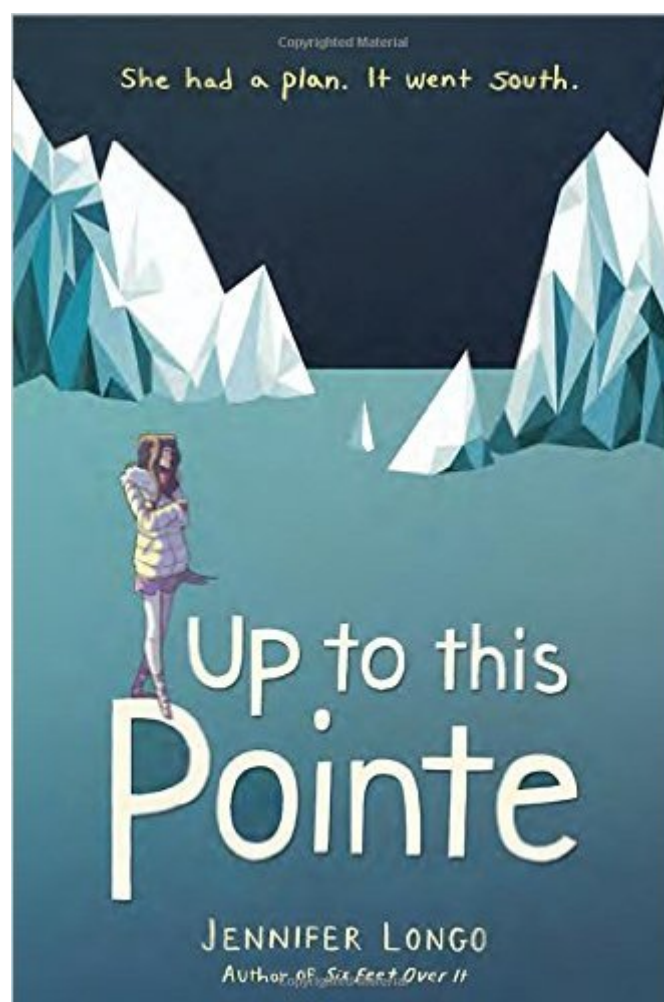


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# Up To This Pointe



## Synopsis

Harper had a plan. It went south. Hand this utterly unique contemporary YA to anyone who loves ballet or is a little too wrapped up in their Plan A. (It's okay to fail, people!) Harper Scott is a dancer. She and her best friend, Kate, have one goal: becoming professional ballerinas. And Harper won't let anything or anyone get in the way of The Plan, not even the boy she and Kate are both drawn to. Harper is a Scott. She's related to Robert Falcon Scott, the explorer who died racing Amundsen and Shackleton to the South Pole. Amundsen won because he had a plan, and Harper has always followed his model. So when Harper's life takes an unexpected turn, she finagles (read: lies) her way to the icy dark of McMurdo Station . . . in Antarctica. Extreme, but somehow fitting apparently she has always been in the dark, dancing on ice this whole time. And no one warned her. Not her family, not her best friend, not even the boy who has somehow found a way into her heart. It will take a visit from Shackleton's ghost--the explorer who didn't make it to the South Pole, but who got all of his men out alive--to teach Harper that success isn't always what's important, sometimes it's more important to learn how to fail successfully. A Kids' Indie Next List Selection "Longo makes Harper a standout character of fire, commitment, and sass." "The Bulletin, Starred Review "A stunning love letter to ballet and San Francisco, Jennifer Longo's (Six Feet Over It) quirky sophomore novel, Up to This Pointe, is the perfect meld of adorable and heart-wrenching." "Shelf Awareness, Starred Review "One of the most breathtaking explorations of navigating heartbreak that I've ever read. This is one for the ages." "Martha Brockenbrough, author of The Game of Love and Death "Longo's book brings the reader intimately into Harper's heartbreak and healing in a way that will speak to readers of all ages." "Anna Eklund, University Book Store, Seattle, WA "Incisively written. Longo makes it easy to commiserate with Harper as she tries to move past disappointment and envision a new path forward." "Publishers Weekly "A moving love letter to dance, dreams, and San Francisco." "Kirkus Reviews "Harper is a well-developed, relatable character. Her inner monologue is witty and dominates most of the novel, giving a unique perspective. . . . A recommended read for determined teens with an interest in following and exploring their dreams." "School Library Journal "Harper's temporary Antarctic life is evoked with as much vivid, fascinating detail as her 'second home,' the ballet studio. . . . An affecting, memorable examination of disappointment and loss." "The Horn Book Review "Longo's fabulous depiction of McMurdo and the winter residents captures the beauty, humor, and danger of such an isolated existence. An adventure story with lots of heart." "Booklist

