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Tiger Heart

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NewsChoice:

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Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

This is a magical story set in a less than magical version of Victorian London. Fly is a young girl, abandoned at birth and then taken to work for a chimney sweep, climbing up and down the chimneys all day. One day she makes a bid for freedom and quite literally finds herself trapped in a cage with a rather large tiger. The strangest thing is that this creature begins to talk to her and she can understand him, but most oddly of all the tiger insists on calling her 'princess' and says that she comes from the same land as himself. They escape from the house they are in but find themselves hunted by the man responsible for bringing the tiger and other animals to this country. How they save themselves and many others as well as retrieving a valuable lost ruby makes for an exciting and mysterious story, with just a bit of magic, because after all tigers do not normally speak.

The author has created a fantastical tale much of which could have happened, but some of which is pure imagination. The descriptions of London and in particular the 'mud larks' who scavenge the shores of the river Thames really bring home the reality of Victorian London for those who were living in abject poverty. This is a story about friendship, knowing yourself and trying to understand the world around you. It is a lesson in not letting physical possessions become the most important thing in life, but in knowing that people are what make the world a better place to live in. It is a tremendous adventure story that does not flinch from showing the bad as well as the good; so people die and others are saved. There is cruelty and also great kindness and Fly learns who she is as a character as well as who her parents are. It is a great read and I am sure we will hear more from this author.

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