



## The Little Pieces of You and Me

*Vanessa Greene*

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Best friends Isla and Sophie made each other a promise a long time ago: to never let life pass them by. Years later, Isla is in love, living abroad and fulfilling her dreams. But for Sophie, things haven't turned out the way she was expecting and she hasn't achieved any of the things she and Isla talked about.

And then, in one sudden moment, life irrevocably changes for both women.

Isla and Sophie have hard decisions to make but above all else they must face up to the uncertainty that lies ahead. It's only when they realise that this is easier together, two friends standing side by side, that each woman can embrace whatever the future holds for them.

**Emotional, poignant and uplifting, *The Little Pieces of You and Me* is a story about old friends, new beginnings and what happens when being strong is your only choice. It will take your breath away.**

## **The Little Pieces of You and Me Details**

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Author : Vanessa Greene

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## **From Reader Review The Little Pieces of You and Me for online ebook**

### **Anna Astin says**

This is the most cliche ridden and appallingly crafted book I have read for ages. I bought it on a Waterstones offer because I had nothing to read at the dentists, and from page one I knew exactly what would happen, even to the diagnosis of MS, the love-lose-refind relationship with the Mexican and the divorce from the controlling husband. Every cliche was there, Paris and the chocolate making, quilting, bicycles in Amsterdam. Bucket list novels are such a cheap and easy way to draw the reader in.

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### **Claire mcmanus says**

what can i say absolutely wonderful i started this book at 7pm and ive just finished it now at 1am never have i read a book so quick story was amazing i actually want more now but wow 5+ stars

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### **Rachel says**

This novel is one that attracts a reader due to its beautifully laid out front cover; the artwork is fairly minimal, but somehow still manages to stand out on a bookshelf. Recently I've been reading books that contain quite difficult subject matters, so the intention was to read something a little easier and more fluid; however this book was a bit of a shock in the sense that it wasn't at all what I'd expected. Isla and Sophie are best friends and have been since their student days, however life has taken them both in very different directions. Sophie never completed her medical degree but is working in a hospital and has a husband, Liam and step daughter, Rebecca at home in Bristol, whereas Isla is a carefree, single actress currently living and working in Amsterdam with dreams of making it big within the theatre world, either by acting or scriptwriting.

Whilst they were at University the two women each wrote out a list of dreams for the future and both them still think about achieving them, although Sophie definitely feels like her dreams are much further from her reach. Isla has dreams of going to broadway and very nearly hits that dream hard on the head. Through a few short months, both of their lives rapidly change. Isla unexpectedly finds love when she isn't looking for it and he seems like the loveliest of men and his bookshop sounds so interesting; even his customers sound out of the ordinary. One of the reasons that I really enjoyed this book was that not everything in life goes to plan; Isla's life grinds to halt when she's diagnosed with a long term medical condition and she's forced to make several decisions; to give up her broadway dreams, to leave Amsterdam and a love behind and go home to her mother and grandmother in Bristol.

Each of the characters seem to be flawlessly devised and I loved the dynamic between Berenice and Rafael, how much time and energy they gave each other in terms of friendship; a foreigner abroad and an elderly lady with a lifetime love of books. Both of them came across as very kind, creative people who enjoyed having someone to talk to although they both had their own secrets to hide from the world. All of the characters make some sacrifices throughout the book, however you could argue that Sophie made the most, as when Isla was unable to fulfil her dreams of travelling, Sophie went for her and helped her to feel like she

was there; they had a fantastic friendship, an incredibly supportive and almost sister-like relationship. In fact, her relationship with Isla is the strongest out of all of her relationships and that is made clear by her struggles to work around Rebecca's near constant teenage angst and her non-existent relationship with her parents as they disapprove of her husband.

