

A Conversation with the Author



Q: *The experience of attempting to calm a crying baby is universal and timeless. What made you want to examine this parental experience in a picture book format?*

Kara LaReau: My son had colic when he was a newborn, so he basically cried nonstop for the first three months. Often my way of dealing with adversity is to try

to find humor in it. I like to say *Baby Clown* was my way of turning those colicky lemons into lemonade!

Q: *Why did you decide to tell the story about a clown family versus a dog family or a cat family or a human family (though I suppose clowns are humans, too)?*

Kara LaReau: There are plenty of picture books out there featuring cute animal families and conventional human families. I suppose making my characters clowns came from the subversive in me. Setting it in a circus felt right; parenting can feel a *lot* like a circus, even on a good day!

Q: *At the end of the book (spoiler alert!), Baby Clown stops crying at the sound of applause. Is applause as an antidote to crying specific to Baby Clown, or did you draw from personal experience here?*

Kara LaReau: It felt true to the nature of the character of Baby Clown, who was born into such a performative environment, to respond positively to applause. In real life, nothing we said or did helped when it came to our baby's colicky cries. One day, inexplicably, he just stopped on his own.

Q: *Any words of wisdom to new parents like Frieda and Boffo Clown?*

Kara LaReau: Invest in earplugs! (Just kidding.) (Not really.) And no matter what happens, you'll get through it. One day, you'll be able to laugh (and maybe even write) about it.



MARKETING PLAN

- Online consumer advertising
- Trade, school, and library advertising
- Trade announcement advertising
- National publicity campaign
 - Book trailer
 - Social media campaign
- Featured title in *Candlewick CIRC* e-newsletter
- Select author and illustrator appearances



CANDLEWICK PRESS
www.candlewick.com

Illustrations copyright © 2020 by Matthew Cordell