

VANESSA MILLER

SOMETHING GOOD

A Novel



BOOK CLUB KIT

 Dear Reader,

I am so thankful that you have a chance to read *Something Good*, the book that touched my heart and helped me grow as an author and as a human being. Writing this story reminded me to look for the good, even in our most heart wrenching times. It put a smile on my face as I laughed at some of the antics of the characters. At other times I cried at the emotions my characters dealt with. Then I experienced joy and hopefulness as the characters began to see a way forward.

Something Good covers a lot of ground about family, relationships, mental illness, the harm distracted driving can cause and HOPE, even in the midst of sorrow, as the red cardinal on the front of the book cover symbolizes.

I fell in love with Trish, Marquita, Alexis and the idea of hope that this story brings to the reader. It felt as if each character sat down next to me and poured their heart out as I wrote their story. Trish told me about her strong faith in a God who could move mountains... even her mountain. Marquita told me about the sorrows of growing up in an unstable family. Alexis told me about all the secrets she had to keep in order to live this perfect life her husband demanded.

Trish, Marquita and Alexis kept me company as the world dealt with shutdowns and stay at home orders. And then one day this red cardinal flew into our yard and found its way into the book as a harbinger of the hope my characters were journeying towards. As you read this book, it is my prayer that the characters speak to your heart and help you to believe in the possibility of something good, even when your whole world has been turned upside down.

Many Blessings to you,

 Vanessa Miller



VANESSA MILLER is a bestselling author, with several books appearing on *Essence Magazine's* Bestseller List. She has also been a Black Expressions Book Club Alternate pick and #1 on BCNN/BCBC Bestseller List. Vanessa has worked with numerous publishers: Urban Christian (Kensington), Kimani (Harlequin), Abingdon Press, and Whitaker House. Most of Vanessa's published novels depict characters that are lost and in need of redemption. Her books have received countless favorable reviews.

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

“Vanessa Miller weaves together the lives of three women in a beautiful tapestry of redemption and hope, friendship and found family. A story that shows, even when we think we’ve bolted all the doors, something good can find a way in.”

—Lisa Wingate, #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *Before We Were Yours*

“*Something Good*, by Vanessa Miller is a literary treat that captivated me from the first page. This story of three women drawn together by the unlikeliest of circumstances had me sitting back and realizing that no matter our backgrounds, no matter our struggles, when it’s for God’s purpose, we can come together. With characters that I could relate to and women who I wanted to win, I enjoyed *Something Good* from the beginning to the end.”

—Victoria Christopher Murray, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Personal Librarian*

“Vanessa Miller’s *Something Good* warms the heart with a vivacious tale of faith, redemption, and renewal. She masterly creates a sisterhood of unlikely friends who realize that there is something good, absolutely wonderful in accepting people as they are and believing they can be better.”

—Vanessa Riley, bestselling author of *Island Queen*



REVIEWS AND PRAISE

“Vanessa Miller’s thoughtful and anointed approach to crafting *Something Good* made for a beautiful page-turner full of depth and hope.”

—Rhonda McKnight, award-winning author of *Unbreak My Heart*

“This real-to-life story doesn’t shy away from some hard issues of the modern world, but Miller is a master storyteller, who brings healing and redemption to her characters, and thus the reader, through the power of love and faith. I thoroughly enjoyed this book.”

—Rachel Hauck, *New York Times* bestselling author

“Vanessa Miller’s *Something Good* unveils the reality of living with guilt, shame, and the weight of unforgiveness through the lives of three women. This story will offer readers a beautiful perspective of redemptive healing and the measure of peace which comes with a forgiving heart.”

—Jacquelin Thomas, national bestselling author of the Jezebel series and *Phoenix*



BOOK CLUB IDEA

Book clubs are about reading good books, of course, but they're also about so much more: making connections, enjoying delicious snacks, socializing with friends, considering new perspectives and ideas, and maybe even learning or trying something new.

Why not discuss the novel while enjoying good food? These recipes are great to make for your book club discussions, whether you're gathering in person or virtually.



