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Raymie Nightingale

Rachel Wadham

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Book Review

Title: Raymie Nightingale
Author: Kate DiCamillo
Reviewer: Rachel Wadham
Publisher: Candlewick Press
Publication Year: 2016
ISBN: 9780763681173
Number of Pages: 263
Interest Level: Primary, Intermediate
Rating: Outstanding



Review

Raymie knows she can make her father come back if only he can see her picture in the newspaper. To accomplish her goal, she is determined to become Little Miss Central Florida Tire 1975. But before she can do that she has to learn to twirl a baton. At her first class Raymie meets Louisiana, an orphan with a unique sense of reality, and Beverly, the rebellious daughter of a beauty queen. Ever since her father left Raymie knows she has lost the spark that inflates her soul, but as she gets to know her new friends Raymie sees glimmers of hope and happiness. Moments that then lead up to that one spectacular minute when Raymie is able to save Louisiana and everything finally and truly makes sense.

Newbery medalist DiCamillo, offers a beautifully thoughtful portrayal of a young girl's journey to a new normal after her life is split apart. This is far from a hard-hitting problem novel, yet it deals with real issues like homelessness, abandonment, and grief in a beautifully simple way. A small touch of the old-fashioned that certainly comes from the 1970s setting just adds a lovely sense of reflection and nostalgia to the story. The three girl's distinct personalities all weave seamlessly into the perfectly paced plot. Punctuated with moments of humor, Raymie's thoughtful reflections are right in line with her character and her emotional growth is realistically developed. A beautifully crafted book that is perfect for readers of all ages to share.