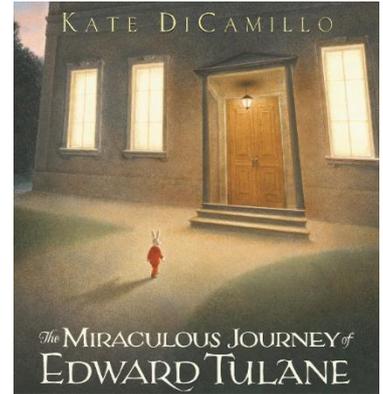


The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane



Once, in a house on Egypt Street, there lived a rabbit who was made almost **entirely** of china. He had china arms and china legs, china paws and china head, a china torso and a china nose. His arms and legs were jointed and joined by wire so that his china elbows and china knees could be bent, giving him much freedom of movement.

His ears were made of real rabbit fur, and beneath the fur, there were strong, bendable wires, which allowed the ears to be arranged into poses that reflected the rabbit's mood - **jaunty**, tired, full of ennui. His tail, too, was made of real rabbit fur and was fluffy and soft and well shaped.

The rabbit's name was Edward Tulane, and he was tall. He measured almost three feet from the tip of his ears to the tip of his toes; his eyes were painted a **penetrating** and intelligent blue.

In all, Edward Tulane felt himself to be an **exceptional** specimen. Only his whiskers gave him pause. They were long and **elegant** (as they should be), but they were of uncertain **origin**. Edward felt quiet strongly that they were not the whiskers of a rabbit. Whom the whiskers had belonged to initially - what unsavoury animal - was a question that Edward could not bear to consider for too long. And so he did not. He preferred, as a rule, not to think unpleasant thoughts.

Edward's **mistress** was a ten-year-old, dark haired girl named Abilene Tulane, who thought almost as highly of Edward as Edward thought of

himself. Each morning after she dressed herself for school, Abilene dressed Edward.

The china rabbit was in possession of an extraordinary wardrobe composed of handmade silks suits, custom shoes fashioned from the finest leather and designed specifically for his rabbit feet, and a wide array of hats equipped with holes so that they could easily fit over Edward's large and expressive ears. Each pair of well-cut trousers had a small pocket for Edward's gold pocket watch. Abilene wound this watch for him each morning.

"Now, Edward," she said to him after she had finished winding the watch, "when the big hand is on the twelve and the little hand is on the three, I will come home to you."

She placed Edward on a chair in the dining room and positioned the chair so that Edward was looking out of the window could see the path that led up to the Tulane front door. Abilene balanced the watch on his left leg. She kissed the tips of his ears, and then she left and Edward spent the day staring out at Egypt Street, listening to the tick of his watch and waiting.

Of all the seasons of the year, the rabbit most preferred winter, for the sun set early then and the dining-room windows became dark and Edward could see his own reflection in the glass. And what a reflection it was! What an elegant figure he cut! Edward never ceased to be amazed at his own fineness.