CHOCOLATE COOKIE TRIFLE

- 1 box chocolate Jell-O Pudding Mix
- 1 Dream Whip Packet
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 1/2 cups of milk
- 1 package of Oreo or chocolate chip cookies
- 4 clear plastic or glass cups

DIRECTIONS

1. Put bowl and beater that will be used for Dream Whip in the freezer to chill.
2. Put 2 cups of milk in a saucepan on medium heat. Stir in pudding mix. Bring to a boil while continually stirring for 2 minutes.
3. Pour pudding into a bowl, put plastic over the bowl. Place in refrigerator to cool for 5 minutes.
4. Take the bowl and beater out of the freezer. Add 1/2 cup of cold milk and 1/2 tsp vanilla to the bowl. Blend in one packet of Dream Whip Dessert Topping Mix.
5. Whip at highest speed of electric mixer until topping forms peaks. About 2 minutes. Continue beating 2 more minutes until topping is light and fluffy.
6. Open packet of cookies. Chop cookies into crumble pieces.
7. Take pudding out of refrigerator.
8. Put half of the crumbled cookies in the bottom of the cup. Add 2 heaping tablespoons of pudding. Then add 2 tablespoons of Dream Whip.
9. Repeat until cup is full.
10. ENJOY!

THE CHOCOLATE COOKIE TRIFLE IS THE SIGNATURE DESSERT IN THE BOOK, *SOMETHING GOOD*. I HOPE YOU WILL MAKE, EAT, AND ENJOY WHILE DISCUSSING THE BOOK!

COOKING UP SOMETHING GOOD

GLUTEN FREE TACO BITES

- 1 pack ground beef or turkey
- 1 cup sharp cheddar cheese
- 1 packet taco seasoning
- 2 jalapeño peppers
- Sour cream
- Diced tomatoes
- 2 stalks of green onion

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 375°
2. Use a pizza pan. Place parchment paper on top of pan. Arrange cheddar cheese in 24 small heaps on top of parchment paper. Put in oven for 5-7 minutes.
3. Stir ground beef until brown. Pour taco mix. Add water. Let simmer.
4. Let cheese crisps cool for 5 minutes on parchment paper.
5. When taco meat is ready, put a spoonful on top of each cheese crisp. Add other toppings such as jalapeños, tomatoes, green onion, and sour cream. Place on serving tray and enjoy.

GLUTEN FREE PIZZA

- 1 1/2 cup almond flour
- 1/2 cup ground flax seed
- 2 cup mozzarella, 1/2 cup parmesan cheese
- 1 egg
- 3 tbsp butter
- Pizza sauce
- Pepperoni & spicy Italian sausage
- Oregano & salt
- Veggies: mushrooms, green peppers, onion
- Pizza stone & parchment paper

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 425°. Place pizza stone in oven.
2. Add butter and 1 cup mozzarella cheese into bowl and microwave for 1 minute or until softened.
3. Stir in egg, almond flour, and flax seed. Form into a ball. Wet hands and then press dough onto parchment paper until it is round like a pizza.
4. Sprinkle with oregano and salt to your liking. Add pizza sauce, meat, veggies, and the rest of the cheese.
5. Place parchment paper on pizza stone. Cook 10-12 minutes. Cut and enjoy!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These discussion questions can also be found on pages 316-318 of the book.

1. Marquita had a hard time holding onto a job and understanding that she needed to treat people with respect. Do you know anyone like Marquita? Have you ever been like Marquita? What are three things you would tell your younger self that would have made life easier?
2. How did it make you feel to read that Marquita didn't want to dream because she didn't believe anything good could happen for her? How would you minister to someone like Marquita?
3. Do you remember young love? I do, and it is sometimes painful. I love him, but does he love me? For Marquita this was compounded by her own feelings of worthlessness. What did you think about Jon-Jon and Marquita? Did they grow enough within themselves to truly have a lasting relationship?
4. Trish's once stable life was turned upside down after her son was left paralyzed. She kept trying to sing a fruitful song, even though she was in a barren land, but nothing she did was working. Things got so bad that she was ready to leave her marriage. Have you ever been so low that you didn't know how to get back up? What did you do to turn things around?



