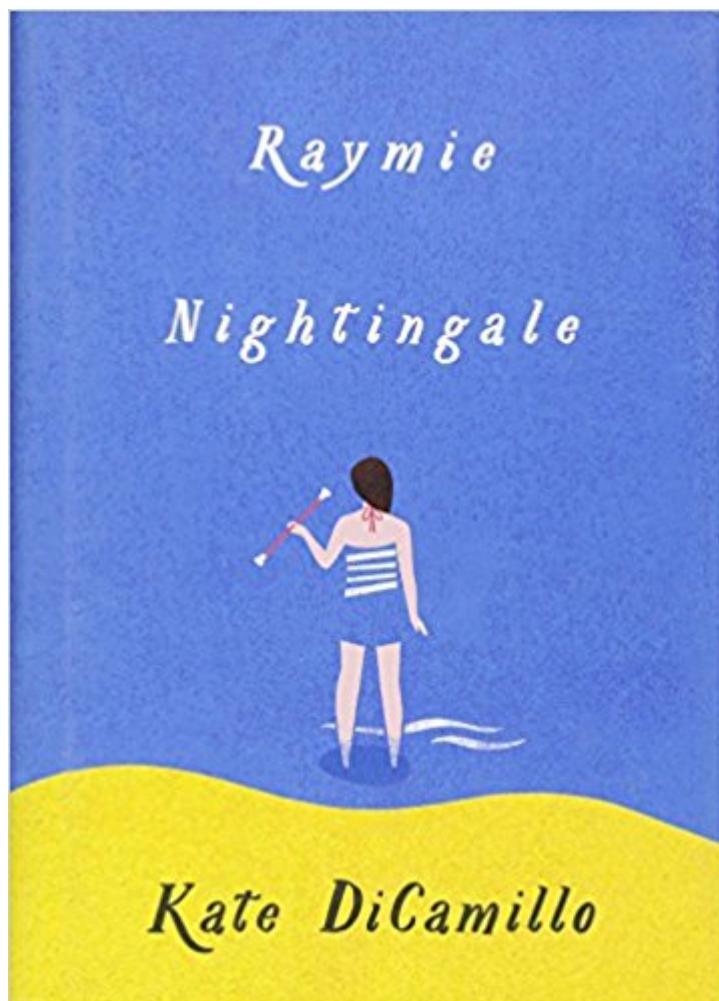


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# Raymie Nightingale



## Synopsis

A 2016 National Book Award Finalist! Two-time Newbery Medalist Kate DiCamillo returns to her roots with a moving, masterful story of an unforgettable summer friendship. Raymie Clarke has come to realize that everything, absolutely everything, depends on her. And she has a plan. If Raymie can win the Little Miss Central Florida Tire competition, then her father, who left town two days ago with a dental hygienist, will see Raymie's picture in the paper and (maybe) come home. To win, not only does Raymie have to do good deeds and learn how to twirl a baton; she also has to contend with the wispy, frequently fainting Louisiana Elefante, who has a show-business background, and the fiery, stubborn Beverly Tapinski, who's determined to sabotage the contest. But as the competition approaches, loneliness, loss, and unanswerable questions draw the three girls into an unlikely friendship and challenge each of them to come to the rescue in unexpected ways.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 140 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #28,791 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #12 in Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Marriage & Divorce #256 in Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction #338 in Children's Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Emotions & Feelings

Age Range: 10 and up

Grade Level: 5 and up

## Customer Reviews

Gr 4-7-Raymie Clarke has a plan. Her father has run off with a dental hygienist without a word, but Raymie is certain that if she wins the Little Miss Central Florida Tire competition, her father will see her picture in the newspaper and return. To this end, she begins baton-twirling classes with two other girls, Louisiana Elefante and Beverly Tapinski. Both girls have their own reasons for entering

