



★ **Some Places More than Others**

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Humorous and uplifting, *Some Places More Than Others* stresses the importance of family, history, and acceptance.

Amara Baker, a preteen with good friends and an affinity for Nike sneakers, knows exactly what she wants for her twelfth birthday: a trip to New York City. Though her mother objects, the trip makes perfect sense to Amara. Her father is headed there for work and, most importantly, his father and sister reside in Harlem. When Amara gets a school assignment that requires her to explore her family history, Amara's vision for the trip takes shape. After finally securing her mother's blessing, Amara sets out for adventure with high hopes for finding enough material for her school project.

Amara is in for surprises. First is the unexpected snark from a cousin who might just be envious of Amara's doting parents and designer clothes. Second is the strained undercurrent whenever Amara's father and grandfather are together.

But there are good surprises, too. The city offers Amara an immersion in African American heritage that she's been unable to get back home in Oregon. Discovering exhibits, museums, and statues honoring African Americans buoys Amara with pride and wonder. She visits some of her father's favorite places and the grave of the beloved grandmother she never met but shares something special with.

When the congestion of New York City and the confusion of navigating the subway put Amara into a precarious situation, the Baker family's lines of communication have a chance to open.

The novel tackles complicated problems in a realistic fashion. The Baker family is depicted as strong but imperfect. Their conversation topics are refreshingly realistic and relatable. Detailed descriptions of New York's tourist spots and lesser-known resident favorites are transportative.

Some Places More Than Others is a much-needed novel about the importance of roots and family connections.

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