Overall, I found this novel to be such a surprise; I'm not sure what exactly I expected, but I definitely assumed that it would be an easy, carefree novel and that it wasn't! Well, actually it did start off very full of life's positives, however it did change fairly rapidly, with Isla's diagnosis. There were many themes in this book, including illness, faithfulness, friendship and relationships in general. Sophie was a far stronger character than she appeared at first glance and I admired how well she fared in the face of adversity, whereas Isla was far more sensitive than she originally appeared, although arguably that was due to having a shock diagnosis. As I mentioned previously, the characters of Berenice and Rafael were not only intriguing, but also key to a large portion of the plot, particularly Berenice, which considering the amount of page space she was given, ultimately had a hand in ending without even being present. Greene writes so fluidly, every word flawlessly connects to the next and makes for easy reading due to how well the novel flows, but I liked how there were many underlying elements to the book. It's a great read, but I did feel like it ended abruptly and could've had a bit more explanation in some places, for example Rafael's background was fairly unclear even after finishing the novel.

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### **Mary says**

I enjoyed this story of a strong female friendship. It told the story of two life long friends who have devastating things happen to them and how their friendship holds them together during the worst of times. I particularly enjoyed Isla's story because it felt like how a person would react to receiving some disheartening news in their life (I don't want to spoil the story, that's why I'm remaining vague). Sophie's story didn't ring as true to me though. Her situation went downhill fast and her response to it didn't feel as real to me based on how the character started the book.

A little deeper than a normal chick lit read.

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### **Sandie Bishop says**

a nice friendship book. A few parts felt that something was missing from the story but nice overall.

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### **Jade Aspinall says**

\*3.5/5 Stars\*

It's not that I didn't enjoy it. I did, truly. The characters felt real for once, and it was full of friendship, sorrow and laughter.

I think it was Isla that annoyed me a little bit; the way she treated Rafael after she got diagnosed I really didn't like. I get that she lied to spare him from being stuck to her, but she didn't even give him the option. And then with the bucket list. Yes, her illness stopped her from doing some of them, but to force Sophie to

go to Paris on her own just so that Isla could live through her. Maybe I'm being harsh, but it felt that Isla was pushing Sophie into these things. I get that they're best friends and would anything for each other, but there is a line.

It was a great, quick read, don't get me wrong, but Isla's actions just don't sit well with me.

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### **Sylvia Maccarrone says**

I read 300 pages in one evening. Couldn't put it down!

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### **Maria says**

I was going to wait for the paperback to come out in August, yet somehow I ended up running into the first line of the prologue and I knew that I couldn't possibly walk away before reaching the very last line.

"The day that your life changes for ever, chances are there won't be a sign announcing it."

Before I go any further into *The Little Pieces of You and Me*, let me first tell you that Vanessa Greene's novels seem to have a rather strange way (is it *magic*, I wonder) of finding me just when I most need to read them. Ever since *The Vintage Teacup Club*, it almost feels like we have been walking through life together, side by side. That is why I have a copy of each of the said novels on a shelf that I proudly call *best friends' shelf*.

I would say that reading Vanessa Greene's first novel was the beginning of a wonderful bond. Even though they are not sequels, as you go from one to the other, it feels as if you are truly going through the different stages of a friendship. As steps are taken forward, dark corners are acknowledged, dusted and brought to the table. There is no judgment. Instead, you will find yourself in a safe space where you can speak your mind without either being made fun of or pitied.

That said, *The Little Pieces of You and Me* deals with one of my biggest fears. We are no longer trying to find the courage to walk away from something we deep down inside know is toxic, as we were in *The Beachside Guest House*, we are now one step further in. We are dealing with the fear of knowing that we cannot walk away from something; we are trying to find the courage to *stay*.

I don't know about you, but I have found myself thinking (who am I kidding, positively *overthinking*) about what I would do if my body decided to give up on me before my mind did. Mind you, the opposite wouldn't be a much brighter future, *at all*, and it's equally terrifying. I find myself breathing a little easier now that I have read *The Little Pieces of You and Me*. You see, this is one of the things I love the most about books, you go through someone else's journey as if it were your own. You get to experience things that you would otherwise possibly go through life without acknowledging. I understand why people say that ignorance is pure bliss, but once you're out of the box there doesn't seem to be a way back in so we might as well talk about it.