the competition: Louisiana needs the prize money, and Beverly wants to sabotage the event. While they never actually learn to twirl, the classes are nevertheless invaluable because of the unlikely friendship the girls form. All three have lost people close to them, and each girl deals with her loss in different ways. With each small adventure, whether it's finding a lost book or rescuing a beloved pet, their friendship grows into an undeniable bond. In short, precisely crafted chapters, DiCamillo once again demonstrates her ability to create unique characters that touch readers' hearts. Raymie, in particular, is observant, thoughtful, and sensitive as she struggles to make sense of the world around her. Her story unfolds in uncomplicated prose, even as the themes explored are complex. Surrounded by the fully realized Louisiana and Beverly, not to mention the adults in her town, Raymie searches for meaning, a search that will resonate with readers. VERDICT Poignant, insightful, and ultimately uplifting.-Amanda Raklovits, Champaign Public Library, IL

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With its short, vibrant chapters and clear, gentle prose, this triumphant and necessary book conjures the enchantments of childhood without shying away from the fraught realities of abandonment, abuse and neglect. Twirling a baton requires flair and confidence, in addition to an understanding that the baton is always balanced just a tiny bit off-center. There is something wonderfully off-balance, too, about DiCamillo's storytelling. It allows her characters to sparkle and soar. DiCamillo has called this novel, based partly on her own fatherless Florida childhood, "the absolutely true story of my heart." What a beautiful and generous heart it is. •The New York Times Book Review As in her previous award-winning books, DiCamillo once again shows that life's underlying sadnesses can also be studded with hope and humor, and does it in a way so true that children will understand it in their bones. And that's why she's Kate the Great. •Booklist (starred review) DiCamillo's third-person narrative is written in simple words, few exceeding three syllables, yet somehow such modest prose carries the weight of deep meditations on life, death, the soul, friendship, and the meaning of life without ever seeming heavy, and there's even a miracle to boot. Readers will approach the tense and dramatic conclusion and realize how much each word matters. Raymie may not find answers to why the world exists or how the world works, but she can hold onto friends and begin to see more clearly the world as it is...Once again, DiCamillo demonstrates the power of simple words in a beautiful and wise tale. •Kirkus Reviews (starred review) With extraordinary skill, two-time Newbery Medalist DiCamillo traces the girls' growing trust in each other

while using understated confessionalism and subtly expressed yearnings to show how tragedies have affected each of them. The book culminates with a daring cat-rescue mission: fraught with adventure, danger, and a miracle or two, the escapade reveals how love and compassion can overcome even the highest hurdles. *• Publishers Weekly* (starred review) The girls don't form an immediate bond, but their initial association of convenience eventually turns into a friendship of understanding and fierce loyalty. After christening the trio the Three Rancheros, Louisiana delivers these prescient words: "We'll rescue each other." And in a beautifully layered set of adventures, they do. The limited third-person narration gives Raymie her distinctive voice and spot-on pre-adolescent perspective of a young girl trying to make sense of the world around her. Here DiCamillo returns triumphantly to her Winn-Dixie roots. *• The Horn Book* (starred review) In short, precisely crafted chapters, DiCamillo once again demonstrates her ability to create unique characters that touch readers' hearts. Raymie, in particular, is observant, thoughtful, and sensitive as she struggles to make sense of the world around her. Her story unfolds in uncomplicated prose, even as the themes explored are complex. Surrounded by the fully realized Louisiana and Beverly, not to mention the adults in her town, Raymie searches for meaning, a search that will resonate with readers. Poignant, insightful, and ultimately uplifting. *• School Library Journal* (starred review) From start to finish, Raymie feels her soul alternately shrinking and expanding like an indecisive balloon as she and her new entourage navigate the waters of friendship and heartbreak, love and loss, life and death. Most of the characters in this fine, funny, meticulously crafted novel live life "wishing for things that are gone," but there's certainly no chance that Raymie's lovely and large soul will ever completely shrivel with a "Phhhhttt." *• Shelf Awareness* (starred review) Although this story is fictional, DiCamillo describes it as the true story of her heart... DiCamillo does a wonderful job of allowing readers into the depths of Raymie's feelings and even into her soul. By the end of the book, readers feel like Raymie, Beverly, and Louisiana are true and lasting friends of their own. It is truly a heart-filled and heartfelt book. *• VOYA* Fans will recognize DiCamillo's unique wry voice as it gives readers vivid images, dizzying ideas, humor, heart-wrenching emotions, and gorgeous, gorgeous language. You all have something to look forward to this April, I promise. *• Huffington Post* DiCamillo writes with her usual easygoing delicacy; the portrayals of the girls are swift, telling, and gentle, with elliptical hints at Beverly's and especially Louisiana's homelife challenges (lack of money clearly limits Louisiana's diet)... While DiCamillo fans will certainly enjoy reading this on their own, it's also excellent classroom material, encouraging kids to stretch their decoding and also to realize that even