5. At Trish's lowest point she heard the scripture Isaiah 53:4, "Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." Reading something like that let's me know that I can breathe easy because God's got me. But does that scripture bring comfort to you or the opposite? Why?
6. Jehovah-Raah is mentioned during Trish's prayer for something good. Jehovah-Raah means God is our Shepherd—our guide through all of life. Have you allowed God to lead you or have you, like Trish, been trying to handle everything on your own?
7. What did you think of the interactions between Trish and Dwayne? Was Trish too hard on him, or did you understand where she was coming from?
8. When tragedy strikes it can either bring a family closer together or tear them apart. When Dwayne realized his family was being torn apart, he made steps to right some of the wrongs. What did you think of Dwayne John Robinson?
9. Alexis was a complicated character because at first glance she seemed to have it all. The rich husband, two wonderful children, a beautiful home. But she also had a secret. Did you realize that her mother dealt with mental illness before she visited her in the nursing home? How did it make you feel when you realized that Vivian was being hidden away to protect the vision of the perfect life Michael wanted for his family?



10. I fell in love with the Alexis Marshall character because she dealt with more internal battles than anyone else. Alexis was loving and compassionate, but secrets and guilt weighed her down. What did you think of Alexis? Was she too much, or did you understand her and relate to the things that pulled her this way or that way?
11. Michael Marshall was a narcissistic character at times. I hated writing about him because he was all about himself and what he needed. But he loved his family. So, what did you think of Michael? Did he redeem himself in the end?
12. The North Carolina cardinal is a symbol of hope in the midst of sorrow, beauty in the midst of darkness. An old wives' tale says that when a red cardinal is in your yard it is a visit from heaven. After learning of this tale, I now smile whenever I see a red cardinal in my yard (I'm not saying it's true, but the story does bring me joy). What's your take on this? Could God use a bird to bring hope to a hurting family?



SOMETHING GOOD



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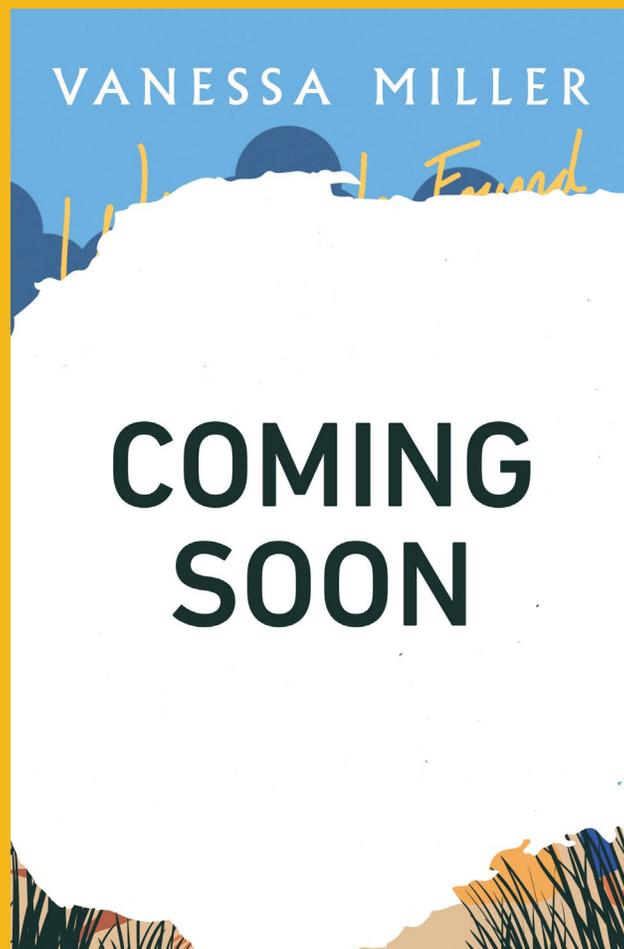


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COMING WINTER 2022

What We Found in Hallelujah

Sometimes going home means facing the storms and finding hope amidst the pain.



FOLLOW VANESSA TO RECEIVE UPDATES AND FOR THE COVER REVEAL.