



Star Child: Places of Power

Leonard Petracci , Caterina Kalymniou (Illustrator)

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Powers are determined by geographic birth locations, and only the rich and powerful are permitted access to prized sites. SC is the first person born in space.

The punishment for unauthorized births is death. Out of fear, SC keeps his strange abilities as his darkest secret. He pretends to be nothing more than a mere Regular while his peers develop unique powers, varying from controlling lightning to producing diamond hard skin. But when his mother is kidnapped by an unknown organization, SC has no choice but to act.

SC ventures into a school of talented students to learn to fight, where he must learn to master his powers without revealing their true nature. But soon he realizes that the school is more than it appears and that it may hold the secret to his missing mother. To rescue her, he will have to reveal powers never before seen in all of history.

Written by award winning author Leonard Petracci, a master of tension and suspense.

Star Child: Places of Power Details

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From Reader Review Star Child: Places of Power for online ebook

Esmerelda Weatherwax says

I received this book in exchange for an honest review and I think it would most appeal to people who like coming of age/ya urban fantasy with a hard magic system.

To understand the main character you first need to know a little bit about the world building. This book has a serious superhero alternate-reality vibe to it. The magic system is based on the conditions of your birth, some people under the right conditions can develop a magic based on their birth environment. People who are born on airplanes can fly, people born near volcanos can use fire, people born on mountains get ice powers etc. SC was born in an illegal location, in space. Both he and his mother have to go into hiding because he isn't supposed to exist, and if the wrong people found out he could be captured and killed.

SC's mother is arrested by the police and he's able to get away, however, after sitting and brooding about how he should have done something to help his mother, he explodes out of anger and guilt and uses his powers in a way he never has before, he ends up blowing apart his apartment complex.

SC is able to make "force points" which look like black marbles that draw everything around them towards the force point. It's sort of like having the power to create mini black holes. Since he's the only known space-born person his powers are unregistered and he sparks the interest of the authorities. They don't know where he is, but they're searching for him after he explodes his apartment.

A series of unlikely events leads him to a school for those who can use magic and while he's there he's disguising himself as a telekinetic. He still doesn't want to reveal what he really is, and is doing a halfway decent job of passing off as a normal kid. He makes a few friends, one of them was born in Hollywood and he's able to implant memories and feelings into a person. Another is named Ariel, born on a plane and able to fly, her father makes things complicated since he's the one trying to hunt down the person who destroyed the apartment.

Something is wrong with the school he's attending, however. His friends come to him with a theory that the school is implanting motivations in a similar way that Hollywood kid can, indoctrinating them to be loyal to the school for unknown reasons. They begin to investigate and things get complicated.

This was a single pov told in the first person from the main character, it was a very straightforward way of telling a story so it worked well for the audio.

This was a really fast-paced book, a ton of plot lines were being introduced in the first third of the book and then a larger one about halfway through. It's also written in a way where you can really fly through it.

I do think this is a good book for the right target audience, I'm not usually a fan of young adult but the magic system in this one and the magic school both kept me entertained. I wish there was a little more character development, this was a plot and worldbuilding driven book.

Audience:

For people who like:

- * hard magic system
- * superhero-like abilities
- * alternate world/urban fantasy
- * single pov
- * first person narration
- * magic schools
- * faster paced books
- * audiobooks

Ratings:

Plot: 12/15

Characters: 9/15

World Building: 13/15

Writing: 11/15

Pacing: 13/15

Originality: 11/15

Personal Enjoyment: 7.5/10

Final Score: 76.5/100 – 3.5/5 stars.

Andy Bigwood says

Addictive reading

Its rare for a book to hold my attention sufficiently to set aside other things... this was one such. Mr Petracci has managed to create an entirely new and original reason for superpowers. Geography and circumstance govern power, people born near volcanoes tend to have firepowers etc.

The title of the book is probably the weakpoint sounding a bit 1970's flowerpowery...don't be fooled...in context it makes sense.

in tone this is similar to the upcoming new mutants film. A police state and something darker than the police state of which we see only the tip of the iceberg, running a 'school' that prioritises obedience...permanent life long obedience.

Our protagonist is unique due to where he was born, and frankly I'd be a bit worried about his power getting out of hand... if it did, there wouldn't be much left! That said its interesting to see the mechanics of this particular power..I wonder if the author will fiddle with time dilation and other powers that might be inferred from 'SC's unique 'geo' and one has to wonder if being the only one means he gets 'all' the potential power from that location rather than just part of it (as would be normal for this universe).

