

From the celebrated creator of the modern holiday favorite *Red and Lulu* comes the story of a brave little doe who meets Santa and changes Christmas forever.

DASHER

MATT TAVARES



Dasher is an adventurous young reindeer with a wish in her heart. She spends her days with her family under the hot sun in a traveling circus, but she longs for a different life — one where there is snow beneath her hooves and the North Star above her head. One day, when the opportunity arises, Dasher seizes her destiny and takes off in pursuit of the life she wants to live. It's not long before she meets a nice man in a red suit with a horse-drawn sleigh — a man named Santa.

And soon, with the help of a powerful Christmas wish, nothing will be the same.

Dasher: How a Brave Little Doe Changed Christmas Forever

On sale September 10, 2019 • HC: 978-1-5362-0137-6 • \$17.99 (\$22.99 CAN) • Ages 4–8 • 40 pages

A Note from Matt Tavares

The question that led to *Dasher* was: How did Santa's team of reindeer become Santa's team of reindeer? These animals are world famous, yet somehow I had never heard a story that explained how they were chosen for this important job. I wanted to tell that story.

So I did a little research. I found centuries-old images of St. Nicholas delivering presents with the assistance of a flying horse. I wondered what might have led him to change from a single horse to a team of eight reindeer.

At first, I was stumped. Then, one chilly day in January 2017, during a ten-minute drive home from my daughter's basketball game, the idea for *Dasher* appeared, almost fully formed (it doesn't usually happen this way!).

I pictured a family of reindeer crammed together under the hot sun, part of an early nineteenth-century traveling menagerie of exotic animals. I imagined Mama Reindeer telling her children about the North Pole, where she and Papa had once lived happily under the glow of the North Star. And I pictured Dasher, the youngest reindeer, gazing up at the North Star, longing for crisp, cold air and cool blankets of white snow.

When I got home, I wrote it all down as fast as I could, and three days later, the first draft of *Dasher* was done. Two years have passed since that day, and I am excited to finally share this story with young readers.

My greatest wish for this book is that from now on, when children wonder how Santa's team of reindeer became Santa's team of reindeer, they will remember Dasher, the brave young doe with a wish in her heart who followed her star and changed Christmas forever.



Photo by Carter Hasegawa

Matt Tavares is the author-illustrator of *Crossing Niagara*, *Henry Aaron's Dream*, *There Goes Ted Williams*, *Becoming Babe Ruth*, and *Growing Up Pedro*, as well as *Zachary's Ball*, *Oliver's Game*, and *Mudball*. He is the illustrator of *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*, *Over the River and Through the Wood*, *Lady Liberty* by Doreen Rappaport, *The Gingerbread Pirates* by Kristin Kladstrup, and *Jubilee!* by Alicia Potter. Most recently he wrote and illustrated the modern Christmas tale *Red and Lulu*. Matt Tavares lives in Ogunquit, Maine.



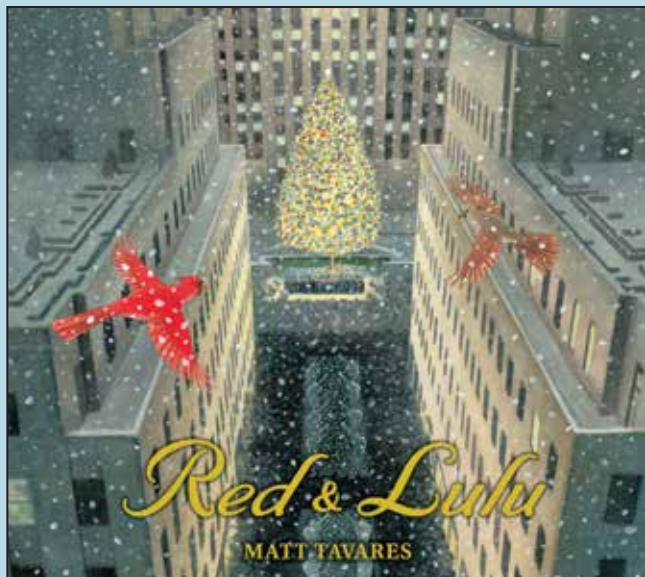
ANNOUNCED FIRST PRINT RUN 150,000

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More Holiday Magic from Matt Tavares



Red and Lulu

HC: 978-0-7636-7733-6

\$17.99 (\$23.99 CAN)

Ages 3–7 • 40 pages

★ “Tavares captures Red’s frantic search for Lulu, following the truck to New York City. . . . The birds’ reunion is poignant and well earned, and their decision to stay in the city after the holidays poignantly shows how seeming misfortune can lead to unexpected and rewarding opportunities.”

— *Publishers Weekly* (starred review)

“Tavares lets the holiday note waft lightly, bringing equal cheer to the celebration of pair-bonding and New York City.”

— *The New York Times Book Review*

“A joyful and affecting picture book.” — *The Wall Street Journal*

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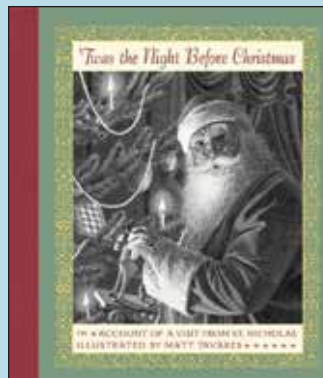
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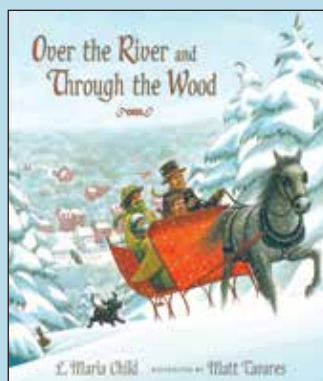
'Twas the Night Before Christmas: Or Account of a Visit from St. Nicholas

HC: 978-0-7636-3118-5

\$8.99 (\$11.99 CAN)

All ages • 32 pages

“Taking the original 1823 poem published anonymously in New York’s *Troy Sentinel* newspaper, Tavares breathes fresh life into it with his stunning pen-and-ink drawings. Reminiscent of Victorian Christmas cards.” — *USA Today*



Over the River and Through the Wood: The New England Boy's Song About Thanksgiving Day

by L. Maria Child

HC: 978-0-7636-2790-4

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Ages 3–7 • 32 pages

“Tavares crafts a polished tribute to another holiday classic. . . . [He] brings life to this countryside jaunt with light doses of humor and action.” — *Publishers Weekly*



The Gingerbread Pirates

by Kristin Kladstrup

HC: 978-0-7636-3223-6

Also available as an e-book

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“Captain Cookie’s quest to rescue his crew from their cookie-jar imprisonment is not without peril, and humorous obstacles abound. . . . Tavares’s vivid watercolor and gouache paintings dramatize Kladstrup’s lively text with vigor in this imaginative adventure story.” — *The Horn Book*