if you don't get the outcome you want, it's still possible to find closure. • Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books It's an inspired choice, for surely this coming-of-age story is a fairy tale for our times. The young damsels in distress test their courage and rescue one another; and the book closes not with a conventional "happily ever after" but with a shared vision of the world as vast and yet intimately connected. • Washington Post DiCamillo, who has just ended her tenure as the National Ambassador for Young People's Literature, understands that children can handle the tough stuff in fiction—after all, they have to handle problems like divorce, grief, abuse and poverty in real life. And a book like this can help. As Raymie's neighbor told her before dying, "If you were in a hole that was deep enough and if it was daylight and you looked up at the sky from the very deep hole, you could see stars even though it was the middle of the day." For children looking up from their own deep holes, the Three Rancheros could be those stars. • TIME Magazine Kate DiCamillo seems always to write with an understanding heart and a gentle archness of tone...As the summer progresses, the girls find poignant points of commonality and a surprising comradeship in this wistful, tender, funny novel for readers ages 10 and older. • The Wall Street Journal Raymie Nightingale is filled with humor, poignancy, and life-sized lessons. It is predictably unpredictable: a hallmark of DiCamillo's brilliant writing. • New York Journal of Books Although this book is awash in personal tragedies, it's not a downer. It's tightly written and full of droll lines and, yes I admit it. It's meaningful. But the meaning you cull from this book is going to be different for every single reader. Whip smart and infinitely readable, this is DiCamillo at her best. • A Fuse #8 Production (blog) "Raymie" is fast and fleet • a crystalline ode to childhood friendship that shines as brightly as anything that DiCamillo has written. • Chicago Tribune DiCamillo...wryly captures the adventure and confusion of childhood with a gut-wrenching lack of sentimentality and a razor-sharp wit. • Star Tribune Kate DiCamillo shines once again with her latest somewhat autobiographical children's novel...Their adventures are fraught with conflict and humor, as they try to do good deeds, rescue animals, and even participate in some breaking and entering. Through their zany antics they realize some things are more important than winning a contest, and Raymie discovers happiness and friendship can exist despite unpleasant realities of life. • School Library Connection Kate DiCamillo is the author whose books I anticipate with the most delight. I read them over and over. In simple but elegant prose, with grace and great humor, she writes truthfully about the human experience but always with hope. Raymie Nightingale is beautiful, a celebration of life, as are all her books. • Dean Koontz, bestselling

author Newbery winner DiCamillo at her best. [People](#) "Modest" and "tour de force" don't usually go together, but they perfectly describe this quirky but melancholy coming-of-age novel. [San Francisco Chronicle](#) "Raymie Nightingale" is striking for its portrait of 10-year-old Raymie Clarke, who hopes to win the contest and push her father, who has abandoned the family, to come home. [Orlando Sentinel](#) While Raymie Nightingale is written for a middle-grade audience, it is a moving novel that can be enjoyed by readers of all ages. [Providence Journal](#) It is an expertly layered and beautifully crafted story with not a wasted word or moment. The characters are living, breathing humans in whose struggles the reader becomes invested. And it's a novel that shimmers with hope at its close, even if that absent father never actually pulls through. [Kirkus Reviews \(blog\)](#) Readers will once again be treated with a novel that is rich and important on multiple levels by the exceptional writer Kate DiCamillo. [Books to Borrow...Books to Buy \(Kendal A. Rautzhan column\)](#) Everyone should read Raymie Nightingale by Kate DiCamillo. It's a classic tale of friendship, which we can all relate to. [On Our Minds \(Scholastic blog\)](#) DiCamillo's original, loveable characters bring with them a hint of magic and an abundance of humanity and humor. [News-Gazette](#) Two-time Newbery Award-winning author Kate DiCamillo has crafted a unique and deeply appealing character in Raymie, and young readers will love watching her finally find a degree of peace. [A Mighty Girl \(blog\)](#) Kate DiCamillo featured promoting summer reading. [Panorama Magazine](#)

