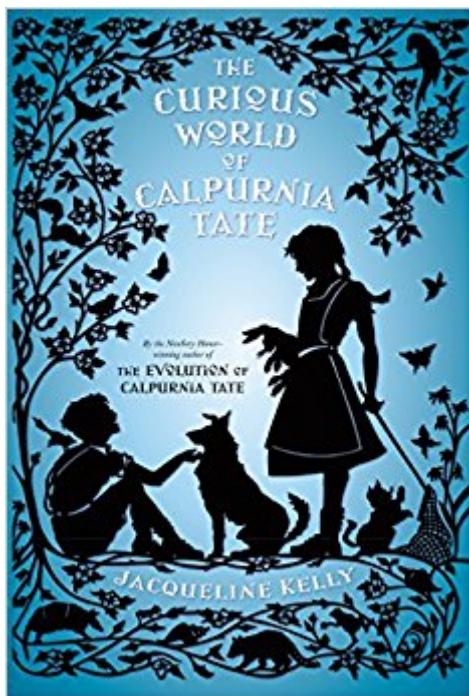


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# The Curious World Of Calpurnia Tate



## Synopsis

Callie Vee, Travis, Granddaddy, and the whole Tate clan are back in this charming follow-up to Newbery Honor-winner *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate*. Travis keeps bringing home strays. And Callie has her hands full keeping the wild animals—her brother included—away from her mother's critical eye. Whether it's wrangling a rogue armadillo or stray dog, a guileless younger brother or standoffish cousin, the trials and tribulations of Callie Vee will have readers laughing and crying and cheering for this most endearing heroine. In this enchanting middle-grade novel, *The Curious World of Calpurnia Tate* by Jacqueline Kelly, readers will fall deeper in love with our heroine Callie Vee, as she continues her journey to learn more about the world around her and to deal with her wild family. “The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate is the most delightful historical novel for tweens in many, many years.” The New Yorker, “Book Bench” section “In her debut novel, Jacqueline Kelly brings to vivid life a boisterous small-town family at the dawn of a new century. And she especially shines in her depiction of the natural world that so intrigues Callie.” The Washington Post on *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate* Don’t miss any of Callie’s middle-grade adventures: *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate* *The Curious World of Calpurnia Tate* *The Calpurnia Tate, Girl Vet* chapter book series: *Skunked!* *Counting Sheep*

## Book Information

Series: *Calpurnia Tate* (Book 2)

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Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 4 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Gr 4-6 •Calpurnia is turning 13 and realizing that she receives half as much allowance and education as her brothers, and her parents don't expect her to become anything other than a housewife. But Calpurnia's love of science and all things related to the natural world leave her yearning for a different future. An older female cousin who lands in their household following the devastating Galveston hurricane of 1900 unexpectedly helps Calpurnia begin to glimpse new possibilities for herself. Further, Calpurnia's escapades with the new vet, Dr. Pritzker, give her some direction as well as a way to earn money. Narrator Natalie Ross is magnificent, perfectly capturing the tone of the young Calpurnia, her family, and the secondary characters. Each has their own recognizable voice, making the narrative easy to follow as well as entertaining. The pacing is just right throughout, with pauses and changes in tempo in all the right moments.

VERDICT Full of the ups and downs of growing up, this work will appeal to fans of *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate* (Holt, 2009), as well as listeners who just love a good, character-driven story.

