



Back on the Map

Lisa Ann Scott

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With their mother long dead and their father unknown, eleven-year-old Penny Porter and her twin brother Parker have been bouncing around foster homes for as long as they can remember. Inspired by the historical figures in her favorite book, Penny likes to imagine who she could be related to. Sacagawea? Her genes would be good ones to have. Or maybe Ghandi, or Harriet Tubman. There are endless possibilities!

But while Penny embraces the question marks in her family tree, she and Porter are both ready for a real home. Living with their aging, ornery Grauntie isn't easy, but it's better than other places they've been, and they don't want to get moved again—or worse, split up. Penny believes the key to keeping them from being bounced to another new home is getting their town of New Hope, North Carolina back on the state map. And what better way to do that than to spruce up and sell New Hope's Finest—an old orphanage that was supposed to reopen years ago as the best attraction ever, but never did.

She's got the creativity and the gumption to do it. And maybe knowing who you are doesn't matter so much as knowing what you can do. But will that be enough to finally keep her and Parker in one place for good?

Back on the Map Details

Date :

ISBN :

Author : Lisa Ann Scott

Format :

Genre : Childrens, Middle Grade, Realistic Fiction

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From Reader Review Back on the Map for online ebook

Beth says

Lisa Ann Scott writes that ‘everything you make carries a little bit of you with it’—and I know that a little bit of her wonderful novel, *Back on the Map*, will stay with me forever. From the first page, Penny and Parker Porter will find a place in every reader's heart. Packed with Southern charm, lush characters, and spun with a fresh voice, this delightful story shows that with grit, creativity, and hope, every day can be magical. This book is a gift to read.

Gwen A. says

I love all types of books, no matter what category the novel is placed in or what ages the book may be appropriate. I loved reading this book; I'm not quite a senior citizen, but this novel that is written for a much younger audience has broad appeal to many readers.

I love the characters. I loved their insecurities, the paradoxes within themselves, with each other until they relate to the town itself.

I can imagine one person would walk away after reading this novel and not think about how they would do just even a little thing differently, because you saw it differently through someone else's eyes or something inspired you that aired she is transferable to drive a community together and that's what this book accomplished.

This character driven story leads the way in the way that the spirit of creativity love learning peacefulness and rejuvenation all come together so we realize that were a part of something, and a part of something wonderful.

Bibi Belford says

My favorite theme in books is hope. I'm a glass half full person. So *Back on the Map* resonated with me. Everyone can make the little corner where they are a better place and that's just what Penny Parker does. On the surface she's a plucky little girl with a creative spark to better her little corner, but the title doesn't do the book justice. Although Penny's mission is to put the town on the map, her reasons are more deep seated, and truly finding the missing limbs for her family tree are at the root of her project. Throughout the book are references to important people in history and also themes of restoration, compassion, forgiveness, and resilience.

Billie says

With their mother gone, twins Penny and Parker are desperate to stay together. Penny sets her sights on a

perfect place, New Hope, North Carolina. There is a problem as New Hope is not on the state map. Penny imagines that she is related to famous people in history, since she really doesn't know her family. This is a sweet heart-warming story that is suitable for both children and adults. I received a copy of this book from Goodreads Giveaways for a review.

Christine says

Lisa Ann Scott, author of *SCHOOL OF CHARM*, has charmed this reader once again in *BACK ON THE MAP* with quirky, unforgettable characters. Mixed-race twins Penny and Parker display unique talents and gifts that will make any reader identify with what it means to be different. Orphaned, Penny travels on a personal journey to discover who she is and where she belongs. *BACK ON THE MAP* is a heart-warming tale of loss and making your own place in the world.

Ms. Yingling says

E ARC from Edelweiss Above the Treeline

When Penny Porter's mother passed away, she left a letter telling Penny to watch out for her twin brother Parker, and to make the best of her situation. Currently, the twins are living with Grauntie in New Hope, which is a town on the skids. Ever since the local orphanage was shut down and bids to sell the building as "the Finest" fell through, the town has decreased in population as opportunities there have dried up. That was the early 1970s-- a dozen years later, New Hope is no longer on the map. As Grauntie's mental state diminishes and her ability to take care of the children is in jeopardy, Penny realizes that she needs some plans to assure that she doesn't have to leave New Hope. Her first plan of attack is to get the town back on the map. Not only does she write to a map company about this, but she asks the mayor of the town if she can start fixing up the Finest. With an assortment of children and adults, the building is slowly, if oddly, refurbished. Penny has long made her existence possible by trading things around town-- for example, she makes animals out of tin cans and trades them for food from the Carlson's diner. This skill helps when items are needed for the finest, and her willingness to talk to adults makes some progress in getting the building back into commission, and also helps her to locate her long lost father. There are a lot of problems along the way, but Penny has a positive attitude and makes up a family tree for herself that includes famous people with a "can do" attitude, and this serves her well.

Strengths: Fans of Polly Horvath who want a quirky story with a touch of magical realism (Penny can see what color auras people are projecting, and the orphanage was for children with similar abilities. This wouldn't have been fantasy until Penny has a couple of protracted conversations with the famous people she has put on her family tree.) will find this to be an endearing story.

