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Three Good Things: A Novel



Synopsis

Sisterhood, motherhood, marriage, baking, and books—these are a few of the things that make this delightful novel a recipe for getting through the tough stuff of life. ELLEN McCLARETY, a recent divorcee, has opened a new bake shop in her small Midwestern town, hoping to turn her life around by dedicating herself to the traditional Danish pastry called kringle. She is no longer saddled by her never-do-well husband, but the past still haunts her—sometimes by showing up on her doorstep. Her younger sister, Lanie, is a successful divorce attorney with a baby at home. But Lanie is beginning to feel that her perfect life is not as perfect as it seems. Both women long for the guidance of their mother, who died years ago but left them with lasting memories of her love and a wonderful piece of advice: “At the end of every day, you can always think of three good things that happened.” Ellen and Lanie are as close as two sisters can be, until one begins keeping a secret that could forever change both their lives. Wearing her big Midwestern heart proudly on her sleeve, Wendy Francis skillfully illuminates the emotional lives of two women with humor and compassion, weaving a story destined to be shared with a friend, a mother, or a sister.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Because I lived in the Midwest for 9 years, enjoyed many a kringle, have a sister and we lost our mom in the past year - I was drawn to "Three Good Things" by Wendy Francis. The themes in this book - divorce, sisters, midlife issues, loss of a parent, starting over with a new business are universal ones and deftly, gently handled by Ms. Francis they will strike a chord with women of all ages. Recently divorced Ellen and her younger sister Lanie are likable characters dealing with

realistic issues. This is a novel that quickly draws you in, and gives you something to think about without too much drama. The older sister, Ellen, is recently divorced (but not quite over her ex). She uses the recipes in a book left to her by her mother to open a shop that serves a variety of kringles (a delicious Wisconsin pastry) along with coffee and good company. Her sister Lanie is a lawyer with a loving husband and a much-adored baby, who seemingly has the perfect life. As in real life, nothing runs smoothly for long and both sisters face some challenges and need to examine their priorities as they plan for the future. I found myself at odds with some of their actions, but that would make for a good discussion with a group of friends (hopefully over a piece of kringle). Lightweight perhaps, but enjoyable. This is the perfect beach read or light summer read for a book club - because there will be things to ponder and discuss when you are finished.

This was a great choice for our book club to read. We all seemed to enjoy the way the story and characters were universally appealing while the story weaved thru the fabric of the lives of characters we could all relate to. I can't wait to read the next book that Wendy Francis writes!

Ellen is recently divorced and proud owner of Singular Kringle (kringle is a buttery pastry that contains fruit or nut filling). She has to decide if she should hold onto the past or take a chance on new opportunities. Lanie is an overachiever and she is trying to juggle work, marriage and motherhood. She's finding it hard to strike a balance and is trying to find out what makes her happiest. Their mother used to find three good things that happened every day. In honor of her memory, the sisters start to find their three good things. They have the opportunity to experience change and happiness if they listen to their hearts. I really enjoyed Francis' debut novel. There is a lot of warmth, engaging characters and some neat twists that made it hard to put Three Good Things down. I'm looking forward to Francis' next novel. If you are looking for a story that features baking, hope and gratitude, you'll want to put Three Good Things on your read list.

Like a kringle, this novel is warm, delicately crafted and satisfying. I read the book in one evening, and I was immersed in the main characters' struggles with hectic careers, imperfect family lives, and old skeletons in their psychic closets. As a midwestern transplant, I can appreciate the realistic depictions of Wisconsin small town life and the dichotomy of good people making bad choices. I would recommend this book highly for a book club discussion, as its themes are accessible and relevant. A solid offering from a bright new author.

Disappointing as her second book was really good, but this one was trite and characters undefined and never did really get a feel for or be able to empathize with any of the characters. Some characters were just totally unlikeable even the main character. I would not recommend it.

I found this difficult to read.....very little character development.....really didn't make sense to me why any of the characters were doing/wanting what they seemed to do and want.....I was really glad to be finished.....

An entertaining read with very relatable, strongly drawn characters. McClarety sisters Ellen and Lanie seem like people that you already know, or would like to. Following the tale of the sisters' ups and downs provides many spot-on insights, both amusing and bittersweet, into the challenges of adulthood: careers, marriage, parenthood, divorce, and coping with the unexpected. A very warm and satisfying story!

I thought the title would be indicative of the book but the phrase did not play into the book at all. I feel like I wasted my time reading this. I always finish what I start so I finished it but that is time I will never get back. Darn.

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