



## So Much Potential

*Margaret J. McMaster*

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## **So Much Potential** Margaret J. McMaster

Andy Towell's dream of becoming a commercial fisherman is jeopardized when a co-worker goes missing. (A high-interest teen novel aimed at reluctant readers.)

Canadian author, Margaret J. McMaster, published her first book of middle-grade fiction, *Carried Away on Licorice Days*, in 2008. It was nominated for three literary awards: the Canadian Library Association's 2009 Book of the Year for Children Award, the 2010/2011 Hackmatack Children's Choice Book Award, and the 2011 Rocky Mountain Book Award. In 2009 she started writing the *Babysitter Out of Control!* series. These amusing, fast-paced adventures include: *Babysitter Out of Control!*, *Looking for Love on Mongo Tongo*, *The Improbable Party on Purple Plum Lane*, *What Happened in July* (selected for Best Books for Kids & Teens - Spring 2013), *The Sinking of the Wiley Bean*, and, *The Queen of Second Chances*. The Complete *Babysitter Out of Control!* Series, published in 2015, was selected for Best Books for Kids & Teens - Fall 2015 and was the Gold Medal Winner in the 2015 Moonbeam Children's Book Award **EARLY READER / 1ST CHAPTER BOOKS** category. She is a past contributor to the Canadian Children's Annual and her creative non-fiction piece, *After All These Years*, was shortlisted for the 2006 CBC Literary Award. *So Much Potential*, a novel set in the Lake Erie fishing industry, was published in 2013. It was a Starred \* Selection in Best Books for Kids & Teens - Spring 2014.

## **So Much Potential Details**

Date : Published July 8th 2013 by Mansbridge Dunn Publishers (first published July 5th 2013)

ISBN : 9780981052571

Author : Margaret J. McMaster

Format : Paperback 91 pages

Genre : Mystery, Murder Mystery, Young Adult, Coming Of Age



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## From Reader Review So Much Potential for online ebook

### David Duncan says

I would like to thank goodreads, this is my fourteenth book that I have received. This story is about Andy a young man, that is just finishing high school, he wants to be a captain of his on tug boat with a crew and have the largest quote on the lake. His father on the other hand, is a doctor and he wants his son to go to college, with his potential, to become a doctor.

Andy has a job at a fish scaling factory after school. A coworker at the factory comes up missing. The police search the area for him and cannot find him. Andy in the meantime gets a job on a tug boat as part of the crew. One day out on the lake Andy witnesses a drug deal, on a tug next to them. This puts Andy's life in jeopardy. In the end Andy's father leave the decision to his son as to what he wants to do with his life. The author did a great job explaining the job in the fish factory, and the job of the tug boat crew. I would like to thank the author Margaret McMaster for the autographed book. I would look forward to reading more of her books.

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### Wendy says

"So Much Potential" which I won from Goodreads Giveaways is a fascinating coming of age story with a murder mystery woven in. The plot centers around Andy Towell's dream of becoming a commercial fisherman on Lake Erie in spite of his father, a local doctor who has higher expectations for his son. When the dreams of the pair collide Andy's kicked out of his home and begins working at the Assessment Plant on the scaling machine and living with Dylan, the forklift operator. What Andy doesn't expect as he works to make his dream a reality is to be thrust into the middle of a mysterious murder.

The storyline feeds the reader's imagination and sends a clear message to young people to work hard and follow their dreams, but it seemed to lack continuity. Most of the story centers on Andy's determination and progress in fulfilling his dream then switches abruptly to the mystery of a missing co-worker. This doesn't directly impact Andy's life until the latter half of the book. I liked both ideas but thought the story too short to fully develop the ideas to their natural conclusion.

I loved the genuiness and virtues of characters like Andy, the determined, hardworking, ambitious teen with high hopes for fulfilling his dream, Lacey, his perceptive and loyal friend and his mother who's compassionate and supportive as contrasted dramatically with his father with his high expectations and tough love approach. But even these characters aren't developed enough to see all their strengths and weaknesses. I kept wishing the story was longer and would have delved deeper into the personalities of minor characters like Dylan, Captain Don Fletcher, Dexter, Wendell, and of course the antagonist Captain Tanner.

Although I think the book was too short to develop such an interesting plot and that the title doesn't reflect such an inspiring message, I did enjoy reading it.

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### Kris says

I enjoyed 'So Much Potential' by Margaret McMaster. The book is about a young man, Andy, who decides to

try his hand at working as a fisherman on Lake Erie, much against his father's wishes. While working a co-worker is found dead and Andy is pulled into the mystery surrounding the co-worker's death.