Weaknesses: Had a quirky, Southern vibe that doesn't do well in my library.

What I really think: The cover of this doesn't help. I like it, but the illustration is a bit young for middle school. Maybe it is best suited for an elementary audience, and that's why I didn't like it as much. I had trouble suspending disbelief long enough to become invested in the characters.

Tracey says

children's fiction (marked by the publisher for ages 8-12; that's about right). 2 orphaned kids (dead mom,

absent mystery dad) move to a small, depressed NC town to stay with their Grauntie and try to put down roots (because they don't have any other willing relatives to take them in). This was just OK for me, not an outstanding story but nothing really wrong with it either.

Alyssa White says

Back on the Map will leave your heart warm, your smile spread, and your imagination inspired! Life starts all over again for twins Penny and Parker when school is over and they fear they are going to be shipped off again. They will do anything and everything to stay in the town they HOPE to call HOME. This book is wonderful with the creative aspects and the historical touches, one's brain is filled with so much wonder. As a teacher I can see Art, Social Studies, and Writing projects streaming off of this! BEAUTIFUL! Oh, Penny, I would like some critters please!

Hoover Public Library Kids and Teens says

"Oh, how I wish Penny Porter from Back on the Map would come to my town with her indomitable spirit and contagious creativity!" I completely agree with author Bibi Belford.

Miriam Spitzer Franklin says

Penny is a character you will root for starting on page one and her hopes, dreams and determination will carry you right through to the last page. BACK ON THE MAP is a story full of heart and a little bit of magic too--the kind that makes you believe anything is possible.

Carrie Westmoreland Kurtz says

I loved this book! Although it is basically a middle grade book, and I'm clearly not a middle grader... I still really enjoyed it!

I saw in some other reviews that people didn't really like the little touches of "magic" or whatever gifts the children had, but I loved that about them! I do have to say that there weren't many negative things in any of the reviews! That speaks volumes for how good this book is.

I found myself wanting to know the children, especially Penny! I hate the thought of children who feel unwanted. The way, in the beginning of the book, Penny kept waiting to be told they had to move away again, thinking she would get home and her things would be packed up... it broke my heart!

Penny's imagination, determination, and hope made me smile and keep on turning the pages! I definitely recommend this book. As a matter of fact, I already passed it to my daughter to read and there's someone lined up to read it next!

*Note: I received a copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Dee says

Penny stole my heart right from the beginning of the book. She's a girl who's been handed some tough circumstances in life, yet she keeps a positive attitude and believes that anything is possible.

I loved the additions to her family tree--she's convinced she's related to famous people in history--and the little bits of magic.

Most of all, I loved the beautiful writing. Lines like, "... hoping my wish would wiggle through that bright slice of sky to the part of the universe that made good things happen."

A full-of-heart read for both kids and adults.

Jaina Rose says

This review is also available on my blog, [Read Till Dawn](#).

There are a lot of books on the market out there about kids living in quirky small towns, learning some valuable lesson about life while trying to overcome a challenge. They often have quite a Southern twang to them. I've liked a few of them, but they often ring rather hollow/cliche for me.

If that category of books is a circle, then *Back to the Map* is lying on the edge of that circle with part of its body in the circle and part of it outside it. I think it actually gains a lot for keeping the quiriness a little more contained than some of the other books do. Penny's passion for trading items around town and fixing junk up into art is very fun to read about, and the interesting side characters add fun distractions to the story. The central project of fixing up New Hope's Finest (a decrepit, abandoned orphanage) is very interesting to read about. I never quite could follow Penny's logic that tied selling New Hope's Finest and getting the town back on the map to gaining a forever home there, but I suppose 11-year-olds aren't known for having the soundest reasoning skills.

I think the bits I mainly didn't care for revolved around characters' quirky semi-magic "gifts" that popped up here and there, just because I don't really care for that particular trope. Others might like it more than I did, though. I also didn't really like the depiction of Porter, which offered a rather stereotypical "behaves like he has autism and has special powers" character, but I don't know enough about the issue to know whether it's actually offensive or not.

There was also a plotline about Penny's search for information about her father, whom she and her twin brother Porter have never met because their mother gave birth out of wedlock without him. All they know is that he must have been some dark ethnicity because their mother was white and they look Black. Racism is lightly touched on (Penny thinks her mother's family is extra ashamed that she and her brother were born out of wedlock and *dark*, and she remembers times when strangers called her a mutt), with a subtlety that I think works well in a book which is really focused on other issues. There are a lot of snippets of information about historical figures who Penny likes to "try on" as potential ancestors on her father's side, which is sweet and

sad and educational all at the same time.

Basically, *Back on the Map* is a sweet, fun read that I enjoyed. It's probably not going on my top twenty favorites list, but that's not really saying much about its quality since I've literally read hundreds (if not thousands) of books. If you're interested in it, then go ahead and read it. You won't be disappointed.

Disclaimer: I received a complimentary copy of this novel from the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Brenda Schneider says

A wonderful book full of charming and unforgettable characters. I won this book through Goodreads.
