



the world according to your bookshelf

BY LIZ JOHNSON, AUTHOR OF A SPARKLE OF SILVER



The world is a lot bigger than I gave it credit for as a child. As an adult, I stare at maps of the world and dream of visiting far-off places like Cleveland. Okay, so Ohio is still a fair trip from my home in Arizona, but the truth for most of us is that our travel dreams are limited. They have to be. We have work. We have family. We have limited resources.

We may daydream and pinch every penny for the trip of a lifetime, but it's just that – a once in a lifetime chance to explore the part of the world we long to see.

What I wouldn't give to hop on a jet at a moment's notice to my favorite little corner of the world! But it's not going to happen. That's why I wrote about Prince Edward Island in the first place. After two idyllic trips to the Gentle Island tucked along Canada's eastern shore, I didn't think I'd ever get to go back. I couldn't stand to let the feeling of PEI's perfect red cliffs and towering pine trees slip away. What if I forgot the rhythmic clapping of the waves on the shore or the smell of earth and sky and everything in between? I didn't dare lose that.

So I wrote about it. I created a version of tiny North Rustico, a village on the island's north shore, that is more real to me than the actual village. In fact, the real North Rustico doesn't boast a single bed and breakfast, but don't try to convince me of that. When I invented the Red Door Inn, it became an indelible part of the landscape in my mind.

Most readers know Prince Edward Island as Anne's Land—home of the precocious, red-headed orphan from the imagination of L.M. Montgomery. I can hardly fault them. *Anne of Green Gables* drew me to the island too. It was the gentle, quiet pace that kept me coming back. There's a peacefulness to the island, a security in the knowledge that

I can get lost on a two-lane road that will eventually lead me to the ocean. It's the music that makes me tap my foot and the smile on every face.

Quite honestly, I would have been blissfully unaware if not for Ms. Montgomery too. Well, unaware at least—if not blissfully so. I'd have been unaware of PEI and unaware of what I was missing. My whole world would have been smaller if I had never known about it.

Even if I had never visited PEI, I would have loved it for the way Anne Shirley experienced it in all her delight and exuberance.

This is what books do for us. They show us a world beyond anything we might ever get to see with our own eyes and show us that world through the eyes of new friends. They help us escape the world we know for one we can only imagine. And we love to imagine!

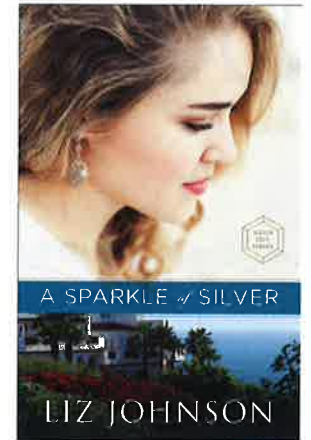
Close your eyes, just for a minute. Can you see it—that far-off land filled with wonder and beauty? Maybe yours looks like the island of Guernsey. Perhaps it's the beach on St. Simons Island. It could be the grandeur of Colorado's Rocky Mountains or Yosemite's cliffs. Do you dream of visiting that place, experiencing all that it has to offer?

You can. Whatever the state of your pocketbook, the world is within reach. Yosemite is as close as Karen Barnett's *Where the Fire Falls*, Guernsey as near as *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society*. Visit St. Simons Island in the pages of my book, *A Sparkle of Silver*, or take a tour of the whole world with Lindsay Harrel's *The Heart Between Us*.

God has created a majestic world filled with wonders that display His handiwork. And we can experience them, even if we can't see them. The pages of our books contain the whole of the earth and a thousand other worlds we need only an imagination to visit. We can travel from Nepal to Narnia with a mere flip of pages.

Maybe the world is bigger than I once thought, but it doesn't seem quite so unreachable when it's as close as my bookshelf.

Liz Johnson is the author of more than a dozen novels, including *The Red Door Inn*, *Where Two Hearts Meet* and *On Love's Gentle Shore*, as well as a *New York Times* bestselling novella and a handful of short stories. She makes her home in Phoenix, Arizona.



Inspirational Romance A SPARKLE OF SILVER

LIZ JOHNSON

The secrets of a historic beach-front estate set in an idyllic coastal community take center stage in the first of Liz Johnson's *Georgia Coast Romance* series. Millie and Ben have numerous obstacles to overcome in their search for treasure, yet their greatest foes are time and trust. Readers will be intrigued by the cleverly mysterious plot and authentic characters which this story boasts. The power of love, integrity, faith and forgiveness shines through as the author breathes life into the what-ifs of yesterday and their implications for today. (REVELL, Oct., 368 pp., \$14.99)
Reviewer: Beth Erin