Vanessa Greene has a gift. She has many others, certainly many that have nothing to do with writing whatsoever, but this gift in particular is of the uttermost importance – she creates safe havens where fears can

be openly *feared* and discussed. She is aware that talking about certain matters is frightening and that sometimes we end up shutting doors to those in need of opening up due to obliviousness. There's a kindness, a tenderness, in her novels that must not be mistaken for pity. People learn to both *speak up* and *listen*. How refreshing is that? It gives me *hope*. So thank you for that, Vanessa Greene, so so much.

And speaking of hope, that is one word that is key to every single novel penned by this author. No matter what her characters are going through, even when their lows seem to test the laws of nature by eliminating the harsh yet comforting existence of *ground* and leading to a bottomless pit, there is always light at the end of the tunnel. And *we* are that light, even if sometimes we have to borrow someone else's to find our way *there*, back to ourselves. And that's another key element to this, and her every, novel. Friendship. Sophie and Isla are in this together, no matter what. It's truly beautiful to witness. And again, *hope*.

"Maybe I was a coward. Life can be complicated – but those complications don't make it any less worth living – in fact, sometimes they're the very things that make it worth living. Those little pieces are what make you, you, and me, me."

*The Little Pieces of You and Me* opens doors. Not just to the outside, through lists of dreams that radiate belief and optimism, but also to the inside. It makes us look closer; it makes us find in those who surround us, including ourselves, all we need to face yet another day. If it's always going to be easy? Certainly not. But it's going to be *okay*.

I read somewhere that most of the times we go out of our way to find something that has been standing right in front of us the whole time. This is not something we should regret, but cherish. Sometimes all we need is a little distance to recognize *it* for what it is. I would say that *The Little Pieces of You and Me* is a beautifully written journey into a distance that ends up just where it started: *you*.

For someone who has found her way back home and has been playing tennis with the idea of *uselessness* and *despair*, this book was everything.

There will be tears and laughs. There will be books, tango, chocolate, tea and visits to the hospital, Paris, Amsterdam and Argentina. There will be love. There will be *magic*. You will have to *want* to find it, though. After all, this book is the distance.

P.S. I fell in love with Sadie and Berenice. Perhaps we will get a follow-up short story about their pasts? That would be wonderful.

P.P.S. I wouldn't be surprised if you found yourself finishing this book on a plane. Vanessa Greene's writing seems to inspire one not only to wonder about certain things, but also to *wander*.

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## Maria says

Wow, such a powerful novel of friendship, dedication, and love, all between two friends that are there for one another through thick and thin. The story begins with introducing Isla and Sophie, along with their respective lives, and how each of them are making time for one another despite being in different countries. All of that changes once Isla comes to terms with her newfound diagnosis, with Sophie's life being thrown into chaos as well. The book goes through some twists and turns between Sophie and Liam, along with Isla

and Rafael, some of which were a tad predictable, but worth reading nonetheless. I loved the emotions that Isla expressed after her diagnosis, which made me realize how precious one's health is, especially when Isla came into contact with Jo, which made me emotional for her specific situation. I felt that the author did a wonderful job of highlighting how important Isla and Sophie's friendship was, and the beauty of how one true friend can bring out the best in you, despite what others may think or say. I felt that there were a few plotlines which could be expanded upon within a sequel, which would be intriguing to read. Overall, a well-written book that made me truly cherish the beauty of timeless friendships.

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### **Anthea says**

I have thoroughly enjoyed all books I've read from Vanessa Greene but this was not my favourite. I enjoyed the theme - 2 close friends who find a bucket list they had made when they were younger and decide to start doing them.

Unfortunately I wasn't sorry when I finished it (which I usually am when reading anything by Vanessa Greene). I didn't find the characters as interesting as in her previous books.