Marcus says

The best thing about this book is the power system. It's unique and introduces powers that are fun to think

about and play around with.

There are some good plot twists that kept it fresh and give it a certain shock value and tone that I enjoyed. But it did leave me wondering a few times who the audience for this book is, since it seems like a young adult novel with some very adult moments. Plus I thought it would be a more challenging read for an older audience, but it's geared towards teens.

The final fight seems to drag on and had some very confusing moments. I'm still not totally sure how the main character won his second to last fight. Also, temperature must work differently then I remember, because somehow metal can turn orange and people are fine.

Overall, it wasn't bad. Only found two typos, which isn't bad compared to other books I've found recently. But this book isn't written for me, and I'm not sure if I would recommend it to anyone.

Ken says

Enjoyable read hoped for more but satisfied.

A little difficult to start but did explain the world as the story unfolds. A good read I was hoping for more to the story but I am satisfied. I will continue with the story and purchase the next book. I did wait until next book was out even though had in my list since came out. I seem to pick too many one hits that don't get continued.

Sylvia Rangel says

The story wasn't bad but I am not motivated to read the next installment. It had a firm conclusion which is a good thing. I felt that writer might have just gone all the way and made these people aliens on an alien world because there was no relation to our reality. That would make the magic system make more sense. Some of the action scenes could have been better written or there could have been less of them. Obviously this was geared to young boys. I didn't really understand the main characters power... but it looked cool in my mind lol so points for that.

Nealis says

Great surprise. The book is a coming of age novel. While there are many familiar elements typical of the genre, the novel is well written and executed. The main character SC, lives in modern world not unlike our own, but is not burdened with with real world legacy or current happenings. They are in a fictional country, in a fictional world shaped by the existence and industry of real human super powers. The book is better b/c of this, everything just fits and it helps the reader suspend disbelief.

Minor spoilers: As for the plot, SC starts off on the war path, and he stumbles around like many juvenile characters, but his plotting and scheming is second to none and he eventually outmaneuvers his enemies rather nicely. The author shows that despite having the strongest power in the world, SC is very vulnerable to his enemies and he finally makes his play, it is part pure comedy and edge of your seat roller coaster to the end.

Again, a great surprise and I will be following this series closely. Greatly recommended!

Rohit Garg says

Good book for YA

Not for me and personally if I were the MC I would've used my power to kill everyone who got in my way once I knew what I wanted. His power can be so OP but he never uses it to destroy everything. Idk maybe I read the book wrong but it sounds like he could've killed everyone anytime he wanted to.

Amelia says

Original

A fun and engaging story with lots of originality! Only reason I'm giving it 4 stars instead of 5 is that it reads a little choppy in places. Still, that's a very minor thing, and I definitely recommend reading this book. You'll love it. After a while it gets hard for a bookworm like me to find more high quality original fantasy reading, so this was an unexpected gem. The plot really lived up to its potential (which sadly isn't always the case), and the premise, characters, and superpower applications were all awesome and well-crafted. I am looking forward to book 2!

Asa Whitley says

This is a decent book, not amazing and probably better for a highschool audience, but the writing is okay and the story holds together, even mending several possible plot holes that I saw coming. There are a few times where the technical explanations grow a bit tedious and the plot is told to the reader instead of shown, but there was never a point that I got frustrated at the author as many other books have made me. If Leonard Petracci can continue to improve on this writing level I look forward to reading his further works.

Nathan McCarty says

Good story, good trope subversions, formatting needs improvement

This book has a very interesting premise and compelling story! I loved the characters and I was delighted by the trope subversions. My only critiques are that sometimes the wording was jarring and took a few reads to figure out what was happening. Otherwise, great read!

Maria Fernanda G Lechuga says

This was my first Sci-fi book and although it's not the genre I am used to reading I enjoyed it.

I got the audiobook version and the narration of Will M. Watt is great, he manages to get different voices and accents for every character and makes the book really enjoyable specially when singing Siri's lines and manage to hold my attention wondering what was going to happen with SC and everyone else.

It was interesting all the powers and how depending on their place of birth is the power they got but it also was a little bit confusing at times specially with SC but I was able to enjoy it and now I want more.

