

A personal note from
K A D I R N E L S O N
author and illustrator of
B A B Y B E A R

The path that led me to write and illustrate *Baby Bear* is a long and winding one that began in my earliest childhood and took an unexpected turn on a trip up the Nile River. Like many of us, I was raised with a strong religious and spiritual upbringing. I've always been grateful to my parents for this foundation, but as a young adult, I struggled to define my own spiritual path. Along the way, I would discover and contemplate various belief systems and faiths from around the world, and I found that on a deep level each shared something very beautiful and very powerful.

As fate would have it, in 2012 at the age of thirty-seven, my search led me all the way to Egypt, where thousands of years ago the story of finding one's true spiritual self was illustrated on the great temple walls. It was there that I learned that at the center of all spiritual faiths is one idea—love—and the journey one takes through the human heart to embrace it. It is an idea that is as old as humankind, and is as true today as it was then.

For me, the simple story of lost Baby Bear reflects the story of so many of us. We each have our own spiritual path to walk, and although the path may be dark and confusing at times, I trust that we are always lovingly guided along the way as we work to find our way home. *Baby Bear* is a sweet reminder that with a little faith and a little help we may all bravely walk the path to love.

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