## Book Information

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Hardcover: 368 pages

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Product Dimensions: 5.7 x 0.9 x 8.5 inches

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Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (31 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #454,310 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #34 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Performing Arts > Dance](#) #291 in [Books > Children's Books > Arts, Music & Photography > Performing Arts > Dance](#) #464 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Emotions & Feelings](#)

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

I received a free review copy of this book through Netgalley. Harper is passionate about ballet. She's always worked hard in class, and even teaches children in order to afford dance herself. She and her best friend Kate have a plan, and Harper will do anything to see it out and become a professional ballerina. When The Plan begins to change, Harper convinces her mother's scientist friend to help her get to Antarctica. Robert Falcon Scott-an explorer who Harper is related to-died while trying to reach the South Pole, but Harper knows that if she can make it there, she can do anything. I had a strangely difficult time getting started reading this, which feels surprising looking back. I put it on hold after one chapter, then after three chapters-and then I read the rest all in one sitting. Once I got into the story, I couldn't put it down. This book was so unique, especially in setting. The chapters alternated between present day in Antarctica, and the past in San Francisco. The Antarctica chapters turned this into the perfect winter read, especially as the writing was so descriptive. I felt the cold (and the heartbreak!) right along with Harper. A huge reason for this was Harper's voice. Her inner monologue made me laugh a number of times, and had me near tears at others. Her thoughts felt true and real, and made her so easy to relate to. Harper was also just an awesome character overall. I felt so much for her. She was so sad throughout the book, but also strong, and I definitely admired that about her. And

her ambition was incredible as well-first she took on ballet, then Antarctica! One of my favorite aspects of the book was that I ended up falling in love with so many aspects of Harper's life, even those that weren't shown that much on the page. Many things were subtle-the family, the friendship, the romance-yet by the end, they felt like huge parts of the book. Overall I really loved this one, and can definitely see myself rereading it in the future. It was an easy five stars for me, with its emotional plot, a vivid, unique setting, and fantastic main character.

Random House Children's and NetGalley provided me with an electronic copy of this book, in exchange for an honest review. Desperately needing a change, Harper Scott receives an opportunity to go to McMurdo, the American science station on Antarctica. As one of three high school students to win the National Science Foundation grant, she will spend six months overwinter helping to collate data on the Adelie penguins and the effect of the environment on them. As a descendant of Robert Falcon Scott, a daring explorer that died on his way to the South Pole, Harper was destined to end up there. However, this drastic change in her life was something that she just did not see coming. Harper and her best friend Kate have had a plan for their future, since they were little girls. As ballerinas, they would dance together for the same company, get an apartment together, and be happy. When her dance instructor derails Harper from her path, she escapes to the end of the world in a desperate attempt to find clarity. Well written with a moving plot and great characters, *Up to This Pointe* is a true YA book: a little drama, a little romance, and a little self discovery. My favorite character is Harper Scott, as her ability to persevere in the face of the devastating loss of her life's focus was very inspirational. Although her life was in shambles, Harper had enough piece of mind to figure out what she wanted to do about it. The only part of this book that I did not particularly care for was the romance aspect on Antarctica. It was not necessary for the plot and kept the focus away from Harper. I would recommend *Up to This Pointe* to readers who enjoy a great character driven YA novel.

You don't need to like science or ballet (or penguins) to appreciate this story. All you need is to understand the feeling that sometimes we need to reset our lives and start all over from scratch. And I think everyone can understand and appreciate that feeling. Harper's life is ballet. She even got a Plan for it. She and her best friend are going to become professional ballerinas and work for a company in San Francisco. Except when that plan has to change, she has no idea what to do. Her entire life up to this point has been training for that. So now what? And because there's really nothing else for her, she ends up in Antarctica. And I know a lot of

people are of the mindset that it's not good to run away from your life, but sometimes you have to. And Harper's not running so much as taking an extended vacation. She plans to go home, just not for a while. I love this story and want to go back and read her backlist. Recommended.

Longo specializes in protagonists who talk like real teens, consider sex like real teens and live lives full of discipline, awkwardness, and love - like so many adolescents! This is a book for anyone who has had to take a detour, anyone who has tried to run from the truth, and anyone who has wished they could travel to Antarctica. I read it in basically two sittings and can't wait for the author's next novel!

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