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### **Olga Kowalska (WielkiBuk) says**

„Cz?stka ciebie i mnie” to powie?? obyczajowa o kobietach i dla kobiet – wzruszaj?ca, lekka, chwilami daj?ca do my?lenia. To historia niezwykle silnej wi?zi, przyja?ni na dobre i na z?e, takiej, której pragnie wielu, a tylko niektórzy maj? szans? prze?y?. To tak?e poruszaj?ca opowie?? o nadziei oraz sile marze? i wierze, ?e mo?na osi?gn?? wszystko, je?li kto? b?dzie przy nas trwa?, nawet w tych najtrudniejszych chwilach, kiedy nie wszystko zdaje si? mie? sens. Jednocze?nie porusza temat, którego obawia si? wielu, ale mo?e po lekturze ?atwiej b?dzie ten l?k oswoi? i wypowie?zie? na g?os. Vanessa Greene stworzy?a ?yciow?, przyst?pn? fabu?? i bohaterki, z którymi nie sposób si? w jaki? sposób nie uto?sami?. To powie?? na uroczy wieczór lub dwa, taka, któr? mo?na podzieli? si? z najlepsz? przyjació?k?, poda? dalej, a zadzia?a jak przys?owiowy miód na serce.

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### **Jeanne says**

Glad I brought this on holiday with me. Because it means I can leave it here. Passable beach read.

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### **Rachel Gilbey says**

A captivating story of friendship, which I found to be really inspiring. There is a lot of depth to the story, including a medical diagnosis that I don't see too often in books, but I had a personal connection to the condition, which added to my interest. Yet the story also features plenty of fun, and even some bucket list style challenges to be completed, by not necessarily the person who wrote the list. This is definitely my favourite of Vanessa Greene's books, although I have a feeling I may have said that at the time about the previous one!

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## Ainslie says

An engaging read about friendship, relationships and life's challenges.

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## Isabell says

Originally posted on Dreaming With Open Eyes

*I kindly received The Little Pieces of You and Me in exchange of an honest review by the publisher.*

When I looked at this beautiful cover, it screamed read me! I was excited to start a novel of an author which I had not read before. This was the first novel that I had read by Vanessa Greene and I came to find that she really does have a talent for writing several unique characters. I have always admired authors like Vanessa who can write several different story lines into one book and still be able to manage them all. The story follows along Isla and Sophie. They have been best friends forever. Even though Isla does not live in the same country anymore, they are still there for each other, no matter what.

This book takes us to great places; one of them is Amsterdam. I did not know anything about the setting in this book. I took this book on holiday with me and I started reading this book at the beach in Zandvoort, which is about thirty minutes away from Amsterdam. What a coincidence! Amsterdam is one of my most favorite cities in the world, I love this place. The canals, the flowers, the super friendly people, the architecture of the city and bicycles everywhere! Isla lives and works in Amsterdam as an actress. Since a teenager Isla is dreaming about playing on Broadway in New York. This dream is about to come true until Isla got hit by tragically news which she forces to go back home to England.

Sophie accepted a different way of life and lives with her husband and her stepdaughter in England. Sophie still thinks about her bucket list which she set up with Isla when they were teenagers. She has not archived her goals and dreams so far. All of a sudden things are changing for Sophie too and it's time for both women to decide to start living their life to the fullest again.

The moment I started reading this book I couldn't read it quick enough. Vanessa Greene's writing style draws you in immediately. I enjoyed reading The Little Pieces of You and Me a lot because I was totally taken in by the story. I was rooting to find out more and more about Sophie and Isla's life. I adored Sophie and Isla's amazing bond of friendship. After reading a few chapters I had high expectations that The Little Pieces of You and Me is going to be an emotional ride until the very end. Unfortunately, it was pretty much everything on the same level. The storyline is clichéd and too predictable. I guessed mostly every twist and turn before it happened. The story lacked of depth and action to move me. Don't get me wrong, it is a very good novel which is written greatly, there are just a few things that didn't work for me. Sophie and Isla dealt so easily with their life changing problems which was very unrealistic and not true to life to me. Most of the time I couldn't understand Isla's decisions. I was really mad at her at times. The story has good side characters who keep the story ticking along. I loved Barnaice and Rafael. I was happy that Vanessa told their story too.

The Little Pieces of You and Me left me with that happy feeling to make me excited to read more books by Vanessa Greene. There were a few plot lines that I would have liked to have seen developed further, but overall it's an entertaining and romantic read that will leave you satisfied at the end.

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