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In Between: A Katie Parker Production (Act I)



Synopsis

Katie's rebellious attitude is at odds with her family, school, and classmates. But in the midst of a dark situation, Katie finds light in the most unexpected places.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 670L (What's this?)

Series: A Katie Parker Production (Book 1)

Paperback: 352 pages

Publisher: Think (April 15, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1600060986

ISBN-13: 978-1600060984

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.8 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 2,355 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #2,005,164 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #41 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Religious > Christian > Family](#) #108 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Religious > Christian > Social Issues](#) #123 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Religious Fiction > Christian > Social Issues](#)

Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 - 12

Customer Reviews

It took less than a chapter for Katie Parker, the main character in Jenny B. Jones's new novel, *In Between*, to win me over completely. Sixteen-year-old Katie, now a ward of the state of Texas after her mom's recent imprisonment, says, "Knowing that your greatest achievement to date is becoming a dependent of an entire state can totally blow a girl's confidence." About the time Katie gets used to being at the Sunny Haven Home for Girls, she finds herself shipped out to foster parents who live in *In Between*, Texas. Now what kind of town would name itself *In Between*? And, have as its high school mascot a Chihuahua? Her new foster parents, James and Millie Scott, are nice enough people, in spite of the fact that Katie is shocked to find out James is the senior pastor of *In Between* Community Church. Now why would a family like that want her? Besides, she's heard the horror stories from the other girls at Sunny Have. Moving from one foster home to another--never staying in one place for long. Katie figures the sooner she can get herself sent back

to Sunny Haven, the easier it will be on everyone. However, when her best attempts to get the Scotts to send her back only seem to strengthen their caring and support, Katie begins to realize that maybe her life can be something better than it has been. And James and Millie Scott are surprised to find that Katie might also have a lesson or two to teach them. With great supporting characters such as Mad Maxine, Millie Scott's "gum-smacking, energy-drink guzzling, wheelie-popping demon" of a mother, Jenny B. Jones has created a humorous and heart-touching book seen through the eyes of a foster kid on the outside looking in. Katie Parker will make you laugh out loud and, by the time you finish the last page, I have no doubt she will have won your heart as she did mine. -- Sheryl Root

Katie Parker knows life isn't fair. After all, when your mom's in jail and your dad's a no-show, you figure things just aren't going your way. But hey, she can deal. Then she finds out she's being sent to live with a foster family--in In Between, Texas. What kind of town has a name like In Between? And what kind of family wants a kid like her? One thing's for certain: None of this will be good. Sure enough--thanks to some new "friends" and her non-Mom's crazed mother, Mad Maxine--life sails right past bad to stinking. Then again, she's just a temporary kid, they're just temporary parents, and she definitely doesn't have any ideas about making any of this permanent. God, on the other hand, may have other plans altogether.

The first couple of chapters were a little rough. The words didn't exactly sound like those of a sixteen year old girl. That said, I'm so glad I kept on reading. This is the story of Katie Parker and her new foster family. While most YA novels turn sixteen year old protagonists into angsty, lovesick morons, Katie is intelligent and strong. She grows as a character. She helps those around her without sappy. She has a hefty amount of sarcastic wit. I enjoyed reading her story and found myself crying more than a few times, completely drawn into her world. Her story rang with truth, even in a fictional tale. *This story does have Christian characters, but it was handled in a non offensive manner. I don't usually read "Christian YA Lit," but I really enjoyed this book. I'll be reading the next book in the series. I'm not a teen, but I enjoy reading books with strong female characters. Katie is a great character. I'd recommend this book to anyone, but especially to YA girls.

In Between is both a fun and heartbreaking story. Katie is a foster child--one who will soon be aging out of the system. Written from Katie Parker's perspective, this captivating story lets us as readers in on her innermost feelings and fears. While her choices

aren't always the best, she really just wants to love and be loved, and to replace her deepest fears with lasting hope. The humor in this book will bring a smile to your face. Jenny B Jones has a very upbeat and candid writing style that I truly enjoyed. As I listened to the audio version, I want to add that Reba Buhr did a fantastic job reading Katie's story. I want to finish the series! This book correlates with guacamole and lime tortilla chips for me. Guacamole with some spice. The combination of flavors is just right.

This is perhaps one of the most creative books I have read in a very long time. Well done! I laughed, I cried, I applauded, and I couldn't put it down. When I reached the end, I was joyous, yet disappointed the fun escape had ended. Katie Parker has to be one of my new favorite people. Maxine? Well she is just one crazy ole gal, in a good way. Watching her and Katie's relationship unfold was beyond fantastic. Jim and Millie are fantastic examples of Christian love and open hearts shadowed with wounds, but never losing hope. Feel good story for sure!!! Applause!!!

This book was cute, fairly well written, and made me laugh quite a few times. I gave it a three out of five stars because Katie sounded like a middle-schooler even though she was supposed to be in tenth grade. Also because while I understand that Katie has trust issues because she's a foster child, I felt that some of her actions were downright rude. Otherwise, she was a good main character, realistic, and relatable. Katie has trust issues, hang-out-with-the-wrong-crowd issues, some behavioral issues, and issues with people that serve God. She's very skeptical of the people she's living with, apparently, James, is a pastor at a church, Millie, seems suspiciously enthusiastic about Katie's arrival, and their dog, Rocky, looks like he wants to lick her to death. There's not a single thing that's shallow about Katie, but she has a whole lot to understand. I enjoyed her personality and how she meddles in things just enough without causing (too much) harm. I loved her sarcastic thought-process and her quick-witted responses as well as how she knew when to stop talking and when to start. She had a type of attitude that wasn't disrespectful but still had a smart-alecky tang to it. Katie was full of different aspects that made her who she is and Jones wrote her well. Millie and James were interesting too, very active in Katie's life once she joined their family and surprisingly honest towards Katie with touchy subjects. They were realistic as well, sharing meaningful glances and the occasional, yet heated, fight. Did I forget to mention Maxine? Maxine made this book have spunk and she's my favorite character. Maxine is a slightly

extremely eccentric grandma that has too much confidence for her own good, yet connects with Katie. Her ways may seem a little kooky, but her heart is in the right place. She doesn't accept Katie's sass, but she gives it out in generous servings. I appreciated the non-believer point of view as well. Despite Katie being in a Christian home, I didn't feel like James, Millie, or anyone else were pushing God on her, but rather just letting her experience Him however she did. A few mentions about faith here, a few encouraging words to get her to pray (and the way she prays is cool and very teenager-like), and a few youth group meetings and that was all. There wasn't any condemnation or ostracizing, it was very well done. All in all, the plot was interesting and very relaxed and it was enjoyable to read.

Okay, this was really funny to me, even though some of it was kind of crass (a little bit of potty humor, some body part jokes, nothing too vulgar). Katie Parker is totally relatable as an inept teenager trying to figure out who she is, and where God fits in her life. The supporting characters are caricatures, like the psychotic bike-riding grandma and the perky, too-good-to-be girl who becomes Katie's best friend, but somehow I fell in love with them. In between the one-liners, there is a story that hits home, with realistic problems and genuine feelings. I bought the rest of the books in the series, not just because they make me laugh, but because I wanted to follow the story and find out where the lives of the characters went. Yes, I would recommend this series.

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