The book is designed for young teens and is a quick read at just under 100 pages. The writing style reminds me a bit of the Eric Wilson books I read as a child. McMaster writes the story well and captures some of the emotions and thoughts associated with young adults. Although the story deals with murder the book is not graphic or scary at any part, in fact McMaster skips over the 'scary' part (don't want to spoil the story) by jumping from the middle of the mystery directly to the end; and the writing switches from current to past tense. Although this technique avoids any the scarier bits it does leave a bit of a void in the plot for older readers.

An additional bonus for me about this book is that it takes place in a relatively small community located along the Canadian side of Lake Erie. I enjoyed reading about locations and towns I was familiar with and visit on a regular basis. It is always fun when the book you are reading brings you home!

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### **Batsiii says**

Firstly, thanks to Goodreads and Margaret for giving me the opportunity to read this book.

The only reason it took me so long to read this book is school ?.

I liked it as soon as I started reading it. The story revolves around a marine life and had a different atmosphere from most of the books I was used to and it was a pleasant change.

The main character, Andy portrays what most people face at one point in their lives which makes him relatable in many levels. He's a teen who was brought up around the sea and despite his father's expectations and his other abilities, sticks to what he is most passionate about; fishing. I liked how he stays true to himself throughout the story line. He's a very sane guy and the supporting characters were as realistic and appealing. There's a mystery which added to the conflict Andy already had to face regarding his life and I think it added an edge to the book.

I'm 19 and although, I usually read bigger books with harder vocabulary, I actually really enjoyed this read. The writing was great; simple, to the point. The pacing was quick and the characters relatable. There were even funny scenes. And the love story was reserved and cute.

Although it was short, I still felt like wanting to know what happened next.

I liked the chill, laid back, bright kind of ambiance to the characters' lives. And the message was inspiring. Overall, it was a great read and I would read it again sometime since it's fast-paced and pleasant.

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### **Linda says**

I enjoyed reading this book. I can understand the position of both the parents and their son. A quick read, I would read it again. Commercial fishermen work hard to earn their livelihood. If your child had the potential to become a doctor, would you be happy if they chose not to attend university and to work as a commercial fisherman?

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### **Pam Butterfield says**

enjoyed this book immensely and would love to read some more from this author .it was easy to read and the storyline good.

won this book from goodreads

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## **Wanda says**

I received a personalized signed copy of So Much Potential by Margaret J. McMaster via Goodreads Giveaway. I appreciate the opportunity and provide my unbiased review.

The author shares the story of Andy Towell whose life dream is to work on a commercial fishing vessel. His parents, mainly his well-educated father, have other plans laid out for him. When Andy begins to pursue his goals, he receives resistance and minimal support from his family. As the story moves along, an unsolved crime within Andy's small community begins to haunt him and he soon begins to question whether he should in fact continue on with his pursuit of happiness.

This was a fun, quick read as it is geared toward a 12+ age reader audience. The author is well-written and shared an important overall theme of "follow your dreams". This is most relevant and a good take-home lesson for all readers.

I am especially fond of the Canadian setting and would recommend for school libraries across our country.  
4/5 stars.

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## **Kristine says**

Original review at [http://kristineandterri.blogspot.ca/2...](http://kristineandterri.blogspot.ca/2012/07/review-so-much-potential.html)

3.5 stars I won this book in a goodreads giveaway

Please keep in mind that this book is marketed as teen fiction (12 and up) and I am way beyond that in years. I do have children (girls) that are 12 and 14 so I tried to put myself in their shoes when reading and reviewing this book.

This book is short consisting of only 91 pages (large print) and is written in language that is very easy to follow and understand. It is a quick story about a young man who has been accepted to medical school but would rather be a fisherman and the mysterious disappearance of his co-worker. The story itself is cute and the mystery is interesting.

Although the story is about a teenage boy that is at a University entrance age I feel that the book would appeal more to a pre-teen or tween audience. My 12yr old is in the seventh grade and has independent reading where she has to read an appropriate novel of her choice. This book would probably be perfect for the boys in her class to read. My 14yr old is in high school (and an avid reader) and would feel that it did not have enough romance, angst and drama for her liking.

In my opinion this book would be perfect for those that are just starting to come out of the younger genre and beginning to read at a more grown up level. Even with the age of the main character and the content of the book I feel that it would appeal to 6th- 8th grade children and not much older.

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