

The Tale of Desperaux

By Author, Kate DiCamillo

Reviewed by: Jake 16

Star Teen Book Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity

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A series of interconnected stories, *The Tale Of Desperaux* speaks of a peculiar mouse called Desperaux, uninterested in doing the typical things mice do. One day, while following the sound of music, he meets the beautiful Princess Pea and immediately falls in love with her. But by doing so, he breaks the rules mice have in place against interacting with humans and speaking to them. What follows is his journey to not only escape the dungeon, but to go back down and rescue the beautiful Princess Pea from a rat called Roscuro and his accomplice, a serving girl called Miggery Sow. Separated into different parts, with each part focusing on a different character, these parts ultimately intertwine as each character learns a valuable lesson from the others.

The best part for me was how many of the characters rebel against expectations set in place for them. Desperaux is uninterested in searching for crumbs or chewing on book glue and manages to save a princess. Roscuro's obsession with the light is responsible for him kidnapping Princess Pea, but is also the reason for his remorse. I also enjoyed the theme of forgiveness, as Desperaux forgives his father for his part in sentencing him to the dungeons, and Princess Pea forgives Roscuro for his part in her mother's death. The author makes it clear that both of them forgave these people largely to heal their own hearts. Furthermore, the death of the queen plays a large part in the story, and it is important to see the impacts that grief has on people.

While the story does end on a happy note, there are brief mentions of death, tails being cut off, and a child being sold. I think that the book is ultimately an uplifting one, and perhaps best suited for children ages eight and up. This would make a great gift for someone, and would be best suited for people interested in animals and adventures.

Recommended Titles:

Because of Winn Dixie – Kate DiCamillo

Tiger Rising – Kate DiCamillo

Mrs. Frisby & The Rats of NIMH – Robert C. O'Brien

The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane – Kate DiCamillo