I would really love to read the second book when it comes out because I want to know more about the powers and the other characters.

Russell says

This was another book that I found on Reddit. I know, what a great source for books. I was browsing a word prompt subreddit, and I saw the prompt "Everyone has a superpower based on the topography of where they were born (IE: Mountains, deserts, etc.). You are the first person to be born in space." This sounded really interesting, so I looked into it and I saw that the top comment had actually made a book out of it! Just like the other book I got from Reddit, I'm very happy I read this.

The world in the book is just like ours, except that people with powers have been integrated into everyday life. The powers you get are based on where you were from. These range from simple flight to being able to manipulate the emotions of those around you. There are better places than others, for example, a volcano is more desirable than a busy city. We follow Star Child, or SC. He, obviously, was born in space. With this comes the power to manipulate space to create something akin to mini black holes. His father was never in his life, and his mother gets taken really early on. After brooding, he goes to a rehabilitation facility for troublemakers because he wanted to learn to control his power and he was told that they do that. From then on, it sorta becomes a school story but better. There's this odd singing that he hears every night. Now he'll do anything to not become part of the bottom class.

One of my favorite things about this book is the setting, which is ironic because the author didn't even think of it. However, he does do a great job at expanding upon the prompt. The way that he's integrated the powers into "real" life makes sense. This might be immature, but I also really liked the powers of SC. He is a really powerful person, and the black hole esque power is simply cool. Another thing that I enjoyed was the supporting characters. The love interest and the friends all felt like they were real people, and the main antagonist is certainly evil.

There was not all much that I didn't like. I would say that the ending leaves much to be desired, even if it does complete the temporary story. Another thing that I didn't like is that because of the powers of SC, he could've just destroyed everything in his path. There is very little that can stop him due to the power that he has under his control. I also think that this book is probably not that dense. You can see everything that is happening without too much thought, so I would not recommend if you want something that makes you think. However, I enjoyed it, and I think that you will too.

Stephen says

Great YA novel

This was a quick read that hit all of the points I was looking for. It's a quick read, has great characters, motivations and a clear over arching story with lots of room for a sequel. It doesn't go into extreme detail on many subject but provides more than enough for a YA book that is just looking to be well written and entertaining. It's exactly as advertised.

Abrand says

Reminder of my favorite times reading has brought me

This book simply brought me back to the height of my enjoyment of reading. Back when I spent nights with a crank up light reading under the blanket on a school night giggling like a schoolgirl simply from how much I loved to read. Its been a very very long time since I had found a book that gave me this feeling.

Thank you so much for this

Denaë Christine says

Reader thoughts: Fun book, but not phenomenal. I enjoyed it and can't even point to anything it did *wrong*, just that I'm going to forget it quickly.

The plot was good. Hidden power, on the run, school for the powerful delinquents, principal lady with hidden agenda, magical brainwashing, police hunter with something to prove, and power competitions to rank students. The elements were there, and they were arranged in a new, fun way. The book never dragged, although I did get annoyed that SC let himself get brainwashed and distracted from his goal.

SC was a likeable character. I rooted for him. He wasn't very clever, though, which I wanted. He didn't figure out lots of new uses for his powers in delicate and creative ways, which I was expecting.

He also didn't seem fully fleshed out as a character. He makes friends within a day of his new school, but he makes no mention of the people at his old school, where he has been for his entire life. Seriously? What's with a character's existence starting on page 1?

Now, granted, there was a first chapter intro piece (maybe a prologue?) with SC as a child, but the rest of the book still didn't reference his life before he met that one flying girl. What were his hopes, his dreams, his friends, his fears? Did he have a life before the book started?

Writer thoughts: I know backstory can slow down a book's pace, but it fleshes out the character so much better that it's worth it (unless you're writing a short story or a horror story or something and have to keep the pacing to a sprint).

Benefits to backstory and referencing a character's life before page one?

Creates character depth

Helps reader identify with the character

Deepens motivation

Raises stakes

As it was, SC lost his mom on, like, page 20, but it didn't feel as big of a deal as if SC had thought about his mother later in the book. He wanted to rescue her, but he never relived memories of her or where they'd been or what they'd done. Did they celebrate holidays together? Did she ever scrimp and save to buy him nice shoes? Did he ever help her make a favorite meal?
