

# KATE KLISE

on writing

THREE-RING RASCALS, BOOK 3

# THE CIRCUS GOES TO SEA

In this third installment of the Three-Ring Rascals series, I wanted to explore the idea of change. Like a lot of people, change is hard for me. I wish I could blame it on age, but I've always been stubborn. Even as a kid I was stubborn. I think most of us are. It's so easy to fall into the habit of doing and thinking the same thing, day after day, week after week.

So I wanted to shake things up in this book and see if I could shine a light on what real change looks like. I wanted to see what it would take for a comically selfish character like Barnabas Brambles to become a more lovable man. I wanted to find out what would happen when circus animals who insist they can't swim are given swimming lessons. And I wanted to see if there was anything that would make Bert, the sassy little circus mouse who thinks he hates poetry, feel compelled to write and recite a poem for a guy he thought he loathed. Every character in this story is given the opportunity to change his or her mind or behavior when the circus goes to sea.

I also took the opportunity in this third book to introduce a few new characters, including Flora Endora Eliza LaBuena LaPasta. Sarah and I have two nieces, Flora and Eliza, who we combined to form one plucky nine-year-



Dawn Shields

KATE KLISE is the author of *Three-Ring Rascals #1: The Show Must Go On!*, *Three-Ring Rascals #2: The Greatest Star on Earth*, and *Three-Ring Rascals #3: The Circus Goes to Sea*, as well as numerous other middle-grade and picture books illustrated by her sister, M. Sarah Klise. Their recent series, *43 Old Cemetery Road*, has been nominated for reading awards in nearly twenty states and is a Junior Library Guild selection.

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old girl. She's heard that Barnabas Brambles is the meanest man alive, so she goes out of her way not to invite him aboard the SS Spaghetti. I was as surprised as Flora's mother, Captain LaPasta, when I found myself falling a bit in love with Barnabas Brambles near the end of this book.

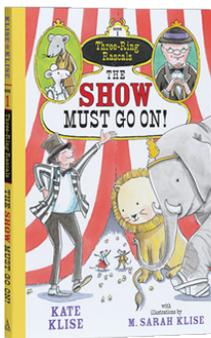
I know it sometimes takes a trip to shake me out of my old habits and opinions. Luckily, I can experience the same thing by reading a good book. I hope this book has the same effect on young readers, whether they read it at home, in school, or maybe even at sea. And if this story helps anyone, including me, begin the journey of becoming more open-minded about ourselves or others, well, full steam ahead to that.

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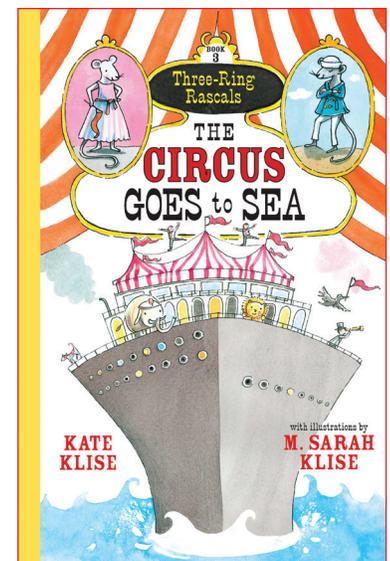
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