



The Luminous Life of Lucy Landry

by Anna Rose Johnson

★ "A heartwarming tale of belonging and learning that life's treasures aren't always shiny." —*Kirkus Reviews*, Starred Review

★ "Tender, wholesome."

—*Publishers Weekly*, Starred Review

A Junior Library Guild Gold Standard Selection

ABOUT THE BOOK

Lucy, a spirited French-Ojibwe orphan, is sent to the stormy waters of Lake Superior to live with a mysterious family of lighthouse keepers—and, she hopes, to find the legendary necklace her father spent his life seeking. . . .

Selena Lucy Landry (named for a ship, as every sailor's child should be) has been frightened of the water ever since she lost

her father at sea. But with no one else to care for her, she's sent to foster with the Martins—a large Anishinaabe family living on a lighthouse in the middle of stormy Lake Superior.

Although life at the lighthouse isn't what Lucy hoped for, it is beautiful—ships come and go, waves pound the rocks—and it has one major advantage: it's near the site of a famous shipwreck, a shipwreck that went down with a treasure her father wanted more than anything. If Lucy can find that treasure—a priceless ruby necklace—won't it be like having Papa back again, just a little bit? But someone else is hunting for the treasure, too. Lucy and the Martin children will need to find the necklace quickly—or they may not have a home at all.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Lucy Landry, an orphan, lives with Miss Mamie. How does Miss Mamie take care of Lucy's welfare in her will? Why do you think the Martins agree to take Lucy? Discuss how Sarah Givens describes Lucy to Mr. Martin. How accurate is her description?
- How does Mr. Martin, a lighthouse keeper, sense Lucy's fear of the water? Why is Lucy adamant that she is "allergic" rather than afraid? At what point does Lucy conquer her fear of the water? Explain how Mr. Martin reminds Lucy of her own papa. Mrs. Martin calls Lucy brave. In what way does she demonstrate bravery throughout the novel? What is her most courageous moment?

- What is Lucy’s first impression of Harmony Lighthouse? Explain why Lucy finds the house suffocating. What is the difference between a simile and a metaphor? Point out the simile and metaphor in the following quote: “But Harmony Island was like a lone lily pad in a pond, connected to nothing; a spiderweb with no glue, a single coin tossed into a wishing well” (p. 50). How does this reflect Lucy’s view of the lighthouse?
- Mr. Martin says, “Welcome home.” Why is Lucy reluctant to call the lighthouse home? At what point does Harmony Lighthouse begin to feel like home? Describe the kindness of Mr. Martin. How is he patient with Lucy? Cite a moment in the novel when he appears impatient with her.
- Describe each of the Martin children. How do they receive Lucy? What is symbolic about the closet that she sleeps in? How does Maureen, the oldest girl, influence the other girls’ attitude toward Lucy? What makes Lucy absolutely sure that the Martin children “did not want her, nor believe her” (p. 71) .
- The Martin children are homeschooled. How is this different for Lucy? Discuss how Mrs. Martin manages to teach the children when they are different ages and levels. How are the Martins trying to preserve the Ojibwe language? Lucy is part Ojibwe. Why hasn’t she ever studied the language?
- Discuss Lucy’s vivid imagination. How does her imagination bring her comfort when she feels lonely? Explain how the Martin children react to Lucy’s imagination. How does her imagination make her a good storyteller? What happens when they later learn that some of Lucy’s stories are true?
- Lucy struggles to belong. What are her efforts to be helpful? How do things go wrong for her in the first days at the lighthouse? Debate whether this reflects her lack of experience belonging to a large family and helping with chores. At what times does Lucy feel like the Small Waif Girl? Describe the moment Lucy is very helpful. Debate whether this is the climax of the novel.
- Characterize Inspector King. Why do the Martins dread his visits? What is his first reaction to Lucy? Discuss his anger when he sees the ink stains. How does this put Mr. Martin in a precarious position? Discuss the conversation between Mr. Martin and Inspector King. When does the inspector change his view of the Martins?
- Why is Lucy obsessed with the Elva Jane shipwreck? How did this shipwreck become a legend? Explain why it’s so important for her to find the ruby necklace. What is Miss Naomi Beaman’s connection to the piano and the ruby necklace? What information does Lucy get from Catherine and Will Airneth? Discuss the role of the Bryson sisters in locating the necklace. Explain why Lucy gives the necklace to Miss Beaman.
- At what point do the Martin children accept Lucy as their sister? What is significant about the gifts the children give her? Explain the symbolism of the flag that Mr. Martin raises at the end of the novel.

ABOUT THE CREATOR

Photo Credit: Daniel Johnson



Anna Rose Johnson is a journalist, blogger, and seasoned correspondent for *Inside Gymnastics*. Anna is passionate about historical fiction, the Native experience, and writing for children. She is a member of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. Anna Rose’s sophomore novel, *The Luminous Life of Lucy Landy*, has received two starred reviews; her debut, *The Star That Always Stays* (an NPR Best Book of the Year), is directly based on her great-grandmother. Find her at AnnaRoseJohnson.com.