

WHAT'S YOUR STORY, LIZ GARTON SCANLON?



I grew up in the mountains in Colorado with my mom, dad, little sister, two dogs, two horses, two gerbils, and the occasional bird, snake, frog or fish. One time I actually took in a rooster but that lasted just one night.

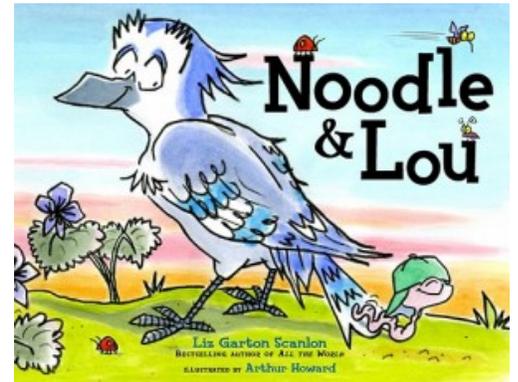
Did you have a best friend? Who was it and why were you best friends?

When I was a little girl, my sister was my best friend -- and she still is. She's two-and-a-half-years younger than I am, but we grew up without many other kids in the neighborhood so we always played together. Noodle & Lou is dedicated to her because she is always, steadfastly, my Lou.

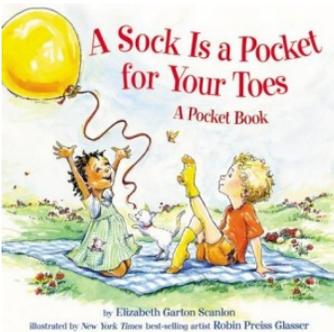
What were your favorite things to do when you were young?

We really grew up outside. We built Huck Finn-type rafts in the summer, and snowball forts in the winter. We rode our bikes and skied and hiked. We brought home snakes and polliwogs. When we were inside, we played pretend. Pretend school, pretend family, pretend horse farm, pretend movie star. It's amazing I grew up knowing who I really was!

Any defining moments (good or bad) that shaped you as a child?



We moved from Colorado to Wisconsin when I was 13. Being a "new girl" in school, getting used to a new home and new climate, making new friends -- it made me feel scared and brave, all at the same time. It was not easy, but I think it helped shake up my perspective -- something that's really important to me as a writer. I don't believe there's just one way to live or to look at things...



Did you ever get into trouble at home or school?

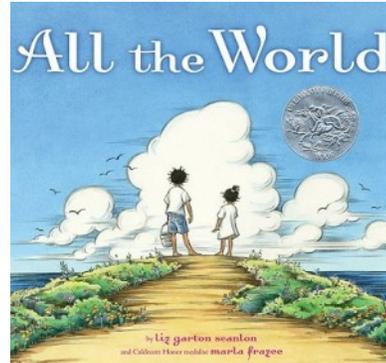
I was usually what they called "a good girl" in school, but I did tend to whisper and chat a little too much. One year I had a teacher who made us construction paper apples. If we were naughty or rascally in class, she'd drop the apple from the tree, and if we were naughty or rascally again, she'd punch a hole in the apple and color a dark, rotten spot around it! My apple dropped from the tree many times that year, but I only got one dark hole, and I cried and cried. Nobody wants to be thought of as a rotten apple!

If you weren't a writer, what would you like to be?

When I was a girl, I wanted to be an actress who lived on a horse farm. That still sounds kind of nice...

Do you listen to music while you write, or do you like silence?

I write in silence because I read my work out loud all the time. I need to be able to hear myself.



How many times do you have to revise? Do you love revision or hate it?

I revise some sections of my books dozens of times. I love revision -- it makes me feel like a mad scientist, stirring things up to see what will fizzle and what will pop and spark and explode.

What your favorite book you wrote?

I always love the one I'm working on best of all. (It's also usually the one I cannot stand!)

Are you famous?

My kids sometimes ask me that, too, and I always say, "Only in my family..."



Quick Picks:

- **PB & J or Mac and Cheese?** *PB&J*
- **Dog, Cat, Bird, or Fish?** *Dog, cat, bird AND fish*
- **Love revision or hate it?** *LOVE it*
- **Early Bird Writer or Night Owl?** *Both! (Or neither, depending on how tired I am!)*