I really enjoyed this book. I was not too much older than these three girls in 1975. It took me on a memorable journey and caused me to reminisce on my childhood. Growing up in the south and wanting to be a baton twirler. I loved the characters in this book so much - the positivity of Louisiana, the gruff exterior of Beverly although all she needed was a friend, and the little girl Raymie Nightingale who found that she can handle life going on and that she can be a big part of it. Totally loved this book! Another one by my all time favorite author.

You know when you've been waiting for a book so long, you worry if it can possibly meet your expectations. Well, this gem sure did! Kate DiCamillo has a way of breathing life into characters that makes you want to wrap your arms around them. In this story we meet 3 girls with complicated lives who find that together they can face their worst fears. As "the Rancheros" they help each other in their quests to win back what they've lost. You will want to read this book! And you will probably want to read it again!

I LOVED The Tales of Despereaux and Because of Winn Dixie, so I expected this book to be as captivating, and with the similar state of action. Boy was I wrong. I felt like this was the worst possible way to get me captivated, and Raymie, the main character had no distinct personality whatsoever. She didn't even have a personality at all, to be honest. It felt like Raymie was droning on through her life. There was no sense of despair throughout the book even though it revolved around getting her dad back from leaving her, but you couldn't even see the sadness through how dull the character development was. Maybe that was what DiCamillo intended; a character who droned on because she couldn't come to terms with what had happened to her parents. But of course the two side characters were about as dull. They had their own personality, but it seemed to fall away with the boring plot and adventures which failed to get me even the least bit excited to read the rest. I don't personally like the book, although I know many others did, so maybe I missed the point.. All I know is that the characters, in my opinion, were terribly developed, and even with this too fast development which left gaping holes in the plot, the book was very slow. Maybe I am a bit biased since I don't typically read books which are in the third person point of view, but I have still read amazing books in the third person. I also feel that this book was lower than my reading level, so maybe if I were younger the book would be able to draw me in, but the simple sentencing just didn't do it for me. For all that were wondering I am in middle school, although I read YA/Adult novels, so this might have also changed my opinion.

I love this writer, but was disappointed in this book. The quirky characters were a little too quirky and some of the plotting seems haphazard. I'm a huge fan of Because of Winn Dixie and so are my students. Rayme will definitely be on my classroom shelf this fall, but I won't do it as a read aloud, mostly because selfishly, I don't really want to read it again.

beautiful story that begins with a confusing marital issue for a young girl. reading this with my 10 year old and she loves the characters and all the people they come across, and likes how these three girls come together to make things happen.

Kate DiCamillo is a very talented author, so it was no surprise when this book was hard to put down. Three girls in the summer of 1975, become friends due to each one of them having the desire to be a part of the same pageant in some way. All three have different backgrounds with a similar sense of loss. This book is an adventure of friendship, love, loss, sadness , happiness, life's lessons, life's

questions, and much more. It was an excellent book, and I highly recommend it!!!!

Kate DiCamillo continues to show her diversity with her writing. This characters in this 70's tale ring true as children of the era who weren't as closely monitored and scheduled as are many modern children. Left to their own devices, the three girls have their own adventures as they develop friendships and experience several hard realities of adulthood. Once again, Ms. DiCamillo show readers how to negotiate a difficult world while learning to improve it.

Kate DiCamillo earned her honor as one of America's top writers for middle school readers with this book. It is a departure from her typical writing but definitely a high interest book. Have you ever wished for the return of a relative that you would do anything to gain their attention. Follow these three girls on their adventure as they grow closer and develop a greater understanding of what it means to be a supportive friend.

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