[ "Recommended for fans of the original novel and strong readers who enjoy character-driven narratives": SLJ 3/1/15 starred review of the Holt book.] •Deanna Romriell, Salt Lake City Public Library, UT --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

• "The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate is the most delightful historical novel for tweens in many, many years. Callie's struggles to find a place in the world where she'll be encouraged in the gawky joys of intellectual curiosity are fresh, funny, and poignant today." • The New Yorker, "Book Bench" section • "In her debut novel, Jacqueline Kelly brings to vivid life a boisterous small-town family at the dawn of a new century. And she especially shines in her depiction of the natural world that so intrigues Callie . . . Readers will want to crank up the A.C. before cracking the cover, though. That first chapter packs a lot of summer heat." • The Washington Post on *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate* • "Each chapter of this winning . . . novel opens with a quotation from 'On the Origin of Species'--a forbidden book that her own grandfather turns out to have hidden away. Together they study Darwin's masterpiece, leading to a revolution in Callie's ideas of what she might accomplish on her own." • New York Times Book Review on *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate* • "Animal lovers will revel in the abundant anecdotes about the benevolent country vet and Travis' mangy strays--some heart-wrenching, some hilarious--while learning plenty about nature ("from pond water up to the stars"), the deadly 1900 Galveston hurricane, and early Texas history as recounted by Callie's scholarly and beloved Granddaddy. A warm, welcome stand-alone companion to Kelly's

lauded debut. *Booklist*, starred review, said "Well worth waiting for . . . Readers will flock to this sequel for the pleasure of revisiting this beloved character and her world. *Booklist*, starred review, said "Humor and little heartbreaks abound as Callie learns animal care under the tutelage of Dr. Pritzker, the town's veterinarian. . . . Recommended for fans of the original novel and strong readers who enjoy character-driven narratives. *School Library Journal*, starred review, said "Six years after debuting in Kelly's Newbery Honor-winning *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate*, the budding Texas scientist returns, as curious and charming as ever, and now preoccupied with fauna instead of flora . . . Happily, the episodic narrative leaves the door wide open for further adventures if we're lucky. *Publishers Weekly*, starred review, said "Callie's transformation into an adult and her unexpected bravery make for an exciting and enjoyable read. Kelly's rich images and setting, believable relationships and a touch of magic take this story far." *Publishers Weekly*, starred review, on *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate*, said "Interwoven with the scientific theme are threads of daily life in a large family—the bonds with siblings, the conversations overheard, the unspoken understandings and misunderstandings—told with wry humor and a sharp eye for details that bring the characters and the setting to life. The eye-catching jacket art, which silhouettes Callie and images from nature against a yellow background, is true to the period and the story. Many readers will hope for a sequel to this engaging, satisfying first novel. *Booklist*, starred review, on *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate*, said "Readers will finish this witty, deftly crafted debut novel rooting for "Callie Vee" and wishing they knew what kind of adult she would become. *Kirkus*, starred review, on *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate*, said "Narrator Calpurnia's voice is fresh and convincing, and Granddaddy is that favorite relative most readers would love to claim as their own. Historical fiction fans are in for a treat. *Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books* on *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate*, said "Kelly, without anachronism, has created a memorable, warm, spirited young woman who's refreshingly ahead of her time. *The Horn Book Review* on *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate*, said "A charming and inventive story of a child struggling to find her identity at the turn of the 20th century... there's no uncertainty over the achievement of Kelly's debut novel. *School Library Journal*, starred review, on *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate*

There are books that you can't put down, books with chapters that end with one cliffhanger after another, books with such a swiftly moving plot, you find yourself holding your breath. And then there

are books that you can't put down because you have fallen in love with the main character. The main character is so endearing that you would read a chapter of them simply brushing their hair or watching the clouds."The Curious World of Calpurnia Tate," is an example of the latter. Calpurnia Tate, first introduced in "The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate," is an Anne (with an "e") Shirley type of girl, passionate (in this case about science and the natural world) and struggling mightily to find a place for herself in a society (1900s Texas) that has no place for women who might, for example, want to go to college one day to be a doctor or a scientist.Calpurnia's struggles with her family over this issue are heartbreakingly real. Frequently, I found myself shaking the book because that's what I wanted to do to Calpurnia's mother and father.Fortunately, Calpurnia has the support of her grandfather and the friendship of her younger brother to get her through the day.The plot of this book, which centers around the changes in Calpurnia's life following the infamous Galveston hurricane, is secondary to Calpurnia's continued personal growth.

The Curious World of Calpurnia Tate is the sequel to the Newbery Honor book, The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate. The book follows Callie's nature studies with Grandaddy, her mundane daily lessons of cookery, knitting, sewing, and other womanly tasks, not to mention schoolwork. But now Callie has something new in her life, her younger brother Travis wanting to adopt every animal he sees. After an unsuccessful try with an armadillo, and two birds, Travis finally settles on a dog/ coyote. Callie is sure that the coydog won't be allowed at home, so Travis feeds it every afternoon on the way home from school. Callie also has, as a result of the Galveston Flood, a snobbish seventeen year old cousin bombarding her room, plus a vet. to learn from. Continue your journey with Callie as she turns from twelve to thirteen, and uncover yet more stories in her life.

As Calpurnia Virginia Tate (Callie Vee to family and friends) continues to struggle against the inexorable customs of turn-of-the-previous century Texas, where girls are brought up to be good housewives and mothers, while her only interest is to grow up and study the sciences like her aristocratic Grandfather has done, she finds a curious ally in her younger brother Travis, who is a friend to all animals great and small, from the armadillo he drags home in the first chapters of the book to the young half-coyote dog Callie helps him hide from disapproving parents. Callie is also expecting great things from the new year 1900, but all it appears to bring her is an unhappy cousin who was flooded out of her home when the savage hurricane hit Galveston.This sequel to THE EVOLUTION OF CALPURNUA TATE is a bit more episodic than the original, but still holds some

surprises and truths for Callie Vee, who eventually gets to help the new veterinarian in town and who finally declares her intention to go to college somehow, even if it's not in the "game plan" of a young woman of the early 20th century. Perhaps the most frustrating thing about this book is living with Callie's inequality of being female, which is hurtfully illustrated in a chapter about money given to her for Christmas—*you simply want to go and give her father a piece of your mind*, but it was common thinking in those days about girl children. Callie's continued friendship with her grandfather is muted a bit this time as she attempts to help sensitive Travis navigate his life's shoals, but she is still the same likeable, determined character she was in her first outing, and her further adventures are a joy to read. I love her because she is not a depressing girlie character obsessed with clothes and shoes and looking pretty. I hope in the future to spend more time with Miss Calpurnia Tate.

I enjoyed this story, I really did, but after reading it, I started to think about it. As I do, I realized it simply wasn't as good as the first story. It felt rushed, with big, unnecessary jumps in time, leaving us wondering what happened during this period. Also, this girl is twelve turning thirteen during this story, soon to be fourteen and has an amazing inquisitive and curious voice, yet there is no mention of one of the biggest events in a young girl's life? Nor an acknowledgement of this same event occurring in her friends? I realize puberty does come later sometimes, but first period, and growing breasts is something you would expect at least a comment on, particularly as her brothers seem to notice her friend's development, even if she doesn't. Overall, a fun enjoyable read, though not quite hitting the high bar from the earlier book.

In this second installment of the adventures of Calpurnia Tate, we find Callie Vee on the cusp of a new century and with much on her mind. She still loves science and scientific inquiry and is the stalwart companion of her grandfather, a man her brothers and most others in town fear and respect. Callie also spends a great deal of time trying to keep her younger brother out of trouble. Her brother has a fondness for rescuing animals, no matter how much her mother fusses and gives him the evil eye. This leads to all kinds of trouble from building an armadillo habitat to a funeral for a hapless bird, but when her brother befriends the scourge of the territory, Callie ends up discovering a new avenue of interest...and perhaps a career. Callie must battle many expectations and "rules of etiquette" for young women at the turn of the 20th century, but she does it with a gentle strength that keeps the reader cheering for her and hoping she will achieve her dreams. Another excellent adventure for Callie and for her fans. Recommended for grades 5 and up, adored by this school librarian.

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